

LVZ DEL VR GALA BERGER

luz: light

del sur: of the south

Luz del sur, Light of the South, rendered here to Southern Light, is used to describe natural sunlight entering interior spaces through south-facing windows, prized for consistent warmth and brightness throughout the day. In poetry, it symbolizes exotic or distant illumination, warmth, or hope emanating from the south.

In this case, *Luz del Sur* is an interplay of LED illumination, layered fabric, and digital sublimation. Each material reinforces the notion of southern light as both a natural phenomenon and a cultural signifier. Light pulses through paper and textiles, casting gradients that echo dawn's first light, while fabric becomes luminous canvases: translucent veils that capture, diffuse, and refract light unexpectedly. This multisensory dialogue is aptly reflected in the practice of Gala Berger, whose textile collages have long explored the alchemy of materials. Space is

transformed into a living organism where shadows become light-bearers, navigating corridors of glowing cloth, their movements recalibrating the chromatic balance of existing in the space. Beyond its visual allure, *Luz del Sur* aspires to awaken a collective memory of place, a reminder that the sun's path through southern skies shapes landscapes and the stories that are told about us.

Weaving contemporary technology with time-honored crafts, the installation reimagines southern illumination as both heritage and future, bridging the ancestral rhythms of dyed fabrics, artisanship, and the programmable possibilities of light. In this spectrum of soft glows and bold silhouettes, *Luz del Sur* is an invitation to dwell in the south and feel its warmth, trace its contours, and reflect on how light, in every latitude, defines the shape of shared experiences. This installation transposes archival research on costumes and shadow art into a spatial choreography of glow, texture, and narrative, illuminating how southern light becomes an agent of social imagination. In this context, *Luz del Sur* emerges as a living conviction that images—characters, digital files, or textiles—forge communal identity. In *Shadows Prove the Presence of Light* (2025), silhouettes of a crowd moving together with blank signs embody this tension, becoming both a protest and an allegory of presence. The work acts as a lens through which Berger's fragmented narratives are reassembled, especially those sidelined by colonial Western thought. It is a light that reveals rather than obscures, inviting multiplicity over singularity, echoing the temporal rhythms of carnival processions, demonstrations, and communal gatherings where identity is performed, contested, and reimagined.

Material assemblage and archival reanimation are not just neutral materials; they carry histories, stains, and stories. They act as conduits for meditating on the past and its relationship to the present. Digital sublimated prints on fabric recall traditional iconography and fragments of public rituals. These layers that are stitched, pressed, and suspended embody fragmentation. This approach challenges dominant historical frameworks and foregrounds memory's plural, mutant dimension. The installation becomes a space where the past is not static but active, where memory is not singular but shared. Through these layered approaches, cloth becomes simultaneously archive and allegory, its threads bearing the residue of extraction, exchange, and collective care.

Luz del Sur resonates deeply with the spirit of shadow theater, particularly in its use of layered storytelling, silhouettes, and material culture to evoke distant

narratives. Berger's process in Munich has also been tied to her long-term research project: the adaptation and translation of the Quechua play *Ollantay* into a shadow theater performance. The exhibition extends into a second room, where works produced in Munich revisit theatrical records and film stills by artists such as Lotte Reiniger. Reimagined through paper, fabric, painting, and collage, these silhouettes open a dialogue between European shadow theater and parallel cultural currents in Latin America. In addition, Berger's reference to *Luz del sur*, an electric utility company in Lima, becomes a metaphorical bridge between two cities. Where ancestral warmth meets the southern sunlight's elemental power, drawing from her deep roots and popular art traditions, Berger explores how light becomes both a metaphor and a medium. Many Spanish-speaking regions associate the "light of the south" with a unique solar quality: softer winters, elongated midday brilliance, and a gentle warmth that permeates architecture, textiles, and daily rituals. *Luz del Sur* is a tribute to the enduring glow of southern latitudes and the traditions that flourish beneath them. It's a celebration of warmth, not just in temperature, but in spirit. It is a commitment to interdisciplinary practice, material storytelling, and collective imagination. It embodies the themes of imagined identities, ephemeral alliances, and plural memory through layered textiles, responsive light, and archival fragments. It invites us to dwell in the warmth of southern light, not as passive observers, but as co-creators of new social roles and shared futures.

Laura Fungai Ganda, Harare, August 2025

17 SEP - 5 OCT, 2025

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, 2-6 PM

OR BY APPOINTMENT: INFO@SALTAART.ORG

SPACE NN. GABELSBERGERSTRASSE 26,
80333 MUNICH

WWW.SALTAART.ORG



GALA BERGER (b. 1983, Argentina) is an artist, curator, and researcher based between Lima and Mexico City. Her practice is rooted in Latin America and often unfolds through the creation of independent platforms. She is part of Retablos por la memoria, a collective producing street interventions for human rights in Peru, and Colección Cooperativa, an experimental project exploring collective ownership in art. Since 2022, she has been collaborating with policymakers from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment and researchers from the Joint Research Centre on a project addressing agriculture in the Amazon. Developed together with Shipibo artist Metsá Rama, this initiative explores the intersections of art, ecology, and Indigenous knowledge.

SALTA ART is an independent non-profit arts organization that seeks to foster the exchange of ideas between South America and Germany. Salta art supports residencies, talks, performances, exhibitions and research to encourage a dialogue among artists, curators, cultural producers and art enthusiasts. In that way, Salta art aims to provide opportunities for collaborations as well as to develop mutual understanding.

SPACE N.N. Since March 2023, space n.n. has provided Munich's art scene with a transitory exhibition space, showcasing more than 100 national and international artists through exhibitions, performances, and events, emphasizing the off-scene, experimentation and innovation as core concepts.