

## **Sins & Virtues**

**A joint art installation by Jennifer Baumeister & Cheryl Bleakley**

Safehouse Arts Space Gallery, 25 Lower Donegall Street, Belfast

Opening: 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2009, 7pm

Exhibition time: 5<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Nov. 2009

The proposed work incorporates a joint installation by 2 artists, Jennifer Baumeister from Berlin and Cheryl Bleakley from Belfast. The cities have parallels. They were or are socially and politically split, so that the people are confronted with additional problems in the context of globalisation.

Both artists examined the idea of the 7 deadly sins and the 7 virtues and used these archetypal characteristics as lead to show present society, captured through different media and performing artists.

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**Cheryl Bleakley** has responded to the theme 'Sins and Virtues' in Belfast in her installation, which incorporates three-dimensional work and sound. The installation is in three parts-

The first installation "Sunday" includes children's swings suspended from a high ceiling, each tied up to mark them 'out of bounds' with the sound of church bells ringing. This stands as a reminder of the practice here in the not-too distant past, and an introduction to children of Christianity, warped by rules and 'religion'.

Another piece entitled "Seventy times seven" is a biblical reference to attempts to forgive. Seven arms protrude from the wall pointing at the viewer, some making a child's shooting gesture. A megaphone is suspended opposite for the viewer to access, although the damage to the arms opposite and the empty bullet shells on the floor make it apparent that the megaphone may be a weapon.

The third piece "Spero Meliora", meaning "I hope for better things" depicts a toddler who has climbed a ladder to view some soulless "Irish art". She holds a water pistol in her hand, and determines not to hold it against her own head.

More information about Cheryl Bleakley on: [www.bleakleyart.com](http://www.bleakleyart.com)  
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**Jennifer Baumeister's** "sinometer" is a machine that is supposed to measure whether people tend more to sin or virtue. The apparatus is made out of different parts from medical technology equipment (e.g.: a patient monitor and various measurement equipment). In a time where a dualistic understanding of the world – a black and white thinking like the seven deadly sins and the seven heavenly virtues is mostly understood to be archaic, there are still a lot of iffy methods used in our society which are based on that very idea to prove a point or come closer to reality.

There are lie detectors on plenty of TV talk shows for instance, there is of course the Scientology e-meter, which is believed to reflect or indicate whether or not a person has been relieved from spiritual impediment of past experiences. But also officials work with similar techniques. In Great Britain they install telephone lie detection systems in an effort to combat benefit cheats or force sex offenders to take *lie detectors* to see if they are a risk to the public or are breaking the terms of their release.

Jennifer Baumeister's "sinometer" not only shows whether you are likely to be a sinner, but also how easy it is to be put into a category.

Apart from that Jennifer Baumeister will exhibit her works "Death Row Visit" and "Thinking about".

More information on: [www.jenniferbaumeister.com](http://www.jenniferbaumeister.com)  
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