



G2 Kunsthalle
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Press release
EN

LICHTPROBE

Jörg Ernert

Special Exhibition
8 February – 12 May 2019

Currently on display at the G2 Kunsthalle is Jörg Ernert's exhibition entitled *Lichtprobe* (Light Rehearsal), his first institutional solo show. The central focus in Ernert's paintings lies in his intense engagement with existing places, in how he is able to reduce his pictorial objects to their essential characteristics. His basic framework of the compositional structures of shapes and spaces is marked by the use of gestural brushstrokes, which, from a formal perspective, places Ernert's work on the border between figurative and abstract painting.

Born in Leipzig in 1974, Ernert is a professor at its Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig) and has been artistically engaged with the rehearsal space and stage of the Leipzig Opera since 2016. The opera series on display here is based on various drawings of backstage rooms sketched during rehearsals for a number of different productions. Rather than addressing the events on stage, the artist focuses on the appeal the space itself exudes.

Ernert's opera paintings highlight the rooms' vertical axis and, consequently, their enormous height and the unusual sightlines he encountered while working in them. The dynamic of the space and its sheer size are reflected in the painting process, where lines of colour dart up and down. The construction of space provides the structural basis for Ernert's pictorial compositions; his intuitive understanding of shapes, dramatic perspectives, and spatial volume is revealed in the way he energetically applies paint to canvas. As the paintings' titles imply, it is often elements such as partition screens, mirrors, curtains, spotlights, rear walls, passageways or scaffolds that will end up in the artist's sights. The sparingly positioned cast of figures is accentuated by the colours of the light they are suffused in. These actors, musicians and stagehands solely serve to establish the particulars of their surroundings, thus blending into the scenery like theatre props.

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Special attention is given to the light on stage. In *Lichtprobe* (2018), a cycle of pictures made up of five paintings, the artist modifies the illumination of a given motif by using a variety of tones and temperatures while simultaneously fragmenting spaces into horizontal strips of colour. What seems to be addressed here are not simply the changes created by specific lighting scenarios; it is the idea of the refraction of light within the optical prism and the resulting dispersion of white light into spectral colours which we are given to contemplate. In the chromatic tones contained in each painting of this series, the sensations of seeing light and hearing colours come together in synesthetic symbiosis. In Ernert's interpretation, the 'stage universe' turns out to be a sounding board for his painting.

In the first room, Ernert's opera house cycle is supplemented by two large-scale paintings from the series *Kletterhalle* (climbing hall) from 2014, as well as earlier works from the Hildebrand Collection. His paintings *Chinatown* (2016) and *Schärttnerhalle* (2004–2005) enable us to trace Ernert's artistic evolution and, simultaneously, illustrate how the vitality of his visual style and his focus on the essential characteristics of his motifs, as well as his choice of format and colours are determined by his perception of the subject at hand.

Text by Anka Ziefer
Translation by Lisa Voigt

L I C H T P R O B E

Jörg Ernert

8 February – 12 May 2019

Presse preview: Wednesday, 6 February 2019, 11AM

Opening: Thursday, 7 February 2019, 6–9PM

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Short biography:

From 1991 to 1996, Jörg Ernert, born in Leipzig in 1974, studied at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig) under Sighard Gille, Wolfram Ebersbach and Neo Rauch; between 1998 and 2001, he attended Gille's programme for Meisterschüler (master-class students). In 2001, Ernert was awarded a scholarship by the Free State of Saxony and in 2006 won the 13th Leipziger Jahresausstellung (Leipzig Annual Exhibition Award). Ernert has been a professor for painting, drawing and composition at HGB Leipzig since 2012. He lives and works in Leipzig.