



HELSINKI

Aaron Heino

Galleria Sculptor

Aaron Heino's recent sculptures convey an intense and unsettling presence. They not only embody movement and the expression of psychological states, but also speak of chemical constituents, immiscibility, and the propagation, release, and containment of energy. While their hard, reflective skins reference the luster of car bodies and candy-coated apples, a number of the figures intimate life forms. The rich color, mirrored surfaces, and unusual shapes of these works capture our attention and draw us toward them. The ensuing voyage of discovery

immerses us in their visual complexity and encourages the ascription of narrative.

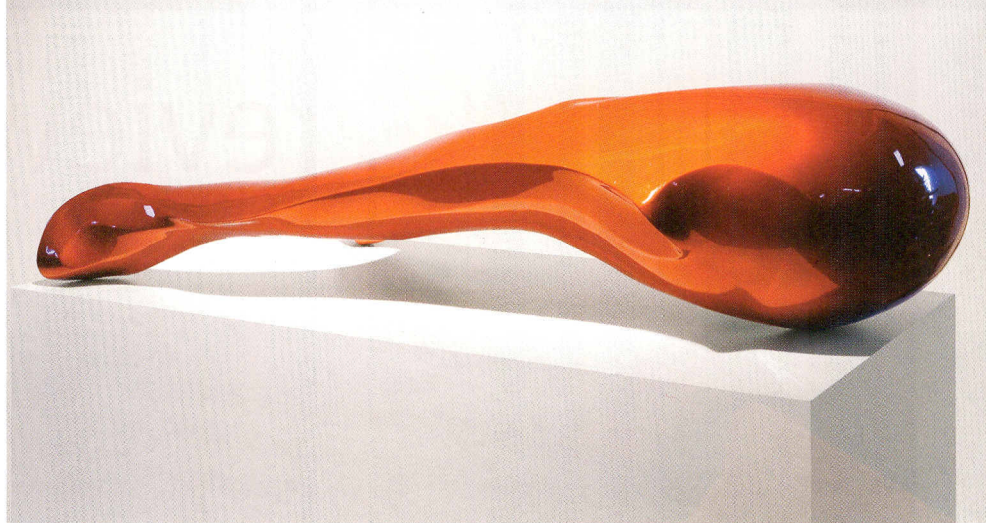
Tenant (2009) consists of two forms—related species of mollusks—that rest one atop the other in a manner that invites anthropomorphism. The configuration suggests an uneasy relationship. While a portion of the white lower body curves upward in a modest gesture of accommodation, the red form curls in recoil. Contrasting contours further the notion of dispassionate co-existence. Best reflecting that which happens to be closest, the slick surfaces of these organisms contradict their yearning for distance.

The onomatopoeic titles *Whoosh* and *Slurp* (both 2009) bestow aural credence to goo in the process of propelling itself through space. The former reminds us of Michael Phelps doing the 200-meter Butterfly. Simultaneously muscular and aerodynamic, this mercurial presence slips through the air. Seeing the space around it condensed in its glossy and distended surface only reinforces the impression. In *Slurp*, a large bulbous shape spontaneously rises out of a placid rectangular pan of luscious, thick red syrup. Intimating an oversize dollop pulled up by an invisible tongue or the emergence of an inchoate creature, the work hovers between represent-

Aaron Heino, *Tenant*, 2009. Polystyrene and painted fiberglass, 130 x 200 x 160 cm.

ing a cloyingly sweet treat and the beginning of a sci-fi adventure.

Two slightly older works were somewhat less effective in this presentation. *All Kinds of Love* (2008), with its mottled color, textured surface, and general configuration, too literally recalls some of Henry Moore's plaster studies. And *Big Fish* (2008), a large, shimmering stainless steel comet trailed by a clutch of tentacle-like streamers, suffered from being segregated and restrained within the tightest of gallery spaces. Sadly, the installation of this technically



Above: Aaron Heino, *Whoosh*, 2009. Polystyrene and painted fiberglass, 50 x 170 x 80 cm. Left: Aaron Heino, *Slurp*, 2009. Polystyrene and painted fiberglass, 90 x 70 x 90 cm.



fish (*Magritte's Smile*). Suspended quietly over a small exterior courtyard, this wry personage twisted freely from its overhead wire, peering with one fishy eye or the other at museum visitors through the glass walls of the Aldrich's ground-floor galleries. With this fishbowl role-reversal (fish outside/gallery-goers inside), Tufte dryly personified a central issue governing his work—namely, the primacy of the eye.

His exploration of three-dimensional forms within a natural context was superlatively integrated at the Aldrich, which was transformed for this exhibition into the most serene of sculpture gardens. Tufte pays Zen-like attention to natural elements either translated through or considered against his fabrications: a maze of stainless-steel panels, polished into suede-like light-buffers, served as a visual foil not only for the landscape that appeared in the intervals, but also for woolly sheep.

Orchestrated into surprising optical events, these sentient relations generate an essential tension: the tension between binocular vision and the perception of three-dimensionality. One could make the point that it's a classical distinction—objective versus subjective, optical versus tactile—though the differ-

and visually impressive structure smacked of melodrama.

Heino's production demonstrates a deftness of form and material. Though his work indirectly references Robert Murray's painted metal constructions and the dynamism of Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913), his visualizations seem to counter our presence rather than mirror it. They conjure a fantastic array of images, including sputniks, chemical concoctions, and entities at once muscular and teleplasmic. Moreover, the irregular topography of the sleek surfaces creates a multitude of optical effects, from shifting sets of spatial perspectives to tonal variations. In his statement, Heino laconically notes

the personal starting point of his ideas, the work ethos through which his sculptures develop and take part in his everyday life, and his interest in combining contradictory elements in skillful ways. In essence, he has been true to his word. In my view, the inventiveness and inherent humor of Heino's work make it a visceral experience.

—John Gayer

RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Edward Tufte

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

The pivot point of Edward Tufte's recent array of large-scale, outdoor sculpture was a battered-looking, Broddingnagian-scaled aluminum