

# Art at Klubhaus



**People are  
continually  
crossing paths,  
sharing opinions.  
The resulting  
conversations  
ignite the mind,  
excite interest,  
and spark ideas.**

## Why we collect art

Why would a global re/insurer like Swiss Re ever engage in art, build a prominent collection and even commission art projects? Re/Insurance is first and foremost about enabling risk, encouraging progress and making societies more resilient. That is how economies can develop, entrepreneurs thrive, knowledge build. Swiss Re is recognized as a thought leader and is one of the most admired companies in its industry. It has a long tradition, a strong identity and extremely loyal employees.

Re/Insurance products and services, however, are complex, intangible and require explanation. That is one of the reasons why Swiss Re has always engaged in art and architecture. Both help project the company's ability to face the unknown, to deal with future challenges but more importantly, they help create an emotional profile and foster dialogue. Art and architecture express the core values of the corporation, support its brand recognition, establish a link to society and offer great identification for employees around the world. Moreover, clients and other stakeholders benefit from the experience of the unique atmosphere and quality of Swiss Re's workplaces and its iconic buildings.

But there is more to it. While art and architecture have become an important visual expression of the company's identity, they also underpin Swiss Re's commitment to offering a stimulating work environment and to bringing diversity to life – every day.

Anne Keller Dubach  
Head Art, Curating & Collection  
Art at Swiss Re

## Swiss Re Klubhaus – reinvigorated, maximized and cultivated

The Klubhaus of Swiss Re – in Zurich at that time still known as “Schweizer Rück” – opened in 1957. Even while it was still being designed and constructed, architect Hans Hofmann was already using artistic elements to give powerful expression to spatial tensions and to dramatize the contrast between nature and the building's interior.

Early collaboration between the architects, Swiss Re's Art Commission and with artists made it possible to synchronize artistic interventions not as an afterthought, but rather in an integrated fashion – already strengthening the process of finding and creating space even during the architectural design phase. Rather than being formally exhibited, the artistic content thus draws back and tries to become inescapably fused with the built fabric.

Pae White from California, Tobias Rehberger from Germany and Jorge Pardo based in Mérida, Mexico – joining together here as a community of artists – give form and expression to the large wall areas on different floors. A total work of art that can be experienced by everyone is created on regularly sized diamond-shaped ceramic tiles that are spatially arranged on the basis of a digitally calculated acoustic model. Through their partly staggered and partly flat, smooth surfaces, the tiles create a play of surprising colour effects and not only enhance the spatial experience inside the building, but also give it an impressive appearance from the outside.

Today's massive interventions resulting from the increase in staffing capacity and the concentration of Swiss Re in its Mythenquai site fade into the background thanks to surprising spatial and lighting effects and through the way in which art is integrated into the architecture. The all-embracing, spatially encompassing integration of art into the architecture appears perfectly natural here, and it also breaks down what might otherwise be an austere quality in the façades.

sam architects



## JORGE PARDO

\*1963 in Havana, Cuba



Lives and works in Mérida, Mexico

Describing his work as “shaping space” Jorge Pardo has made work that moves freely across the notional disciplines of art, architecture and design throughout his over thirty-year career. His constructions range from a single light sculpture, to paintings, rooms or an assembly of buildings that combine all the individual elements of his artistic creation in the mode of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* or “total work of art.”

His work contends with distinctions of private and public space, while calling to mind references as diverse as the Light and Space movement, Land art, modernist design and the colour, flora and fauna of his home in Mérida, Mexico.

