

ArtReview

Gerry Bibby: Combination Boiler

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By Valentina Bin



Gerry Bibby, Combination Boiler, installation view, The Showroom, 2014. Photo: Daniel Brooke



Gerry Bibby, Combination Boiler, installation view, The Showroom, 2014. Photo: Daniel Brooke



Gerry Bibby, *Mr Stockholm Syndrome, Combination Boiler, The Showroom, 2014*. Photo: Daniel Brooke



This exhibition is part of **How to work together**, the new shared commissioning programme between London non-profit institutions Chisenhale Gallery, Studio Voltaire and The Showroom itself. In consonance with the collaborative ethos of the project, Gerry Bibby has staged a discreet intervention at North London gallery, informed by his 'residency' within the institution before and during the show.

Supported by a pile of pillows, carpets and books, a radiator lies discarded in a corner. The viewer is encouraged to snoop through the worn out notebooks, printouts of texts-in-progress, funding proposals and writings (by Giorgio Agamben, Roland Barthes, Kathy Acker, Guy Hocquenghem and many others), inserted between its fissures like a sort of sculptural filing system. Berlin-based Australian Bibby is eager to pay tribute to his intellectual references while mixing them with private material, such as his birth certificate hidden behind the cover of a notebook. On the opposite side of the room, a cupboard acts as a makeshift plinth for a vase containing wastewater collected from the gallery's radiators.

Along the pre-existing grid-like perimeter of the gallery are hung panels with layered compositions combining blue and silver cutouts with fragments of Bibby's ongoing written work, which is densely woven together with his sculptural practice. During the show, Bibby will work on a manuscript which will be published by the Amsterdam-based performance platform 'If I can't dance I don't want to be part of your revolution'.

Occupying the centre of the room is an installation of white wooden posts and Plexiglas panels, which rest on brick-like objects made with PVA glue embedded with objects such as coins, tickets and receipts. Glued to one of these posts is what could be a cypher for the show as a whole: a printout of the dictionary entry of the word *exposé* ('a public revelation, as of something discreditable') and its declination as the verb 'exposed/exposing'.

Rather than exhibiting something new and external to the context, Bibby's shifting intervention, mostly comprising assemblages of banal found objects from the gallery, aims to expose the pre-existing in a new light, while consciously operating within its material limitations. What the viewer is presented with is a queer (in many senses) text-based, almost anti-show, liberating – through the act of object appropriation and re-functionalisation – the poetry of the gallery's operating structures and detritus; the focus being as much the artist's ongoing creative processes happening behind the scenes of the gallery walls as what's presented within them.

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