

TEMPLON



Press Release
6 July 2018

IVÁN NAVARRO *PROSTUTOPIA*

6 September – 20 October 2018
Opening : Thursday 6 September from 5.30 to 8.30 pm



Iván Navarro, *Totem*, 2013
Néons, 254 x 111,7 x 111,7 cm

For his new exhibition *Prostutopia* at Galerie Templon in Brussels, Chilean artist Iván Navarro has deconstructed the notion of utopia. Extending his exploration of the energetic forces that incite revolutionary action, and following up on his recent exhibition *Fanfare*, at Templon Paris in 2017, which invoked the power of sound and music as a revolutionary tool, he now turns his attention to the utopian vision and its exploitation.

A resident of New York for over 20 years, Iván Navarro's works are political, informed by art history, design and architecture as well as his personal experience of American society and the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile. His new work takes the notion of utopia and its subsequent commodification as its starting point. *Prostutopia* questions the distorting spectacle of utopia dressed up, marketed and denatured.

In the half-light, electric sculptures create an interplay of light and optical illusions that transform the space. These subverted everyday objects – a fence, two vanity mirrors, a ladder, a book, a three-tiered podium, a booth – while immediately playful and appealing, take us on a journey haunted by the issue of control and freedom. Each object becomes an instrument of control and surveillance. In a world where everyone is constantly watcher and watched, the artist's luminous *Totem* with its minimalist aesthetic becomes a watchtower. Iván Navarro questions the illusion of protection and connection which nourishes the ambivalent power of the political, economic and social bodies doing the watching – government, businesses and social media.

On the opening evening, the exhibition will include a performance piece entitled *Sirens*, conceived in collaboration with artist Courtney Smith, where three volunteer participants each occupy one of the three podiums. Periodically prompted to shift postures and explore the possible uses of the object to the body, they are free to move and speak and interact; yet strictly confined to their individual stations.

Born in 1972 in Santiago, Iván Navarro has been living and working in Brooklyn (NY) since 1997. He represented Chile at the 53th Venice Biennale in 2009. Recent solo and group exhibitions featuring his work include: *This Land is Your Land*, solo, Busan Museum, South Korea; *Age of Terror*, Imperial War Museum, London (2018); *Luz y Espacio*, Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain (2017); Art Basel Parours; Yinchuan Biennale, China (2016); *Under the Same Sun*, South London Gallery (2016 and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2014); *Storylines*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2015); *This Land is Your Land*, Madison Square Park, New York; Nasher Museum of Art, Durham and North Park Center, Dallas (2014 - 2016); *Light Show*, Hayward Gallery, London; Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland; Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah and CorpArtes, Santiago (2013 - 2016); *Iván Navarro: Fluorescent Light Sculptures*, Frost Museum of Art, Miami (2012). His work is included in a great many international collections, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York), Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (Washington, DC), Fonds National d'Art Contemporain and Louis Vuitton Foundation (Paris). He was appointed as the associate artist for the Grand Paris Express artistic programme, working in collaboration with architect Dominique Perrault on the future Gare de Villejuif - Institut Gustave Roussy.

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