Selected projects and exhibitions include:

L’Arlatan, Arles (2018)

Tecoh, Yucatán (2006–2011)

Latin American Art Galleries, LACMA, Los Angeles (2008)

*starting to get the ex wife out of my summer house...and maybe some issues in objecthood along the way...*, Applied Arts Pavilion,

La Biennale di Venezia with the Victoria and Albert Museum,

57th Venice Biennale, Venice (2017)



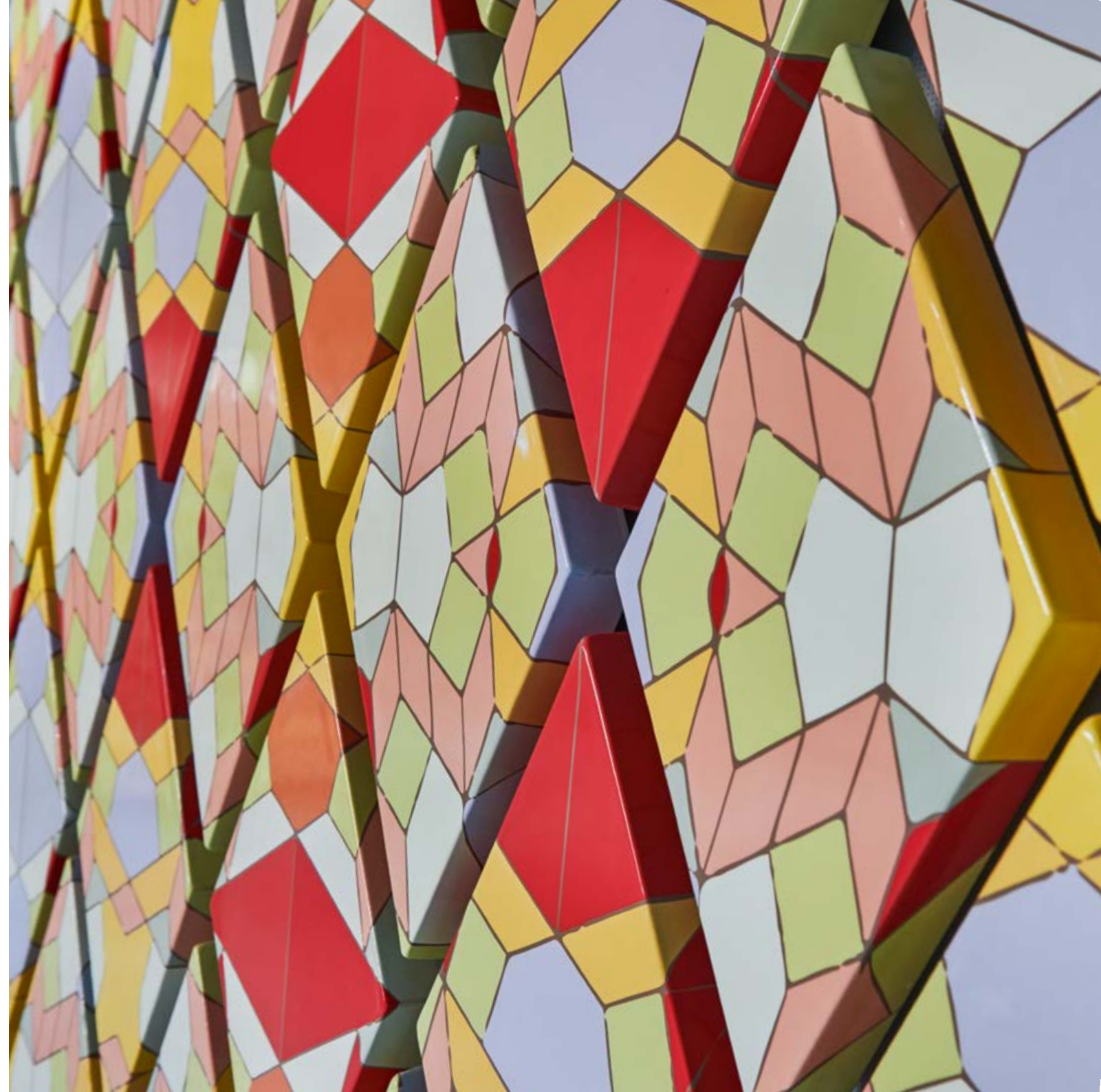
### Tiles

#### Details

##### Untitled, 2018–2020

Silkscreened ceramic tiles,  
27 x 49 x 3 cm each  
102 m<sup>2</sup> overall

© 2020, Jorge Pardo  
Image copyright: Luca Zanier





## Interview with Jorge Pardo

### What's the intention behind your concept?

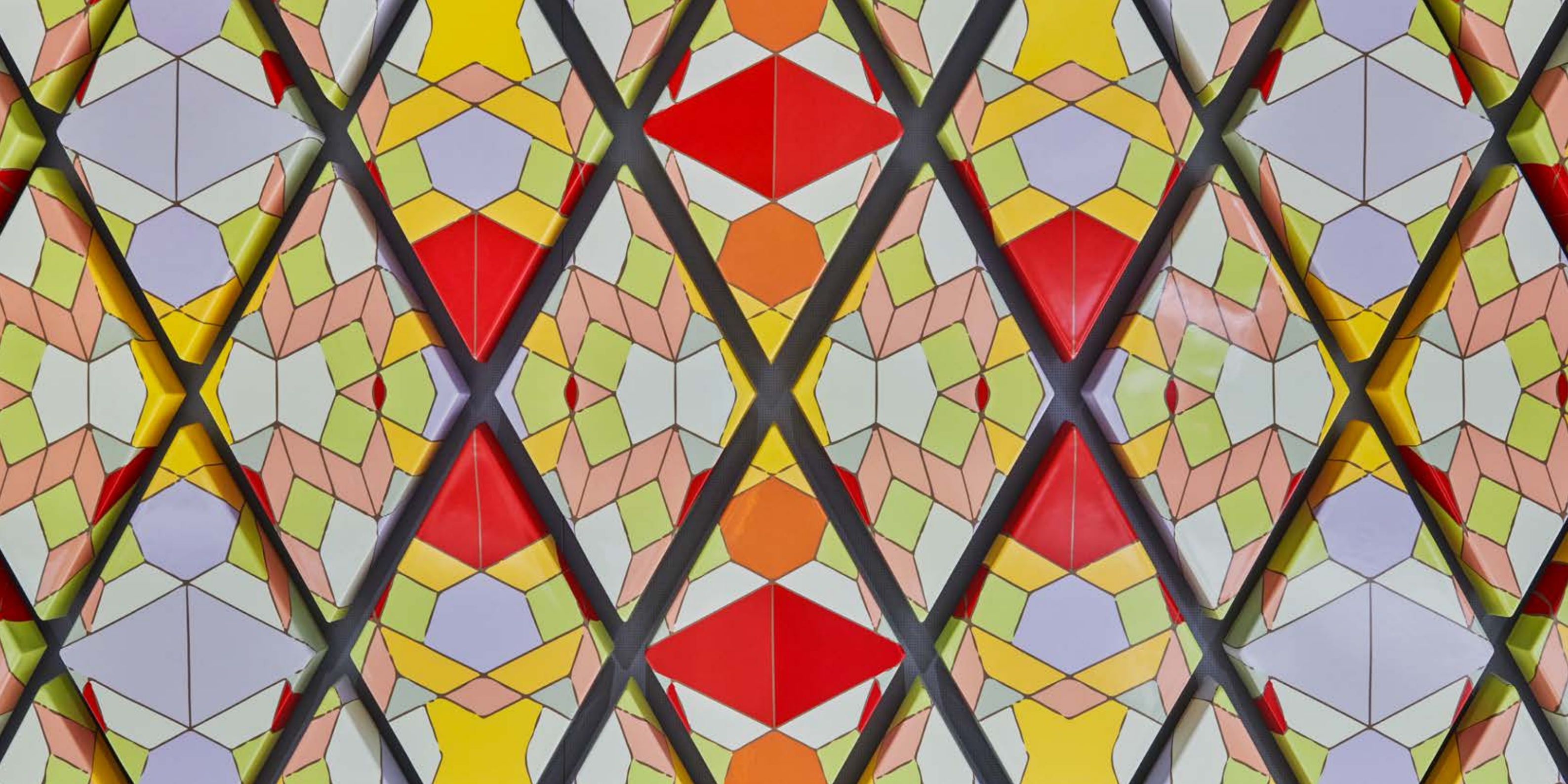
The intention behind the project was actually the internal, studio-based process of development and creation itself. This partially consisted of selecting colors for the tiles, selecting colors for the light works and understanding how those interacted with each other. Another integral part of the process was understanding the spaces in detail and being able to develop a sense of how the space here (K01) and the spaces and works above (K1 and K2) form a unit. The space down here is almost basement-like, so it carries a different expectation. The entryway has a sense of drama, and the spaces above it take on a lighter sensibility.

