



Hobson's Choice

Paul Hobson, Director of the Contemporary Art Society, recommends his favourite exhibition of the week.



Stuart Brisley - Next Door (the missing subject) at PEER

29 February to 28 April 2012

97 & 99 Hoxton Street, London N1 6QL

Open Wednesday to Saturday, 12 – 6pm

www.peeruk.org

"For those disbelievers who need evidence that art can sometimes be a form of magic, you should pop into the current show at PEER in Hoxton. In May 2010, when the opportunity arose for the tiny gallery to extend into the abandoned shop next door, PEER's Director, Ingrid Swenson not only jumped at the chance but decided to invite acclaimed British artist Stuart Brisley to take up temporary residence for ten days amongst the accumulated detritus left by the previous three occupants – a bookseller, a sign-maker and a dealer in electrical supplies– as the beginning of a new art work, which two years on is now being shown in the space. Not perhaps the most practical approach to a refurbishment and renovation, but who cares when the resulting piece is such a strangely powerful and mysterious site-specific work, layered with meaning and extending out through formal references to Modernism and the ideologies of Romanticism. Entering into the gallery there are a series of quite beautiful photographs taken from outside the shop window looking in as Brisley - hermit-like - randomly constructs and re-orders, dismantles and re-locates heaps of debris within the space. Reflections of trees and passers-by caught in the filthy shop window overlay the makeshift and ever shifting accumulations of jagged, geometric architectures Brisley forms from shop panels and furniture in the space, where flat red, yellow and purple panels and Perspex sheets evoke Modernist legacies. The photographs are shown in the original PEER gallery, and in the room next door – where Brisley's intervention took place two years earlier – a 30 minute film, edited down from the many hours of footage filmed over the ten

day period, is shown in a blacked-out space. The film is quietly unsettling. The camera's eye-view pans across the terrain with mesmeric intensity, heightened by a sound-scape created from the original audio soundtrack where crashing objects, screeching metal and the ambient or accidental noise of Brisley negotiating the terrain is subtly manipulated to intensify the film's brooding sense of ill ease and menace. For those people who think art is rubbish, this could arguably be the show for them. But for those like me, who see the potential for artists to transform the most humble and modest of situations into something magical and affecting, this is absolutely the perfect show!"

Image: Stuart Brisley, *Next Door (the missing subject)*, 2010. Performance at PEER. Photo: Maya Balcioglu. Courtesy the artist and the Gallery.

Let us know what you think at
membership@contemporaryartsociety.org



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