Situated in the heart of the commercial center of Copenhagen lies an uninhabited power transformer station. Located on the primary facade, facing one of the largest department stores in the city, ten 1960s modernist vitrines have been neglected and left vacant. Once used to display products from the nearby shops, the distinctive and unusual vitrines in copper and glass have since been empty for years. As outdated pieces of urban furniture they bear witness to the digitalization of the urban environment where LED screens have replaced the static billboards and physical display of objects. In their abandonment they become markers of urban entropy, physical ruins of an old economy decomposing in a new landscape of consumption. In Vitro (studies on entropy) is a pop-up exhibition investigating the term entropy and its relation to contemporary society. By using the Latin term in vitro (in glass) we draw a parallel to the world of scientific research and refer to studies of biological properties which are subject to test tube experiments (i.e., under glass).

For this apexart Franchise Exhibition, the Copenhagen vitrines are turned into local laboratories for the study of entropy in materiality, nature, and discourse. The American artist Robert Smithson appropriated the term entropy in the 1960s from the world of natural science and brought it into the field of artistic research. Much of Smithson’s output was shaped by his interest in the concept of entropy, the second law of thermodynamics that predicts the eventual exhaustion and collapse of any given system. In his famous essay “Entropy and the New Monuments” (1966), he draws analogies between rock quarries and the strip mall’s unstoppable expansion (i.e., entropy in nature, materiality, and discourse. The American artist Robert Smithson appropriated the term entropy in the 1960s from the world of natural science and brought it into the field of artistic research. Much of Smithson’s output was shaped by his interest in the concept of entropy, the second law of thermodynamics that predicts the eventual exhaustion and collapse of any given system. In his famous essay “Entropy and the New Monuments” (1966), he draws analogies between rock quarries and the strip mall’s unstoppable expansion.

But the idea of entropy can also inform an outlook on culture and civilization more generally and can be applied to almost everything from tiny particles to the dynamics of human interactions. Some have argued that the whole energy crisis is a form of entropy: the earth is a closed system with finite resources, interactions. Some have argued that the whole energy crisis is a form of entropy: the earth is a closed system with finite resources, and civilization more generally and can be applied to almost everything from tiny particles to the dynamics of human interactions. Some have argued that the whole energy crisis is a form of entropy: the earth is a closed system with finite resources, interactions. Some have argued that the whole energy crisis is a form of entropy: the earth is a closed system with finite resources, interactions. Some have argued that the whole energy crisis is a form of entropy: the earth is a closed system with finite resources, interactions. 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Seemingly bodiless, this physical structure is actually in danger of leaking and being destroyed just as information can leak due to human action or error. The work consists of thick fiber optic cables transporting light from a hidden screen simulator. The light of Vikings online and send them back to Denmark, returning the characters using found pieces of wood, brown, leather, and fur to America. For Martin Erik Andersen, Beverly Hills, as Martin Eik Andersen suggests.

democracy, but throughout the Renaissance the ship gained a more contemporary character as it became common practice to send the deranged and mentally ill out to sea as a cure for mental sickness and as a way to maintain normative culture in society. It was a way to dispose of the confusing, disturbing, and uncontrollable entropic elements in society.

With the title Im Hermann, Beverly Hills the Danish artist Martin Erik Andersen refers to the cinema of Rainer Werner Fassbinder, whose sensibility for the dysfunctional elements of the urban inspired the artist. He also creates a connection to another nearby vitrine, which for a long time has showed nothing but a collapsed Beverly Hills in pink letters. Martin Erik Andersen sees the urban as a network of functionalities and as a way to maintain normative culture in society. It was a way to dispose of the confusing, disturbing, and uncontrollable entropic elements in society.

For their site-specific project, the Danish duo Mathias & Mathias has been inspired by ornament and allegory. Using the full space of the vitrine, their piece Ship of Fools takes on a three-dimensional character creating a theater-like scene. The style is inspired by the kind of aesthetics one finds in public institutions: trashy, simple shapes, and saturated colors. The background consists of a silk-screen print of a hand-drawn running dog, a classic ornament used in art history dating back to pre-antiquity, but in this case also a 1:1 copy of a wall decoration from Horsens State Prison, a now defunct institution in Denmark. Remembering a wave, the background alludes to an ocean on which Mathias & Mathias placed a paper maché ship. The title of the work refers to an allegory originating from Plato, which depicts a vessel without a pilot, populated by human inhabitants who are deranged, frivolous, or oblivious, and seemingly ignorant of their course. For Plato the ship represented dysfunctional over time and take on a new position. And by their mere emptiness and lack of function they start questioning the efficiency of the urban system, one that, in the case of Copenhagen, is based on a small but highly efficient rationality that leaves little room for the dysfunctional.

As a frame for contemporary art, the vitrines become a metacommentary on the status of the dysfunctional in the post-industrial city of Copenhagen since visual art has always existed in a limbo between aesthetic value and dysfunctional trash. At the same time public, but today unnoticeable, the vitrines exist as empty visual platforms, whose functionality has collapsed and been relocated to the world of digital billboards. All that is left is a questioning physical emptiness, a collapsed Beverly Hills, as Martin Eik Andersen suggests.