

**HOLLYBUSH GARDENS**  
**ISSUE #0**

**A curtain  
of pearls,  
like points,  
defining  
a line and**

**KNUT HENRIK  
HENRIKSEN**

**Hollybush Gardens Issue** will function as a contextualising device that provides information on artists' practices through essays, conversations and images. It will be printed occasionally, linked to specific events and situations, such as an exhibition, performance or presentation at an art fair.

#o is published on the occasion of

**A curtain of pearls, like points,  
defining a line and a plane,  
hung to define a specific volume**

by Knut Henrik Henriksen

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## **Moments of doubt**

**– Sculpture in public spaces**

**by Knut Henrik Henriksen**

Simon Parris

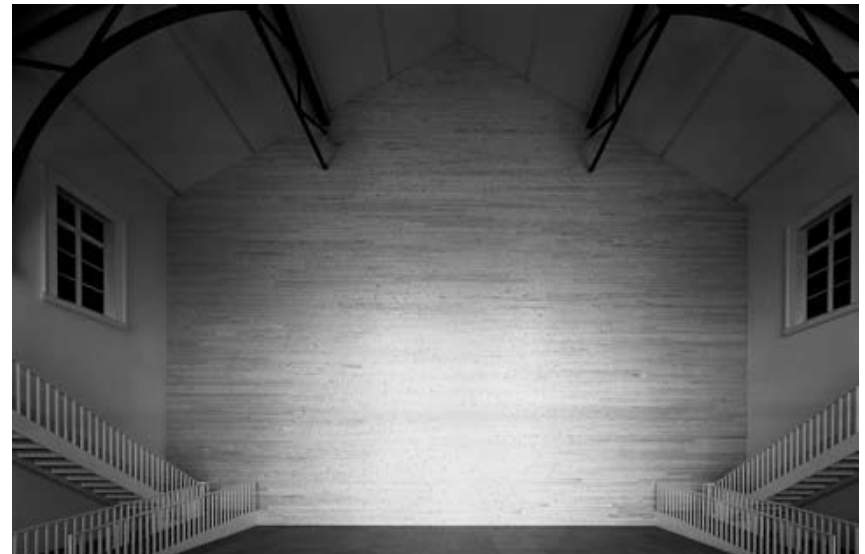
Knut Henrik Henriksen's use of traditional materials and cultural signifiers may allow the viewer a moment of familiarity, but his architectural interventions pay both homage to and lay bare their siting. These are sculptures that draw attention as much to the void, and to that implied or missing, as they do to themselves. There is a modesty in the authorship that forces you to re-consider the function and fabric of the works' location and surroundings.

Henriksen's approach to these 'independent sculptures' is rooted in an existentialistic sense of what he calls an 'architectural doubt', a feeling of unease or discomfort you might experience when walking into a room or building for the first time, a sensation akin to mild motion sickness.

He encountered such a response as he walked into the wide, vaulted entrance hall of the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum for Contemporary Art in Berlin in 2004. The only surviving terminus building in Berlin from the late neoclassical period, it was first converted to be a technical museum

and then again in the early 1990s to become the Museum for Contemporary Art. The resulting, jarring juxtaposition of oriental styles overlaid onto the existing neoclassical architecture was to directly inform his contribution to the exhibition 'Berlin North', a work titled **Architectural Doubts**.

