

Jan Kenneth Weckman, IN RETRO SPECTIVE - to look once more

This exhibition springs from an idea, one version of which I would like to set out below. Retrospection, the act of looking backwards, is a fiction, as the past is viewed in another time, a time, as we well know, when experience, history and value are rewritten. The setting, the scene, the atmosphere are different and the past is received differently. What happens when an artist turns his attention to what he has done before? The idea of retrospection, of viewing the past objectively, disintegrates: in retro spective. Our interpretation of an otherwise impeccable word or sentence is disrupted, its meaning escapes, the connection with the past is lost.

Linearity is a value that is measured in units of consistency and “seriousness”. It seems that there is one rule that applies to the act of making art without exception: you must not return to what you have done before. Another way of looking at my undertaking is that by not changing you are also not losing anything. Perhaps that is the aim of this exhibition. It is intended as a demonstration, as proof of my wholeness, it is an act of completion.

So this exhibition is an experiment, a trial of what it feels like to create new art with an old approach, in an earlier spirit. I am not implying that what is on display are straightforward reproductions of my earlier works. I have not sought to copy existing pieces, merely cast my mind back to what they once looked like. I have also picked out techniques, shapes, forms and themes and forged them into something new. These are new works. The hardest thing has been to imagine the feelings and emotions that prompted my earlier works. Identifying with them, reverting to my past, my self has not been easy. I am simply no longer the person that held his first exhibition in 1969.

In retro spective is an opportunity for me to expand and deepen my expression by revealing something invisible, almost a truth, that I assume is hidden beneath an oeuvre that might at times seem amorphous. I am not moving forwards but completing something that already exists. My method, if that is the term we wish to use, is practice, going round in a circle. I am turning my attention to something that is not all encompassing, clearly delineated. Perhaps it does not exist. So far, all I have is more art.

Jan Kenneth Weckman, artist and Doctor of Fine Arts (b. 1946) works with drawing, painting and digital graphics. Weckman held his first exhibition in 1969, with retrospectives at the Amos Anderson Art Museum in 2000 and at the Åboa Vetus & Ars Nova museum in Turku, Finland in 2003.