

CHRISTIAN HERDEG

27 January – 25 March 2022

In his first solo exhibition in Austria light art pioneer **CHRISTIAN HERDEG** (*1942 Zurich) presents a group of works created in the last two years, thus opening up a new chapter in his artistic oeuvre. For over fifty years he has been exploring fleeting states of aggregation, the colour and warmth of light. His research is manifested in an individual form language going beyond pathos and highly charged symbolism. "Form and matter are bound together in the process of increasing sublimation and reflection on the relationship between colour, light, area and space."¹

Shortly before his eightieth birthday **CHRISTIAN HERDEG** introduces an impressive series of works created in his later years: *Lichtgarben*. Fluorescent tubes are bundled and mounted on the wall; starting from one point the neon and argon tubes fan out like spillikins (*Albatros*, 2021, *Black Bird*, 2021, *All White*, 2021). The dynamic, three-dimensional works are contrasted by reduced works based on the exact perpendicular nature of Concrete Art: *Piet*, 2020, a reminiscence of Piet Mondrian, stands out because of its clarity and geometrically explored equilibrium. Five neon or argon tubes in the colours blue, black, red and two differing shades of white cross over each other at a right angle. *Spaghetтини* is characterized by straight lines, just like *Piet*. In both works, at first sight one does not perceive the neon tubes that are concealed behind the others. Only when one observes them more closely and from the side does the multi-layered quality of the splendidly colourful masterpieces become apparent.

Circle Summit, 2022, was completed shortly before the beginning of the exhibition and here **CHRISTIAN HERDEG** reveals his sense of humour: the circular sticks are inspired by hula hoops. The artist says that it is technically impossible to throw the inert gas tubes playfully and so the hoops are arranged in a row on the wall, conveying the impression of waiting for the next performance...

In the series of works entitled *Micros* the focus is on the painterly aspects of his oeuvre: the combination of monochrome painted geometric forms with linear fluorescent lamps or black light tubes explores the spatial impact of light as related to the colour areas. In *Micro II*, 2019, and *Micro V*, 2019, these shine through the black light projected onto them just as unexpectedly as remarkably intensive.

CHRISTIAN HERDEG follows his own guidelines of reduction and sparse artistic expression in many *Art on Public Building* projects, setting light sculptures and façades as assertive statements into the urban appearance in Zurich, Frankfurt and Munich. In 2021 **CHRISTIAN HERDEG** was awarded the Cultural Prize of the canton of Zurich for his "unbroken fascination for the power of light to fill as well as to create space."²

Salzburg, January 2022

Katja Mittendorfer

1 SCHUNK, Volker. in: „Der Klang des Lichtes.“ catalogue Christian Herdeg. (Basle 1992) p. 10

2 Quote from the text of the honorary certificate of the canton of Zurich.