

Motels and Mineral Surfaces

The NAG (2011)

“You’re standing on a platform made of glass. The rim of the Grand Canyon is 70 feet behind you. The other side of it is 3 miles in front of you. Then you dare to look down and see nothing – nothing but 2,000 feet of air between you and the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Until recently, a sensation like this could only be experienced in dreams. But now, on the Hualapai Indian Reservation that is just East of Las Vegas, dreams and reality will meld into one with the Grand Canyon Skywalk.”

In this solo exhibition by Aoibheann Greenan the artist imagines the experience of visiting the Grand Canyon Skywalk, using only the tour-package information as a guide. Discrepancies between the Greenan’s fantastical depictions and the real place implicate the artist as the author/cultural voyeur. Her fetishistic interpretations of the Hualapai tribe’s crafted merchandise are mere signs of an imaginary other. They are hackneyed pan-Indian constructs borne out of pop-cultural representations from film, tv and internet. On close inspection they betray a utilitarian status through their incorporation of cheap commodity items. Greenan’s myriad cultural misappropriations parody the way online information can distort or limit our understanding of the world.