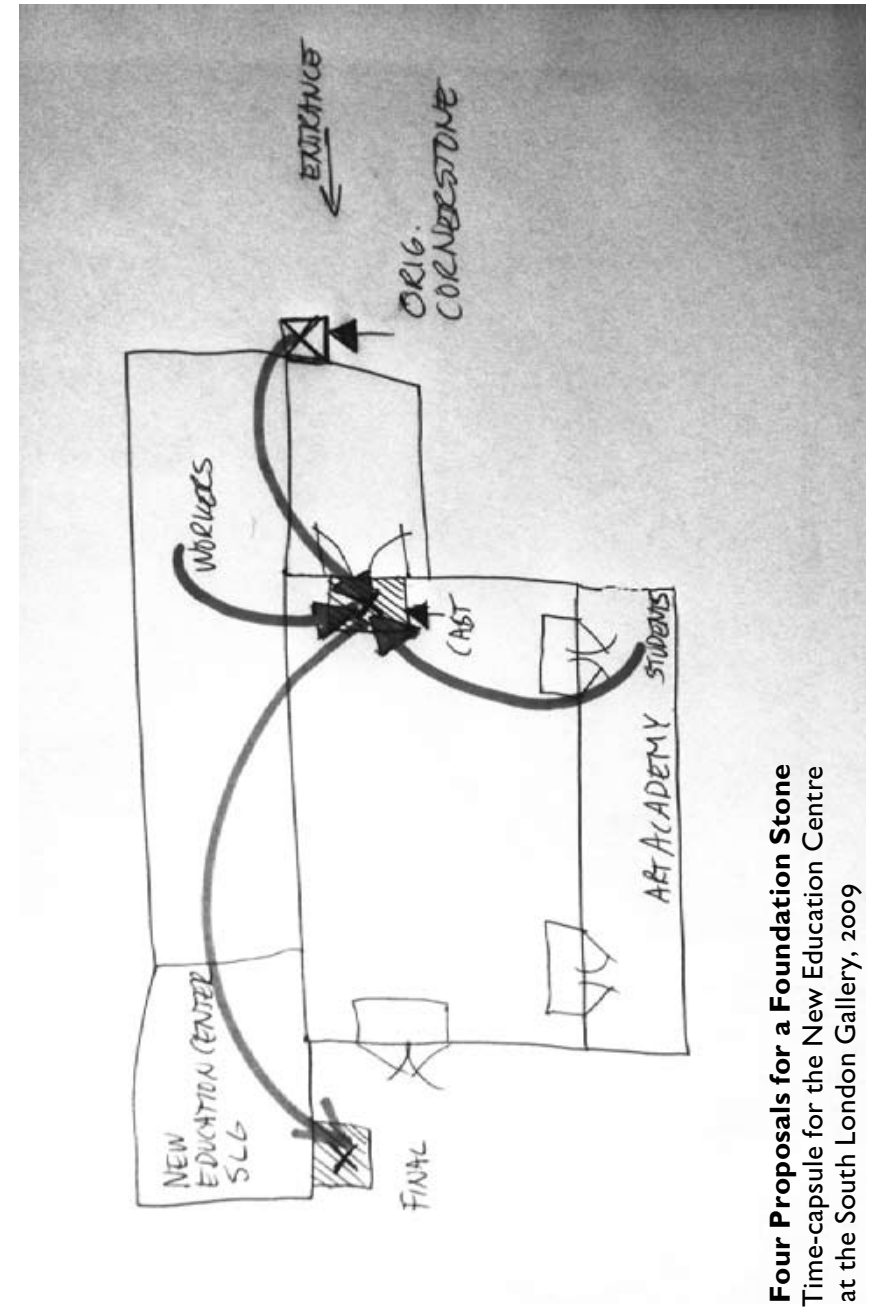
**Architectural Doubts** took the form of an imposing wall, constructed with the familiar Norwegian pine plank of his cultural heritage, spanning floor to ceiling and from side to side. The wall dramatically divided the entrance hall into two sections at a point where the old and new architectural styles meet, on one side classical, the other orientalist. The wall both highlighted and obscured these anomalies from the visitor, who were forced by the intervention to re-negotiate their route through the space. It was only upon arriving on the reverse side of the wall, having walked through another room, that the visitor was able to compare and contrast the two sides. From the front side of the hall, the classical architecture dictated that the top of the Henriksen's wall is steeply pitched with an overall width of eighteen metres and height of fifteen, whilst from the rear, oriental side, it is thirty by thirteen metres, with a gentle top curve indicative of building traditions of the



**Architectural Doubts**, 2004  
Front side: height 18 m, length 15 m, wood  
Back side: height 13 m, length 30 m, wood  
Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin  
Photo: Jens Ziehe

era. Henriksen's affectionate relationship with architectural aberrancies and his interest in the manner in which public spaces have been modified over time, the junctions where old and new intersect, is a reoccurring motivation in his works.

**Four Proposals for a Foundation Stone/ Time-Capsule for the New Education Centre,** Henriksen's contribution to the 2009 exhibition 'Beyond These Walls' at the South London Gallery, similarly took physical form from an architectural quirk he noted as he walked into the gallery – recesses in the floor in front of each of the four doorways leading into the large double-height Victorian gallery space. Anomalies that were determined by the re-flooring to protect an original Walter Crane marquetry panel dating back to the late nineteenth century. As the newly laid floor reached each of the doorways it became necessary for it to slope downwards to pass under the heavy metal doors that remain to this day in the gallery. Henriksen's proposal was to cast these recesses, the point at which the new floor met the old building, in concrete and for the resulting sculptures to act either as symbolic or actual cornerstones for the gallery's new extension, which was due to open in June of 2010.



