

Plamen Dejanoff

KUNSTVEREIN IN HAMBURG

Klosterwall 23

October 1–December 30

Plamen Dejanoff's latest exhibition features work from his ongoing project "The Bronze House," which the artist began planning in 2006 and which revolves around the construction of functional bronze houses throughout the Bulgarian city of Veliko Tarnovo. Consisting of architectural prototypes, sketches, paintings, lighting designs, and a section of one of the bronze houses itself, this exhibition's function is notionally to inform viewers about the overall project. That said, the works on display are so captivating as standalone artworks that their eventual realization as architecture almost seems like a trivial pretext. Reinforcing the "in progress" sensibility, the plinths supporting his prototypes are unpainted and the bronze house section, *The Bronze House (facade elements)*, 2011, resembles an archaeological fragment.



View of "The Bronze House," 2011.

Off-site in Hamburg's port district, Dejanoff has installed a walk-in version of one of his houses, simply titled *The Bronze House*, 2011. Created from over 150 separate elements that were assembled by hand, the modular work is at once a temporary building, a public sculpture, and a prototype detailing his plan to do for Veliko Tarnovo what Donald Judd has done for Marfa. The structural designs of Dejanoff's houses refer to Veliko Tarnovo's traditional wooden housing, which, in 1911, Le Corbusier researched on his so-called "journey to the east." Le Corbusier visited the city in search of vernacular architecture, hunting down organic and spiritual approaches to design that might reinvigorate housing in the industrialized West.

Aligned with Nicolas Bourriaud's important publication *Postproduction*, 2001, Dejanoff's earlier collaborative practice with Svetlana Heger examined the relationship between art and the economy, with both artists approaching their collaborative works as vessels for critical strategy. In "The Bronze House," Dejanoff treats issues such as corporate branding and urban design with a lighter touch. Instead of directing the viewer to consider the parallels between art objects and other commodities in the economy, Dejanoff's exhibition focuses more on the formal and experiential qualities of his creations—enigmatically staging the interrelations between art, architecture, autobiography, and place.

— Wes Hill