



***The Colony* - Dinh Q. Lê at the Void Gallery Derry**

**14 May - 2 July**

**Exhibition Launch : Sat 14 May 6.30pm - 9pm. Artist's Talk: Wed 25 May**

Void in collaboration with Artangel and Ikon Gallery Birmingham presents *The Colony*, a major new video installation by renowned artist Dinh Q. Lê, curated at Void by Maoliosa Boyle and Orla Ryan.

Dinh Q. Lê's new work features newly filmed footage of the Chincha Islands off the coast of Peru which are inhabited by large colonies of birds and rich in guano, a powerful fertiliser. Currently these islands are uninhabited but during the mid 19th century the Chincha Islands were central to global markets and contested by Spanish, American and Peruvian powers in order to lay claim to what was then one of the most valuable global commodities. At the height of the 'Guano Rush' thousands of bonded Chinese labourers\* were forced to live on these islands in brutal conditions to harvest the fertiliser. The United States passed the Guano Act in 1856 and Spain and Peru went to war from 1864-1866 because of the Chincha Islands. By revisiting 19th century imperialism and colonial economic disputes, *Colony* also poses questions in relation to contemporary conflicts over mineral exploitation. In the accompanying catalogue Dinh Q. Lê in conversation with Zoe Butt also discusses this project in relation to current political instability over the contested islands in the South China Seas taking place between Vietnam and its larger neighbour China.

*The Colony* has been commissioned by Artangel, Ikon, Han Nefkens H+F Collection Proyecto Amil, Lima and is part of The Artangel Collection, an initiative to bring outstanding film and video works, commissioned and produced by Artangel, to galleries and museums across the UK. The Artangel Collection has been developed in partnership with Tate, is generously supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Foyle Foundation and uses public funding from Arts Council England.

Environmental Historian Frank Uekotter from the University of Birmingham will launch the exhibition on Saturday 14 May at 6.30pm with a talk based on the legacy of Guano.

Dinh Q. Lê will deliver an Artist's talk at Void on Wednesday 25 May.

***The Colony* will continue at Void until 2 July 2016.**

Void is open Tuesday - Saturday from 11am to 5pm. Admission is free. To book a tour of the exhibition please contact our Head of Access and Participation Sally Murphy [sally@derryvoid.com](mailto:sally@derryvoid.com).

Note to Editors:

1. Void exhibition opening: Saturday 14 May, 6.30-9pm. The exhibition will be accompanied by a programme of public events, for full details visit [www.derryvoid.com](http://www.derryvoid.com)

2. Dinh Q Lê was born in Hà Tiên in then South Vietnam in 1968. In the late 1970s, his family escaped by boat before eventually settling in the US where he completed his education. He is the co-founder of Sàn Art in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, where he has been based for the past decade. In 2010 he was awarded the Prince Claus Award for his outstanding contribution to cultural exchange. Lê's work has been included in many international group shows including Documenta 13 in Kassel, Germany (2012), the 2nd Singapore Biennale (2008), the Gwangju Biennial (2006) and the Venice Biennale (2003). He was the first Vietnamese artist to have a solo show at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010). Dinh Q Le's Farmers and Helicopters was shown at Void in 2015 as part of Spring Watching Pavilion curated by Orla Ryan.

3. Void is a contemporary art space with up to 5 exhibitions per year showing the work of established international and Irish artists. A key element to the gallery is the [Void Engage](#) programme, which places participation, engagement and learning at the heart of Void, making contemporary visual art accessible to visitors of all ages. Void's Mission statement: Void exists to present the contemporary visual arts and to support artists, through a programme of exhibitions, related educational and outreach activities from a national and international perspective.

4. The Colony is part of The Artangel Collection, an initiative to bring outstanding film and video works, commissioned and produced by Artangel, to galleries and museums across the UK. The Artangel Collection has been developed in partnership with Tate, is generously supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Foyle Foundation and uses public funding from Arts Council England.

5. Void is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 5pm. Admission is free. Void Gallery is supported using public funding from Arts Council Northern Ireland. For the latest news and events follow @voidderry on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

6. For more information and high-res images please contact Maoliosa Boyle or Aisling Bradley at Void on 028 7130 8080 or email [marketing@derryvoid.com](mailto:marketing@derryvoid.com)

Void Gallery, City Factory, Patrick Street, Londonderry, Derry, BT48 7EL 028  
71308080 / [www.derryvoid.com](http://www.derryvoid.com) Open Tuesday-Sunday, 11am-5pm / free entry