

## Sies + Höke Galerie

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*"It is always the artist who aspires to, or needs to, say something deeply his own, all alone, something he shares with noone, and he always tries to say this using the strangest, most remote he can grasp." (Rainer Maria Rilke)*

### Press release

#### **Björn Dahlem: Rays**

2 March – 14 April 2012, Opening: Friday 2 April 7-9 pm

In his first solo exhibition at Sies + Höke Björn Dahlem (\*1974) shows new large-scale installations and sculptures.

Björn Dahlem's complicated, intricate, harmonically balanced assemblages of wooden slats, found objects, flea market lamps or neon lights are based on physical phenomena and scientific models. Staged and assembled from deliberately simple materials, they visualize - without any claim to scientific accuracy - the mental images of complex theories and models of cosmology, astronomy, particle physics or quantum mechanics; themes anyway which allow people to reach the limits of their imagination. Dahlem, who as the son of a physicist came in touch early on with highly abstract mental constructs, is not interested, however, in the mere reproduction of scientific models, but instead in the internal contradictions and questions they raise: On failed utopias, on spirituality, on human existence as such. With charming details and a high level of precision in the implementation, the artist almost playfully poses existential questions.

For this exhibition, Dahlem realizes two new large-scale installations. The front gallery space houses *Magellanic Cloud* (2012), a construction of wood beams equipped with neon lights that meanders through the room like a translucent cloud-like shape. The Magellanic Cloud is a neighboring galaxy to the Milky Way which Ferdinand Magellan discovered in 1519 during the first circumnavigation of the world. Dahlem here points to the paradox that knowledge gained always attracts further questions: No sooner the Earth was rounded for the first time, the gaze into space opens up further fields to be explored. The diffuse nebulae of the *Magellanic Cloud* thus stand for new questions and the urge to explore.

By contrast the second installation is designed, which Dahlem displays in the lower exhibition room. *Sun* (2012) is a paragon of chaotic energy, an exploding ball of light and radiation. Dahlem sees this as a metaphor for the energetic moment of an artist whose fertile and creative potential requires a fine balance between chaos and order.

The series *Particles* (2012), to be seen on the mezzanine floor, is concerned, unlike the above celestial bodies and galaxies, with the smallest elements of our universe: particles. Just like the particles that are represented here, the sculptures, including their display cases, are very small. Dahlem points to the "loss of clarity" as one of the biggest problems of particle physics, whose incredibly small objects are constructed mathematically and can only be detected indirectly by measuring data. The boundary between abstraction and figuration is released, the *Particles* are abstract objects.

Björn Dahlem was born in Munich in 1974 and lives in Berlin. For 2012, a solo exhibition in Oldenburg Kunstverein is planned; among his recent solo exhibitions are: *Die Theorie des Himmels II – Die Milchstraße*, KIT - Kunst im Tunnel, Quadrennial 2010, Düsseldorf (2010), *The Magic Mountain*, Kunstraum Innsbruck (2010), *The Theory of Heaven I - Bright Matter*, La Conservera Murcia, Spain (2009); *Helle Materie*, Magazin4 - Bregenz Kunstverein (2007), *Solaris*, UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2004), *Utopia Planitia II*, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2004). His recent group exhibitions include: *Wunder*, Deichtorhallen (2011), *Triennial 2011*, Yokohama (2011), *The Shape of Things to Come: New Sculpture*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2011); *space. Die Kunst und ein Traum*, Kunsthalle Wien (2011).

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