

Lothar Götz conjures up the theatre in his new show at DOMOBAAL

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Installation view of Lothar Götz, *Pas de Trois* at DOMOBAAL. Photography Andy Keate, courtesy domobaal

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German abstract artist **Lothar Götz** has created a theatrical room-filling installation at DOMOBAAL gallery. *Pas de Trois* pays tribute to modernist artist Oskar Schlemmer's **iconic dance choreography *Triadic Ballet*** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHQmnumNngo>), which was first performed in Stuttgart in 1922, and toured through Europe until the mid-1930s.

Götz is best known for his large scale wall paintings and immersive architectural displays, characterised by the use of vividly coloured abstract geometrical forms, shapes and lines. His practice has been strongly influenced by the Bauhaus Movement's idea of the 'Gesamtkunstwerk' (a total work of art) and in particular by Bauhaus master Oskar Schlemmer (1888-1943). In his student days in Aachen in the 1980s, Götz was unsure if he should pursue a career as a dancer, an actor or artist. It was Schlemmer's experiments with multi-disciplinary art forms that made Götz realise that his passion for theatre, architecture and choreography could be unified through art.

Oskar Schlemmer taught at the theatre workshop of the Bauhaus in the 1920s. He had a strong interest in the abstraction of the human body and aimed to translate the two-dimensional nature of painting into movement and dance in space. For his groundbreaking *Triadic Ballet* he designed costumes that reduced the human figure to geometric formalist elements.

Inspired by Schlemmer's contrasting colour palette of pink, black and yellow and the striking abstract harlequin-like patterns of the dancer's costumes, Götz has transformed DOMOBAAL's gallery space into a stage-like environment.

A colourful mural that covers an entire gallery wall is juxtaposed with two brightly painted freestanding partition walls that resemble theatre flats. The shapes on the walls create a dynamic interplay with the compositions of diagonals, segmented

circles and arrows depicted on three small-scale acrylic on linen works. Large silver silk-screens hang like theatre curtains over the windows, blocking the natural light. Geometrical patterns re-appear in a series of colour-pencil drawings, displayed in a seemingly provisional zigzag arrangement of three plywood vitrines on trestles in the centre of the room.

It is evident that *Pas de Trois* evolved from Götz's longstanding engagement with Schlemmer's oeuvre. However, instead of just copying the Bauhaus artist's colours and compositions, Götz powerfully translates them into his own distinct aesthetic language. Götz reverses Schlemmer's working process by bringing the three-dimensional poses, the movement and stage design of the *Triadic Ballet* back into the two-dimensional realm of painting, thereby creating a complex interplay of shapes, surfaces and colours.

The overall effect is an immersive sculptural and theatrical environment, and could be interpreted as a sketch for a performance to be activated by the bodily movement of the viewer. To fully experience the work, one must move through it!

The second part of the exhibition, titled *Threesome* will open at **Petra Rinck Gallery** (<http://www.petrarinckgalerie.de/artists/goetz/>) in Düsseldorf on 4 November 2016. Lothar Götz's in situ *Composition for a Staircase* is on permanent view at **Pallant House Gallery** (<http://pallant.org.uk/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/installations/lothar-gatz-composition-for-a-staircase>) in Chichester.

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DOMOBAAL, 3 John Street, London WC1N 2ES. Open Thursday – Saturday 12.00-18.00 and by appointment. Exhibition continues until Saturday 12 November 2016. www.domobaal.com (<http://domobaal.com/exhibitions/91-16-lothar-goetz-pas-de-trois-01.html>)