

# MARUANI MERCIER

Jeppé Hein: WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES - WHAT DO YOU SEE  
August 3 – August 27, 2023  
Kustlaan 90, Knokke

*The ocean always appealed to me and inspired me in many ways. When it's calm and its surface smooth, it reflects like a mirror; when set in motion by the wind, ever-changing structures emerge. Its colours range from sky blue, to orange-red when drenched by the sunset, to nocturnal black. The motion of the waves reminds me of how our breath flows through our bodies and the rhythm of life. – Jeppé Hein, 2023*

The first solo show of Danish artist Jeppé Hein for MARUANI MERCIER Gallery follows the theme of the waves in colour, appearance and rhythm and is inspired by the nearby ocean of the gallery's locations in Knokke. Taking place from August 3 to August 27, 2023, *WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES - WHAT DO YOU SEE* will take place at Kustlaan 90 in Knokke, Belgium, and will feature a special public installation outside of their second gallery space on Zeedijk 759 just around the corner on the seaside.

The walls of the gallery will be covered with blue waves painted by the artist and created with the help of his breath: while inhaling he paints the wave going up, and when exhaling the wave goes down again. The dynamic structure of the waves seems to set the entire room in motion and blur the viewer's perception of the space. At the same time, it frames the various works that deal with the topic on different levels and places them in a joint context. This is enhanced by a mirrored canvas, where a circular area was cut out by the artist. Instead of their mirror image, viewers in return look at the wall behind the artwork entitled *Circular Cut*, thus highlighting the painted waves and questioning one's own self-reflection at the same time. The round opening can be found again in *Threefold Perspectives*, a mirror circle revolving slowly around its centre point. The reflecting surface is folded in three parts, thus mirroring both the viewer and the surroundings in an unfamiliar manner. The multifaceted reflections enable the viewer to look at different parts of the space at the same time and are reminiscent of the view through a kaleidoscope.

The exhibition title *WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES - WHAT DO YOU SEE* emerges from the even surface of two mirrors in the shape of a speech bubble. Layered with reflections of the visitors and the surrounding space, the appellative message seems to directly address the viewers asking them to not only look at the artworks but to look inside themselves too. Curved like a wave a *Light Blue Modified Social Bench* leads into the exhibition space and offers an opportunity to sit, lay or playfully slide up and down. The *Stabilé*, composed of two mirror rings gradually rotating around a suspended circular mirror, confronts with an unusual perspective. Fragments of the room are suddenly juxtaposed next to or in front of one another providing views that could not be seen simultaneously with the naked eye. Taking up the circular shape and movement of the *Stabilé*, *Grow with your Breath* consists of blue neon rings lighting up in a specified sequence behind a two-way mirror. The sequence is inspired by the artist breathing and the artwork invites the viewer to breathe accordingly. Combined with the two-way mirror in front of it, it makes the usually unconscious process of breathing conscious for a while.

Variations of Hein's coloured *Mirror Balloons* are spread across the exhibition space, some of them hang above people's heads or seem to hover at eye level in front of a wall. Three of them are tied to a birch stem, while a fourth balloon hangs next to them from the ceiling. Due to their shape and reflective surface, the balloons produce a distorted perspective of the surrounding space, like a fish-eye view. Viewers wonder what prevents the balloons from soaring into the air and expanding the reflection to the infinite.

On the second floor, visitors are welcomed by *Take the Moment* (light purple, light turquoise, coral blue IV, light may green), a bunch of colourful mirror balloons hanging from the ceiling with their ribbons knotted. Next to it, a curved line of mirror lamellae placed equal distances apart describes two almost complete circles. Visitors walking along the accessible sculpture *Two of Us* will realize that it offers a place to stand inside. With the alternation between reflections of the viewer and reflections of the location in the mirror lamellae, and

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views to the outside – be it an interior or exterior space – offered by the openings between them, a blurred perception of space arises. Facing another person standing in the opposing circle creates a situation of togetherness, while at the same time, the reflections make the two appear multiple.

Here, too, some of the walls are covered with blue waves and in addition, a new series of unique *Wave Paintings* is on view. On another wall *ALWAYS BELIEVE THAT SOMETHING WONDERFUL IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN* glows in white neon letters behind a two-way mirror. Like the mirror speech bubbles with the exhibition title, this work addresses the viewers directly inviting them to enjoy the moment and be open to the unexpected.

Jeppe Hein (b. 1974) is a Danish artist based in Berlin. He studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Arts in Copenhagen and the Städelschule für Bildende Künste in Frankfurt a. M. Jeppe Hein is widely known for his production of experiential and interactive artworks that can be positioned at the junction where art, architecture, and technical inventions intersect. Unique in their formal simplicity and notable for their frequent use of humor, his works engage in a lively dialogue with the traditions of Minimalist sculpture and Conceptual art of the 1970s. Jeppe Hein's works often feature surprising and captivating elements which place spectators at the centre of events and focus on their experience and perception of the surrounding space. Solo shows include Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2022); Changing Spaces, Rockefeller Center, New York City (2022); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2020); Breathe with Me at UN Headquarters and in Central Park, New York City (2019); Kunstmuseum Thun (2018); Château La Coste (2017); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (2015); Brooklyn Bridge Park New York (2015); Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm (2013); 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (2011); IMA - Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis (2010); ARoS Kunstmuseum, Århus (2009); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2009); Carré d'Art, Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes (2007); Sculpture Center, New York (2007); The Curve, Barbican Art Centre, London (2007); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2005) and P.S.1. MOMA, New York (2004) among others. He participated in La Biennale di Venezia's 58th edition in 2019 and 50th edition in 2003. In 2022 he received the Carte Blanche by Maison Ruinart. Permanent installations are on view at ARKEN Museum of Modern Art (2021); La Guardia Airport, USA (2020); Fondation Carmignac, Porquerolles Island (2018); Kistefos-Museet, Norway (2016); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2013); City of Perth (2012); KUNSTEN Museum for Modern Art Aalborg (2011) and Bristol University (2009) among others.

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Weekends & Holidays, 11:00 – 18:30  
(or by appointment)

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