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PSM

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Øystein Aasan
whatnot, goahead, wideawake

Opening: Friday, October 24, 2008, 6 - 9 pm
Opening times: Wednesday – Saturday 12 – 6 pm
Duration of the exhibition: October 25 – December 13, 2008

Øystein Aasan lives and works in his own private archive, which consists of words, thoughts, books and pictures. Scriptures and texts of world literature as well as those of unknown authors lead him to new forms of sculptures and collages. Photos by anonymous photographers, magazines of long passed eras or documentations of remarkable findings of forgotten scientists also form new contents.

In 1951, the French politician and author André Malraux defined the idea of a museum without walls. For Malraux, such an imaginary museum is the collection of reproductions in the form of books or archives that in theory allows simultaneous reading of all works of art. Øystein Aasan took that idea of such an overall museum and created the archive of *Never ending Memory* in 2006. In order to enable simultaneous reading of all his collected pictures, his realized works and his drafts, he built a multiangular shelf construction and sorted index cards into the compartments. The architectural design allows an indefinite extension in height and therefore complies with one of the three rules that the archive is subject to: 1. It will never be finished. 2. It can never be shown. 3. It can never be sold.

Pursuant to the second rule, visitors of the PSM exhibition can only see the *Never ending Archive* when they take up Øystein Aasan's public invitation to come visit him in his studio during the course of the exhibition. The proximity of PSM and Aasan's studio makes this exceptional situation possible.

Under the title *Proliferation no. 10-18*, visitors at PSM can see the extension of an ever growing series of sculptures. Glass negatives of the 1880s to the 1930s form the basis of each sculpture that Aasan has collected from the archives of art academies and art collections.

Apart from the sculptures, Aasan also shows a group of new collages as well as sculptural furniture. All works have in common that they require people to look at them actively. Optical illusions such as the effect of reflections or the raster contortion of images require concentration when looking at the work. You not only have to walk around the sculptures, but also have to look at them from various heights - the purpose of the sculptural furniture. Using the furniture enables the visitor to look at his own reflection in the surface mirror, whose slow transformation towards antireflection is, however, forwarded with every use.

The title of the exhibition quotes three portmanteaux of the Irish author James Joyce from his work *Finnegans Wake* (1923-39), which designate the three benches of the sculptural furniture with their multilevel meaning and actively make the person sitting on them think and reflect.

Øystein Aasan is born 1977 in Kristiansand, Norway. He lives and works in Berlin.