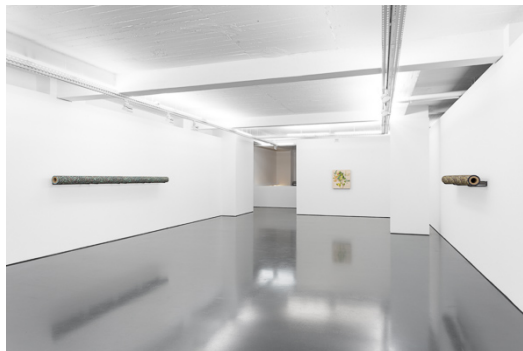


# GALERIA PEDRO CERA

**DAVID THORPE**

**Lush Underground**

September 23, – November 11, 2017



Pedro Cera Gallery is proud to present the first exhibition of David Thorpe at the gallery. David Thorpe belongs to a generation of artists who have started working after the rise of the YBA (Young British Artists) movement in London, which has significantly contributed to the transformation of artistic practice and the art market in the late 1980's and the early 1990's. Viewing the work of David Thorpe within this historical context allows us to understand not only the conceptual point of departure of his practice, but also some of the artists concerns behind the formal characteristics of his work, which are at the core and define a philosophy of his practice as we know it today.

Rather than spectacular and ostentatious, the work of Thorpe places a strong emphasis on the complexity of its process and the temporality of its production. The work of Thorpe is a love affair with labour and craft, distancing itself through an act of adoration from the alienating characteristics of modernity and the ways of being of the modern man. Inspired in part by the *English Arts and Crafts Movement*, John Ruskin and the late socialist writing of William Mors, Thorpe applies an aesthetic of organic ornaments and botanical motifs that act as a veil and as a protective skin to enclose and hide an increasingly vital yet marginalised philosophy. Through such a gesture, Thorpe advocates an opposition towards an economic and a social order closely connected with the modern and consequently the contemporary world we are immersed in today. The role of the machine is rendered secondary and emphasis is placed on the careful and the time-consuming process of mixing, layering, cutting, extracting, filling, colouring (...), questioning thus the value and the nature of labour within the growingly immaterial realm of the present day.

The work of David Thorpe can be easily "accused" of beauty. Beauty however is only one of many surfaces, and in this case also a powerful tool and a means for further scrutiny. The complexity of the organic ornaments symptomatic for the work of the artist are an intellectual reference, but also a utopian construct for a further construction of a self contained work, the aim of which is to verbalise a utopian dream. The complex and layered surface of Thorpe's sculptures, may these be sculptures resembling furniture looking structures characteristic for some of his older series, or an infinite pipe-line with no obvious beginning or end, suggest the possibility of a new system of flow and exchange.

Utopian in its nature, *Lush Underground* immerses us in a non-place. A familiar place, yet a place with no history, where labour and beauty overshadow function. Although mimetic, the multiplicity of its formal meaning and function remains deliberately unclear, resulting in a refusal of the objects easy consumption and circulation.

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David Thorpe (1972, London) lives and works in Berlin. His work has been exhibited at ICA (London), *Hayward Gallery* (London), *Van Abbe Museum* (Eindhoven), *Tate Britain* (London), *The Museum of Contemporary Art* (Los Angeles), *Saatchi Gallery* (London), *Santa Barbara Museum of Art* (Santa Barbara), *Camden Arts Centre* (London) or *Kunstverein Hannover* (Hannover) among other.