

**MICHAELA MELIÁN**

›Lunapark‹

Exhibition: June 12 – July 14, 2012

In her three-dimensional, multi-disciplinary installations Michaela Melián works with drawing, objects, film, photography, and music. She is one of a new generation of conceptual artists, combining gender themes, visual culture, everyday objects, and music to create an analytical, sophisticated oeuvre from out of a pop culture understanding of the self.

For her new solo show at the Barbara Gross Galerie Melián has developed a three-dimensional work, *Lunapark* (2012) out of glass, light, and music. Glass objects are arranged on a tabletop and illuminated by a slide projector in a darkened space. Ordinary, everyday vessels such as bottles, light bulbs, water glasses, vases, or CD cases are mixed in with precious, handmade, blown glass or geometric prisms made especially for the installation. Reflecting fragmented rays of light, the various objects on the table always seem to be creating new, constructivist groupings or constellations. A revolving, motor-driven prism installed in front of the objective creates a film-like projection that moves across the walls. In continual, flowing motion, the original contours dissolve into an abstract urban silhouette.

In *Lunapark* the richly associative aesthetic of the fragile projection oscillating between light and dark also has an acoustic component, achieved by playing a recording of music made by the artist using glass. In both cases - the record player and the slide projector - the artist is deliberately using analogue technology and machines, which, as objects, become part of the installation. The photographs on display were taken in 2012, in the context of the installation. Covered in grids made of colored threads sewn together, the prints take on a three-dimensional, multifaceted character, while their surfaces manifest a fabric-like texture.

The use of glass plays with concepts of utopian glass architecture, of the kind seen in architectural visions of Paul Scheerbart, Bruno Taut, and the "Glass Chain" correspondence of the early twentieth century. Scheerbart promoted the idea that glass should be used to open up architecture, promising that this would lead to a synergistic effect for the development of culture. In Melián's *Lunapark* there are also echoes of the utopian notion of mutable social space.

Michaela Melián, born in 1956 in Munich, lives and works in Munich and Hamburg. She has been a professor for contemporary media at the Hochschule für bildende Künste (HfbK) in Hamburg since 2010; studied music and art in Munich and London; 1980-1986, co-editor of the magazine *Mode und Verzweiflung* in Munich; member of the band F.S.K. since 1980, current album: *Akt, eine Treppe hinabsteigend (Nude descending a staircase)*, released May 2012). Among her best-known installations are *Bertha Pappenheim, Projektion*, 1998-99; *HysterikerIn*, 1998; *Life as a Woman*, 2001; *Föhrenwald*, 2005; *Speicher*, 2008, and *Memory Loops*, 2010.

Solo shows (selected): Städtische Galerie Nordhorn, 2011/2012; *Memory Loops*, Kunst im öffentlichen Raum, Munich, 2010; Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz, 2009; LUDLOW 38, New York, 2009; CUBITT Gallery and Studios, London, 2008/2009; Ulmer Museum, 2008; Kunstwerke Berlin, Kunstverein Graz, 2006; Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, 2003; Arthotek, Munich, 2002; Städtische Ausstellungshalle am Haverkamp, Münster, 1999; Kunstverein Ulm, 1997; Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, 1995.

Currently, Melián's art can be seen at the Shedhalle, Zurich; Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Stadtgalerie Schwaz, Kunsthalle Bregenz, and at the Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz.