

HREINN FRIDFINNSSON
FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 29, 2009

Galerie Nordenhake is pleased to present an exhibition with new works and elaborations of previous projects by Icelandic artist Hreinn Fridfinnsson. His work could be described as discreet tributes to the poetry of small gestures.

Fridfinnsson gained prominence as a leading figure of the Icelandic avant-garde after co-founding the artist group SUM in 1965. A major retrospective of Fridfinnsson's work, organized by Hans-Ulrich Obrist, documenting his ongoing influence for a younger generation of artists, was on view at the Serpentine Gallery in London and the Reykjavik Art Museum in 2007 and traveled to Bergen Kunstmuseum and the Malmö Konsthall in 2008.

Fridfinnsson's art is rooted in the memories and experiences of his native Iceland and its contrasting landscapes. At times, he echoes the lyricism of a wandering bard, recounting legends, rumours, secrets, and dreams, sometimes telling a story, other times describing a place or an event. All these aspects are embodied by his new photographic series *Second House*. The images are a documentation of a further development of his *House Project* from 1974, an installation inspired by the tale of an eccentric Icelander who built a house inside out.

Fridfinnsson's work can take almost any form: crystal turning to stars; frottage that evokes the artist's own studio; a silvery pencil rubbing of Cezanne's Mont St Victoire. In *Whatever Time We Choose* (1999), for example, the artist creates an installation made out of an undefined number of crystals that recalls an imaginary constellation of stars. Alongside this work Fridfinnsson presents *From Mont Sainte-Victoire* (1998), a series of fifteen frottage works, lovingly tracing the very ground of Cezanne's muse as if he were making a brass rubbing. The same kind of technique has been deployed by the artist in reproducing the visual patterns composing his studio's floor. A pile of these drawing is then gently agitated by two small fans thus allowing the artist to give the illusion of a minimal action and its time. In both works the historically charged technique of the frottage connects the everyday and the magical through the poetic and ironic presence of the artist. The diversity of media, which Fridfinnsson utilizes consistently reflects the artist's complex visual language, each work imbued with simultaneous instances of humour and wonder.

Born in 1943 in Baer Dölum, Iceland, Hreinn Fridfinnsson has been living in Amsterdam since 1971. He has had solo exhibitions at: Malmö Konsthall (2008); Reykjavik Art Museum and Serpentine Gallery, London (both 2007); Domaine de Kerguehennec, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Bignan, and Kyoto Art Center (both 2002). In 1993 he exhibited at the National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik (1993) and represented Iceland at the 45th Venice Biennale. His work has also been featured in group shows including *Material Time/ Work Time/ Life Time*, Reykjavik Arts Festival (2005), *Eblouissement, Jeu de Paume*, Paris (2004), *Norden*, Kunsthalle Wien, the *Carnegie Art Award*, (both 2000), *Sleeping Beauty—Art Now*, Scandinavia Today, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1983). In 2000, the artist was the recipient of the prestigious *Ars Fennica* prize. Hreinn Fridfinnsson has been exhibiting with Galerie Nordenhake since 1989.

Opening: Thursday, February 19, 2009, 17.00 - 20.00

Exhibition period: February 20 - March 29, 2009

Installation views are available after the opening at www.nordenhake.com

Please contact the gallery for further information and press images