**Four Proposals for a Foundation Stone**  
Time-capsule for the New Education Centre  
at the South London Gallery, 2009



**Four Proposals for a Foundation Stone**  
Time-capsule for the New Education Centre  
at the South London Gallery, 2009

The South London Gallery's long-standing connection with the local community was also evident in a group of young people taking part in a workshop, in and around the current exhibition during one of his visits. To reflect this aspect of the gallery's programme Henriksen invited students on the sculpture course at neighbouring Camberwell College of Arts to participate in the realisation of his proposal. The relationship was consolidated through a series of experimental workshops to refine casting technique, conducted in consultation with the building contractor responsible for the gallery's new extension.

The workshops took place on the common ground in between the two institutions. A cement mixer provided by the building contractors was set up, and under their initial guidance Henriksen and the group of students began a series of experiments to determine the correct balance required for the mix. This was an opportunity for those involved to both learn and to educate, as there were no certainties within the execution of the project.

In order to protect the gallery skirting, a layer of cellophane was used as a barrier between it and the poured cement, whilst thick plastic sheeting was laid onto the floor to protect the floorboards

themselves. Given the relatively slight depth of the casting area, a trough of several inches at its deepest point against the door, it became clear that it would also be necessary to reinforce the cement using a section of metal grill cut to approximate the arc of the cast.

The Victorian locking mechanisms, located centrally on each set of doors, could not be cast directly during the final session as it were necessary for the cement to dry over a period of several days. Given that the gallery staff needed to come and go within this period, an alternative solution for securing the doors was employed, and the lock mechanisms were cast separately, their moulds then placed in the original positions when it was time to pour the floor recesses. Ladders operated as informal bridges for staff to negotiate to, from and through the room.

Fragments of the buildings original stone foundation, chanced upon by Henriksen during a visit were also incorporated into each of the casts. These pieces of Portland Stone, a material notable for its use in many major public buildings of the late nineteenth century, embodied the gallery's history, re-capturing an earlier period of transition and change into the artist's concrete time capsules. Thus a democratic, 'sculptural ballet' of sorts took

place, with the builders, students and materials as performers. As the works were positioned for the exhibition (they were to be simply pushed a matter of feet from their cast position towards the centre of the room), their angle was naturally skewed by the comparative strength of the students engaged on either side with shifting them.

The mutually respectful working relationship between Henriksen and the sculpture students was apparent throughout the realisation of these works, and was followed up by a studio visit to his workspace in Berlin. A short while after the close of the show one of the four casts fittingly found a permanent home, embedded in the concrete garden path between the extension and Clore studio of the newly expanded South London Gallery.

