



LUIS CAMNITZER

*1937

For Luis Camnitzer art is, above all, an instrument for the expansion of knowledge. As both artist and educator, his practice enquires into the social functions of art, the dual role of the audience as witness and accomplice, as well as networks of language and power. An important medium is the written word, which Camnitzer uses both as tool in his academic and critical writing, and employs as material in his installations and artwork. Consciously positioning himself on the periphery, Camnitzer has maintained the keen eye of the outsider yet never fails to critically engage with the center.

Born in Lübeck in 1937, Camnitzer grew up in Uruguay and moved to New York City in 1964. Through printmaking, photography, sculpture and installation he has consistently addressed themes such as the importance of language, social injustice and political repression. In 1964, he co-founded the New York Graphic Workshop with Liliana Porter and José Guillermo Castillo with the aim of reevaluating and catalyzing its potential as a democratic instrument of information. Subsequently, Camnitzer began a lasting engagement with conceptual art, seeking ways to question commonly held beliefs in the field, and to open it up to participation. Much of his practice was developed in response to the social and political upheavals of the 1960s and 70s, as much in Latin America as in the United States. Camnitzer insists that not only his works addressing social injustice overtly, but his entire oeuvre should be considered in a political context. Despite this positioning, Camnitzer's work is never ideologically heavy-handed, instead provoking though with its lightness of touch and humor.

Luis Camnitzer's work has been featured in numerous international solo and group exhibitions. Retrospectives have been held at Kunsthalle Kiel, as well as at the Daros Museum in Zurich, and the Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín, Bogotá among others. He has shown at numerous biennials, including the Whitney Biennial and Documenta 11. Several museums, such as the Tate Britain, London, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA) have included his work in their permanent collections. He received Guggenheim Fellowships in 1961 and 1982 and is professor emeritus at the State University of New York, College at Old Westbury.