

Getting the ball rolling

ART

Jeppe Hein

Ball-balls and unjogged bounces: art fairs might be having a bit too much fun these days. At Tate Modern, Carsten Höller's slides are injecting a pre-school element into the institution, and today the Barbican joins in with a mini roller coaster in The Curve space. In Danish artist Jeppe Hein's new installation, *Distance*, visitors activate a ball that rolls along rails that loop and dive through the gallery. By following its progress on foot, they are choreographed on a six-minute journey that constantly changes pace.

Hein was also responsible for last summer's water sculptures on the South Bank, in which walls of water rose and fell randomly to create a series of 'cooops'. But his objects do the suggestion that art is turning London into a playground. 'That's a dangerous word. It's like when you say in text "funny", then it's not good an,' he says.

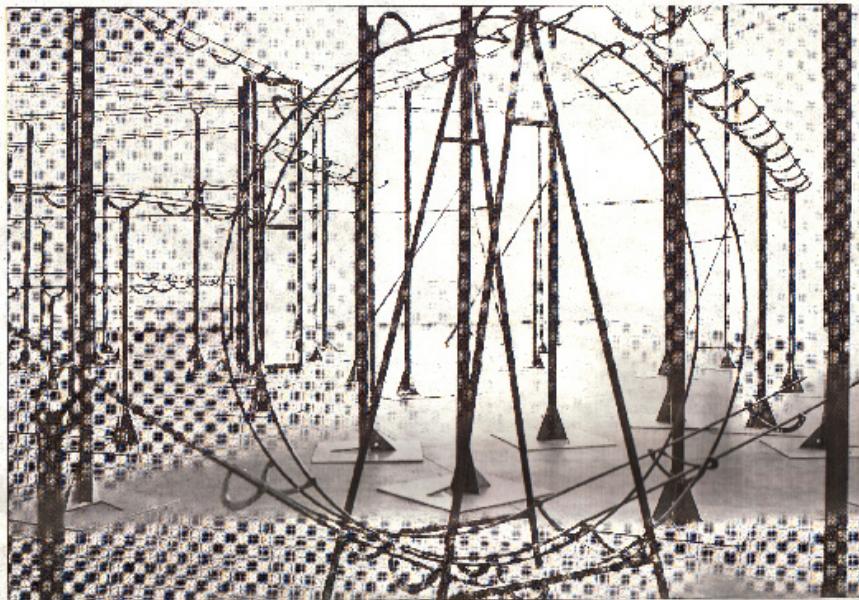
Instead, Hein likes to encourage play as a way of communicating. 'I see my work as a tool for dialogue,' he says. 'We're living in a world right now where there are so many boundaries between different cultures and we don't like to talk to other people. When you go to a roller coaster and follow a ball, you'll meet people, you'll look at them and smile – a small smile and a glint in your eye is a good way of starting a positive communication.'

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Roll on:
Jeppe Hein's
new installation,
Distance, requires
visitors to
get involved
if they want
to experience
the work

made an 'invisible maze' in an empty space, with six different imaginary labyrinths that visitors navigated using headsets. Every few metres, a vibration would signal if you'd gone into a wall. Another installation consisted of a park bench

shoot out of the water, disappearing when the bench was vacated.

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made an 'invisible maze' in an empty space, with six different imaginary labyrinths that visitors navigated using headsets. Every few metres, a vibration would signal if you'd gone into a wall. Another installation consisted of a park bench next to a lake – as soon as someone sat down, a huge fountain would

shoot out of the water, disappearing when the bench was vacated.

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To prepare for the Barbican piece, Hein has researched how people

spend time in institutions. His work doesn't just break down boundaries between people but also questions the viewing habits of gallery visitors. 'I focus on how we're all looking at art,' says Hein, 'the border between you and the art and the institution,

visitors, there are no balls rolling and there is no art.' So there may be more to it than a roller coaster after all.

Fiona Macdonald

Until Apr 29, The Curve, Barbican Art Gallery, Silk Street EC2, daily 11am to 8pm, free. Tel: 0845 120 7550. www.barbican.org.uk

Tues: Barbican

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GIG

Metric

You ignore Emily Haines at your peril. In this theatrical force of nature, Metric have a frontwoman who is as cute, vulnerability one second and rioting feminist the next, often offering up several shades of modern femininity in the space of just one song. Haines was once a vocalist for Toronto's ever-fascinating Broken Social Scene but, with her Metric bandmates, also former members of BSS, she's developed an icy synth-punk style that, although at times derivative, is certainly refreshingly independent from the dream-veil of other BSS satellites such as Stars.

Metric's first album didn't take off but last year's *Lives Like Ours* was a terrific blast of dreamy punk pop, all bruised mouth beauty, collegiate literacy and serrated sweethearts. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Haines's indomitable presence and knack for throwing herself around the stage like a mad



CLASSICAL

Riot

Can classical music be political? Subversive? That's the question behind Riot, tonight's fascinating concert of new works by singer Lotte Lubberberg (pictured) and the Bad Bear Percussion Quartet. Lubberberg, a multi-voiced mezzo with an intriguing comic instinct, is best known for her involvement with Jerry Springer: The Opera, in which she played Baby Jane the diaper popper. The show's composer, Brithud Thomas, no stranger to strong public responses to his work, will be on hand to elicit a discussion about music, politics and protest after the performance.

Perhaps one of the questions under discussion should be whether music without words can ever signify anything beyond itself; since many of the pieces in this concert are text-based, Lotte's Stopped, Usbald Nau'sagedived! (With Pipes, Drums, Fiddles) sets cheerful nonsense rhymes, for example, and



Coming Together by Franck Rzewski uses extracts from the letters of prisoners killed during the Africa prison riots of 1971.

The concert also includes works that seem to take a parodic look at the avant-garde experiments of the 1970s. Flyboy Unfold! by Duncan Harrison requires the permission to play in a bus covered with aluminium and Claudia Malibor's Leek is cautiously scored for wet triangles. The riotous event has been programmed by Ruth Hind and designed by multimedia artist Julia Barnley. Warwick Thornton

Jersey, 21 Lubbock St, EC2P 2PF. Pavilion Road M1, 10065, 020 7812 0600. Tel: 0870 050 0192. www.scarf-uk.com. Tube: King's Cross

THEATRE REVIEW

Gone Too Far

Kicking off the Royal Court Theatre's annual Young Writers Festival, Bolaji Achugbo's debut play is a tale of two brothers. Yemi is London bred, his older brother Ifayadiyi has been raised in Nigeria, and as cultural differences clash during their fraught reunion, Yemi is forced to face his race and heritage. His identity crisis becomes a symbol for the wider African and Caribbean conflict on the estate and the mixed-race issues of the other adolescent residents.

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down. Her arguments are overplayed, and the performances, although convincing, become stilted in an attempt to convey her themes.

Director Bijan Sheibani adds some poignancy by marking scene changes with a blacked-out stage, a booming garage tune and a choreographed dance-off; while the stark set is brought to life by a few imaginative props. And despite the overkill on worthy themes, this is nonetheless a promising first play.

Zewa Asihoo
Until Feb 17, Jermyn Street Theatre, Savoy Court, Savoy Square, EC4N 1AA, Mon to Sat 7.45pm, Wed mat 2.30pm. Sat mat 3pm, £15, £10 concessions. Tel: 020 7588 0600. www.royalcourttheatre.com. Tube: Sloane Square