



Press release

PLAYSTATION @ Galerie Fons Welters

3 November 2012 – 12 January 2013

Opening: Saturday 3 November, 5-7 pm

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 1-6 pm

NB. The exhibition is closed from 26 – 29 November and from 24 December – 2 January

Edward Clydesdale Thomson

Causa Finalis

Galerie Fons Welters invites you to the exhibition 'Causa Finalis' by Edward Clydesdale Thomson in Playstation. Dispersed through the space, steel constructions – gates or parts of gates in different sizes and shapes – are leaning against the walls, resting on cushions, lying on the floor, and standing on top of carpets, turning the space into a temporary repository. One of the gates, blocking the passage of the gallery space, forces the visitor to pass through and as such seems to extenuate its corridor-like architecture. The structures' forms might resemble minimalist sculpture, yet their decorative counterparts found in the textiles' prints, give way to a different reading. In fact, through a process of abstraction and translation, Clydesdale Thomson derived these forms from the eighteenth century topiary garden designed by the Scottish architect Robert Lorimer (1864-1929) for Earlshall Castle in Scotland. At first sight, one could imagine topiary – the cutting and shaping of evergreens into specific forms – to have gone out of fashion a long time ago, as the invitation card to this exhibition perhaps indicates: in 1713, with his satirical enumeration of possible topiary, English poet Alexander Pope (1688-1744), announced a turning point in the then popular topiary. With his mock inventory: 'The Tower of Babel, not yet finished'; 'St George in box; his arm scarce long enough, but will be in condition to stick the dragon by next April', he heralded a more natural form of landscaping to come into fashion, only for topiary to come back into fashion again with the Cottage Garden and the Arts and Crafts Movement, advocated a.o. by Lorimer.

What does the image we call landscape mean? How does it move between nature's nature, a cultural construct connected to its time and preferences, and a commodified product? Questions that lie at the fore of Edward Clydesdale Thomson's practice and his exhibition in Playstation. Understanding these questions is for the artist as political as it is aesthetical. Sharpening the boundaries of design, functionality and visual art, he at the same time opens a door to a more open reading. As such the title of this exhibition 'Causa Finalis' is perhaps not suggesting that it is for the sake of which everything in the production process is done, such as the yew plants being grown into certain shapes; rather this final cause seems ever changing.

[Laurie Cluitmans]

Scottish/Danish artist Edward Clydesdale Thomson (1982) studied at the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam, the architectural program at the Glasgow School of Art and is currently a resident at the Rijksakademie, Amsterdam. In 2011 he was awarded the Lecturis Award and nominated for the Prix de Rome. Exhibitions include 'Secret Gardens', TENT, Rotterdam; 'There was a Country where They were all Thieves', Jeanine Hofland Contemporary Art, Amsterdam; 'Borderline Picturesque & the Recounting Prospect', Tromsø Kunstforening, Tromsø, Norway; 'Observing Construction', Netherlands Architectuurinstituut (NAi) Rotterdam. 'My Travels with Barry', Tent, Rotterdam. On Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 December his work will be shown as part of the Open Studios at the Rijksakademie.