

From September 1st, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen is presenting six works of art by Matias Faldbakken (b. Denmark, 1973), an artist who is currently commanding increasing attention on the international contemporary art scene. Faldbakken is renowned for his radical, provocative attacks on society and the art world. In thousands of ways his work pronounces a resounding ‘no’: he destroys and provokes, but at the same time he recognises that he irrevocably belongs to the society to which he is saying ‘no’. In Rotterdam he is showing a sculpture composed of a block of lockers laced in with coloured straps and a framed plastic bag that he has set about with marker pen. These objects are inevitably labelled as ‘art’ because of their place in the exhibition.

‘My work plays a lot with gallery conventions ... I think objects gain a lot but also lose a lot by becoming art,’ Faldbakken explains. ‘Because art is the absolute luxury good, the items really serve the most abstract function but collectors are still willing to pay high prices for them. And in that sense it gives an image to the absurdity of capital.’

‘Everything around us can be art,’ according to art collector Bert Kreuk. ‘The ideas about and interpretations of objects determine whether we elevate the everyday to art. In my opinion the works by Matias Faldbakken possess the qualities to elicit this discussion. This makes his work especially intriguing and exciting for me.’

### **Contemporary society as an empty container**

Matias Faldbakken’s works arouse a certain unease because of Faldbakken’s destructive approach, yet at the same time they are seductive for their insinuative combinations of popular culture and minimalism. At Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen he is presenting several works from his ‘container series’, including Film Cans, Everted Jerry Cans and Locker Sculpture. These works seem to allude to the emptiness of Western society: sometimes by turning everyday objects inside out or squeezing them empty, on other occasions by covering an object with an extra layer. For example, the empty film cans in Film Cans are spray-painted in chrome. By indulging his vandalism on the cans with chrome paint, Faldbakken literally superimposes a layer of all-encrusting glamour over the film industry’s vacuity.

### **Matias Faldbakken**

Faldbakken is a Norwegian author and artist who was born in Hobro, Denmark. He exhibits his work throughout Europe. In 2005 he represented Norway at the Venice Biennale and his installation Book Sculpture is currently on show at Documenta 13 in Kassel. In early 2012 he staged a solo exhibition at the Office for Contemporary Art Norway. His literary work includes The CockaHOLA

Company (2001), Macht und Rebel (2002) and Unfun (2008), the three parts of his 'Scandinavian Misanthropy' trilogy.

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