

Henrik Plenge Jakobsen - I Object
Galerie Patricia Dorfmann, Paris 2009

Henrik Plenge Jakobsen's first solo exhibition at Galerie Patricia Dorfmann titled *I Object* contains a series of quasi-autonomous works – sculptures and Gouache paper works. The title points to the fundamental relation between the 'I' and the object but it also denotes the basic performative utterance of the protest (I object!) – how to 'do things' with words. In that sense, the exhibition is both a strictly formalist investigation of signs and systems as well as a visual diagnosis of the love/hate relationship with omnipresent societal systems – the institution, the organisation, the corporation and so forth.

A veritable flight case serves as the starting point for three sculptures in the exhibition. Inside each of the flight cases in *Autonomy One* and *Autonomy Two* are three, oblong objects made in either turned wood or aluminium. All though abstract in their appearance, each of the singular objects contain different references. The carved, wooden objects with serrated profile, in ash and mahogany, might recall Brancusi's columns, while the shaping of the objects made in aluminium are based on the forthcoming NASA space programme Ares and its paradoxical return to an aesthetic of early space crafts of the 1950s and 60s.

Each of the horizontally positioned, oblong objects inside the flight cases have in themselves the potential of functioning as upright, singular sculptures in their own right. By the same token, the actual case in these flight case sculptures serves both as a protective shield (as in a weapon case or instrument case) and as a valid, sculptural base. This is also true for the third flight case sculpture, *Eight Ball*, whose interior contains a line of crystal glass balls – eight in total, one of which has been thrown into to river Seine prior to the opening of the exhibition.

The exhibition comprises two additional sculptures, both in plaster, referred to by the artist as 'energy sculptures'. In *White Heat* candles and light bulbs provides for the heat and energy, whereas *Orgone* is based on a different kind of energy, orgone, proposed by psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Wilhem Reich in the 1930s. With his specially built boxes, the so called 'orgone accumulators', Reich attempted to concentrate atmospheric orgone, a kind of omnipresent, bioenergetic force, which among other things defines the nature of the libido. In that sense, Plenge Jakobsen's sculpture can be viewed as an object which seems to capture the mass less orgone energy.

Questions of autonomy, singularity, individuality, hierarchy, authority and other issues related to the 'I' and 'the object' finds its most strict shaping in the Gouache works on paper. Here, the artist makes use of a boiled down, tightly constructed visual imagery in black, white and red alluding to corporate logotypes, esoteric symbols and scientific aesthetics, also reflected in titles such as *Double Half Moon, Eye, Solar System, Organisation, and I Object*. The resulting emblematic graphics are striking and resonant, mandalas of contemporary thought.

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The work of Danish conceptual artist Henrik Plenge Jakobsen (b.1967) embodies critical perspectives from the Frankfurt School to Situationism. His artistic vocabulary draws from Formalism, Op- and Pop Art as much as from Fluxus and Conceptualism.