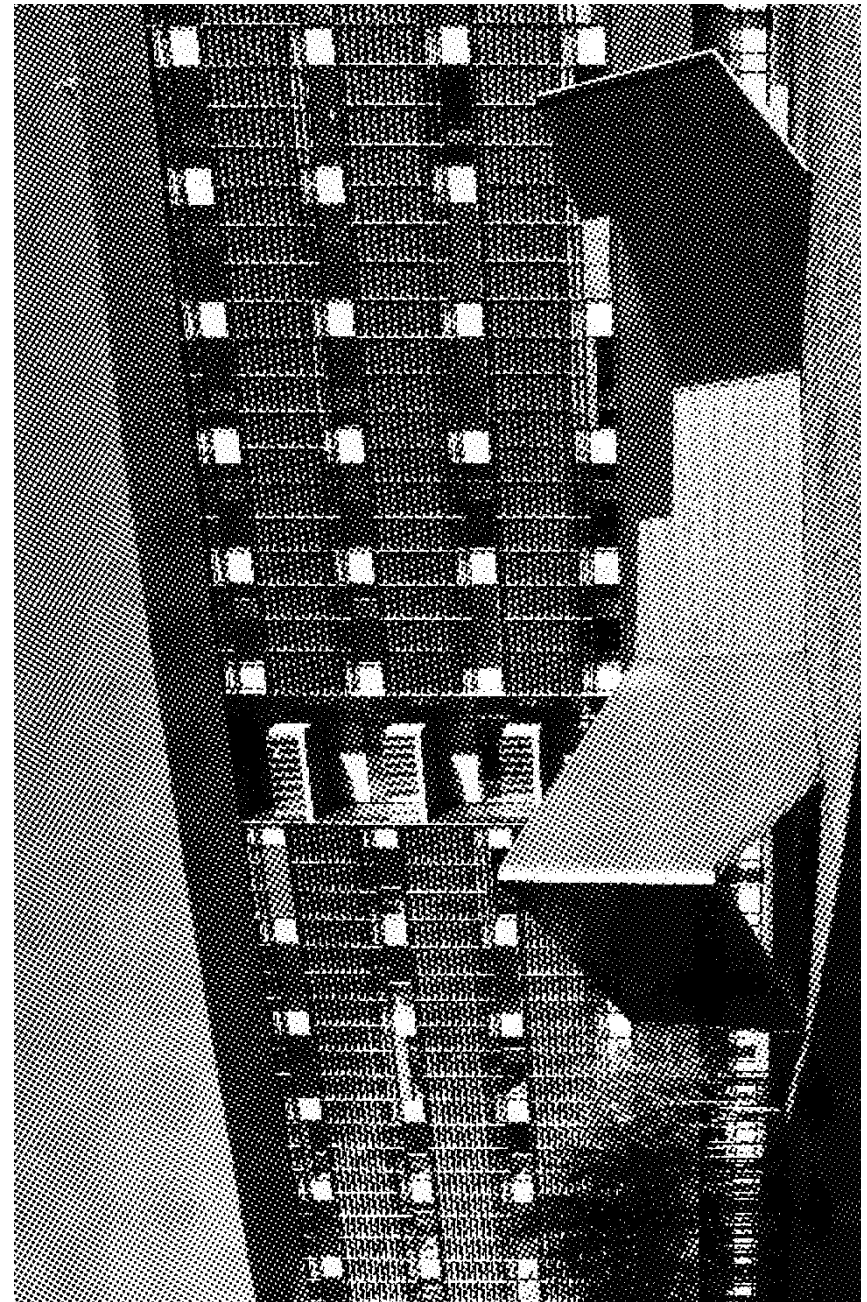
**Façade Charade**, Henriksen's 2008 commission for the grounds of the New Akershus University Hospital in Lørenskog, Oslo, could perhaps be seen as the most extreme example of architectural subversion within his work to date. The city of Lørenskog has the dubious pleasure of being site to one of the most prolific house building programs in the Nordic region and the multi-artist

**Facade Charade**, 2008

Wood, paint, approximately 7,5 × 8 × 17 m

A-HUS University hospital in Akershus, Norway

Photo: Guri Dahl



commission for the hospital grounds coincided with the re-opening of a dramatically expanded building, one designed to 'emphasize feelings of comfort, security and clarity' for the patients. Given a large pre-determined open-air space to propose a permanent work, Henriksen decided that the piece should comment on volume. Taking the familiar, a traditional Norwegian two-floor house, as his model, he casually dismisses its mass by unfolding the four walls, re-orientating the concertina like structure and planting it head-down on the grass.

The bright red colouring of the sculpture was not chosen, as might be expected, with reference to regional housing tradition, but instead for the powerful contrast against the green grass the work

is sited on, and for its ability as a colour to efficiently retain this tension. The decision to deploy colour and deconstruction in Henriksen's manner in **Façade Charade** is predictably at odds with the approach of C.F. Møller, the new hospital's architects. Their decision to select dark-coloured panels for the adult wards was made to enhance the serenity and elegance of the rooms. The wood panels chosen for the children's rooms was to reflect the calm of nature and the outdoors.

With **Façade Charade** Henriksen is not so much exposing an architectural doubt as boldly inserting one where one might not have anticipated finding it, a striking demonstration of the one to one relationship between material and expression in his practice ●



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## Full Circle

Tamsin Dillon

**Full Circle** is a two-part work created especially for King's Cross St. Pancras Underground station commissioned by Art on the Underground. It is an integral part of the station, installed in 2010 and 2011 as part of an upgrade project including two new ticket halls.

The work was conceived to be situated at the end of two new concourses, one for the Northern Line and the other for the Piccadilly line. Each of the sculptures reflect the context of the modernised station and its distinctive architectural style and language. They propose a reconsideration of this site and a re-examination of the way the station has been constructed for the contemporary city it serves.

