

ENGLISH

GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS DUBAI

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JULIO LE PARC

Melodia

26/01/2024 - 10/03/2024

Tuesday - Saturday 11.00 - 19.00

Galleria Continua is pleased to present a new solo show by Julio Le Parc, *Melodia*, in its spaces in Rome, inside the prestigious hotel, The St. Regis Rome. A leading figure on the international contemporary art scene, Julio Le Parc, born in Mendoza, Argentina in 1928, revolutionized kinetic art and Op Art as well as being a staunch protector and defender of human rights. In 1958 he settled permanently in France, and it was within this time that he came away from the Concrete Art and Constructivism movements and moved toward his own approach. He got rid of all signs of manual interference in his work and he created his own range of 14 colours, using them, pure and unshaded, in combination with each other to reach the amplest chromatic spectrum he could. His experimentation with material, colour and light as well as his consideration for the viewer is what distinguishes him as an artist and ensures his place as a key reference point for many artists working today.

At the heart of Le Parc's artistic practice is the desire to experiment with how viewers interact with and perceive art, thus redefining the understanding of the roles of the artist and the viewer. To this end, in this exhibition, the artist explores the meaning of the spectators' gaze and movement, involving them on a physical level, through his mobiles, paintings

and works that use light as their principal material. Julio Le Parc began his first experiments with light in 1959. At the time, he placed light in small boxes before replicating, multiplying and combining light waves by inserting sheets of plexiglass, prisms, squares and circles, using the scale of 14 colours that he developed at the end of the 1950s. The result of these experiments was the artist's detachment from the work of art as something fixed and stable, the absence of symbols or figurative representations and a move towards works of art that always had the potential to change. This approach challenged the traditional notions that art and what it figuratively represents is the most important element to an artwork. Le Parc was intent on deconstructing these conventions and, through the use of materials like light, mirrors, and motors, he put the viewer at the centre of the experience.

The exhibition continues with a series of paintings titled *Modulations*. Completed in the 1980s, these works were another result of the artist's desired experimentation of the time; in 1976 Le Parc expressed his awareness of the "discontinuity" of styles in his work, stating that he has never claimed to be a Kinetic painter but rather that everything he did which was new or different brought with it a sort of memory of what he had already done. An economy of means

has always been present in his works, the result being that his works are not an accumulation of elements but an array of components that are placed in relation to each other, therefore creating a rich landscape of form and colours that also create a tension between themselves. To achieve this result, the elements of the painting have to be as little and as anonymous as possible, meaning that the interest of the viewer is based on an intermediate plan between the viewer themselves and the painting. An immaterial presence is therefore floating a few centimetres from the painting, or behind it, and into a world to be discovered.

In the early 1960s, Julio Le Parc started exploring mobile elements by manipulating forms through the transmission of light. The *Continuel Mobile* series therefore confronts many different questions like movement, instability and probability as well as factors and influences that are external from the artwork itself. *Sphère Noire* is made of shiny, black squares attached to transparent nylon threads and suspended from a wooden frame. The nylon threads hang down from one single point, meaning they move freely according to how the air moves around the room, generating amazing optical effects and fragmenting the surrounding images. The constant movement of the artwork is an essential part of its conception and existence. The artwork is not a fixed and stable object but a changing and unpredictable mobile which depends on the viewer to reach its full chromatic and geometric potential.

Julio Le Parc was born in 1928 in Mendoza (Argentina). He has lived and worked in Cachan (France) since 1958. A leading figure in kinetic and contemporary art, he was one of the co-founders of the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV) in Paris in 1960, alongside Horacio Garcia Rossi, Francisco Sobrino, Francois Morellet, Joel Stein and Jean-Pierre Vasarely (Yvaral). He has participated in numerous personal exhibitions in important museums and institutions such as the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), the Metropolitan Museum

of Art (New York), the Perez Art Museum (Miami) and the Serpentine Gallery (London), to name a few. A socially committed artist, Le Parc was expelled from France in May 1968, after having participated in the Atelier Populaire and its demonstrations against large institutions. An intransigent personality and staunch defender of human rights, he fought against the dictatorship in Latin America. In 1972 he refused a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art of the city of Paris, playing heads or tails. His works are part of the most important international public collections, including: MET in New York, MOMA in New York, Tate in London, the MNAM and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, LACMA in Los Angeles, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art Humlebaek, Musée d'art contemporain de Montreal, MNBA in Buenos Aires, Walker Art Center Minneapolis, Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, Musée d'art Moderne de la ville de Paris, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia of Madrid, Guggenheim of Abu Dhabi, Museo Boijmans Van Beuningen of Rotterdam, Albright-Knox Art Gallery of Buffalo, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation of Miami, New Orleans Museum of Art, Delgado Museum of New Orleans. Artistic director of the studio: Yamil Le Parc. Director of the Le Parc studio: Eduardo Berrelleza.

Galleria Continua is located inside the prestigious The St. Regis Rome hotel, with which since 2018 it has presented works by international artists of the calibre of Loris Cecchini, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Sun Yuan & Peng Yu, Hans Op De Beeck, and Ai Weiwei, to name a few. Together they also collaborate with Città dell'Arte Fondazione Pistoletto with which they often host workshops and talks for school-age children.

For more photographs or information: Silvia Pichini press office, press@galleriacontinua.com cell. + 39 3474536136

