

Jeremy Evans: Book of Numbers

AVERAGE EARNINGS FOR HUMANS BEING \$7,000
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Dalla Rosa Galleries East

At what stage does the rational and measurable start to break down, revealing itself as something more peculiar, unreliable, or nonsensical? That's the question posed by Jeremy Evans, with his use of various data and topographical representations: the peaks and troughs of opinion poll charts which he transforms into mountainous landscape reliefs; or the cartographic boundaries of all the world's countries connected together into a single, meandering line; or his drawing on the gallery's front window tracing the view of the rooftop skyline across the road.

Throughout, the point is that the world is too nuanced and multivalent to be reducible to a single, unitary perspective and that fixed locations are nothing but temporary abstractions. This is shown to wonderfully absurdist effect in 'I Wouldn't Start From Here', a looping, palindromic video touring the stairwells of a tower block, while a voiceover narrates a humorously Beckettian tale to do with the byways and misdirections of language.

Not all Evans's works are as successful. The absurdism of his cutout street plans, layered to create impossible latticeworks, seems rather forced by comparison and a video showing attempts at spinning a top for a statistically average duration is one-dimensional. Rather, Evans is at his best when letting a work gradually unfold, allowing suppressed narratives to take over the starting premise. The drawing-and-text sequence, 'My Left Hand Wants to Buy Me a House', begins as an experimental response to a temporary injury to his dominant, right hand, but soon evolves into a much darker, funnier meditation on notions of procrastination and ambition. And most affecting of all is 'The Colour Wheel' (detail pictured), whose 12 statements about different sorts of averages – from the statistical ('average temperature in Disneyworld is 22C') to the personal ('you are not an average girl') – are written forwards and backwards, as if seeking a private, internal average, some sense of centredness in the world. **Gabriel Coxhead**

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