### What is special about the Klubhaus project and what did you enjoy the most?

I enjoyed the opportunity to come to Zurich to really consider what it is like to be in the space and to get a full understanding of the project's context. Being able to walk through the space and understand how the entryway space differs from the upper floors, both in terms of architecture and general ambience was illuminating. But in reality, a project is never really special – it is just specific. The differences between the projects are what I find special. And of course, it was nice to be able to work with my good friends and colleagues, Pae and Tobias.













## TOBIAS REHBERGER

\*1966 in Esslingen/Neckar, Germany

 Lives and works in Frankfurt and Berlin

Tobias Rehberger is an artist whose work across sculpture, installation, painting and architecture is characterized by transformation, chance and dialog. From minimal interventions to large scale public sculpture, his distinctive aesthetic creates radical new experiences of our surroundings.

Selected solo exhibitions include:

Haus am Waldsee, Berlin (2019)  
Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2019)  
Museum of Contemporary Art Busan (2018)  
Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2016)  
Rehberger won the Golden Lion at the 53rd Venice Biennale for *Was du liebst, bringt dich auch zum weinen* (2009)



### Tiles

#### Details

**Alphabet of Colour,  
Time and Space, 2018–2020**

Silkscreened ceramic tiles,  
27 x 49 x 3 cm each  
370 m<sup>2</sup> overall

© 2020, Tobias Rehberger  
Image copyright: Luca Zanier

“For over twenty-five years, I have created work that questions artistic ideals such as genius and authenticity. Using strategies from the realms of design, architecture, fashion and advertising, I examine the meaning of art and art’s modes of production. Through sculpture, industrial objects and handcrafted articles, I explore structural design and architecture as a whole, thriving on chance connections and unexpected encounters. The objects that I create are versatile and can be repeatedly adapted to the contexts in which they are meant to function.”

*Tobias Rehberger*







## Interview with Tobias Rehberger

### What's the intention behind your concept?

For me, the project's three-dimensional nature, as well as the building's history and its renovation, were my main points of departure. I wanted to create this work in an archeologically minded way that also took into account the relationship between the work, the structure that it would be housed in and the viewer – to achieve that, I created the tiles in three layers of relief, with each layer becoming more saturated in hue. The least saturated colors were applied to the lowest layers of the relief. These lightest colors correspond to the color originally used in the Klubhaus before renovation. My intention was also to create a work that is aware of its environment and its utility – it is, after all, installed as part of a cafeteria, and I wanted the materials and techniques that I employed to reflect that.

### What is special about the Klubhaus project and what did you enjoy the most?

The spirit of collaboration that this project fostered was amazing. There were three of us that worked here, and although we all have different approaches, we all shared a common set of tasks and a mutual goal: We were to work with tiles as wall coverings, and we were to create a set of light works. It was all very interconnected, but from that interconnection came a distinct sense of contrast that brought across our individual approaches as artists. As friends, it was wonderful to join forces with Pae and Jorge to create work that emphasizes the delicate sensibilities of a renovated historical space. And of course, I like food!









