

Nina Beier

*JOBS*

31. 3. – 13. 5. 2023

Modern mornings begin with a certain amount of vanity. And the vain ones are considered shallow or dumb, straight up sinful by some. Yet the professional human being usually has a ritual urge to conduct some 7AM self-polishing before launching a day of earnings. Busy coffees ending in corners of mouths and then a graceful commute through a city shaped to bring capable people joy. Stopping, getting off, finally arriving at the playground/church/life sentence/gym formerly known as: the office.

Which is more a human destiny: growing hair or getting rid of it. Several millennia, seemingly, before so-called civilization, face hair was trimmed with accessible tools. Shells and rocks sharpened and used to beautify the bearded. Probably a matter of practicality, too (just like any style choice is balancing between pretty and functional), but this inevitable desire to groom could be a corner stone of a homo sapiens lifestyle: self-contained individuals eventually becoming religious, eventually becoming bourgeois, eventually becoming yuppie citizens. Hair growth is the closest we get to animals and forests, hair removal is the closest we get to dolls. Those with hairy cheeks can nurture their own little gardens: well-groomed symmetric ornaments like furry petals adorning the mouth/covering the holes. They easily become pieces of facial architecture that signals 'man' in ways where it's also a costume. Are costumes the opposite of nature. Are beards beards without a face.

Cultivating the ground that a human scalp is, harvesting its carefully monitored hair, selling it for artificial purposes: that is an industry. People disguising themselves with other people's hair in order to entertain audiences: that is an industry. Hopefully, a person's professional appearance isn't proportional to their degree of grooming, but it could be. Wear an exquisitely maintained fake beard and look competent. When hair is removed from the body that grew it, it kind of stops being hair and starts being trash or theater. You would think of hair applied with glue to an upper lip like a prop, a symbol rather than a beard, and this is essential: for centuries beard-owners have shaved their way into a consensus-civilianism destined to end in fiction. Decoration and fiction seem codependent, but fiction doesn't necessarily equal fake. Or maybe fake is just the insulted/know-it-all way of saying fiction. A highly fictive circle of people surrounds you, so opaque that only a face feature suggests their presence. Portraits of a therapeutic support group, potential danger, unapologetic law making. A distant relative peacefully forced into the yearly Santa duty. Coming together in an almost Victorian frieze of quiet desire, these guys are hungry and welcoming. They're hung low but that doesn't compromise their flawless trimming. Contemporary hair needs care.

If mornings are for hurrying, nights are for sitting down. First you wake up, then some moving around for different purposes, then bringing home earnings (mouths to feed), and finally going down, resting. Looking presentable through it all. A job is always repetition and prior to a job is the urgent need for it and after a job comes exhaustion. Baby. This day ends with another stinging sunset and red light will be showering those who work now.

– Nanna Friis

Nina Beier (b. 1975 DK, based in Copenhagen and Berlin)

Nina Beier works with found objects, things that exist in the world, whose value has been shaped collectively across different time periods, generations or global realities. Hybrid and unstable, her selected motifs are elastic, forever mutating, mingling, or reverberating, slipping in and out of meaning or visibility, in a continuous state of transformation. Beier's work digs into cultural codes that are particularly layered and contradictory, uncovering the space between the intention, production, distribution, trading and use of her selected objects.

Beier has shown internationally for the past decade and her work has been featured in major international exhibitions including the Lyon Biennale, France; the Busan Biennale, Korea (both 2022); the São Paulo Bienal, Brazil; Glasgow International, Scotland (both 2021); the Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art, Latvia (2020); 20th Sydney Biennale, Australia (2016); and Performa, New York (2015). Her work has been included in exhibitions at major institutions including the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2022); the High Museum of Art, Atlanta (2019); YUZ Museum, Shanghai; Kunsthaus Zürich, (both 2018); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2016); KW Institute For Contemporary Art, Berlin (2015); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2014 and 2013); Tate Modern, London (2012 and 2007); Kunsthalle Zürich (2009); Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2008); and Hayward Gallery, London (2008). Her fountain *Women & Children* is currently on view at The High Line, New York and her installation of *Guardians* can be seen on the outdoor Pista at Pinacoteca Agnelli, Turin. Upcoming solo exhibitions include Haus am Waldsee, Berlin; Art Sonje, Seoul (both w. Bob Kil in 2023) and upcoming group shows include MUDAM, Luxemburg and Kunsthalle Vienna (both 2023).

### List of works

#### Main space:

*Parts*, 2023

11 real hair beards

Dimensions variable

#### Smaller space:

*Parts*, 2023

9 real hair beards

Dimensions variable

#### Smallest space:

*Parts*, 2023

5 real hair beards

Dimensions variable

