

ENGLISH

GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS DUBAI

87 rue du Temple, 75003 Paris, France. Tuesday - Saturday 11am-7pm and by appointment
+33 (0)1 43 70 00 88 | +33 06 75 15 16 22 | www.galleriacontinua.com

JULIO LE PARC

AURORA

GALLERIA CONTINUA | Les Moulins - From September 17, 2023

GALLERIA CONTINUA is pleased to present the first exhibition dedicated to Julio Le Parc in its Les Moulins space, following on from an initial exhibition shown in the gallery's Parisian space in summer 2023. A painter, sculptor and visual artist from Argentina who has lived in France since 1958, Julio Le Parc is a forerunner of kinetic art and Op Art, and winner of the International Grand Prize for Painting at the 33rd International Contemporary Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 1966. Today he is celebrated as a seminal figure in the history of art.

Presented at GALLERIA CONTINUA / Les Moulins in a museum-scale scenography, *Aurora* brings together a selection of nearly seventy works representative of the artist's singular artistic language from the 1960s to the present day. These range across a variety of formats and media: acrylic paintings on canvas from iconic series, two- and three-dimensional modulations and contortions in stainless steel, wood or metal, works from the *Lumières* series, both historical and recent, and a monumental installation over five metres high. The exhibition is complemented by a unique virtual reality experience.

Aurora opens on the ground floor of the Moulin de Boissy with a display of paintings on canvas in full colour, paying tribute to the beauty and complexity of Julio Le Parc's systems, based on the notion of surface, including pieces from Series 15, which he began in the early 1970s. Le Parc extended his research to include colour in 1959. Not only did the artist any trace of manual execution, of "brushstrokes", but also any subjective

composition. He chose fourteen colours, which he felt summed up all the possible variations of chromatic mixtures, and used them pure, uncut with black or white. Using this chromatic spectrum as a starting point, he created increasingly complex combinations, based on systems that were both rigorous and simple. Starting with one or two horizontally shifting spectra, the artist superimposed four spectra developed vertically, horizontally or diagonally, and sometimes four new spectra as well.

The major work in the exhibition, consisting of ten paintings measuring two metres by two metres, *La Longue Marche* [The Long Walk] was created in 1974, following an aborted project for a major retrospective at the Paris Musée d'Art Moderne, which Le Parc decided not to participate in by a coin toss. The work stands out for its monumentality. It uses the fourteen-colour system of the chromatic prism in prismatic meshes that unfold in fluid, sinuous sequences, exploring the visual effects of superimposition, weaving and overlapping. There is very little hierarchy in the organisation of the pictorial field. There is no dominant element, no centre from which the shapes radiate.

Representative of the artist's experiments with mobile elements, the monumental installation *Zepelín de acero* [Steel Zeppelin], dating from 2021, presented for the first time at the Fondation Hermès in Tokyo and previously unseen in France, reinterprets the use of light boxes characteristic of the artist's research into the medium of installation, this time obscured by the steel of which they are composed. In this way, he questions a series of issues: the diversity of situations

within a single experience, notions of movement, instability and probability, and the consideration of contingencies external to the work, in a characteristic distancing of his work from the notion of a stable, unique and definitive body of artwork.

The exhibition continues on the first floor of the Moulin de Boissy with a selection of works entitled *Modulations*, in two or three dimensions and in relief, all in shades of black and white, covering a period from 1965 to 2019.

The *Modulations* are part of a series of experiments that began in late 1974, the theme of which is rooted in the last elements treated with fourteen colour-spectrum, as well as in the research into real volumes made by the artist since 1960. The technique he used (air brush, spray paint) produced a gradation from dark to light and a fairly precise modulation of the surface, leading him to develop new themes and explore a new field of research. In continuing the artist's experiments with the plane, these works continue to be based on simple systems of organisation, the correlation of forms depending on the same principle in each case. In this way, the artist sought to challenge his certainties, while rigorously continuing to subject his discoveries to reflection and analysis.

A major contribution to recent developments in Le Parc's work, the contortions on show (*Torsion 1 to 4*, dating from 2004, and *Formes en contorsion [Shapes in Contorsion]*, 2019) are exceptional in that they demonstrate the play of chance, the play of light and the surprise of movement. This emblematic movement infused into the form has its origins in certain sets of works from the *Mouvements surprise* series. The process uses flexible ribbons of mirrored steel forming circles on a black background, in front of which they slowly deform due to a mechanical action coordinated by motors of different speeds.

In the Moulin de Boissy's darkroom, the exhibition also features a selection of light works rarely shown together in France, including *Continuel lumière mobile [Continual Light Mobile]* (1963-2013), *Continuel lumière boîte [Continual light box]* (1959-1965) and *Continuel lumière avec quatre formes en contorsion [Continual Light with Four Shapes in Contortion]* (1966-2012). Begun in late 1959, Le Parc's experiments with light scatter light rays

into small boxes, the aim of which is to reproduce, multiply and combine squares and circles using the fourteen colour-spectrum, by means of screens made from Plexiglas sheets in the shape of prisms.

The artist's aim is to capture the potential for chromatic variations thus created, and to manifest them in a single visual field. Anchored in movement, these experiments are in keeping with the artist's principle of distancing himself from a fixed, stable and definitive body of work. The viewer is captivated by the development of a multitude of changes, the uniform medium of the elements or forms accentuating the highlighted instability. These works are characterised by their structure and, at the same time, by the absence of any composition.

To complement the exhibition, GALLERIA CONTINUA is presenting for the first time Julio le Parc's *VIRTUAL LABYRINTHUS MUSEUM* project through a virtual reality device. Designed by Julio Le Parc in collaboration with Juan Le Parc, using programming tools derived from video games, Julio Le Parc's *VIRTUAL LABYRINTHUS MUSEUM* offers an interactive visit to a virtual museum space comprising five levels, corresponding to Le Parc's five pictorial periods: *Surfaces*, *Surface - couleur [colour]*, *Modulation 1*, *Modulation 2*, and *Alchimie [Alchemy]*.

Julio Le Parc (born 1928 in Mendoza, Argentina, and has lived and worked in Cachan, France since 1958), a major figure within kinetic and contemporary art, 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, François Morellet, Joël Stein and Jean-Pierre Vasarely (Yvaral).

The artist has participated in numerous solo exhibitions at leading museums and institutions such as Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Perez Art Museum, Miami and Serpentine Gallery, London, among others. This socially committed artist and defender of human rights fought against the dictatorship in Latin America, and was temporarily expelled from France in May 1968 after taking part in the Atelier Populaire protest group and its demonstrations against the major institutions.

Artistic director: Yamil le Parc
Studio and Team Manager: Eduardo Berrelleza