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"Du" by Jenny Holzer in the Atrium of the new HDI HQ in Hannover



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The Atrium of the HDI Headquarters has recently become the site featuring a spectacular work of art. Two LED illuminated strips are suspended from the transparent ceiling with displays of texts by the world-famous conceptual artist Jenny Holzer. The two strips are nearly one metre wide and only differ in their length. One LED light strip is around 16 metres long and the other measures more than 21 metres. Nevertheless, it is a long way from the floor because the Atrium is five storeys high.

Hundreds of English sentences run across the LED light strips in a steady stream. They are part of several series which the artist has collected over many years. The series she has drawn on for this artwork are Truisms, Living and Survival. She created them between 1977 and 1985 and she is continuously recombining them. Her statements are deliberately bold and simple, and some of them have now become world famous. They are pithy popular sayings which the artist has collected over the years, reformulated or indeed written herself, although not all of them represent her own personal opinion. The sentences include statements like: "The beginning of the war will be secret" or "Eating too much is criminal".

Like promotional displays in modern cityscapes, the letters do not always run uniformly along the LED strips. Individual words are displayed repeatedly or flash several times, the text flow stops briefly or the pace accelerates. Jenny Holzer created "Du" – her ninth permanent installation in Germany – in her signature text-stream style specifically for the ingenhoven architects' architecture of new HDI HQs.