

Press Release

Knopp Ferro: **Interrupted Silence**

16th September – 25th October 2010

Maddox Arts is pleased to present Knopp Ferro's first solo exhibition in London. In his art Ferro evokes grace and dynamism by placing slender iron rods around spatial constructions. The artist employs fine wires that create parallel and perpendicular lines, which intertwine and question the value of space. Suspended from the ceiling, floating effortlessly above us or protruding out of the floor, all the works presented in this exhibition challenge not only our understanding of gravity, but also our experience of geometrical shapes within time and space.

Ferro's compositions allude to past theatrical experiences resulting from his collaborative efforts throughout the seventies and eighties with the artist collective Jet Ferro and performance theatre Bumper to Bumper. These theatrical concerns are translated into gravity defying structures, which aim to activate the space that surrounds them by producing elusive waves of motion. The artist manipulates the minimal and kinetic properties of his metal constructions creating light and shadow, gravity and weightlessness. The dramatic sensibility achieved in each sculpture originates from minimal geometric shapes confronting one another. These structures not only evoke emotion, but also create a poetic relationship with their surroundings.

The delicate and intricate ornamentation of Ferro's light metal rods echoes the lyrical abstraction of Soto's mobiles and the subtleness of Venezuelan sculptor and architect Gego. Like Soto, Ferro assembles fine wires in different directions drawing horizontal and vertical lines that show the force and power of movement. By following a minimal aesthetic of consecutive fine wires Ferro manages to define and manipulate space. His meticulous technique results in optical effects that seduce the senses and incorporate the spectator as an active participant. The silence created by the purity of form and simplicity of Knopp Ferro's sculptures is interrupted when these ethereal structures are set into motion by a breath of wind. The artist transforms raw metal into reflected light and movement creating a perfect balance between gravity and space.

Although Ferro's knife drawings appear to be initial depictions of his iron sculptures, there is no intention of presenting them as a preliminary step towards his final sculpture making. However, they resemble the performative and dynamic quality, which characterizes his metal sculptures. The accumulation of short knife slashes across a white surface presents an ambivalent relation between creation and destruction, stillness and motion. Ferro's spontaneous reaction towards geometric forms reflects the intuitive process that defines much of his artistic production.

Knopp Ferro was born in Cologne in 1953. From 1975 to 1977 the artist studied metal sculpture and performance art at the **Academy of Art & Design** in Cologne. He founded in the seventies the legendary artist group **Jet Ferro** and was part of the Zurich based performance theatre **Bumper to Bumper**. He has exhibited widely including Argentina, Spain, Austria, Switzerland, Germany and the United States. His work is part of several public collections including **the Ella Fontanals-Cisneros Collection** in Miami, **the Artothek Cologne** in Germany, **the MACBA Museum Art Center** in Buenos Aires, Argentina and **the Collection of the Republic of Austria** in Vienna. The artist currently undertakes large-scale commissions from Switzerland and Latin America. Knopp Ferro works and lives in Munich, Germany.