

galerie paul frèches

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NICK LAESSING

First solo show in France

Energiser

EXHIBITION 17 JUNE-18 JULY 2009

OPENING: TUESDAY 16 JUNE, 6-9PM

AND 8PM-MIDNIGHT AT MAINS D'ŒUVRES

Galerie Paul Frèches is delighted to present Nick Laessing's first solo exhibition in France. This exhibition is part of a season dedicated to emerging artists of the British art scene, and will be accompanied by an exhibition of films by young artists from the UK to be shown in Mains d'Œuvres ("For your eyes only", June 16-28). These two exhibitions are curated by Florence Ostende, guest curator of the series of exhibitions "CoExpo".

The work of Nick Laessing starts with his own research and experiments that recreate pioneering scientific discoveries. Whether resulting in a machine or a documentary film, Laessing's investigations all pay tribute to inventions whose principles mirror the utopic aspirations of their times. In 2004, Laessing recreated the prototype of a device for "free energy" invented by John Bedini. In this work entitled *The place of the material world in the universe is that of an exquisitely beautiful precipitate or varied cloud-work in the universal aether*, a complex entanglement of wires, coils and batteries displayed on a transparent plexiglas table reconstructs Bedini's technology. A wheel of magnets charged by a single battery releases a powerful source of energy known as "radiant energy" which is then stored on several batteries. While only one battery supplies power to the system it enables many more to be charged, thus creating, according to Bedini's claims, a durable and endlessly exploitable source of free electrical power. Laessing has continued to develop this device, the last of which is the work *Power Station* 2008.

In his exhibition at the Galerie Paul Frèches, Nick Laessing will present his latest version of the free energy machine entitled *Energiser Experiments, Prototype II (after John Bedini Patent no. 6,545,444)*, 2009 for the first time. Lately Bedini has released additional information about his technology and his work. On a recent trip to a sustainable energy fair in Canton, USA, Laessing was able to witness a rare public presentation of Bedini's inventions. The *Energy Fair* brought together exhibitors and visitors from diverse places and backgrounds to present their individual researches into alternative sources of energy. Among solar panels and domestic insulation stands, and surrounded by magnet coils, wires and batteries, enthusiastic amateurs and professionals shared information on the possibilities of off-grid living. While it is questionable whether anyone has been able to put this technology to practical use, Laessing observes and engages with this idealistic quest, both as an outsider and as a complicit insider, to better understand the idealism driving these individuals and the technology of the seemingly impossible.

Laessing's recent video installation *Excerpts from a diary* (2007) is a portrait of Viktor Grebennikov, a Russian biologist and entomologist who died in 2001. Grebennikov became a figure of reknown and mythological status in Russia when he claimed he had discovered a previously unknown insect specimen which had anti-gravity properties. Using this anti-gravity insect matter, Grebennikov claimed to have built a flying machine apparently capable of reaching such groundbreaking speeds as 25 km per second. Another example of Laessing's work is *Voice Figures* (2007), a performative work which began with his fascination with an account of a device constructed by a singing teacher at the end of the 19th century with which she performed, demonstrating how the vibrations of her own voice could be channeled and transformed into elaborate patterns and shapes, flowers, and most notably landscapes. Laessing's own research and experiments and working with a singer, led to a recreation of this device originally known as the 'Eidophone'. By singing into a tube connected to a latex membrane on which sits a pool of powder or paint, the singer can create complex patterns that appear and disappear depending on the tone of her voice.

"My work revisits forgotten, disregarded and obscure scientific discoveries, investigating the ideological, romantic endeavours and aspirations of scientists and amateur experimenters. This is a kind of quest towards understanding the origins of ideas, and the paradoxes inherent in the meeting of intuitive knowledge or revelation and scientific rationalism. My reconstructions and experiments are extensively researched by careful examination of scientific patents and papers. The resulting works pay homage to the unorthodox minds of individuals that straddle the narrow and obfuscated margins between naiveté and genius." (Nick Laessing)

Nick Laessing (b. 1973, London), lives and works in Berlin. (see CV)

Guest curator: Florence Ostende

Florence Ostende is a curator and art writer based in London and Paris. She has organized the exhibitions "Retracing Exhibitions" (Royal College of Art, London, March 2009), "Les Enfants du Sabbat 10" (Creux de l'Enfer, Thiers, March 2009) and "Argument de la Diagonale" (Bétonsalon, Paris, Summer 2008). She is currently finishing the Curating Contemporary Art program at the Royal College of Art (London) and is working with London-based art writer Coline Milliard on Catalogue, a bi-monthly and web-based contemporary art magazine designed to act as a platform of exchange between the British and French art scenes. The first issue will be available in September 2009 at www.cataloguemagazine.com

CoExpo is a series of exhibitions organized every summer by young curators invited by the gallery. On this occasion, the gallery whose crucial mission is to support new talents, produces or co-produces a solo or group exhibition.

Power Station, 2008

(Work in Progress)

55 x 98 x 18 cm

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