

ARTFORUM

August 2023

Critics' Picks

Everything Broken Down, Solid House Kunsthalle, Melton, UK

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View of *EVERYTHING BROKEN DOWN*, 2023.

“EVERYTHING BROKEN DOWN”—the title of a group show curated by Ryan Gander—does not equate to everything broken apart. The included artists find pleasure in systems and structures that don’t function as they should or might. Gander consolidates their work as a commentary on and reaction to the failures of state leadership, while encouraging us to dismantle things as a means of scrutiny.

Ghislaine Leung’s *Public Sculpture*, 2018, bisects the exhibition space with a long trail of miniaturized domestic architecture and appliances of plastic play sets, while Holly Hendry sets up another axis with the precarious assemblage *Copycat*, 2022. Along the back wall, Leung’s neon sign *Portraits*, 2021, spells out its title, though no accompanying image is to be found. Elsewhere, Lawrence Weiner’s *WHERE IT SEEMS AS IT IS WHERESOEVER HOWSOEVER WHATSOEVER PENDING*, 2012, deconstructs language into an exercise in pure semiotics.

“EVERYTHING BROKEN DOWN” undermines any lingering sense of British exceptionalism with a panoply of visual and semantic references that extend beyond nation-states (from the black hoodie and earphones, framed behind glass, in Prem Sahib’s *Voices I*, 2015 and to Robbie Campbell’s *nantwich road*, 2019, in which the artist traces the establishments on a stretch of road near his family home in Crewe, England, braiding every Papa John’s and Polish supermarket into a new narrative). Taken altogether, the works in “EVERYTHING BROKEN DOWN” succeed in building things up anew as a joyful refrain.