The starting points for **Full Circle** are the circular end walls of the two concourse tunnels. In both instances, and as is common throughout the Tube, the circle is truncated where it meets the floor, implying a 'lost' segment beneath. This segment has been 'reinstated'; conceptually exhumed by Henriksen and mounted as an integral architectural feature of the wall. In each case, the segment was fabricated by the station upgrade

contractor from the same materials (shot-peened stainless steel in one case, stainless steel grid in the other) as the walls themselves. The result is almost incognito, yet remains elegantly obvious.

The precise positioning of each segment was, for Henriksen, the final in a sequence of decisions informed by the physical and architectural constraints of the two sites. On the Northern line concourse, the curved side of the segment rests on the floor, with one tip leaning against the arc of the tunnel wall. On the Piccadilly line concourse Henriksen has raised up the segment at the same angle as it would be beneath the floor. The flat edge is parallel to the floor, its curved side rests upon it and one tip is up against the tunnel arc. In each case there is an apparent casualness to the segment placement, offering a human gesture in a highly modernised and streamlined functional environment.

The construction and finish of the upgraded King's Cross St. Pancras station uses contemporary, industrial materials including glass, stainless steel and ceramic tile. The apparent simplicity of Henriksen's artwork for the site is borne out of a preciseness of vision that depends on a highly accurate execution to fit the concept and materials of the finishes for the entire station. The works offer a

physical and psychological challenge to the architectural qualities of the concourses and an opportunity to contemplate the site and the station.

An economy of means sits at the heart of Henriksen's practise. Whilst working on his proposal for King's Cross St. Pancras he produced models from card and other ephemeral materials that enabled him to think through the site. These models then became the vehicle through which he presented his ideas. They arrived flat-packed but with a clear visual construction process that enabled them easily to be built as he intended.

Henriksen's practise draws on a preoccupation with architecture and, to some extent, the continuing influence of Modernism on contemporary art and architecture. A European Modernist style is prevalent in London Underground, due in particular to the influence of Frank Pick, Managing Director in the 1930s, and Charles Holden, the architect for many Tube stations at that time. Pick played a key role in the Tube's cultural heritage and the established tradition that art is an integral part of its service. **Full Circle** is the first permanent work to be installed on the network since the 1980s, bringing that tradition up to date and setting a new standard for the future ●



**Full Circle**, 2009  
King's Cross Underground station, commissioned by Art on the Underground  
Photo: Daisy Hutchiso



## **On Knut Henrik Henriksen**

Lisa Panting and Malin Ståhl

**Lisa Panting** Let's begin by thinking about the titles that Knut Henrik Henriksen (KHH) gives his works. **Untitled to Ullhodturdenweirmudgaardgringnirurdrmolnirfenrirlukkilokkibaugimandodrrerinsurtkrinmgernrackinarock<sup>1</sup>** are quite extreme in their difference. The latter taken from James Joyce's **Finnegan's Wake**, is the title of an installation at Kunsthalle Basel in 2007. For Joyce thunder consists of 101 letters and KHH's 'thunder' reciprocates with a 101 rows of wood. His titles often come from literary sources – I am interested in the potential of 'fiction' to activate the conversational aspect of the work – both as a framing device but also as a point of reference. What is the potential of bringing visual and literary language, into communication with one another?

I. "There are ten thunders in the Wake. Each is a cryptogram or codified explanation of the thundering and reverberating consequences of the major technological changes in all human history. When a tribal man hears thunder, he says, 'What did he say that time?', as automatically as we say 'Gesundheit.'"

– Marshall McLuhan ([robotwisdom.com/jaj/fwake/thunder.html](http://robotwisdom.com/jaj/fwake/thunder.html))



**Ullhodturdenweirmudgaardgringnirurdrmolnirfenrirlukkilokkibaugimandodrrerinsurtkrinmgernrackinarock, 2007**  
'Poor Thing', Kunsthalle Basel, Basel

**Malin Ståhl** Using titles that point to particular texts, myths, allegories, might be a method of explaining without explaining, and a way to visualize a concept without illustrating it. With the particular piece you mention, I can imagine that KHH wants to invoke Joyce's 'stream of consciousness'<sup>2</sup> technique used as a method of narrating. Here, Joyce creates a tension between system and chaos, mystery and the quantifiable – a tension that I think KHH is drawn to.

