



*THERE ARE NO ORDINARY MOMENTS*

JEPPE HEIN

Amos Anderson Art Museum

Yrjönkatu 27 , 00100 Helsinki, Finland

08 November 2013 - 13 January 2014

## *FUNHOUSE FASCINATION*

BY JOHN GAYER

Highlighting his win of this year's Ars Fennica prize, Jeppe Hein's *There Are No Ordinary Moments* also forms the celebrated artist's first solo exhibition in Finland. The choice was made by Akiko Miki, Senior Curator at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. Her decision was informed by the way his work affects behavior and engages perception. Thus, it makes perfect sense that the exhibition presents an elucidating overview of his output ranging from his use of reflective materials, geometric shapes, repetitive actions, text, furniture and machinery to the much more ephemeral phenomena of vapor and sound. The selection is bracketed by the entertaining *Smoking Bench* (2002) – a mirror accompanied by a bench that envelops visitors in a cloud of vapor when they sit down to examine their reflections – and his *Frequency Watercolors (D)* (2013) – splatter paintings created by running pigment-loaded stencil brushes around the edges of sound bowls.



**Jepppe Hein**, Installation view showing *Are You Really Here*, 2013; Courtesy Amos Anderson Museum / Photo: Stella Ojala.

Hein has a reputation for producing works that mimic the appearance and strategies of minimalist and conceptual art. A walk through this presentation reminds us of the work of artists such as Robert Morris, Joseph Kosuth, Hans Haacke, Agnes Martin and Dan Graham, but with an interesting twist. He invests his work with unexpected psychological content that makes us aware of our presence and mindset. Concise statements written in neon tubing comment – ‘You don’t have to be perfect to be here,’ says one – and question – ‘Are you really here,’ asks another. Not only that, but we encounter our reflections over and over again. They appear in the glazing of framed works, a bicycle mirror and when inspecting a hole in the wall. Our proximity to a large mirror gets it shaking. The trembling images change our understanding of both ourselves and the room’s attributes. Strolling through this presentation conveys the lighthearted aura of a funhouse; and, with that there is also the risk of triteness. In this regard *Screw On Wall* (2007) stands out as the most obvious example. Though it engenders surprise and second glances when people notice the screw turning itself into or out of the wall, fascination soon withers. The piece comes across more as a lame gag than an evocative gesture.



**Jepppe Hein**, Installation view showing *Light Pavilion*, 2009 / *You Don't Have To Be Perfect To Be Here*, 2012; Courtesy Amos Anderson Museum / Photo: Stella Ojala.

In an attempt to create an overall experience – something involving more than the sequential examination of individual works – Hein also requested that the exhibition spaces be painted various colors. These have been drawn from Goethe's Theory of Colors and condition our responses to the works and the spaces in which they have been set. For some, the dark blue and green used in the small galleries accentuated their intimacy; for others they became claustrophobic. I found that the dark blue conferred an aura to *Light Pavilion* (2009) that made it much more dream-like and difficult to forget. The light sky blue, pale salmon and eggshell tones enhanced the airiness of the larger spaces and set up contrasts that intensified subtleties inherent to the work. The decision to employ color in this way also recalls Sol LeWitt's switch from graphite to the use of vivid hues. Here, color helps further diminish the systematic or clinical nature of the work. It collects the art works into select communities, which, in turn, encourages new interpretations.

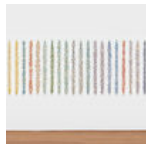
—John Gayer

(Image on top: **Jeppé Hein**, *Detail of 1-Dimensional Mirror Labyrinth*, 2006; Courtesy Amos Anderson Museum / Photo: Stella Ojala.)

Posted by John Gayer on 06/12/13

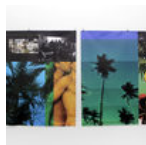
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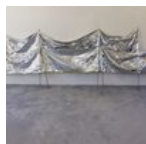
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#### COMMENTS (1)

Fascinating. Love playing with both perception and Goethe's color wheel so hope this eventually makes it to the States.

Comment by: Lucie Smoker on Monday 09/12/13 10:49