

SETAREH

Christian Megert
NEW WORKS

10. Oktober – 14. November, 2020
Königsallee 27–31 | 40212 Düsseldorf

SETAREH presents new works by the artist **Christian Megert**. Born in Bern in 1936 he has been working in Düsseldorf since the 1970s. In addition to the latest mirror objects, the exhibition provides an insight into Megert's early work with a series of informal and monochrome structural paintings from the 1950s and early mirror pieces from the 1960s, covering a broad span of the oeuvre of one of the most important international representatives of Light Art and Kinetic Art and co-founder of the Zero movement.

In his search for new pictorial forms, Christian Megert experimented from the mid-1950s onwards with painterly sculptural practices, using relief-like forms, lines and grids to create structural reflexes of the incoming light on bright color surfaces. Consequently, Megert increasingly detached from this painterly approach and by the end of the 1950s was already developing pioneering ideas for the expansion of the inner pictorial space with the help of broken light through directly reflecting surfaces.

Since 1960 onwards, the mirror, as an industrially produced material (Readymade), is Megert's means of choice for doubling, changing, refracting and multiplying forms in order to generate the idea of a new space that could reach into infinity. As a companion of **Lucio Fontana**, with whom he met in Paris in the 1950s along with Jean Tinguely and Yves Klein, Christian Megert is the first artist who, with this consistency, sought to expand the traditional pictorial space into the 3rd dimension by means of light refraction and mirror effects. His mirror manifesto *Ein Neuer Raum* from 1961 is furthermore an appeal with the „help of art to rethink everything possible“.

In the construction of his „illusory spaces“ through mirror reflections, Christian Megert dynamizes the used material by cutting, collaging, coloring and glazing it. In his installations, which are mostly set in Plexiglas boxes, he also uses foils and light sources such as fluorescent tubes to create continually new spaces of light and color. The mirror thereby becomes both the leading compositional element of light and the projection surface of the own self, in which the viewer and his surroundings appear in multiplying reflections and – overcoming the narcissistic reference – are released into an immaterial, infinite space.

„I want to build a new space, a space without beginning and end, in which everything lives and is encouraged to live, which is at the same time quiet and loud, unmoved and moved...“

Extract from the manifesto *Ein neuer Raum*, 1961



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Christian Megert attended the School of Applied Arts in Bern from 1952 to 1955. Extensive study trips to Berlin, Stockholm and Paris followed. From the 1960s onwards, he took part in Zero exhibitions together with **Piero Manzoni**, Otto Piene, Günther Uecker, Adolph Luther, Agostino Bonalumi and other artists who were both artistically and socially connected, and coordinated them in Switzerland. In 1968 Christian Megert created a „boundless“ mirror room at the documenta IV in Kassel. In 1973 the artist moved to Düsseldorf at the invitation of Heinz Mack. There he married his wife Franziska in 1976 and in the same year became professor at the chair for the 'Integration of Fine Art and Architecture' at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, which he held until 2001.

Christian Megert created numerous large stone sculptures for the Musikzentrum in Amsterdam, the city of Maastricht, the WestLB in Wesel, the Bundesgartenschau in Düsseldorf, the Terrassenbad Baden, the Bankverein Thun and the city of Vaduz in Liechtenstein.

The Museum für Konkrete Kunst in Ingolstadt and Museum Ritter in Waldenbuch have already honoured Megert's oeuvre with a retrospective. In 2006 Megert's works were part of the exhibition *Zero – International Artists' Avantgarde of the 1950s/60s* at the **Kunstpalaſt** Düsseldorf. Christian Megert was an important representative at the major Zero retrospective *Zero: Countdown to Tomorrow, 1950s–1960s* held at the **Guggenheim Museum** in New York in 2014 and at subsequent Zero exhibitions at **Martin–Gropius–Bau** in Berlin and **Stedelijk Museum** in Amsterdam in 2015. He continues to live and work in Düsseldorf and in his birthplace Bern.