



Abgefahren
ESCH-BELVAL, 2007

Light object for the foyer of Rockhal, a concert hall in Esch-Belval, Luxembourg

A stunning object with a size of approx. 15 meters is suspended in the foyer of the Rockhal, a concert hall in Esch-Belval. It is a structure made of large pieces of metal, musical instruments and other objects. Its center is a blistering bright spot. The essential part of the object is still recognisable as a car, blown up as in the still of an explosion. Lights flash, fog is drifting out from the center, diffusing the light in an intriguing way. Certainly not a standard commission work of interior design for a shop or a bar, this is what Ingo Maurer prefers to do and does if you let him. The Rockhal is conceived expressly as space for Amplified Music and thus Ingo Maurer let himself be inspired by his remembrances about the early times of rock music. "When Rock'n' Roll came up", he says, "it was like a liberation for me. The power of this music blew away bonds and restrictions. Nowadays it is not as fresh and shocking anymore, but it isn't out-dated." The explosive force of rock music merged with Maurer's fascination for explosions, captured in a film still or slow motion. "In the 1950s, when rock music made its entrance on the stages, automobiles or motorcycles granted its driver an unleashing feeling of freedom. It was a means to escape one's small-town environment – it didn't have all the negative connotations it has today like traffic jams and pollution.", states Ingo. In fact, the starting point for the object is a Citroën SM 1973 picked up on an auto graveyard. To enforce the visualization of an explosion, long metal boards protrude both from the front and the back. Broken guitars and a smashed drum remind of wild, destructive performances of legendary rock musicians – and of some tragic accidents, too. "Abgefahren" literally means "departed" in German, but in the slang it is used for "spacy" or "far out". It is a massive object that not only required hours of precision work and consideration for its details – the instruments, the airbrush decoration on the hood and one of the doors. A lot of engineering tasks had to be carried out: with its weight of approx. 1.5 tons, it's gracing the entrance hall of the building, packed with visitors before and after concerts. It's lowest point reaches about 3.50 meters, the highest 9 meters. And, last not least, it is a lighting object. Inside the car parts, powerful light sources with approx. 3,100 watts are integrated, creating an extremely bright spot in the car's cockpit. Three stroboscopes and a fog machine add varying effects. A searchlight moves through the fog and the rest of the hall, intensifying the theatrical, stage-like atmosphere. These elements run with a program, that can be changed according to the situation. The carambolage object generates enough light for the foyer. The general lighting system, with which the foyer has been equipped withas the hall was in function prior to the installation of "Abgefahren", does not need to be used when the organizers wish to evoke a very unusual impression. In the same building the Brasserie offers its gastronomical services to the visitors. It has been furnished with three large lighting fixtures by Ingo Maurer already in October 2006. The cupola-shaped suspension lamps are lacquered pink on the inside and create a particular

lighting atmosphere, adding to the exceptional experience a visit to the Rockhal can be. "Abgefahren" is quite something for passers-by on Avenue du Rock'n' Roll, too. The wide front of windows of the building make it visible from the outside. Across the street you see another eye candy by Ingo Maurer. In the roof of the entrance hall of Dexia Banque International de Luxembourg, tubes of the light installation delineate a zigzag and at first glance look like colour-ed neon lights. In fact they consist of LED technology, which facilitates maintenance. Depending on the viewer's position, it seems to have a variety of appearances, differing in size and colour. Esch-Belval is a disused industrial area, which is developed as a new town since a few years. Gigantic blast furnaces are being conserved as historical monuments of the industries. Ingo Maurer is involved in several other projects in Esch-Belval. May 2007

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