

# GALERIA HEINRICH EHRHARDT

Luz

Michael Beutler, Björn Dahlem, Fernando García, Secundino Hernández,  
Tobias Rehberger and Julia Spínola  
December 19th 2018 - February 14th 2019

The Heinrich Ehrhardt Gallery presents Luz, a group exhibition of works by artists already represented by the gallery and which revolve around sculpture, architecture, design and the concept of the lamp. Bringing together pieces by Michael Beutler, Björn Dahlem, Fernando García, Secundino Hernández, Tobias Rehberger and Julia Spínola, the exhibition space is presented as a stream of light running through the multiple sculptural volumes set on the floor or hanging in the spaces of the rooms.

Some of these artists are already deeply familiar and engaged with such use of light, in works which have already developed along these lines. The works of Beutler, Dahlem and Rehberger stand out in this regard, having for years raised questions about our understanding of design, furniture and the practical and functional use of sculpture. Their lamps, either free-standing or hung, question the very nature of furniture and open up new trajectories of content and work materials, including notions of habitability, the place of art, installation and domestic space.

On the other hand, three highly novel and timely pieces are offered by García, Hernández and Spínola, artists whose body of work has not thus far been so directly related with the idea of light or lamps. This occasion sees two well-known pieces by García and Spínola and a new piece by Hernández presented to the public.

Michael Beutler approaches his work as an authentic craftsman and, as usually happens in such cases, many of his works feature elements of artisanal production, radiating an intense play between technical skill and improvisational ingenuity. His work escapes categorisation and through a thoroughly heterodox methodology of direct language and austere and precarious materials, he illustrates a universal landscape in which anything goes. His approach to the inhabited and the habitable is key to understanding his artistic formulations. In this case, metal mesh cylinders or tubes covered with painted paper and positioned either on feet secured with cords and coloured threads or hung from the ceiling act as lampshades to illuminate the room.

The case of Björn Dahlem could be the most paradigmatic within this exhibition, since his work has long been developed in accordance with his conception of the lamp and lighting. Avoiding the obvious and situating his sculptural works in an environment that does not lend itself to ease of analysis, Dahlem brings industrial design closer to the scientific, the astronomical and the mathematical, constructing works of light that function as lamps and whose large dimensions reflect a particular vision of the universe. In this way, the three lamps presented in the current exhibition create a link and a narrative with the moon -in all its orbitary particularities- and with the configuration of the planets within the Milky Way, the relationship between them and the lines of their orbits and rotation. Dahlem gives all these elements a deep formal and sculptural interpretation.

Though already exhibited before, the work by Fernando García distances itself from the most recognisable part of his output. This is not because of the piece's nature per se but because he has not produced lamps or hanging light structures of such characteristics before or since. When this piece was exhibited for the first time in a group exhibition, the artist provided certain keys to its interpretation: The inside of a convent – The lighting of a castle – Castilian Inns – Luis Candelas. This theatricality and scenography make light the central focus.

Luis Candelas, who also gives this lamp its title, was a Madrid-born son of a cabinetmaker and a mythological figure among bandits. The historical association established in García's work through references to certain characters place it within both the present and the geographical past and its broader context. This is also true of this sculpture which combines balance, craftsmanship, brightness, reflection and shadow.

Secundino Hernández is another of the artists whose participation in this exhibition might have been somewhat unexpected. While Hernández had not previously exhibited any works relating to lamps, for some time now he has been immersed in the sculptural investigation of certain light pieces that function as lamps. With a strong formal and conceptual link to his pictorial work, for the first time Hernández presents these decidedly gestural copper tube structures in which we can appreciate the same physical charge of his moving hand and body as in his painting. Covered with metallic paint, these wrinkled and malleable forms stretch both upwards and towards the floor, resolving their winding profile in a light bulb given similar volume to the painter's lines.

In the context of this exhibition, Tobias Rehberger's work could be classified in a similar way to that of Dahlem. Like Dahlem, Rehberger has made lamps as well as other elements of domestic design and architecture, an artistic output constantly questioning that which has already been established. From rooms for smokers, kitchens and tree houses, Rehberger has questioned the role of architecture and our relationship with it. Using the most celebrated history of modern architecture, his work gives rise to various interpretations, many of which reside in sets of velcro lamps in which colours and mobile and rotating forms create a true hanging landscape.

Finally, Julia Spínola presents lamps made especially for her last solo exhibition at CA2M. The indefinite light of twilight – the central element of her exhibition – led Spínola to subject all her work to an atmosphere and play of light which flooded the space in which her works were shown. From these twilight-related investigations, Spínola created three metallic structures in the form of lampposts that feature sodium-vapour lamps, a lighting solution no longer in use today. Indefinition, gesture, vague perception and unsettled disappearing forms are some of the questions that swarm together under the work's orange light.