

# SEANKELLY

Velvick, Lauren. "Peter Liversidge: As Sculpture," *Artworks London*, October 2017.

## ARTWORKS LONDON

### Peter Liversidge: As Sculpture



Phill Jupitus, performing as part of Peter Liversidge, *As Sculpture // Day of Stand Up Comedy* (21 Oct 2017). Photo: Mischa Haller. Courtesy the artist and CGP London.

In CGP London's Dilston Grove space Peter Liversidge's neon ampersand, one of three interconnected light works, is obscured as the backdrop for three hours of stand up comedy. There's an apprehension to attending performances in contemporary art spaces, but here the set-up is conventional, avoiding the dreadful awkwardness that comes with an audience's mass confusion. While the seating, stage and compere are appropriate for stand-up, in the context of an exhibition it is curious not to be in individual control of navigating the space, or of time spent. Intermittently during Liversidge's solo exhibition at CGP there are live performances taking place at the Dilston Grove venue, that have been programmed by the artist but that do not always feature him. At an event on Saturday 21 October some of the comics make light of their discomfort in performing in front of an 'art audience', because they are professional comedians, as opposed to artists encompassing stand-up within their practice.



Peter Liversidge, *As Sculpture // Day of Stand Up Comedy* (21 Oct 2017). Photo: Mischa Haller. Courtesy the artist and CGP London.



Housewives, performing as part of Peter Liversidge, *As Sculpture*. Photo: Mischa Haller. Courtesy the artist and CGP London.

In CGP's Café Gallery that sits on the other side of the park from Dilston Grove, a few of Liversidge's proposals have been realized, including sets of two identical images, a polaroid and its copy, that induce the viewer to try and spot the differences, with the printed proposal making it clear that there aren't any. Alongside these small framed works a mass of bare branches is decorated with elastic bands, where the contrast between the stretch of the rubber and brittleness of the wood has a pleasing tension that begs for a twang to disrupt the whole arrangement. In this way, even the works that exist as objects instead of performances are imbued with latent energy, something that is made explicit in the way that the light works flick on and off so that all three are never illuminated at once. Simultaneously, in a film work, comedian Phil Jupitus delivers jokes written by patients and staff at the Royal London Hospital, evoking skill in performance but stumbling over the new or unexpected, an interplay that is reiterated through the live performances.



Peter Liversidge, *As Sculpture*, CGP, 2017. Photo: Levin Haegele. Courtesy the artist and CGP London



Peter Liversidge, *As Sculpture*, CGP, 2017. Photo: Mischa Haller. Courtesy the artist and CGP London.



Peter Liversidge, *Untitled* (detail), 2017. Photo: Mischa Haller. Courtesy the artist and CGP London.

For the viewer Liversidge's work can seem demanding, with long (albeit entertaining) live performances and proposals that ask the impossible and tempt fate. The artist purposefully plays with the conventions of displaying contemporary art, and in this case is happily able to stretch beyond its vocabularies to do so. Viewing the gallery-based works after an afternoon spent alternately laughing and relaxing in the dark as part of an audience, it was inevitable to offer Liversidge a little more leeway than might've been given otherwise, but this has to be acknowledged as an integral part of the exhibition. Not every visitor will experience the same works, or in the same order, and it's easy to see how what feels like a comradely prank to one person could be an elitist tease to another, which might be the most important thing to take away from this exhibition. Liversidge has previously spoken about how he attempts to choreograph the actions of his audience, part of which is an acknowledgement of and exploration into how intentions can fail to translate into outcomes.