

Nina Canell

Perpetuum Mobile (40 kg), 2009–2010

Mixed media, dimensions variable
Courtesy Konrad Fischer Galerie, Mother's Tankstation & Galerie Barbara Wien
New commission for Tate Liverpool and Liverpool Biennial 2010, *Touched*

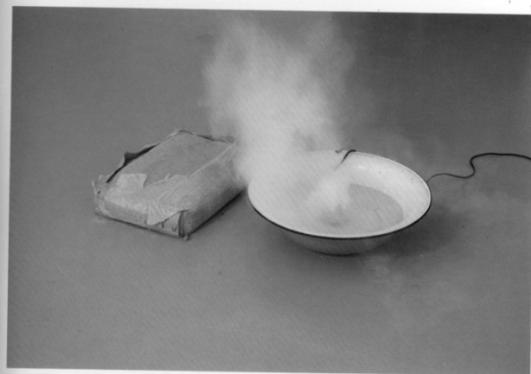
The work of Swedish artist Nina Canell explores the relationship between humans, objects and events, whereby the parameters of material phenomena might be articulated. Her installations are carefully choreographed to create seemingly casual sculptural happenings, which harness the properties and elusive energies inherent, for instance, in sound, gas and water – revealing intimate bonds in our existing as well as fictive surroundings. Incremental shifts in frequency, radiation and movement are often exposed in the contingent 'nothingness' between us and that which we perceive, thus suggesting alternative readings of what might be regarded as invisible or imperceptible.

For *Touched*, Canell uses water, a recurring element in her work which also references Liverpool's position as a seaport. Taking its cue from the last musical passage in Gustav Holst's composition '*Neptune the Mystic*' from his *Planets* suite (in which Holst conceived of what is often described as the first 'fade-out' in music), Canell presents a perfectly static object in which she has recorded an imaginative descending movement by capturing the fluctuating depths of the River Mersey

with an oceanographic 'Nansen Bottle'. The act of waning or giving way – to grow duller and dimmer until something is completely washed out – thus leaps from the pages of a musical score and plunges into a quiet underwater event. In some ways the transparency of the water defies visible distinction, thus allowing the precisely measured action to open the mind's eye in attempt to define the logic of its strata. Such skewing of the senses into the prose-like realm is a typical gesture in Canell's work, which often seeks to address a personal position to physical phenomena.

A community of objects and happenings accompanies the work, which further explores the link between the gallery space and the outside world in a second marine endeavour. This work relies on chance transmissions from a buoy on the River Mersey, which records the acoustic topography of the water with a hydrophone, to a radio receiver in the gallery space. Thus, radio and water waves establish a symbiotic coexistence, establishing yet another alternating point in Canell's fluctuating geometry.

Peter Gorschlüter



Supported by



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