

■ **Left:** *The Chasm Records* (Hanukkah menorah, 1940s), installation view at Project Arts Centre. **Right:** Ulrich Vogl's *Squared*, from *The Nature of Drifting* at the Kevin Kavanagh Gallery. MAIN

PHOTOGRAPH: ROS KAVANAGH

tion with a nostalgically nationalist vision of Hungary. In fact, as he sees it, his minority position in Romania lent him a useful detachment from which to view the "objectification and instrumentation" of his own identity on the part of the Hungarian political establishment in the construction of a new, decidedly illiberal nationalism. And, as this show demonstrates (not without relevance to Ireland and Brexit Britain), equipped him to be alert to the flaws and problems attendant on "identity formation ... and ... the construction of national identity." As witness Masha Gessen recent response to an interviewer's assertion that Russians were very interested in their own history. They are not, she insisted, they are interested in the historical myth. Myth is simple, reality is complex.

The nature of drifting ★★★★★

Ulrich Vogl, Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Chancery Lane, Dublin. Until December 23 kevin-kavanagh-gallery.ie

Ulrich Vogl's recent works are meditations on maps. Always ingeniously economical with his means, Vogl sees no need to make new maps when there are so many there already, and he sets about using them. He did, however, engage the services of a conservator of contemporary art, Claartje van Haften, to work on one, *Alpen* – half restored. As with all 15 map pieces on view, it is quiet and requires some thought, but it is also especially good, the centerpiece of the show. Van Haften was presented with a map of the Alps and asked to restore it.

In this case, restoration has a practical



and a conceptual meaning. Practically, van Haften treated all indications of human activity – borderlines, roads, train tracks, cities and towns, names and other markings – as damage, carefully over-painting them so that they become invisible and only the uninterrupted natural phenomena are evident. The map is bisected by a vertical line. The "restoration" work has been effected on one side, not on the other. It's not a true restoration, since the map was made as a map, but figuratively speaking van Haften has restored the landscape to its pre-human state.

Elsewhere, Vogl continues to deal with the conventions and concepts of map-making, introducing versions of and interventions in conventional maps, dancing along that borderline between the geophysical and the human. *Night and Day/Day and Night* dramatizes the dateline as though it were a physical fact. *The Land Beyond the Sea* submerges much of Ireland beneath risen sea levels, leaving just the higher areas above water. *Squared* plays on the convention of the grid. Play is an appropriate word. Vogl enjoys being playfully inventive, but that doesn't mean his work is not also profound.

