

MSSNDCLRCQ
Meessen De Clercq

HREINN FRIDFINNSSON
Between what and what not

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2a Rue de l'Abbaye B 1000 Brussels
meessendeclercq.com

Between what and what not is the largest exhibition to date for **Hreinn FRIDFINNSSON** (b. 1943). By combining old and new works, one of the most fascinating artists of his generation is showing work whose basic "materials" are light, time and space. Highlighting these materials through the ambiguity of the vision, deception of perception and of language as if with the A4 sheet at the entrance of the exhibition marked with the word with a dual meaning *Priceless*. In the right-hand room, the visitor is confronted with a large frame which appears empty but which does in fact contain the phrase *What didn't happen?* which is gradually fading away. This work finds its genesis in a proposal which was never implemented for the Paris Biennale in 1974 and which emphasises the latency of time. What didn't happen 40 years ago, or during the period since then? A wonderful question that resonates in the photographic work *Nocturn II* which shows the interior of a house viewed from the outside. It reveals a subtle link with the five *Atelier sketches* which are spider's webs collected by the artist. Dust is a material disparaged by many but regarded as splendid by certain artists, as shown in *To Light, shadow, dust*. Gold reflects the light as much as black absorbs it in *Source*, a banal cardboard box whose inside is deep black. An echo of that black is the velvet disk placed high on the wall that opens a window into a new, unfathomable space. The contrast between full and empty is found in *Still life* and in *Monument*, the urinal installed up the wall, an obvious reference to the *Fountain* by Duchamp. The most complete illusion appears in *Illustration*, a work composed of three elements that illustrate a mythical house built by Fridfinnsson in 1973 right in the heart of his native Iceland. The magic device creates a hologram of the framework of this house. Fridfinnsson reminds us that intimacy is vast, limitless and that being means living the world and being inhabited by the world. This place is a container open to every possibility. This house is the ideal fortress, the last useless bastion, last resort of dreams and the imaginary world.

There left-hand room is simply composed of a sequence of crystal champagne glasses and pearls showing the first prime numbers (2, 3, 5). These numbers are the primary elements with which all numbers are constructed. Where mathematics joins forces with philosophy as well as aesthetics. *Palace* is another major installation by the artist; consisting of iron mesh, this work repeats the smallest hexagonal shape of the mesh to form a triangular shape bounding an imposing architectural structure. The multiplication of the structure is echoed in the artist's crystal hand, reflected in a mirror in a gesture of offering that is a play on the hollow and the full. Showing items indirectly can also take a more humorous form, with this woman's shoe whose sole is reflected. *Two appointments : once a day, once a night* suggests that every end has its time. Consisting of two small alarm clocks with the time frozen at the same moment, this work shows us the moment when Time has an appointment with these objects. Fridfinnsson often uses an implied rather than explicit language, in a surreptitious, indirect aesthetic. An exhibition without a beginning or end, like a Moebius strip.