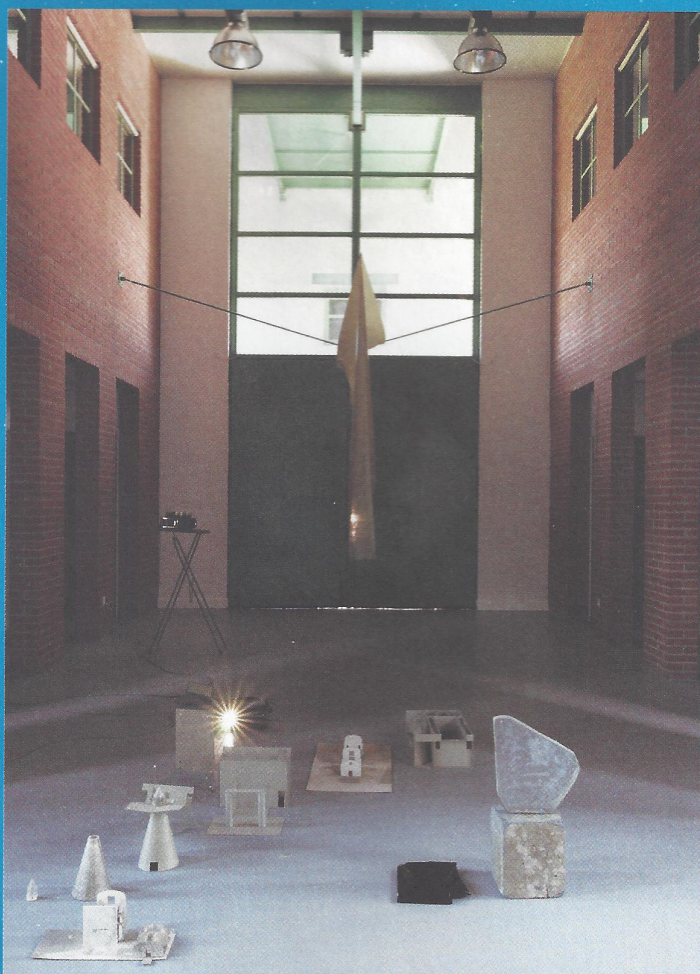


**Magnús Logi Kristinsson**  
 (see *Sequences VI*)  
*Sculpture*, 2008/2013,  
 performance, pedestal, acrylic  
 wall paint. Photo: Oliver Basciano

**Sequences VI:  
 Real Time  
 Art Festival**



**Ian Kjaer**  
*A.R. Petit Théâtre*, 2013  
 (installation view), paper,  
 Plexiglas, cellular concrete,  
 acrylic on taffetas, cardboard,  
 wood, metal. Photo: Aurélien  
 Mole. Courtesy Allison Jacques  
 Gallery, London, and Maroelle  
 Alix, Paris

*Sequences VI: Real Time Art Festival*  
 Various venues, Reykjavik  
 5-14 April

In Samuel Beckett's *The Unnamable* (1953) there's a short, desperate line uttered by its anonymous protagonist: 'I can't go on, I'll go on.' That brief pause before the dichotomous resolution emphasises the sentence's central concern: the unstoppable nature of time. Temporality, time passing, and – by logical extension – the irrevocable end of a life lived are the themes underlying Markús Þór Andrésson's curation of the ten-day 'real time art festival', *Sequences* (est. 2006). But if this all sounds a bit heavy, you'll be relieved to know that Andrésson's chosen artists address the themes with a distinctly Northern European sense of absurdity and grimy humour.

Gretar Reynisson's retrospective *Decade* – the largest show of the event – sets the tone. In it, Reynisson portrays everyday life as a repetitious endurance test through various collections of objects used during a set period. For example *60 Glasses, One a Day* (2003) is a table displaying all the glasses the artist drank out of in that time, each annotated in marker pen on the rim with the date it was used. *52 Shirts, One a Week* demonstrates a similar level of attentive hoarding. In a separate room there's a vitrine with ten piles of photographs, each documenting various mundane facets of everyday life – titles include



*Lights* (2006), *Hallways-In* (2004) and *Windows Out* (2003) – collected and collated to become oddly beautiful and sad in equal measure.

There's no beauty, but perhaps some sort of grim poetry, to Curver Thoroddsen's similarly retentive documentation project, *The Fine and Delicate Art of Archival Processing* (2011). In a pitch-black, low-ceilinged cellar across town, the artist subjects his audience to an audio recording of all his defecations over a month. It's gross listening – a horrible project, really – yet simultaneously, like Reynisson's work, it gives a comforting familiarity to the messiness of life. We eat; we shit; time passes.

