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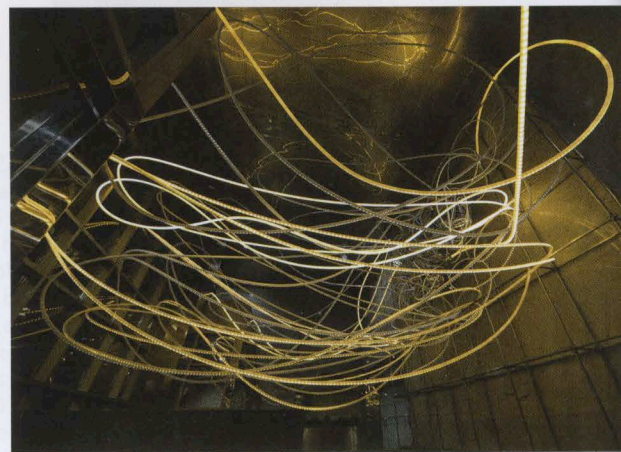
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Art to Walk Into, Under, Around, or Through

LED "BUBBLES" BY GRIMANESA AMORÓS

The graceful undulations of LED tubing compose a striking display in the windows of 125 Maiden Lane at the heart of New York City's financial district. The latest sculpture in Grimanesa Amorós's most recent body of work, the installation plays on the artist's signature "bubble" sculptures while providing a new mode of exploring her longstanding interest in lighting effects and diffusive materials. For Amorós, the work conveys ties to her birthplace of Peru, with bubble shapes recalling man-made islands in Lake Titicaca and LED tubes referencing distinctive reeds that grow in the northern reaches of the country. Such references inspire her intuitive process of formulating site-specific works. Here, a structural grid against the back wall echoes the building's monumental windows and acts as a spine for the seemingly weightless swirls of light. A dynamic pattern activates LEDs in four shades of white and a golden yellow. At night, the sweeping and curving work reflects off the marble walls, steel ceiling, and windows to create a hypnotic illumination. grimanesaamoros.com

—Sara Spink



SMILJAN RADIC'S SERPENTINE GALLERIES COMMISSION

Architect Smiljan Radic becomes the fourteenth architect commissioned by the Serpentine to design a pavilion outside the entrance to its Kensington Gardens gallery. Conceived in 2000 by director Julia Peyton-Jones, the Pavilion project has presented works by highly prestigious architects and become an important site for architectural experimentation. Radic's design references his earlier work, much of which resides in his native Chile, but also speaks to the architectural traditions of England. "The Serpentine 2014 Pavilion is part of the history of small romantic constructions seen in parks or large gardens, the so-called follies, which were hugely popular from the end of the sixteenth century to the start of the nineteenth," Radic says. His semi-transparent cylindrical structure atop large quarry stones resembles a shell and encloses a flexible, multipurpose social space with a café. During its four-month tenure (June 26 to October 19), it will provide a venue for the Serpentine's Park Nights series—interdisciplinary events combining art, poetry, music, film, literature, and theory. The pavilion itself will offer additional enticement for visitors at night, Radic says—the amber-tinted light showing through the translucent shell "will attract the attention of passers-by like lamps attracting moths." serpentinegalleries.org

—Sara Spink

A POSTHUMOUS WORK BY JESÚS RAFAEL SOTO IN HOUSTON

Almost ten years after its commission, a twenty-six-hundred-square-foot site-specific work designed by the late Venezuelan artist Jesús Rafael Soto (1923–2005), an iconic contributor to the kinetic art movement, has been completed at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The artist first experimented with kinetic works in three dimensions in the late 1950s, and this piece stands as his final contribution to the Penetrable series he began in 1967—indeed, it is his last work. Of the twenty-five or thirty Penetrables Soto designed, the Houston piece is unprecedented in its size and complexity and is one of few Soto planned for interior display. It is also a rare work he designed for a specific site and is the only one expressly intended for (relatively) long-term installation (it is up until September 1). Architect Paolo Carrozzino and producer Walter Pellevoisin oversaw a team of artisans and ironworkers in Houston and Vielle-Tursan, France, to realize this piece, which is comprised of twenty-four thousand hand-painted and tied PVC (polyvinyl chloride) tubes. The work hangs two stories from ceiling to floor and attains its full realization only with the participation of the viewer, who, walking through it, becomes absorbed in a tactile, optical, and physically responsive environment. An accompanying exhibition of eight pieces typifying the various phases and series of Soto's career helps viewers appreciate the Houston Penetrable as the consummation of the themes and concepts he investigated throughout his career. mfah.org

—Sara Spink