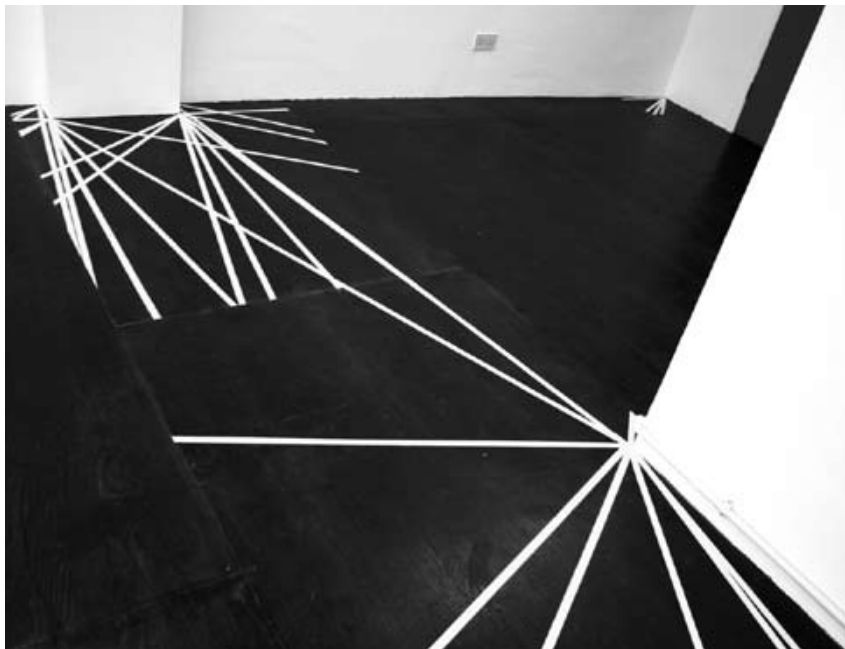
Another interesting title is **Mick Crib, Ashton Coin and Davies Compound meet Mr. Z as a Tableau**, used for an installation at abc, art berlin contemporary, Berlin, 2008 for Sommer & Kohl, Berlin. "Mick", "Aston" and "Davies" are the characters from **The Caretaker**, an absurdist theatre play by Harold Pinter. The family names "Crib", "Coin" and "Compound" were also the titles of three Styrofoam sculptures by Carl Andre, shown at Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York in 1965. "Mr. Z" refers to the z-axis in the coordinate system X,Y and Z. In the old postal building where abc was

2. "Stream-of-consciousness writing is usually regarded as a special form of interior monologue and is characterized by associative leaps in syntax and punctuation that can make the prose difficult to follow." – wikipedia.org



**Mick Crib, Ashton Coin and Davies Compound meet Mr. Z as a Tableau**, 2008  
Installation view at abc, art berlin contemporary, Berlin  
Courtesy Sommer & Kohl, Berlin

held, KHH displayed a four-part installation consisting of two Styrofoam pillars, I-beam made out of cardboard and a historical postal sack filled with Styrofoam pellets, ready to take the imprint of the viewer's body. Through the title KHH sets up a connection to other works made before him – that of Carl Andre and Harold Pinter. It is possible to say something by affirming somebody else's work. This is not the same as using metaphors, but more like making metonymies – associations on a horizontal plane.



**Untitled, 2006**  
Yellow tape on floor, dimensions variable  
Hollybush Gardens, London

If the metaphor creates a vertical relationship, something stands over you and you want to reach it by imitation, the metonymy is structured horizontally, like a chain of contagious associations. This horizontally multiplying structure might provide a method for KHH to move beyond a fixed size or given architectural site. I don't think he likes small rooms! The metonymy spreads like a virus and KHH's work develops in a similar way. His practice holds an open, unfinished system with endless possibilities. I'm thinking of his first exhibition at Hollybush Gardens where there were lines, bright yellow tape on the floor, and one wall was covered in wallpaper that had been exploded, fragmented. Everything was pushing and pulling in different directions, expanding the room, creating tension and a field of energy. Perhaps it is unavoidable to mention here Deleuze and Guattari's *rhizome*.<sup>3</sup>

3. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari use the term "rhizome" to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation. In **A Thousand Plateaus**, they oppose it to an arborescent conception of knowledge, which works with dualist categories and binary choices. A rhizome works with horizontal and trans-species connections, while an arborescent model works with vertical and linear connections. Their use of the "orchid and the wasp" is taken from the biological concept of mutualism, in which two different species interact together to form a multiplicity (i.e. a unity that is multiple in itself). Horizontal gene transfer would also be a good illustration. – wikipedia.org

The rhizome is a root-like structure presented as an alternative to and an escape from the binary structure. Like the metonymy, the rhizome is structured horizontally; it is multiple and spreads through trans-species connections. KHH looks for similar ways to expand the given, where uncertainty and doubt shine and where new possibilities can be formulated.

