

UJI (HAHAN) HANDOKO EKO SAPUTRO

Speculative Entertainment No.2 (Australian Edition)

7 March – 4 April 2020

Speculative Entertainment No.2 (Australian Edition), the second part of the *Speculative Entertainment* series, continues Hahan's interest in destabilising art market norms, creating a concerted attempt to offer audiences nuance and understanding of an industry gripped by a cult of secrecy. First presented at Art Jog, Yogyakarta in 2017, the works take the form of a series of interactive paintings, rolled so that the image is hidden, and then housed in Perspex vitrines. The works are interactive. When activated by motion, a small speaker plays a recording of one of several curators' commentary. The curators, each selected for their ongoing support of Hahan's career in Australia, offer their insight into Hahan's practice while separating the factual insight from the thick patina of polemic and exaggeration often found within the visual arts market. The narrators include Jacklyn Babington, Danny Butt, Carol Cains, Max Delany, Julie Ewington, Tarun Nagesh, Aaron Seeto, Russell Storer and Mikala Tai.

In this way, Hahan's project draws attention to the globalised world of the art market where certain personalities and the patronage of these art world actors are crucial to an artist's success. A fact-finding mission of sorts, *Speculative Entertainment No.2 (Australian Edition)* collapses the traditional silos and barriers between an art consuming public and the individuals within the background who drive the decisions that impact career trajectories and value. The mystery of the painted works is half the magnetism of the project, acting as a metaphor for the often-opaque operations of an art market, guided by peculiar codes, customs that are substantially based on relationships, private agreements and trusts.

Recalling a world where Maurizio Cattelan's *Comedian* 2019, a work of a fresh banana gaffer taped to the wall, sold for \$120 000 USD, *Speculative Entertainment No.2* exposes an elite world which at times reads like a Jackie Collins novel, where money is treated occasionally as confetti and ideas as loose change. The work takes the preceding work in the series, *Speculative Entertainment No. 1*, to its logical conclusion where the artist cut up various sections of a larger painting to allow members of the public to purchase the constituent parts at various art fairs around the world. Acknowledging contemporary art is unattainable for most, the works were nominally priced the same as entry to the fair, democratising art collecting. In this latest iteration, Hahan's speculative device is designed to lift part of the veil to the insular art world as each esteemed curator conveys, in their own way, the intoxicating allure of today's art market, and by extension, confers cultural, curatorial and financial status to Hahan's paintings hidden from view.

As Hahan says, the art market can often feel like a merry-go-round, brightly spinning, teetering noisily up and down. As a means to negotiate this spectacle, Hahan's *Speculative Entertainment No.2 (Australian Edition)* is an invitation to go, wander, examine, experience and listen to the Australian art world's cognoscenti. And as you experience the disturbance, the power, the pleasure and the beauty of the merry-go-round, for all the talk of the fabulous and the sublime, it leaves us with just enough time to wonder — just how much does this world spin on spin?

Micheal Do, February 2020

**Art
Month**
Sydney
6–29 March
2020