

James Beckett - The Sceptical Structures of Max

The Sceptical Structures of Max by Zimbabwean born and Amsterdam based artist James Beckett instigates a rudimentary examination of our built world to tease out ways in which industrial production is the result of and subsequently influences our behaviour.

The exhibition mines Beckett's skill of compounding study with material use in intensively diligent yet open ended ways and that leads to new pathways in the language of exhibition presentation. Yet despite the former, at the core of Beckett's exhibition is something mundanely normal: chipboard. Punctuating the exhibition are a number of extended captions, mimicking information tropes synonymous with cultural history museums, and through them we learn of Max Himmelheber, the mastermind of chipboard.

Himmelheber's innovations contribute to an ongoing and ever prosperous yet cautionary tale of industrial production, both reflected and refracted in Beckett's works that salvage chipboard from the streets. In their formality – including shape, volume and composition – the works are as much sculptural as they are painterly, with their diversions from wall to floor. The works' material employment, which deal with aspects of ground and form, house publications and artefacts, including a number of chipboard samples drawn from the Max Himmelheber-Stiftung.

As with a number of Beckett's previous works, the installation delicately treads the line between revelation and complication, unearthing a wide net of potential uses and misuses of invention and industry, and their affect and effect on our contemporary society.

- Adam Carr, Curator and Writer