

CHRISTIAN ACHENBACH

PARICUTÍN

KÖNIG MEXICO CITY
CALLE YAUTEPEC 111, CONDESA, CUAUHTÉMOC, 06140 CDMX

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KÖNIG MEXICO CITY is pleased to present Christian Achenbach’s first exhibition in the Americas, and his second with the gallery. Achenbach is a Berlin-based German painter and sculptor. His practice is rooted in the traditions of art history, yet reimagined through a contemporary lens. He often draws on familiar landscape motifs, transforming them through a vibrant and expressive color palette into timeless visions. In doing so, he composes a vivid symphony where memory, nature, and history converge. For this exhibition in Mexico City, Achenbach engages deeply with the legacy of Josef Albers, whose encounters with Mexico left a lasting mark on modern abstraction.



Christian Achenbach, SIROVAL, 2025 © courtesy of the artist, photo by Mika Gentili

Achenbach is widely recognized for his bold use of saturated color, producing powerful visual impact. His color palette is not representational, but rather compositional: it builds rhythm, movement, and atmosphere. Achenbach’s canvases can be read almost as “visual music,” a reflection of his long-standing engagement with sound and rhythm as sources of inspiration. His color fields carry an intensity that spreads across the canvas the way sound carries through air.

This exhibition brings Achenbach into dialogue with Josef Albers (1888–1976), the German-born artist, designer, and educator best known for his pioneering work in color theory and abstraction. Less widely recognized, but crucial to his artistic development, were Albers’s repeated travels to Mexico between 1935 and 1967. Together with his wife, textile artist Anni Albers, he visited the country more than a dozen times, deeply engaging with pre-Columbian art and architecture. Albers was profoundly struck by the geometric clarity and monumental presence of Aztec, Maya, and Zapotec structures—qualities that shaped his artistic vocabulary and vision of visual order.

During these journeys, Albers also produced a remarkable photographic body of work, documenting temples, facades, and stairways with attention to symmetry, light, and geometric abstraction. These images, now considered an integral part of his oeuvre, echo throughout his celebrated paintings, such as the "Homage to the Square" series.

In Mexico City, Achenbach reflects on this shared fascination. Just as Albers translated the language of architecture into abstraction, Achenbach integrates architectural elements into his compositions, comparing his own impressions of Mexico with Albers’s visual archive. Monumental patterns inspired by pre-Columbian structures form the foundation for Achenbach’s new body of work, which transforms the gallery into a space charged with rhythm, geometry, and vibrant color. The title refers to the Paricutín volcano in Michoacán, Mexico, which emerged from a cornfield in 1943. PARICUTÍN evokes a moment when the earth itself began to breathe and transform, recalling the tension between permanence and change, and the unseen energies that continually shape our world.

Josef Albers once described Mexico as “the only truly modern culture”—a statement that reveals how strongly he felt the timeless unity of past and present. For both Albers and Achenbach, Mexico is not simply a destination but a source of aesthetic and spiritual inspiration, offering a lens through which to reconsider form, space, and harmony.