



KUNSTMUSEUM CELLE MIT SAMMLUNG ROBERT SIMON

DAS ERSTE 24-STUNDEN-KUNSTMUSEUM DER WELT

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„Light is politics“

***Kunstmuseum Celle* – The German Award on Light Art goes to Mischa Kuball**

CELLE. Mischa Kuball is awarded the German 2016 light art prize. With this award the *Robert Simon Art Foundation* wants to honor the internationally acclaimed artist for his outstanding way of dealing with light as a medium of public (inter-)action. Mischa Kuball is going to be the second laureate, to whom this prize, which is endowed with 10.000 Euros, is given. The German Award on Light Art is presented every two years, starting in 2014. First prize winner was Otto Piene.

“Kuball is not a painter of light; Kuball is a conceptual artist of light, a political artist of light—a unique and important stance.” (Peter Weibel) In his installations Mischa Kuball manifests the political and social dimensions of light as an artistic material. “Light is sociology. Light is politics.” This is how Mischa Kuball himself describes his approach. Since 1984 he works in public and institutional areas, where he explores – by using light as his medium and frequently in participatory projects – social and political discourses and codings, which are related to the space inhabited by his artworks. Kuball achieved prominence with his art work “Refraction House”: For a period of eight weeks the synagogue in Stommeln was lit from the inside with intense light, so that the building illuminated the surrounding area like a light sculpture. Another example for Kuball’s approach is the installation “Urban Context”, in which spotlights traced the outlines of a former gauleiter bunker in Lüneburg, Germany. Since 2007 Mischa Kuball is a professor in the Academy of Media Arts, Cologne, associate professor for media art at Hochschule für Gestaltung/ZKM, Karlsruhe, and since 2015 member of North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences, Humanities and the Arts, Duesseldorf.

The German Award on Light Art will be presented in January 2016 during a ceremony held at the *Kunstmuseum Celle*. The institution was founded in 1998 as the first *24-hour Art Museum*, which today accommodates one of the most comprehensive museum collections of contemporary Light Art in Germany.

For further information please visit www.kunst.celle.de and www.mischakuball.com



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Information



Mischa Kuball

*1959 in Düsseldorf/DE
lives and works in Düsseldorf/DE

Mischa Kuball has been working in the public sphere since 1987. He uses light as a medium to explore architectural space as well as social and political discourse in his installations and photographs, reflecting on a whole variety of aspects from sociocultural structures to architectural interventions, emphasising or reinterpreting their monumental nature and context in architectural history. Public and private space merge into an indistinguishable whole in politically motivated participation projects, providing a platform for communication between the audience, the artist, the work itself and public space.

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Urban Context, 2000, Projection at the Lüneburg bunker

After five years of discussion between students at the University of Lüneburg and the artist, this site-specific project was finally realized. The light from the spotlight attached to the scaffolding shone directly across to Schiessgrabenstrasse in Lüneburg, marking the subterranean location of a former gauleiter bunker.

„Mischa Kuball – ...in progress - Projekte / Projects 1980-2007“
Ed. by Florian Matzner, 2007

Photo: Hubertus Birkner, Köln



Refraction House, 1994, Stommeln Synagogue

The synagogue in Stommeln on the Lower Rhine can barely be seen from the main street and is set back in a courtyard. For a period of eight weeks, the building was closed and lit from the inside with intense light, so that the building illuminated the surrounding area like a light sculpture, becoming a symbol that could be seen from afar.

„Mischa Kuball – ...in progress - Projekte / Projects 1980-2007“
Ed. by Florian Matzner, 2007

Photo: Kwan Ho Yuh-Zwingmann, Hannover



Ghosttram, Katowice, 2013

Years of shifting borders, occupations, expulsions, settlements, and evacuations shaped the identity of the Upper Silesian region around Katowice. The tram network of Katowice and the surrounding cities, whose history goes back to 1894, now belongs to one of the largest transit systems in the world. In cooperation with the Katowice Cultural Institute "City of Gardens" a historic tram from the 1980s was brightly illuminated and sent out on a nighttime journey, without passengers, scheduled service, stops or a destination. In the darkness of night the "ghost train" seemed to be on its way to "donikąd / nowhere" like a glistening white cube, set free from its original function, history, and materiality, without background and without destination, without identity.

„public preposition“
Ed. by Vanessa Joan Müller, 2015

Photo: Krzysztof Szewczyk