**LP** In ‘A curtain of pearls, like points, defining a line and a plane, hung to define a specific volume’, the space of the gallery is a central motif, where the idea of space – *spacing* – is a connecting principle that runs through the show. Whilst the sculpture becomes material form, bringing associations, narrative and historicity of that materiality itself – the arrangement of space – making sense of it, is a driving force in the pieces. One of the works, **Sticks to measure volume (Hollybush Gardens) to be rebuilt somewhere else**, is derived from a simple low-fi measuring device – KHH has used the sticks to measure Hollybush Gardens, where colour tape holds the key to the specific volume of this space – the work quantifying not only volume, but bringing attention to our experience of that space as well. The implied action keeps the object

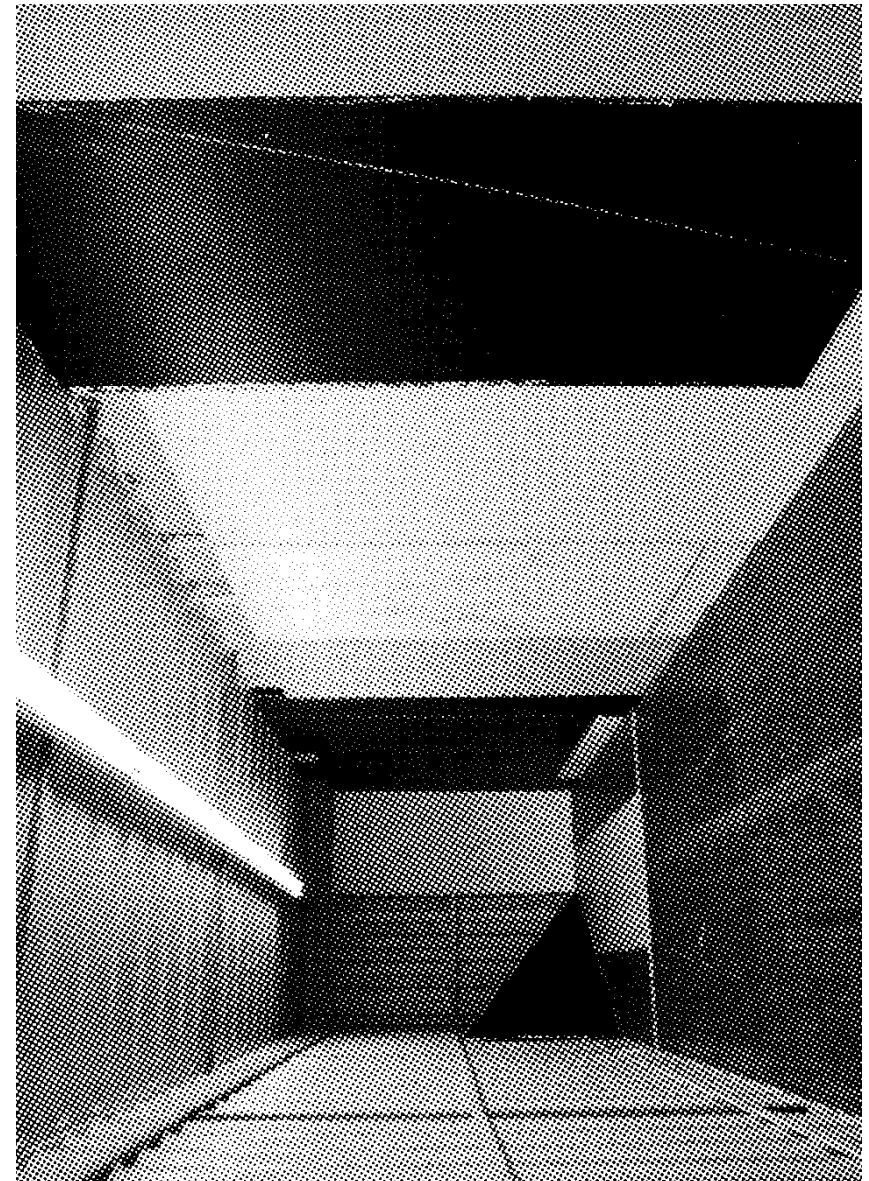


**Sticks to measure volume (Sommer & Kohl)**  
**to be rebuilt somewhere else and other works, 2009**  
Installation view at Sommer & Kohl, Berlin

in motion. This suggestion of an action – *a doing* – gives rise to the image, and suggests a potential, a movement.

