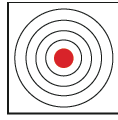




DIOCESI PATRIARCATO DI VENEZIA  
UFFICIO BENI CULTURALI

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»**Illumination – Ways to Eureka**« a project by **Lore Bert**  
for **San Samuele Church** (7<sup>th</sup> May – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2019)  
for the **58<sup>th</sup> Biennale di Venezia 2019**



**Press conference:** 7<sup>th</sup> May 3 pm  
**Opening:** 7<sup>th</sup> May 4 pm

**Welcome: Arch. Don Gianmatteo Caputo**  
(Delegato Patriarcale per i beni culturali)

**Opening speech: Dr. Dorothea van der Koelen**  
(President of the ›van der Koelen Foundation for Art and Science‹)

## Press release :

As an official collateral event of the 55th Venice Biennale, Lore Bert's »*Art & Knowledge*« exhibition in the ›Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana« (St. Mark's Library) attracted more than 105,000 visitors and was featured as one of the top 10 cultural events in Italy by a travel agency in the summer of 2013. After this brilliant success Lore Bert wants to surprise the Biennial audience again with an impressive installation in the lagoon city.

Under the title »*Illumination: Ways to Perception Knowledge – Eureka*«, the artist presents a voluminous environment made of paper and dichroic glass inside the church of San Samuele from May 7<sup>th</sup> to November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The remarkable project is realized in cooperation with the ›**Diocesi Patriarcato di Venezia – Ufficio Beni Culturali**‹ and mainly supported by the ›**van der Koelen Foundation for Art and Science**‹.

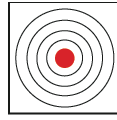
### **The Installation**

On entering the *church of San Samuele* located in the immediate vicinity of the Palazzo Grassi, the observer is astonished to perceive two architectural elements which seem to be apparitions at first: Two transparent shimmering glass columns rise from a white, ocean-like, but geometrically shaped field (10 x 4 m) of thousands of folded papers, up to 4,32 meters in height. Their iridescent colours are fascinating.



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They are reminiscent of a rainbow and the moment when this fleeting, intangible phenomenon emerges. The soft paper field intensifies the impression of lightness, yet seems to protect the transparent pillars, highlighting their special impression. With its purity and fragility, the paper evokes subtlety and inspires the spectator to pay even more attention to the fragile beauty of the work. The white ocean of paper acts like a magnetic field, capturing the light inside the space, giving it a body and transforming it into shadows by its thousands of folds. Our attention is focused on the special light phenomenon that comes through the dichroic glass.

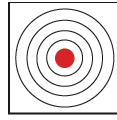


That phenomenon is an invitation to observe the environment more closely from different perspectives and under different lighting conditions to discover how colours and light are always changing through the dichroic glass. The light plays both on the structure of the columns as well as on the white paper field and finally reflecting into the room. Where the light is reflected in white, a bluish nuance suddenly shimmers and, viewed from a different perspective, a reddish colour actually appears. This creates an unexpected interplay between reality and appearance, between what we perceive and what *may be* real. Involuntarily, the image of Venice appears as a memory. The city of glass and the iridescent reflections of water, as the poet Rainer Maria Rilke describes it: »... *the city, which time and again, where a glimmer / of heaven meets a feeling of tide / forms without ever being...*«

But with the light, its transience, its changing angle of incidence throughout the day and its colourful transformation, another dimension seems to flow into the work: ›Time‹.

These fleeting phenomena do not convey an absolute message. Rather, they reflect themselves in the viewer and trigger reflections: thoughts and considerations that arise from one's own perception and experience, from one's own unique perspective and thus can only be personal in nature. Due to this, the work opens up differently to each viewer. It refers to the subjectivity of one's own vision, to the subjectivity of what the individual perceives and thinks. It suggests a multifaceted, ever-changing, possible picture of reality beyond one's own point of view and offers various conceivable ways to this insight. Thus, the title »enlightenment« does not only point to the concrete interplay between the light and its reflections in the installation itself and in a figurative sense to the prophet San Samuele (the enlightened one), but also extends to philosophical sense: the title and with it, the work reveal an snap-shot of the thought process, the moment between perception and knowledge that shapes and influences our image of the world.

The dichroic glass that Lore Bert uses for her installation comes from her hometown Mainz. In this way, the artist combines the tradition of glass production in Venice, her second home, in which no dichroic glass is still produced, with her roots in Mainz. The word ›dichroic‹ comes from the Greek ›dichroos‹ and means bicolour. It describes glass that changes its colour depending on the sunlight, viewing angle and background. During production, several thin layers are applied to the glass.



This can be done employing the sol-gel technique, in which the glass is immersed in liquids containing organometallic compounds and metal oxides. In a thermal process, the metal-alcoholic coating solutions used are converted into firmly adhering metal oxide layers at 480 °C . Multiple optical interference layers filter the light into specific wavelengths and colours, creating a rainbow effect. Depending on the change in the viewing angle, the glass changes colour.



