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Giver of form

Aldo Bakker went deep in the Libby Sellers gallery's archive to (re)discover some of the pieces commissioned, in order to create conversations, connections and juxtapositions among them all.

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It is always so refreshing to walk into Libby Sellers' Gallery in central London, as it happened to me again in the occasion of her current show, "Spaces In Between", opened during Frieze week and curated by designer Aldo Bakker. Visiting the exhibition I was suddenly surrounded by an extremely subtle atmosphere of a delicate and a rare sense of harmony.



↑ Top: Formafantasma, Fendi Bell Lights, Craftica. Above: Aldo Bakker, Pose bench, Solid walnut wood, 2011. Photo Erik and Petra Hesmerg

Bakker went deep in the gallery's archive to (re)discover and then select some of the pieces commissioned by Sellers since the first opening and investigate the pieces in order to create conversations, connections and juxtapositions among them all. It is a story of balance and dialogue, of counterpoints and concurrences: the works by the Dutch designer developed a silent conversation with the productions of designers such as Peter Marigold, Formafantasma, Max Lamb, Julia Lohmann, Jonathan Muecke, and Lex Pott.



The exhibition turns out to be a game of invisible relationships: Aldo Bakker's *Pose* bench in suave and impeccable walnut wood opens a dialogue with Julia Lohmann & Gero Grundmann *Tidal Ossuary 3A* small vase (2009-2010), a combination of resin, sterling silver applied on a real, discarded natural bone found near riversides, where the precious element, the silver act as outrigger: "there is a similarity between the colors and the natural materials as time has played an important role in informing these qualities", adds Bakker.



His lacquered table *Le Lac* from 2007 is a beautifully refined and polished surface with the tones of the ocean is presented in contrast with Peter Marigold row-edged *Wooden Table Green 2 (2013)* in jesmonite and steel, and the *Wooden Vases A and B* in cast bronze (2011). Both these works come from an obsessive transformation and almost endless activities towards the piece born from a long and thought process of several repeated layers of labor: a replication of actions, for Bakker very calculated and intended ones while for Marigold instant and spontaneous, delivering two completely different results; all actions here are marked to hidden histories of Beller's piece as they are no longer visible but incorporated in the object itself.



↑ "Spaces in between", Gallery Libby Sellers, London. Photo Gideon Hart

The relationship between Bakker's solid spade copper pieces such as a the *Copper Soy Souce* which looks like Aladdin mantle lamp, the *Mixing Bawl* with an uncommon handle and the twisting *Watering Can* (all 2009-2010) and the Jonathan Muecke *Step Stool* from 2011 is about "how form does not follow function", comments Sellers, "but are still able to charm ourselves for its unexpected poetry." Max Lamb's *Scrap Poly Chair* (2011), in milk white rough expanded polystyrene and rubber, murmured to a curator's wooden elm chair with only tree legs as the fourth one it is used as a backrest.

Why using four if you can make it with three? Impossible not being delighted by the small *Salt Seller* in silver and gold plating (2007) which hides the grains inside the handle till you move it, along with the *Silver Oil Can* (2005) and the *Silver Pouser* which, again, when moved downward, allows liquid to double its track in the two golden rivers.



↑ "Spaces In between", Gallery Libby Sellers, London. Photo Gideon Hart

As the gallerist explained to us, "contemplation and communication are at the heart of Bakker's practice; his choices confirms his position as an arbiter of materials." His production in wood, stone, metal, glass and ceramic are outstanding for the sophisticated and refined work. It is a story of details. It comes with no surprise that also this exhibition has a strong feeling of congruence as per Libby Sellers' past experience in museums, her sensitive, profound and passionate approach to design and deep curatorial expertise.



↑ "Spaces In between", Gallery Libby Sellers, London. Photo Gideon Hart

At the gallery is still visible the *Copper Mirror Series*, a project by Norwegian-born and London-based Amy Hunting & Oscar Narud comprising beautifully made self-standing round mirrors in copper and mild steel supported (and backed) by a 70 kg piece of granite; the choice of the stone refers to Norway's rich cultural heritage as in last century the Scandinavian country was strong in mine activities and ore extraction playing a striking point for its economy. Once again young, inventive designers for an enlightened gallery program: we look forward to welcoming Anton Alvarez exhibition, scheduled to open in spring 2014.

SPACES IN BETWEEN

Curated by Aldo Bakker

15 October – 15 December 2013



↑ "Spaces in between", Gallery Libby Sellers, London. Photo Gideon Hart

Until 14 December 2013

Spaces in between

curated by Aldo Bakker

[Gallery Libby Sellers](#)

41-42 Berners Street, London