

Press Release

Unna Centre of International Light Art

Special Exhibition

Light 21

Light Art Visions for the 21st Century

Works by HC Berg, Brigitte Kowanz, Christina Benz

4th December 2010 – 27th March 2011

Ever since its invention in the 1960s, Light Art has been a medium of artistic expression that combines avant-garde inventiveness of form with critical reflections of the zeitgeist in a hitherto unprecedented way. Light Art mirrors the poetry of the present and projects it in all its spatiality into the dimension of the future.

The exhibition “Light 21” presents three outstanding exponents of contemporary Light Art whose works exemplarily span the thematic spectrum between present-day analysis and future projection. In the context of historic industrial architecture, which lends the exhibition rooms of the Centre for International Light Art in Unna their unmistakable character, the works of HC Berg, Brigitte Kowanz and Christina Benz together take us on an “energizing” tour through imaginary spaces of light and shadow in which the future seems almost graspable.

HC Berg

The focal point of this Light Art exhibition is the work of the Finnish artist HC Berg (born 1971), who was elected “Artist of the Year” in Scandinavia in 2007. HC Berg counts among the most important exponents of Light Art in northern Europe. His light installations and sculptures blur the boundaries between light and space, thus creating zones of physical and mental experience that integrate the viewer directly into the work. While transparent cubes gather the light of the room and mirror every movement, open installations enter into a symbiosis with the surrounding space. By permanently blurring and transcending the boundaries of perception, HC Berg creates fluctuating phenomena of light and space that take both the artist and the viewer on an exploration of a completely new urban sensation.

Brigitte Kowanz

The Austrian artist Brigitte Kowanz (born 1957) lives in Vienna and is recognized as one of the internationally leading exponents of Light Art. For many years she has been experimenting with the mutuality of light and language, her repertoire of signs and symbols ranging from mathematical sequences of numbers mounted on wall panels to luminous self-observations on mirrors. Her most recent developments include mirroring cubes that reflect and refract the light into what can only be described as sheer visual poetry, a completely new perspective of virtuality. The reflections seem to repeat into infinity, an effect that is as forceful as it is ungraspable.

Christina Benz

The constant, ever faster flow of media images is the theme of the light projections and video pieces of the young Swiss artist Christina Benz (born 1972). Working with analytical precision, Christina Benz explores and illuminates the visualization strategies of the media world and at the same time infiltrates what through the media has now become our familiar way of seeing things. Particularly fascinated by the relationship between light and time, she generates moments of visual irritation that seem to come from a different time zone. Her works are distinguished by an “inbetweenness” in which images hover between apparently total omnipresence and arbitrary absence.

Exhibition curator: Ursula Sinnreich

The exhibition is part of “Mapping the Region”, the series of exhibitions hosted by the RuhrArtMuseums on the occasion of the European Capital of Culture RUHR.2010.

The exhibition is supported by RWE Stiftung and Stadt Unna.

The exhibition will be accompanied by discussions with the artists and a symposium. A catalogue in German and English is in preparation.

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