## PAE WHITE

\*1963 in Pasadena, USA

 Lives and works in Los Angeles

Pae White makes artwork that emerges from material experimentation with an approach that often pairs high-tech and artisanal craft, or ephemeral objects and quotidian subjects. Over the past decades she has created an expansive body of work that includes sculpture, painting, site-specific installation, furniture, architecture, and graphic design. Her subjects and imagery might include smoke, color, popcorn, time, plants, moonlight, birdcalls, bugs, and clip art. Common materials are often used to uncommon ends, for example in the way the artist has made artworks with neon, ceramic, string, birdseed and glass. White has also adapted centuries-old techniques to function with 21st-century digital technology, as with her recent series of tapestries. “For a number of years,” White explains, “my practice has at times focused on an exploration of the overlooked, the forgotten, the elusive, the spaces between things, even the things between things. I am equally drawn to the temporary, the fleeting, to the ephemera of everyday life.”

Selected solo exhibitions include:

The San Jose Museum of Art (2019)  
Saarland Museum, Saarbrücken, Germany (2017)  
South London Gallery, London (2013)  
The Power Plant, Toronto (2011)

Her work has been included in significant exhibitions such as the Whitney Biennial, the Venice Biennial, and the NGV Triennial in Melbourne



### Tiles

#### Details

**Forgetting to Remember  
Spring, 2018–2020**

Silkscreened ceramic tiles,  
27 x 49 x 3 cm each  
112 m<sup>2</sup> overall

© 2020, Pae White  
Image copyright: Luca Zanier





## Interview with Pae White

### What's the intention behind your concept?

My intention for this project is to reference storytelling through type and graphic form. I used the alphabet as my starting point since it forms the most essential building blocks of any text. From there I built it out graphically, broke it apart and reconfigured the letterforms. My hope is that the fleeting references to type that are found in these mini-collages evoke a sense that a story is waiting to be decoded, and that a story is waiting to be told. This could be a story about transparency and perception or a story about adjacencies – subjects that are represented more formally in the tile glaze itself. Nevertheless, it is the echoes of storytelling that I am hoping to explore.

### What is special about the Klubhaus project and what did you enjoy the most?

One of the things that I really enjoyed about the Klubhaus project was collaborating with my old friends and colleagues Jorge and Tobias, whose work I have watched and admired over the years. For us to come together in this building, a building which celebrates collegiality, is an extremely unique opportunity. It is really quite incredible to see a company extend this kind of generosity and sensitivity towards its employees. The Klubhaus is a beautiful building with a fascinating history. It is an honor to have my work be both the foreground and background of the what transpires in these spaces.









## Lights Patio K2



### Details

Jorge Pardo

#### **Untitled, 2018–2020**

Powder coated steel, coloured  
PET-G, lightbulbs  
50 x 48 x 25 cm each

© 2020, Jorge Pardo

Tobias Rehberger

#### **Alphabet of Colour, Time and Space, 2018–2020**

Steel and 3d-printed plastic, spray  
painted and coloured HPL, lightbulbs  
dimensions variable

© 2020, Tobias Rehberger

Pae White

#### **Forgetting to Remember Spring, 2018–2020**

Neon tubes, wire  
dimensions variable

© 2020, Pae White

Image copyright: Luca Zanier









## Chandelier K01



### Details

Jorge Pardo

#### **Untitled, 2018–2020**

Aluminium base, coloured PET-G,  
LED lighting  
75 x 75 x 35 cm each

© 2020, Jorge Pardo

Tobias Rehberger

#### **Alphabet of Colour, Time and Space, 2018–2020**

Steel and 3d-printed plastic, spray  
painted and coloured HPL, lightbulb  
54 x 54 x 30 cm each

