

**energy/power | haroon mirza**

**11 november 2022 – 28 january 2023**

For the opening exhibition *energy/power*, the British-Pakistani artist Haroon Mirza (\*1977 in London, UK) has developed a multi-sensory presentation intertwining various references of technology, nature, human and the universe with socio-political issues. The medium of electricity is at the forefront of his work, combining light, sound, and photovoltaic panels into complex circuit systems that create a dynamic audiovisual experience. Mirza draws on a variety of scientific, musical, art-historical and spiritual influences, referring to Minimal Art strategies on a formal level.

At the center of the presentation is the large-scale sculpture *Dyson Sphere* (2022), its core octagonally enclosed by solar panels with intensely radiating halogen lamps, absorbing the light. Mirza takes this idea from the physicist Freeman Dyson, which in turn refers to the little-known science fiction novel „Starmaker“ (1937) by Olaf Stapledon: in the future, with technological progress, a star can be enclosed with a collection of solar panels to store its enormous reserves of energy and make it usable for humans. Using the power generated by *Dyson Sphere* as an energy source, surrounding works of sound-generating objects and psychoactive San Pedro and Peyote cacti will be powered and operated as if within its own ecosystem. The *Light Work*, whose pulsating light is based on growth lamps, is placed above the corner and supplies the plants, whereby the blue light spectrum promotes vegetative and structural growth and the red light promotes the growth of flowers and fruits. At the same time, a wafting sound resounds through the space, paired with a rhythm emanating from two drums. The tablas are activated by a mechanism connected to the *Dyson Sphere*'s circuit, giving the impression of a shamanic ritual powered by technology. The sound is coming from a stone circle with integrated speakers that cyclically emit sounds in unison with the absorbed light.

Additionally two works from Mirza's series of *Solar Powered LED Circuit Compositions* are presented, in which he combines solar panels, electronic circuits with light and pigments to create unique wall pieces that are able to preserve the rawness and aesthetics of the materials used while at the same time developing a painterly presence. The intensity of the LEDs is directly dependent upon the light incidence of the solar panel, allowing the external influences to become part of the *Solar Powered LED Circuit Composition* – the candles of the LED matrix only flicker when the light is very bright. Mirza's interest is in the merging of the energy and electricity of the heterogeneous constituents, creating a closed circuit that can be conceptually and metaphorically understood as an analogy of social systems.

Beyond Mirza's interest in music and the sound of electronic signals, the exhibition title *energy/power* refers to a very ambivalent relationship of dependencies: „*Semantically they are different, but there is overlap between energy and power: you need energy to have power and electrical signals. The key for me is that it's a circuit: there is always a plus and a minus, which is conjoined to create the power. (...) Because in all of life and in the universe, ultimate power doesn't come from just one source, it's a combination of two or more things. Then philosophically this is interesting, because this negates monotheism. And then politically, those that have energy have power.*“

**max goelitz**

### **about the artist**

British-Pakistani artist Haroon Mirza (b. 1977 in London, UK) describes himself as a composer, developing a multi-layered body of work with sound, video, electronic circuits, and everyday objects by altering the function of the components used, as well as the meaning of their cultural and social codes. In his multisensory installations, he tests the interplay and dissonance between sound, light, and electric current, challenging viewers to abandon perceptual distinctions between noise, sound, and music and to experience the relationship between the individual components and the surrounding space in new ways. In doing so, he formally refers to strategies of Minimal Art and fuses contemporary technologies with political themes.

In 2011, Haroon Mirza was awarded the Silver Lion at the 54th Venice Biennale. He received further honors with the Zurich Art Prize (2013), Nam June Paik Center Prize (2014), Calder Art Prize (2015), and the COLLIDE International Award (2017), which included a two-month residency at CERN in Switzerland. The Dyson Sphere was presented at the exhibition "Novacène" in 2022 as part of lille3000 and supported by Maison Ruinart. Selected solo exhibitions of the artist's work have been shown at the New Museum, New York (2012), Museum Tinguely, Basel (2015), and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2019).

### **about max goelitz**

max goelitz was founded in Munich in March 2020 and shows an international and contemporary program. The gallery represents established and emerging artistic positions in conceptual and post-minimal art and focuses on the intersection of art and current technologies. The dynamic and cutting-edge gallery model is characterized by a combination of digital innovation and traditional art historical expertise. At its core is an ongoing, collaborative partnership with artists and a fundamental support of artistic freedom. In addition to the exhibition program in Munich the exhibition space in Berlin will showcase statement artistic presentations in the future. max goelitz follows a collaborative approach and acts within a global network of partner galleries that include OMR, Mexico City; François Ghebaly, Los Angeles; and Häusler Contemporary, Zurich, among others.

The exhibition *energy/power* takes place in collaboration with Lisson Gallery, London, New York, Shanghai.

For further informations please contact:

Gabriel Schmidt | gabriel@maxgoelitz.com | +49 176 62097929

max goelitz  
rudi-dutschke straÙe 26  
10969 berlin

maxgoelitz.com  
@maxgoelitzgallery  
#maxgoelitzgallery

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