

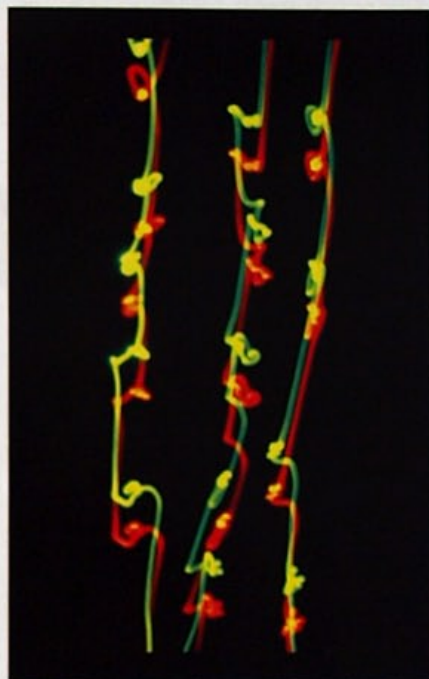
## DISCOVERING THE LIGHT

Suzie Walshe

*"The result of Kilu's dark room journey culminates with far more than a photograph, the works are objects of discovery that possess a timeless, magical quality."*

Using fluorescent light and movement to explore color, luminosity, and sculptural space, German artist Kilu captures the energy of the life—from the people he meets to the places he travels. Conceiving his visual art behind a camera lens, Kilu conveys inventive points of view that form a synthesis between abstract and figurative elements. Kilu creates a narrative with light, utilizing abstract compositions that reveal a life within the darkness of the studio. His photos deliver compelling patterns with graceful colors, methodical lines and arches,

spinning, and manipulating the camera," he says. Given the very limited time of the camera's exposure, and the complexity of the produced piece, the artist impresses with his dexterity during the creative process. Kilu repeats the exposure many times



an aesthetic that can be closely identified with time spent in Zurich, Switzerland before his relocation to New York.

Kilu's method for creating the photographs goes far beyond the traditional studio and dark room process. The base for every piece is a self-constructed light installation, consisting of strings of light sources in various colors and temperature. Suspending the camera on a self-constructed hanging support, often directly operated by himself, Kilu manipulates the camera in order to register the movement of the light as a continuous form. Kilu constructs an explosive narrative during this time, where his own subtle movements translate a radiant experience of light and energy. Each line dances across the surface of the glass, in a very personal attempt by the artist to transpose his sensibility into colors and forms. Color is of paramount importance to the artist, whose palette evolves based on his environment. Earlier works created in Zurich are awash with mellow lemons and energetic greens, whereas recent work created in New York echoes the vibrancy of the city. Kilu's surfaces are now ablaze with saffron, crimson, and burnt umber. The *Rays* series brilliantly captures the effervescent colored lights and forms of New York City that contrast with the neutral spectrum used in the work made in his native Europe. This recent cycle of work combines elements of gestural Abstraction with drawing-like marks. For example, the work *Circular Rays No. 22* is at once epic and intimate. This dynamic work is infused with references to literature but more significantly to nature and travel.

Music plays a key role in both the composition and conclusion of the final piece. Acting as part of the creative process—in that it takes the artist into a trance, music opens Kilu's creative channels, thus making him ready to conceive the piece. "At the right moment I open the camera's shutter for a longer period of time, and create an image by moving, rotating,

until he is satisfied with the ultimate image. This technique works prolifically in order to achieve a raw aesthetic.

The result of Kilu's dark room journey culminates with far more than a photograph; the works are objects of discovery that possess a timeless, magical quality. Reminiscent of a dream voyage to another place, his works are deeply personal, evoking his own subconsciousness, while revealing universal truths about the journey and celebration of life. With a bravery and intuit, Kilu's current work travels down many new paths, exploring new techniques and aesthetics. Light and its power to transform, however, will remain a central focus throughout his creation. □

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Left: Kilu, *Circular Rays No. 22*, 2008. C-Print/Original, 32 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Right: Kilu, *Rays Sechs*, 2006. C-Print/Original, 24 x 36 inches. Courtesy of the artist.