“Untitled” (Loverboy) – Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Site-specific intervention at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion
From 25 March until 11 April 2021

Press kit: mies.link/PRESSKIT_UntitledLoverboy

“Untitled” (Loverboy)
1989
Blue fabric and hanging devices
Variable dimensions

Felix Gonzalez-Torres
The Politics of Relation

Barcelona, March 2021.

Fundació Mies van der Rohe presents, from 25 March to 11 April 2021, "Untitled" (Loverboy) by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, a site-specific piece at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion shown as part of the retrospective exhibition at MACBA of the work Politics of Relationship by Felix Gonzalez-Torres.

The intentionally cryptic subtitle of the work now presented in the Pavilion underlines the impact of the materialities of each surface. The curtain of dense, heavy, falling colour, which together with the onyx and the carpet adds the third colour of the German flag, becomes a very light, undulating, light blue tulle that flutters beyond the end of the window.
The adaptation of this piece to the architectural space and the poetic sensuality it introduces opens our gaze not only to the work presented but also to new rereadings of the Pavilion.

In the work of Gonzalez-Torres - American, born in Guáimaro (Cuba) in 1957 and deceased in Miami (United States) in 1996 - always in transit between contexts and identities, blue often represents love or beauty, but also fear. The fact of developing a subtle language about the queer condition, which prioritises romanticism and reformulates the language of minimalism and conceptualism as vehicles for affective content, is one of his main contributions to his aesthetic canon.

This installation, consisting of translucent fabric curtains that tint the light of the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion blue, introduces a new sensuality to the architectural space. It is a special work because it is the only one that is assigned a new inventory number each time it is produced. Even though the author is no longer present, the piece continues to evolve. The overall exhibition curated by Tanya Barson offers a political reading of Gonzalez-Torres' work in relation to postcolonial discourse and the anti-fascist fight, mainly in Spain and the Americas, their shared histories and commonalities, and how they impact on a personal level through issues of memory, authority, freedom and national identity. In the case of the installation in the Pavilion it also addresses the formative importance of Gonzalez-Torres' work in queer aesthetics. In the exhibition, all these aspects are related, for example through the dialogue between militarism and homoeroticism, or through Gonzalez-Torres' engagement with the idea of the monument, which can be related to narratives of race, colonialism and fascism.

Ivan Blasi, curator of the programmes of Fundació Mies van der Rohe who has coordinated and organised the specific proposal for the Pavilion of the piece, says: "The presentation of "Untitled" (Loverboy) is part of the collaborations with teams and institutions of the city of Barcelona: "The presentation of "Untitled" (Loverboy) is part of the collaborations with teams and institutions in the city of Barcelona. A blue curtain replaces the red one and issues of memory, authority, freedom and national identity are emphasised; the Pavilion was commissioned by the Weimar Republic in the interwar period and while Spain is under monarchy and dictatorship. A blue curtain that in each presentation is produced anew and gets its own registration number, giving a continuous life to the work. An absolutely different and highly recommendable experience in the Pavilion".

**About the artist**

Gonzalez-Torres got to know Spain as a child, in 1971, when he and his sister travelled through Madrid, coming from Cuba and before settling in Puerto Rico with an uncle. Although he began his artistic training in Puerto Rico, he moved to New York to continue his studies, where he consolidated his career as an individual artist and also as a member of the collective Group Material. From the perspective of an identity in transformation, Gonzalez-Torres's work revolves around a complex politics of identity that resists the simplistic labels into which it usually falls, and which allows his work to enter into the diverse contexts of Spain, Latin America and the Caribbean. Always in transit between contexts and identities, in his work Gonzalez-Torres meticulously traces the complex codifications of a mutable identity. He repeatedly questioned and subverted classifications that he believed marginalised and stereotyped the "Hispanic" artist; this led him to remove the accents in his name, a gesture that underlined and altered simplistic or discriminatory identity labels. Gonzalez-Torres
aspired to equality instead, while remaining aware that the act of looking already embodies an identity. In this sense, he considered aesthetics to be intrinsically political.

**About the Programme of Artistic Interventions at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion**
The interventions by visual artists that take place in the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion are conceived as light, short-lived installations or exhibitions. The programme of interventions provides a unique type of activity in the city that builds on the exceptional spaces of the Pavilion. The installations are a way of maintaining active interpretations and making sense of the Pavilion’s current events. A periodicity of one or two projects per year is considered, maintaining an appropriate proportion between interventions by artists and architects.

**About the Pavilion**
The Barcelona German Pavilion was designed by Lilly Reich and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as the German national pavilion for the 1929 Barcelona International Exhibition that was held in Montjuïc. This symbolic piece of work of the Modern Movement has been exhaustively studied and interpreted, while inspiring the work of several generations of architects. Built from glass, steel and different kinds of marble, the Pavilion was conceived to accommodate the official reception presided over by King Alfonso XIII of Spain along with the German authorities.

After the closure of the Exhibition, the Pavilion was disassembled in 1930. As time went by, it became a key point of reference not only in Mies van der Rohe’s own career but also in twentieth-century architecture as a whole. Given the significance and reputation of the Pavilion, thoughts turned towards its possible reconstruction.

In 1980, Oriol Bohigas promoted this initiative from the Urban Planning Delegation of the Barcelona City Council, and architects Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Cristian Cirici and Fernando Ramos were the ones appointed to the research, design and direction of the reconstruction of the Pavilion. Works began in 1983 and the new Building was inaugurated in 1986 on its original site.

**Fundació Mies van der Rohe** was created in 1983 by Barcelona’s City Council with the initial aim of carrying out the reconstruction of the German Pavilion. In addition to preserving and disseminating knowledge about the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, the Fundació promotes debate and awareness on contemporary architecture and urban planning issues.
“Untitled” (Loverboy) is a collaboration between MACBA and Fundació Mies van der Rohe in the framework of the exhibition “Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Politics of Relation”.

→ entrance to either institution allows free access to the other one between 25 March and 11 April

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Dates: From 25 March until 11 April 2021
Place: Mies van der Rohe Pavilion (Av. Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia, 7 Barcelona)
Opening hours: Monday through Sunday from 10h-20h

→ Find on the following link: mies.link/PRESSKIT_UntitledLoverboy
- Press kit (CAT, ESP, ENG)
- Images and graphical material

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