

# GALLERIA CONTINUA

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## CARLOS CRUZ-DIEZ

### *The Euphoria of Colour*

13/11/2022 - 12/01/2023

Open every day | 11.00 am - 1.00 pm | 2.00 pm - 8.00 pm

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GALLERIA CONTINUA Dubai is pleased to announce *The Euphoria of Colour*, a solo exhibition of works by the late artist Carlos Cruz-Diez (1923-2019), a pioneer of kinetic art, and an undisputed master of colour. The new exhibition marks the first-year anniversary of GALLERIA CONTINUA space at Dubai's iconic Burj Al Arab Jumeirah, and the return of Carlos Cruz-Diez's œuvre after the recent feature of his immersive artwork *Chromosaturation* at France's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai.

One of the greatest artistic innovators of the 20th century, and member of the OpArt movement, **Carlos Cruz-Diez** described himself as an artist applying the discipline of a scientist. He proposed colour as an autonomous and evolutive reality where the implication of our senses reveals chromatic events as they develop. ***The Euphoria of Colour*** presents the highlights of Carlos Cruz-Diez' innovative artistic career, exploring the artist's own theory of colour, through some of his most iconic artworks.

Carlos Cruz-Diez Jr, Chairman of Cruz-Diez Foundation's Advisory Council and General Director of Atelier Cruz-Diez said: "I am immensely proud to see Cruz-Diez's works again in Dubai, one year after their exhibition in the France Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai. My father used to say that art is a universal system of communication and as such has no borders. He believed that art has the power to convey a direct message to the human spirit because art is for people. Cruz-Diez has changed the

perception of colour in art, presenting the chromatic phenomenon as an autonomous reality that can exist by itself without the help of form, and even without the need for support. His works generate a dialogue with the viewer where there is no past or future but a continuous present."

The central area of the gallery space showcases ***Labyrinthe de Transchromie A*** (1965/2017), an installation focusing on colour affected by subtraction. A superimposed structure consisting of coloured transparent panels, it's as immersing as a labyrinth of colour. The viewer undergoes an experience of colour combinations, reflections and degrees of transparency which keep modifying the space and its perception. As the artist explained in 1969, it is the viewer who, by walking around, chooses whichever combination of subtractions they like, from the many different standpoints. The work exists less in itself as such, than as a dialogue with the surrounding reality, contained in transparency.

Earlier on, in 1959, Cruz-Diez began his heralded ***Physichromie*** series - also presented in the exhibition - which turned into a life-long investigation into the idea of chromatic autonomy and the exploration of the physicality of colour.

A product of the experiments he had been conducting on the heightened effects of 'colour reflection' while living in Paris, where he subsequently moved the following year, this series of work embodied Cruz-Diez's adoption of European modernism. Drawing on a vast repertory of forms and research, from George Seurat's pointillist technique to the colour theories of Josef Albers, the works explore the physical effects of colour on the viewer, while encouraging the experience of colour transformation.

*Physichromie 1843* (2013) is composed of thin, coloured bands that alternate between vertical strips of Plexiglass. Acting as a 'light trap', the surface's colour alters radically depending on the viewer's position, while the coloured bands appear to shift and vibrate.

The works in this series were included in many exhibitions, including the landmark exhibition *The Responsive Eye* at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1965.

Cruz-Diez always referred to these works as "structures" to embrace the fact that they are at a crossroads between a painting and a sculpture, as like with the latter, they require the viewer's movement along with it in order to reveal its true colours. This hybridization between a painting and a sculpture is a tentative response to explore further the limits of bi-dimensionality, the classical limits of painting that he constantly questioned. By exploring tridimensionality, Cruz-Diez created a coloured atmosphere in front of his works, referring to them as a "support for chromatic events". Not the tale of something that already happened but something that is happening in the present time.

The work on canvas, *Induction Chromatique à Double Fréquence Série Brésil 3* (2007), is closely related to the phenomenon of "after image," or retinal persistence. In other words, the retina of the eye, after gazing at a red coloured plane for a certain time, retains, even after it looks away, an image of the plane - in green, which is the induced colour or complementary colour. The phenomenon previously described, takes place in two phases, however, the *Induction Chromatique* brings it about simultaneously. In other words, it stabilizes and makes visible a phenomenon that can only be captured momentarily and in very special circumstances.

"Where Monet would represent the changing reality of light by using several canvases - of a haystack or a cathedral - Cruz-Diez only provides one surface, but one which is so sensitive to the intensity and the angle of luminous rays that it appears gay and bright one moment, severe and dark the next. With each variation in the electric or solar intensity, a new work is formed, a new chromatic relationship, unforeseeable like life itself, and as changing and varied. A thousand pictures - within a single surface."

Jean Clay - Carlos Cruz-Diez et les trois étapes de la couleur moderne, 1969

**Carlos Cruz-Diez** (1923, Caracas - 2019, Paris) defined himself first and foremost as a painter, listening to the profound societal changes happening around him, in Venezuela and in the world. From the beginning of his career, he was interested in the invention of a new work, requiring the constant search for unconventional techniques and technologies, which would come to play a key role in his approach.

He figures among the most prolific artists of his time in the urban space. His works are designed to reach a large audience and to be part of everyday life. As a result, several hundreds of his creations can be found scattered across the globe, occupying spaces that have since become iconic such as Caracas airport in Venezuela, or Place du Venezuela in Paris. In France, they are an integral part of the cultural heritage of cities like Clermont-Ferrand, Cambrai, Villetaneuse or La Roche-sur-Yon. Even today, his works lend a special glow to the façades of Prada stores in Asia, part of an homage paid to him by the brand.

His works are in the permanent collections of prestigious institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; Tate Modern, London; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne; Geffen Contemporary, Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk.

The works of Carlos Cruz-Diez were previously exhibited in the Gulf region, notably the immersive presentation at the France Pavilion of *Expo 2020 Dubai* in 2021-2022; ephemeral in a public space of the historic district of **Jeddah**, Saudi Arabia, as part of *21,39 Summer Edition* in 2019; and featured in the *Light Show* at **Sharjah Art Foundation** in 2015.

Founded in San Gimignano, Italy, in 1990, **GALLERIA CONTINUA** has expanded its galleries in Beijing, Les Moulins, Havana, São Paulo, Rome, Paris, and now with an exhibition space in Burj Al Arab Jumeirah in Dubai. Remaining faithful to the spirit of perpetual evolution and committed to engaging the widest possible audiences in contemporary art, Galleria Continua has built a strong identity through its bonds and experiences, thriving away from the conventional urban centres, in completely unexpected yet timeless locations.

*The Euphoria of Colour* is on view at GALLERIA CONTINUA Dubai, Burj Al Arab Jumeirah, from 13 November 2022 to 12 January 2023.

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