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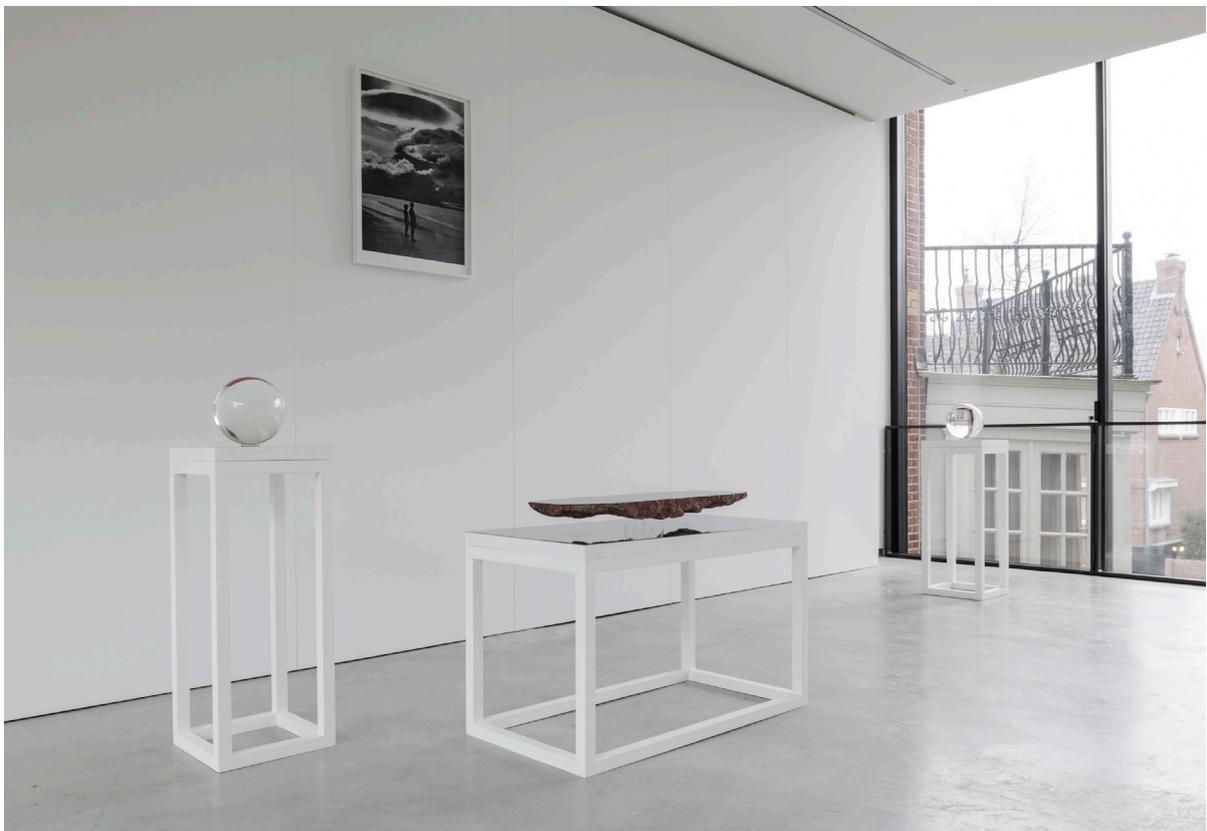


PHOTO: PETER COX

HREINN FRIDFINNSSON, *BY THE OCEAN*, 2018

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AMSTERDAM

OPENING BY HANS ULRICH OBRIST: 3 MARCH, 17—19 HRS
EXHIBITION: 3 MARCH—21 APRIL 2018

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“A Secret” – Cassandra Edlefsen Lasch

Slated at between 2.2 and 2.4 billion years old, and sourced from an iron mine in the American Midwest (more precisely the Biwabik formation of Saint Louis County, Minnesota), a single geological specimen—a stromatolite—rests atop a table. This fossilized witness of one of the earliest life forms on earth is installed alongside a number of other objects, together comprising a single artwork by Hreinn Friðfinnsson presented here within the program of EENWERK, Amsterdam, *By the Ocean* (2018).

As a relic of the existence of microorganisms flourishing in shallow water and known to have produced abundant oxygen at their peak in existence some 1.25 billion years ago, the fossil records a process of accretion, its formation unique to specific conditions of growth and the interaction of a life form at the very surface between aquatic and terrestrial environments. This particular stromatolite, a *Collinia Undosa* dating from the Precambrium era, is a rare red hue due to its high iron content.

Set in relation to the stromatolite: a wall-mounted model of an oxygen molecule with a pair of linked atoms; two crystal balls, one on either side of the stromatolite; and a single framed photograph where two boys stand on the shore of a calm seascape beneath an atmosphere heavy with clouds, two spheres of perspective observing the landscape at large. What becomes apparent in any notation of these elements is the reoccurrences, the parallels: spherical pairs, dynamic partnerships, exchanges of energy.

By the Ocean borrows its title from the black and white photograph by Thorsteinn Josepsson chosen from the book *Icelandic in Pictures* (1943). The artist's selection does not constitute an act of homage, rather a sensitivity to the captured conceptual and cosmic connections inferred. Together, the work's components sample geography (land, sky, sea, mountains); time; gravity; consciousness; myth; fact.

The work of Icelandic artist Hreinn Friðfinnsson draws degrees of separation as potent spaces of communication, of existential exchange, where the attractions and repulsions at play—manifest in the atomic and cosmic nature of the world—formulate the work itself. Perceived as a composite of charged elements read within a conceptual framework *By the Ocean* grants space for not only thinking about these connections but for feeling them, allowing them to be unspoken and simultaneously known and unknown.

For more information please contact:

Julius Vermeulen

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BIOGRAPHY HREINN FRIDFINNSSON

Hreinn Fridfinnsson was born in rural Iceland in 1943 and has lived in Amsterdam for the last 40 years. He represented Iceland at the 45th Venice Biennale in 1993 and in 2000 he received the Ars Fennica Prize. Fridfinnsson has exhibited widely internationally, with solo shows including the Serpentine Gallery London in 2007. Fridfinnsson participated in the group exhibition, *The Imminence of Poetics*, 30th São Paulo Biennial, Sao Paulo, Brazil. He has participated in *Skulptur Projekte – Münster 2017*.

Hreinn's vocabulary, underscored by a delicate sense of humour, encompasses dreams, folklore, doubling and perceptual tricks. By using different media in his research, he utilises an economy of means to evoke a rich panoply of associations.

Fridfinnsson's primary materials are by nature frail or illusory: glass, gold leaf, paper, stones, mirrors and remnants from the every day. One could characterize his artistic attitude as a constructive interpretation of humble things, one which transforms the familiar into the new while also incorporating the very process of transformation into the work.

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PRICE ON REQUEST

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JULIUS VERMEULEN