

HREINN FRIÐFINNSSON

Galerie Nordenhake is pleased to present an exhibition with new and recent works by Icelandic artist Hreinn Friðfinnsson. Friðfinnsson gained prominence as a leading figure of the Icelandic avant-garde after co-founding the artist group SUM in 1965. His conceptual works have a romantic and narrative character that critics have only recently recognised in certain forms of conceptualism of the late 1960s and 1970s and which is widespread in current artistic expressions. Some of his outdoor projects like the *House Project* (1974) or *Five Gates for the South Wind* (1971-72) can be considered as early Land Art.

Hreinn Friðfinnsson's art is rooted in the memories, experiences and at times sagas of his native Iceland and its contrasting landscapes. His works are characterized by an economy of means and precise minimal interventions. Making small additions or changes to the most mundane, insignificant materials he reveals or activates their conceptual potential— identifying the poetic component in what already exists.

In his works the act of seeing is very often connected with the perception of space and nature. The installation *A Woman Resting in the Golden Ratio*, consisting of a photograph and two long mirrors proportioned according to the Golden Ratio, is a play on reflection, perspective, and illusion. The harmoniously composed picture of an Icelandic landscape with a woman looking at a river meandering through it, seems to extend into the gallery space. The river continues as a blue line on the two mirrors whose reflective surfaces conflate the landscape and the surroundings of the viewer.

For Friðfinnsson an image is not self-sufficient but a tool to go beyond its own representative limits. It is essentially an act of thought characterized by poetic and often ironic levity and devoid of intellectual rigidity. In several works in the exhibition the artist evokes the complexity and ambiguity of the idea of space. In one of his works, which sits in one of the corners of the exhibition space a triangular piece of red acrylic glass is placed between three mirrors facing each other, thus creating a visually intriguing illusion of a three-dimensional geometric solid floating in an indefinable space. The mirrors double the image and return our gaze, creating moments of doubt and destabilized orientation. The way Friðfinnsson creates complex illusions evokes not only humble moments of wonder but also conveys profound metaphysical meanings, like ancient legends recalling how a rhyme was born from an echo, or a drawing of the outlines of a shadow.

The artist is presenting his video installation in the showroom on the first floor.

Born in 1943 in Baer Dölum, Iceland, Hreinn Friðfinnsson has been living in Amsterdam since 1971. He has recently had solo exhibitions at: The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art (2012), Bergen Kunstmeuseum and Malmö Konsthall (both 2008); Reykjavik Art Museum and The Serpentine Gallery, London (both 2007); Domaine de Kerguehennec, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Bignan, and Kyoto Art Center (both 2002).

In 2012 he participated in the 30th Sao Paulo Biennial and represented Iceland at the 45th Venice Biennale in 1993. His work was recently featured in the exhibition *Ends of Earth* at Haus der Kunst Munich and MOCA Los Angeles (both 2012) and was recently on view in group exhibitions at Castello di Rivoli, Torino (2010), MARCO Vigo and FRAC Limousin, Limoges (both 2009), Reykjavik Arts Festival (2005), Jeu de Paume, Paris (2004), Kunsthalle Wien and the Carnegie Art Award, (both 2000) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1983). In 2000, the artist was the recipient of the prestigious Ars Fennica prize. Hreinn Friðfinnsson has been exhibiting with Galerie Nordenhake since 1989.

Exhibition period: January 19 – March 2, 2013

Opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11:00 – 18:00

Please contact the gallery for further information and press images

ARTISTS: CHRISTIAN ANDERSSON OLLE BAERTLING MIROSLAW BALKÁ ANNA BARHAM IÑAKI BONILLAS ANN BÖTTCHER GERARD BYRNE JOHN COPLANS SARAH CROWNER JONAS DAHLBERG ANN EDHOLM SPENCER FINCH HREINN FRIDFINNSSON PAUL FÁGERSKIÖLD FELIX GMELIN FRANKA HÖRNSCHEMEYER GUNILLA KLINGBERG EVA LÖFDAHL MEUSER HELEN MIRRA ESKO MÄNNIKKÖ SIROUS NAMAZI WALTER NIEDERMAYR SCOTT OLSON MIKAEL OLSSON MARJETICA POTRČ HÁKAN REHNBERG ULRICH RÜCKRIEM MICHAEL SCHMIDT FLORIAN SLOTAWA LEON TARASEWICZ JOHAN THURFJELL ALAN UGLOW GÜNTER UMBERG NOT VITAL MAGNUS WALLIN STANLEY WHITNEY RÉMY ZAUGG