

THE ETERNAL PENDULUM

Irene Pérez Hernández

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Artist in Residence at grove, Bury St Edmunds, UK



The Eternal Pendulum, 2019 stop motion video, 02:19 loop

Irene Pérez Hernández's artistic practice spans media and genre. Integrating film, sculpture, and performance, the artist explores the dynamics of space, temporality, and perception, and the ways in which enduring geometric forms and sets of relations are expressed in different contexts.

The ruins of the Benedictine Abbey at Bury St.-Edmunds provide the subject matter for the work 'The Eternal Pendulum' at the Grove residency. Using the arched window from the surviving section of the north transept of the Abbey as a focal point for her new work, Pérez Hernández overlays a digital pendulum on the stones. The arc created by swinging of the pendulum in The Eternal Pendulum's stop motion video creates a whole circle by mirroring the semi-circle of the stone arch. The interplay of presence and absence, and matter and information, in the work evokes the vanished sections of the building but also seeks to larger aesthetic and social lineages.

The centrality of geometry to the construction of medieval European houses of worship, and the elaborate metaphorical associations applied to geometric forms provide a direct architectural reference point for Pérez Hernández's piece, but the cyclicity of human events also inform it, not least the turbulent social history of Bury St. Edmunds itself, including the Great Riot of 1327 and the later extremities of 1381 in which an uprising against the privileges of the Abbey saw the Prior beheaded. The work poses the question if humans are doomed, destined, or privileged to live through types and shadows of the same events eternally, moving forward in time only to return to some previous manifestation of social relations.