

HOPSTREET

EGILL SÆBJÖRNSSON 29 January – 05 March 2011

We are happy to announce the first solo exhibition of the Icelandic artist **Egill Sæbjörnsson** in Belgium. As an internationally exhibited visual artist, a successful musician and witty performer, Egill Sæbjörnsson (*1973 in Reykjavik, living and working in Berlin) covers a wide range of artistic approaches and techniques. Probably it is one of the most remarkable aspects of Sæbjörnsson's work that it simply ignores the usual categories of media and genres. It is a startling fusion of music, video, installation, sound and performance which the artist uses to explore the relationship between different levels of reality and imagination – often with a keen sense of the quirky and the absurd.

HOPSTREET presents three of Sæbjörnsson's compelling light-sound-object-installations. One of them was created specifically for this show. This new piece which is made of a stage-like setting, an used linen bag filled with balls and an animation with sound builds a further step on the artist's way of investigating and developing "pseudo instruments". This investigation evolves from Sæbjörnsson's interest in the perception of music and in instruments as 'tools' for making music but also simply as objects in their own right. What makes an object an instrument? And how do we relate a specific sound to a specific instrument or object? This also touches the concept of synthetic music and the term of 'acousmatic' music, that is music one hears without seeing an originating cause. Egill Sæbjörnsson plays with these notions, inventing images and sounds and connecting them with 'real' objects in the exhibition space, thus mixing their correlations. The result is a dream-like, at the same time captivating and confusing installation which the artist proposes to perceive as a "pseudo instrument".

The groaning, squeaking and wheezing "Plugstaab" (2010) can be seen in a similar way. Its mysterious construction of a glass sphere held in a grid hanging from the ceiling not only seems to be the source of an elaborate composition of peculiar sounds but also of a colourful light performance. Clearly, projection, sound and object are connected, but how? Is the "Plugstaab" an unknown instrument, a theatrical piece without actor or an intoxicated still life?

In "Kugeln" (Spheres, 2008) everyday objects like buckets and a broom are arranged on a pedestal and combined with a projection of colours and forms. Both on the wall and on the pedestal the projection and the objects blend into each other and seem to have a life on their own. It's the hypnotizing chirring of insects that intensifies the vivid visual and spatial sensation.

Barbara J. Scheuermann, Berlin

Egill Sæbjörnsson had recent presentations in institutions such as Kunstverein Göttingen (solo), Kunstverein Frankfurt, Kunstnerens Hus Oslo and Reykjavik Art Museum (solo). He was invited by curator John Bock for the exhibition 'FischGrätenMelkStand' at Temporäre Kunsthalle Berlin. On the 21st of March, he and the Brazilian Producer and actress Marcia Moraes will present the new Performance Installation What Got You Here, Won't get You There in the context of Musikwerke Bildener Künstler at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin.

In Belgium he was invited in 2008 by curator Karolin Tampere for the first exhibition 'Curator Curator #1' at the HISK, Gent. In 2009 he was invited by Luk Lambrecht for the exhibition 'Down to Earth' at CC Strombeek, and in 2010 by Jan Hoet and Stef Van Bellingen for 'Coup de Ville' in Sint-Niklaas.