Emily Wardill's 76-minute film, *Game Keepers Without Game* (2009), which tells the story of a girl in social care whose mental health issues and aggression reach a devastating crescendo, offers a converse depiction of drama and tragedy. What would be a run-of-the-mill (though nonetheless exhausting) kitchen-sink drama is nicely skewed, however, by the action playing out before an antirealist white studio backdrop. This has the effect of abstracting and universalising the characters' experiences, making them feel brutally resonant. Trauma is also the central facet of *Yes, Angel* (2011), Aleesa Cohene's evocative cinematic collage of movie clips, which reduce various characters to telling body language and facial tics. Appropriating these images, the artist uses narration to superimpose a new narrative upon them, addressing the AIDS crisis and a sense of queer collective identity, its disintegration and (perhaps) mutating reemergence. It's sharply perceptive stuff.

One of the highlights of the festival proved to be the work of Magnús Logi Kristinsson, whose performances are all about endurance. Of the two I was in town to catch (there were another three), one saw Kristinsson stuck in a box; the artist's suited-and-booted leg stuck out from one appropriately sized hole in the front of his white-painted wooden container, an arm from another. For the other performance, the artist caked his arm in white paint and rested it on a pedestal in a gallery of the Einar Jónsson Museum. The work had the tragicomic quality of clowning, objectifying the artist's body and drawing attention to its physical limits. Encapsulating Andrésen's largely successful curatorial meditation on the prologue to what Erasmus termed the 'terminus that yields to no one', Kristinsson's work reminds us of the body's role as arbiter of our time spent living.

OLIVER BASCIANO

Ian Kiaer

**Ian Kiaer**  
**Centre International d'Art et du Paysage,**  
**Île de Vassivière**  
**14 April – 23 June**

**There are those moments** when, half-asleep, you can't tell whether a sound you heard came from your dream or the real world. There is a mutual interjection, the sound inserting itself into the dream, the dream diffusing into the waking world, as you muddle awake uncertainly, trying to tell what's what. A similar sense of sifting hesitantly through things balanced precariously on the edge of existence characterises Ian Kiaer's work. His sparse, humming arrangements of flimsy, worn materials might position him simply as a poetic postreadymade formalist. Huddled around the work like shadows, though, is a host of explicit references and allusions to a set of artists, architects, writers and aspirationalists that I'd prefer not to recount here. Kiaer's work is, for me, at its best in that loose, associative oneiric state, where his inspirations hover over barely constructed objects that can't possibly bear their weight, half-gestures and incomplete ideas that haven't yet been abruptly awoken.

On the island in Lake Vassivière, a manmade lake in the middle of the sparsely populated logging region of Limousin, it's hard to ignore the Centre d'Art. A postmodern building jutting imposingly out from a hill, its focus point is a conical lighthouse, with the adjacent main building conceived of as its 'aqueduct', designed by Xavier Fabre and Italian urban theorist and 'analogical' architect Aldo Rossi, and completed in 1991. Kiaer has, as much as is characteristically possible for his work, dealt with the building directly. The exhibition is a series of five sculptural tableaux, each assemblage simply named after the room it occupies. *A.R. Atelier* (*A.R. Studio*, all works 2013) is the bluntest, scattering the floor with disassembled model versions of the centre itself, some stained with old bird shit. Three slide projectors flick through photos of the building under construction, rough preparatory drawings, shots of the island landscape, one of them refracting onto the model ruins. A plastic sheet covered in frayed silver leaf crumples on the floor like a distant to-scale mountain.

In his spatial propositions, Kiaer is adept at quietly shifting between direct and indirect metaphors for material (silver leaf or plastic sheeting as water, cardboard or more plastic sheeting as brick, adhesive tape or, again, plastic as glass) and scale. (Are we to take on the height of the sole tiny figure on the floor in *A.R. Salle des Etudes* (*A.R. Study Room*), meant to occupy the odd little half-built maybe-buildings strewn about the place? Or are we giants standing outside looking down? Being just the way we are, right where we're standing, suddenly seems awkward: a suspended option.) Here, alongside his usual sly understatement, Kiaer deals with such an overbearing housing for his work through a particular sense of presence. In *A.R. Phare* (*A.R. Lighthouse*), a projector dangling from the ceiling sways slowly back and forth as it shines a black-and-white image on the concrete aggregate of the structure's inner cavern. A black sphere with an adjacent flat box bobs erratically on a water surface, a live CCTV transmission from a model sitting in an inlet from the lake just below at the base of the hill. Just next to a small square window, facing out to the lake from the back of *A.R. Petit Théâtre* (*A.R. Little Theatre*), is a smudged painting attempting to replicate the view. These displacements unsettle the consonance of place asserted in the titles of the work; they're all self-underminingly elsewhere. Kiaer's unsteady, paradoxical indexing of spaces is fragile, and while the precision of, say, an archival photograph can puncture the fugue, they suggest the amniotic state in which most dreams and aspirations remain.

CHRIS FITE-WASSILAK