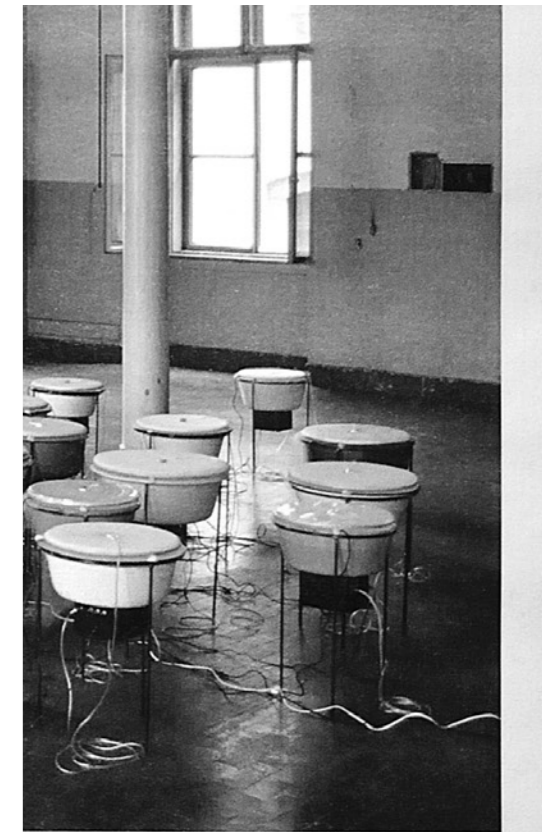


Creamier (book)
 Published by Phaidon, 2010
 Written by Adam Szymczyk



Mist Mouth, 2007. Hole in gallery floor, water, bucket, hose, mist machine, fan. Approx. 20 x 20 x 15 cm



1 x 150 cm

64 *Creamier* Berlin, Germany

Nina Canell

Mist Mouth, 2007. Hole in gallery floor, water, bucket, hose, mist machine, fan. Approx. 20 x 20 x 15 cm

Mutual Leap (After Nollét), 2008. Bones, electric string, electronic fan. Approx. 150 x 150 x 150 cm

And So Invisible (*Excerpt III*) (2009), for example, is a 'sublimated watermelon' placed on a wooden shelf next to a speaker and sound-system components, neon tubes creeping languidly over bricks (*Soft Stone*, 2009) or hanging limply on a femur (*Winter Sun, Sleepy Tongue*, 2007), bones joined in a circle suspended from the ceiling (*Mutual Leap* (After Nollét), 2008), or piled up volcanic stones, lit from within by the red glare of neon (*Bag of Bones*, 2007): Nina Canell's works formalize but at the same time defy the traditional notions of sculpture — a striving for permanence and consistency in gravity — while offering new insights into the repertoire of Minimal art. In a Latinist most famously channelled, Communism equalled boxes placed on the electrification of the country, Canell's works enable a gradual awakening of the potential of dead sculptural matter through the application of electricity and sound waves, as well as through invoking physical changes in states of matter. *To Be Hidden*

Precarious combinations

The New Miner, 2009. Lighting rack, glass, neon, brick, concrete, aluminium, steel, cables. 3000 watts current. Approx. 500 x 100 x 200 cm

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66 *Creamier* Berlin, Germany

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Potential of dead sculptural matter

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Arabesques of cables on the floor, obsolete radio equipment and sound-system components, neon tubes creeping languidly over bricks (*Soft Stone*, 2009) or hanging limply on a femur (*Winter Sun, Sleepy Tongue*, 2007), bones joined in a circle suspended from the ceiling (*Mutual Leap* (After Nollét), 2008), or piled up volcanic stones, lit from within by the red glare of neon (*Bag of Bones*, 2007): Nina Canell's works formalize but at the same time defy the traditional notions of sculpture — a striving for permanence and surrender to gravity — while offering new insights into the repertoire of Minimal art. If, as Lenin once famously claimed, Communism equalled Soviet power plus the electrification of the country, Canell's works enable a gradual awakening of the potential of dead sculptural matter through the application of electricity and sound waves, as well as through invoking physical changes in states of matter. *To Be Hidden*

And So Invisible (21000 Hz) (2009), for example, is a 'sublimated watermelon' placed on a wooden shelf next to a speaker and generator of waveforms. In another piece, *Sleep Machine* (2008), a stream of air from a small electric fan fixes a plastic bag to the gallery wall. *Mist Mouth* (2007) is a cloud of steam vaporizing through a hole in the floor.

Canell employs outmoded technical equipment and found objects in her characteristically unassuming low-tech installations. Viewers are invited to witness the ephemeral events in sculpture rather than merely to acknowledge the presence of solid forms. In language, this intermediary caught-in-the-act state of things has an equivalent in poetry, and indeed, Canell's titles are similar to fragments of poems. The dream-like narrative situations that she devises reveal their affinity to language games and literature, while the formal vocabulary is that of the various traditions of modern sculpture.

Precarious combinations

The New Miner

Endless Column (*Alternating Current for Twelve Window Fans*) (2009), installed at Konrad Fischer Gallery, points at the avant-garde and mystical origins of Minimalism, conflating a title borrowed from Constantin Brancusi with a structure reminiscent of Donald Judd's stacks. But instead of consisting of twelve galvanized iron boxes attached to the wall, as in Judd's *Untitled (Stack)* of 1967, Canell's work comprises twelve standard-size window fans that produce alternating wind currents and seem to hover above each other in a column extending from floor to ceiling.

Canell juxtaposes man-made and natural things in precarious combinations that point at a state of instability and originate from the contingency inherent to our existence. The basic impulse animating her work seems at least twofold: on the one hand, one might think of Eva Hesse introducing the 'weak' logic of the body into the rigid economy of Minimal art. On the other hand, the performative and temporal components of Canell's practice may be inspired by Bas Jan Ader's refutation of Conceptual art's scholarly stringency in favour of highly personal, narrative and poetic works.

1. 25 x 43 x 15 cm