© 2020, Tobias Rehberger

Pae White

#### **Forgetting to Remember Spring, 2018–2020**

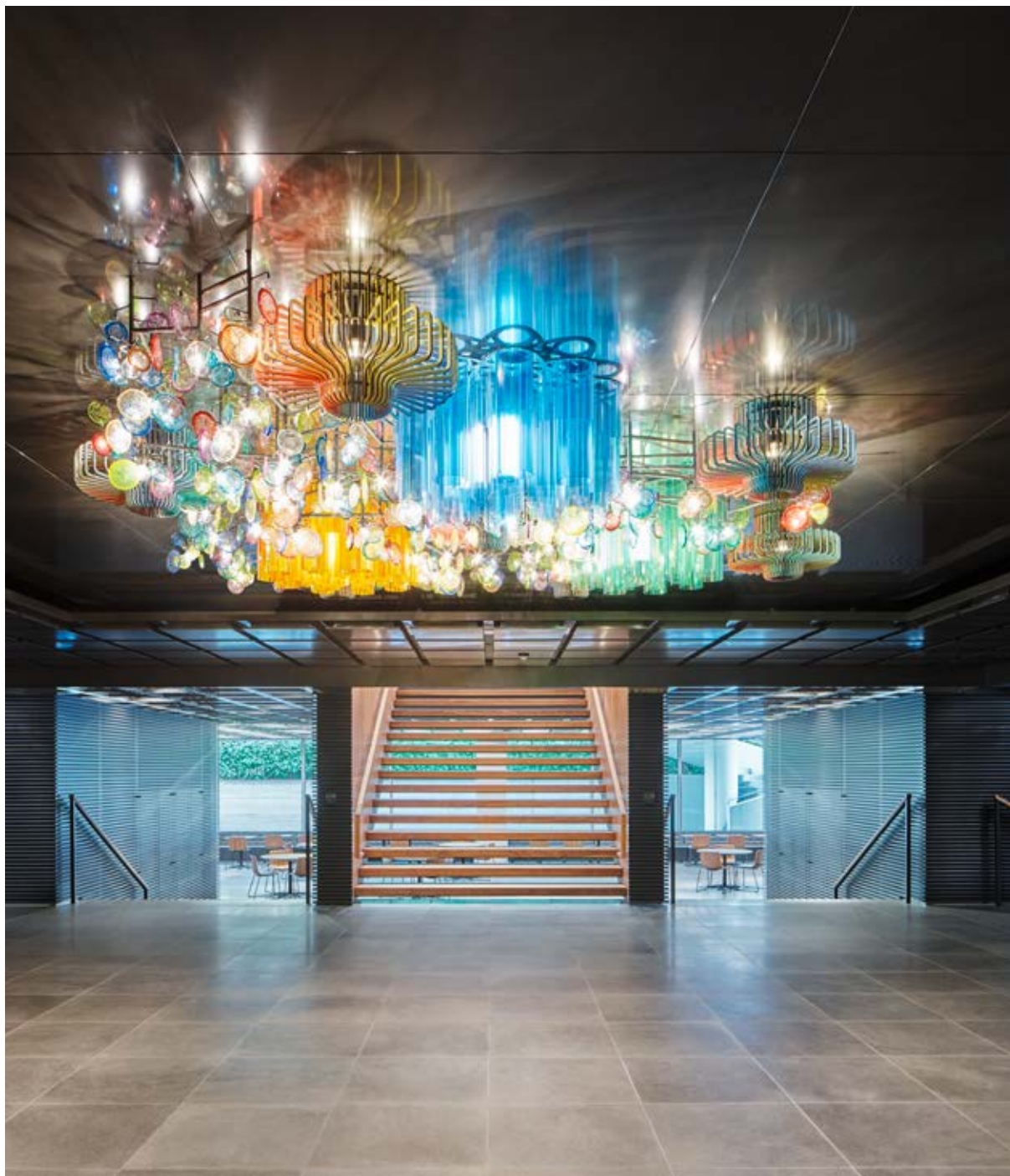
Metal, glass, lightbulbs  
dimensions variable

© 2020, Pae White

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Facts and Figures on Swiss Re’s Art Collection



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Swiss Re Management Ltd  
Mythenquai 50/60  
P.O. Box  
8022 Zurich  
Switzerland

Telephone +41 43 285 2121  
Fax +41 43 285 2999  
[www.swissre.com](http://www.swissre.com)