### The relief objects

Each work of art is independent, but at the same time it stands in the context of the intellectual world from which it originated. To get closer to this world is what art offers. Lore Bert's large-format picture objects (each 180 x 180 cm) in the left aisle offer visitors the opportunity to gain a deeper impression of her artistic universe. The material that Lore Bert has been working with for over four decades, and with which she has made a name for herself worldwide, is paper: Handmade, precious paper from Far Eastern countries she has travelled to. Papers from China, Japan, Nepal, rice papers, but also papyrus from Cairo. A special material that causes the haptic dimension of her work, its spatiality and the dialogue with the light to vibrate in an unusual way. With the paper, the colour white in its infinite nuances is a constant in the work of Lore Bert, as the unforgotten art historian and exhibition organizer **Jan Hoet** wrote in his eulogy on the artist's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday (2011):

*»In Lore Bert's work, it was the use of the colour white, the instrument par excellence, that can even represent the void through the use of the achromatic colour and bring about the immaterial light in her oeuvre, just as Malevitch said he sees the white as the manifestation of the liberated nothing, or as the Zero movement saw white as a symbol of a humane world in which man can articulate freely.«*  
**(Jan Hoet).**

The imposing triptych of Immanuel Kant with a bilingual quotation from his ›Critique of Pure Reason‹: **»Kant - Transcendental Aesthetics«** is made from paper, too. The work from 1998 was presented for the first time by Lore Bert during her solo exhibition *»Idea - Phenomenon - Perception«* in Seoul (South Korea). The triptych indicates the philosophical dimension in the work of the artist, who deals with the writings of great thinkers, poets and scientists since the 80s, even more clearly. *»Ways of Worldmaking, like the American logician Nelson Goodman – to whom Lore Bert has dedicated a series of works and installations – describes this process, represent only a part of the whole, an aspect in a sense. As Immanuel Kant aptly describes it in the Critique of Pure Reason in its chapter on transcendental aesthetics, it is only one's own subjective way of perceiving the world, which is peculiar to him. Lore Bert has devoted numerous text works and banners with quotations from his writings to Immanuel Kant, too. With those works, she refers to an elementary peculiarity in the nature of the ›Animal Rationale‹ (of the reasoned living being): (Abstract) thinking and (concrete) feeling are symbiotic within man.«* **(Dorothea van der Koelen)**

In addition to the material paper, light plays a central role in the work of Lore Bert. The work **»Sun«** (2018) is dedicated to the light par excellence. A three-dimensional, geometrically designed image of thousands of coloured and crumpled papers, in whose centre a field of pure gold leaf gleams,



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seemingly floating. Like an intensifying echo, this work seems to reflect an impression that the installation »Enlightenment« has caused. While the Kant triptych expands the philosophical level of the installation, this other large-format work appears like a symbol referring to the spiritual-religious dimension of the »enlightenment«. The colours white, turquoise and gold also remind us of the Orient, of countries that have had a tremendous impact on the history of Venice, of countries in which Lore Bert, too, has worked and exhibited.



Finally, the last two large-format works pay homage to Venice: »*Coloured Quatrefoils in Black*« (2016) and »*Circle in Square*« (2018). Their coloured and golden structures refer to the characteristic architectural elements of the *Serenissima*. Back in 2003, Lore Bert showed a series of works dedicated to the city of Venice in her exhibition »Architettura Veneziana« in La Galleria, on occasion of the reopening of the *Gran Teatro La Fenice*. The enthusiasm for this city's architecture originated in 1955, when Lore Bert undertook her first four-week study trip to Italy. From this fascination for architecture and space her »basic works« have emerged: constructive drawings and collages, based on floor plans of mosques and churches. Those plans were taken only as a basis by the artist and then formally modified. With her image »Coloured Quatrefoils in Black« Lore Bert refers to the landmark of Venice, which can be found in the Gothic window forms of the Doge's Palace or the *Ca' d'Oro*. The work »Circle in Square« proofs her interest in the geometric forms and the amazing structures of Venetian marble floors in churches and palaces.

### **Lore Bert – Biographical Notes**

Lore Bert represents a unique position in the international art scene. Born in 1936 in Giessen, she grew up in Darmstadt. Between 1953 and 1957 she studied at the »Hochschule für Bildende Künste« in Berlin under the sculptor Hans Uhlmann, who sparked her interest in spatial design and was thus to decisively shape her further development. In the exhibitions that she presents in more than 28 countries worldwide, she showcases works which enter into a multifaceted dialogue with the material paper. Her artistic universe unfolds in the spirit of Kant's »*Transcendental Aesthetics*« through sensory perception. In addition to relief objects and collages made of paper, she realized more than 120 environments in museums and public institutions in Europe, Asia, Africa, Arabia, the USA and Canada. Constructive forms, geometry, architectural elements, letters and numbers constitute her formal vocabulary, poetic and philosophical writings, science and history, logical connections, properties and relations the intellectual content of her work. Over 260 exhibitions and 40 monographs document her work. Her artworks are part of numerous public and private collections.

Lore Bert was honorary artist at the Sharjah Biennale (UAE) in 1999 and at the Izmir Biennial (Turkey) in 2011. In 2013, she presented her exhibition »Art & Knowledge« at the *Biblioteca Marciana* (Piazza San Marco, Venezia) as an official »Collateral Event« of the 55<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial. In 2017 she received the medal of the city of Lublin for her extraordinary contribution to the cultural life of the city of Lublin/Poland.

She lives and works in Mainz and Venice.