This sense of movement and possibility is really key to KHH – the process and the image it forms is mutable. In 2006, KHH’s tape piece connected different points in the room, visually it might have seemed like a formal floor piece made of yellow tape, yet ‘errors’ undermined this reading. The tape responded to the architectural oddities of the gallery – engaging us with an activity of tracing and connecting. It made me think of pacing a room – through that work I ‘saw’ the human impulse to think and walk, quantifying space in relation to my body.

**MS** You mention titles, the importance of site, errors and doubt – these are all elements that KHH works with on a continuous bases, but it makes me think of the piece he made at Art Basel Miami Beach, titled **HLXU 624675 5 45GI**, 2007. Here, the title does not point to something outside of itself, but refers to the very site of itself. The title is the serial number of the shipping container that KHH has turned into a sculptural object. The starting point is a container with a temporary exhibition structure – white painted walls. For this



**HLXU 624675 5 45GI**, 2007  
Shipping container with cut and reorganized temporary exhibition walls,  
Art Basel Miami Beach, Miami





**Fall, 2005**  
Office wall removed, cut and folded  
Green Light Pavilion, Berlin

piece, KHH has advanced a method he first used for **Fall** at the Green Light Pavilion, Berlin, 2005. A wall is cut diagonally and folded outwards to make a three dimensional object. The inside structure of the wall, including yellow insulation, is revealed and becomes part of the sculpture. At Art Basel Miami Beach the walls had been used multiple times and traces from previous exhibitions were visible on the unpainted backs. KHH cut some walls diagonally then moved all the walls from one side to the other – white facing white – leaving the backs on display whilst also revealing the structure of the container.

**LP** Of course the narrative located in materials is important and the significations at work become more and more finely tuned as the objects' life extends through history. In 'A curtain of pearls, like points, defining a line and a plane, hung to define a specific volume' we have two wallpaper drawings hanging from ceiling to floor. Mass-produced wood chip wallpaper is covered in fine charcoal dust that settles into a landscape determined by the formation of the pattern. This wallpaper, by now decidedly out of favour in modern interior design and DIY culture, was designed by Bauhaus as an ingenious solution to covering damaged walls.

Embedded with meaning, we are enabled to invest in the transformation that occurs when the material becomes an art work – where the size and spacing of the wood chip leaps from the prosaic to the aesthetic, whilst the social history of the object adds a human dimension.

**MS** KHH often uses DIY materials, mass-produced and cheap materials. There is no romanticism in this but rather a curiosity of what exists around us, how it is made, what meaning system it proposes and comes out of and so on. Rather than making something from nothing KHH works with what is already there; in this manner he formulates, exposes, stages the given. After Minimalism KHH's work is economic with self-expression and purged of metaphors, it is democratic both in terms of use of material and an equality of parts. However, KHH's sculptures do not lack human touch – there is a dialogue between industrial material and human-hand intervention. KHH's practice also holds an indebtedness to Dadaism – a shared anti-art strain. Like the Dadaists KHH questions the nature of the art

**Untitled**, 2010  
Woodchip wallpaper and charcoal dust  
'An Affirmative Attitude', Hollybush Gardens



object, both materially and as a definitive term. His sculptures often muddle the border of art and non-art. It can be hard to say where some of his sculptures end and the exhibition room begins. If Dadaism stood for some kind of social, political and ethical uprising against establishment such as the established bourgeoisie culture of the industrial age; KHH's is a different battle, a battle against established forms.

**LP** KHH's practice calls for instability and doubt, insecurity and the unstable – defined of course by the governing principles that he locates and stages as you call it – but how steadfast are these parameters? Bergson talked about the fourth dimension, and there are many takes on space beyond that which we 'know'. Maybe KHH's practice evokes a

liberation – and can be seen as an abstraction – a bit like freestyling – where logic breaks down, becoming immaterial – and this immateriality feeds content like anything else. But the abstraction works within a dialectic; a dialectic of abstraction in relation to representation. In representational terms we are dealing with social history that will include the history of the worker, the street – the very fabrication of modernity. I have a sense that process and object are currently making equal demands – there can be no priority of one thing over another. This is what Adorno was articulating in the 1960s and it seems useful to think through again. Producing works that offer different layers of experience and reflection/refraction embedded within the production of artwork, feels pertinent to return to and talk about today ●



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norden



NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

**a plane,  
hung to  
define  
a specific  
volume**