

Whoever as enjoyed, as a traveller, the sudden discovery of a relict of modernist architecture in the midst of a provincial town lost in time, or a metropolis seized by late capitalism may share the insights Dolores Zinny and Juan Maidagan trigger in their work—the memory of a time where the notion of the future as progress or utopia was widely shared. This cosmopolitan experience is at the core of their work, enriched by a cultural memory deeply indebted to Argentine writers such as, Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy Casares, as well as to MADI, the international abstract movement initiated in Buenos Aires in 1946, of which Lucio Fontana was one of its later offsprings.

In their oeuvre Zinny and Maidagan engage critically with the legacy of modernist art and architecture. Their journey has led them from their native Rosario, Argentina, to New York and later to Berlin—three cities marked by the memories of modernism. Through this journeying, Zinny and Maidagan have refined their “poetics of the site-specific”, as Ranjit Hoskote described their work.

To challenge perception, Zinny and Maidagan rely on the pure and

simple disposition of color and line, folded into layers of diverse materials. Yet the purified shape does not draw away from its context. By virtue of their very own chemistry, the site's memories start to resonate. Their geometrical forms interact both with the spectator as with the space, unfolding layers of time and history: abstraction starts to speak in a surprisingly playful way.

For the last Labor Berlin, Zinny and Maidagan take up with HKW's venue, one of Berlin's architectural landmarks. A gift from the USA to former West Berlin, it was built in 1957 on an artificial hillock as a symbol of freedom of speech. Brought into these walls and windows, Zinny and Maidagan's geometrical forms evoke manifold readings: stars and stripes, the modernist's trust in new beginnings, the fogs of the Cold War. By unveiling the future folded into the past, Zinny and Maidagan create a common vocabulary for a community yet to come. Text by Silvia Fehrmann

Both born in Rosario, Argentina.  
Zinny 1968, Maidagan 1957  
2011: *MMK 1991-2011 20 Jahre Gegenwart*,  
Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am  
Main, Germany (group).  
2010: *Buenos Aires*, Fundación PROA,  
Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
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