

Willie Doherty

Secretion, 2012

Shot on location in and around Kassel, Germany, and first shown as part of dOCUMENTA 13, *Secretion* draws upon the possibilities of lost and forgotten narratives located somewhere between recent history and a near future. The omnipotent narrative at times presents echoes of *Ghost Story* (2007), pulling personal histories and experience to the foreground of the Kassel landscape. This same landscape served as the backdrop of much of the folklore collected by the Brothers Grimm while they lived and worked in Kassel. Their first collection of folk tales, *Children's and Household Tales (Kinder- und Hausmärchen)*, was published in 1812. Doherty is interested in the relationship between landscape and memory and in working in locations that are contaminated with untold stories; some forgotten, some half remembered. Many of his works involve looking at specific places, *Buried* (2009), *Ancient Ground* (2011) as a means of meditating upon the existence of traces of past events that will not disappear that resurface and cannot be forgotten. *Secretion* builds upon the possibility of suppressed or hidden stories being embedded within contemporary experience and knowledge.

Doherty's approach and process is speculative. He often takes an existing image or other information as a starting point and then proceeds to see what can be discovered or found. At the same time, Doherty's method is sensitive to the difficulties of working in a contemporary landscape that has been shaped by monumental historical events. To this extent *Secretion* is informed by his experience of making work that responds to the complexities of the political conflict in Ireland.

Doherty has stated, "Obviously, my response cannot be emptied of what I already know or imagine about the German landscape and the traditions of its representation however the intention is not to impose a preconceived reading onto the landscape but to respond to what I might find there."

Secretion is about the present rather than the past. The work attempts to engage with the landscape as it looks today but also as a repository of the memories of past experiences and our apprehension about the future.