

The approach frieze

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Germaine Kruip

The Approach, London, UK

Fixed to the end of an L-shaped armature suspended from the middle of the gallery ceiling, the light bulb described a circle in space, turning 360 degrees every day. Its movements were too slow for the human eye to catch, but spend long enough in *The Approach's* white-walled interior, and the gentlest of environmental changes (a fading shadow, a seeping of light into a grey corner) might just have dispelled this illusion of inertia. This was Germaine Kruip's *A Room, 24 Hours* (all works 2010) – a work that also gave its title to her exhibition of five sculptures – and its arching, achingly slow passage recalled the hand of an impatiently watched clock, or the imperceptibly shifting print of a sundial upon the earth. For all the space's apparent stillness, time still passed here – and where there's time there's change. Transitions from one state to another, then, and the fact that no one moment is ever quite the same as the next, were the presiding concerns of Kruip's show.

Clinging to a corner, and hung flat against the gallery wall, *Mirrored Square* and *Mirrored Trapezium* are geometric shapes created from thin tubular lengths of mirrored glass, which flashed as the rotating bulb drew near, or else gleamed dully on the far side of its orbit. As visitors paced about the space, their reflections bent around the sculptures' surfaces, creating sudden moments of movement and colour. Endlessly mutable and at times almost invisible, these delicate, angular forms seemed less substantial than the hard black silhouettes they cast against the white paintwork, although these too were incrementally recalibrated as the light wound its way around the room. A third piece in the same material, *Double Mirror Line*, comprises two rods running from ceiling to floor, intersecting each other's space like a pair of crossed fingers. Inspect them closely, and they seemed to suck up the colour from the floorboards like a rag dipped in dye. The difference, of course, is that mirrors never become saturated (position one far enough away, and it might contain the whole world) and do not retain any trace of the things they fleetingly reflect. Time, here, did not give rise to memory; every moment vanished, forgotten, as the room remade itself anew.

Also suspended from the ceiling, at around head height, was an undulating, elliptical form, fashioned from a sheet of highly polished metal. Entitled *Steel Eclipse*, the piece slipped constantly from the viewer's perceptual grasp,

its surfaces becoming black holes or blazing suns as one moved around it. Piet Mondrian held the ellipse to be the figure of the unity of antitheses, and Kruip's show was nothing if not a meditation on how a set of supposed opposites (day and night, objects and their shadows, the reflected and the reflection) are part of the same, continuous whole. Ellipse, though, also suggests ellipsis – something that has been omitted, but might nevertheless be inferred from proximate information. In the case of 'A Room, 24 Hours', the lacunae was the time between 6pm and noon (and all day Mondays and Tuesdays) in which the bulb circled a locked gallery. Nearly all temporary shows spend more of their life than not hidden away from human eyes. Kruip played skilfully upon this fact, encouraging visitors to imagine a particular set of shadows, reflections and formal relationships that the time code of the exhibition denied them. Perhaps there's something a little cruel in this, but I prefer to see it as instructive. To imagine continuity in one's absence is, after all, a guard against solipsism, and a step towards accepting the blinking out of one's own brief, bright light.

Tom Morton



Germaine Kruip
Steel Eclipse
2010
Polished steel
212×77×20 cm

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