

THE SOAP FACTORY

514 2nd Street SE

September 7, 2013–November 3, 2013



Jess Hirsch, *Reikiwave*, 2013, microwave, pegboard, popcorn, dimensions variable

The Soap Factory's Minnesota biennials function less as sweeping state-of-the-arts surveys than as excuses to highlight work in a range of contemporary practices by artists from across the state. The third biennial—curated by John Marks and David Petersen, former coproprietors of the engaging gallery Art of This—has been titled with just three commas.

The curators' focus on inclusivity is most evident in the space's first gallery, where twenty-seven artists representing various disciplines were invited by Emily Gastineau to participate in her piece *Art is Easy in 2014*, 2013. These artists use a raised platform situated near the back of the room as a working space to develop their own projects on their own schedules. In this manner, the artists' processes become Gastineau's result.

Further in, the show engrosses all the senses. Regarding smell and taste, Jess Hirsch's *Reikiwave*, 2013, consists of a microwave oven and bags of popcorn, which viewers are allowed to cook and consume. Andrew Mazorol and Tynan Kerr's *7-Sided Room with Painted Floor*, 2013, takes the form of a raised hut decorated with faux primitive artifacts. Inside the shrine-like abode, an electric organ produces a sustained eerie chord, suggesting a mysterious religious ritual in progress. The show even sardonically applauds itself via Nate Young's *Untitled (Soul Clap No. 1)*, 2013, a small gold speaker embedded in a wall at the very back of the final gallery that emits the steady echo of hands clapping. (Young's partner piece, *Untitled [Soul Clap No. 2]*, 2013, appears near the gallery entrance and consists of a silent video of clapping hands.) This interest in the disembodied suits the decommissioned industrial space and its inhabiting show that presents the state's contemporary art scene as, happily, a work in progress.

— Jay Gabler

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