

CARLOS CRUZ-DIEZ

THE COLOR ITSELF

राजदिए



EXHIBITION

21 September - 4 October 2023

Galería Cayón

Ground floor, Corinthian Plaza, 121 Paseo de Roxas, Legazpi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines
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FRONT AND BACK COVER:

Detail view of : *Physichromie 1979*, Paris 2015
Chromography on aluminum, plastic inserts
100 x 100 cm

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
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PREVIOUS PAGE:

Carlos Cruz-Diez in front of his *Cromoestructura*,
2015-2016
Edificio Kenex Plaza, Obarrio District, Panama City,
Republic of Panama. Lacquer on aluminum structure,
North Facade : 9,36 x 42,5 m,
West Facade : 9,36 x 36,25 m
Arch. Fernando Ponce de León

Photo: Artacruz S.A Panama / Rafael Guillen
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THIS PAGE:

Carlos Cruz-Diez behind a *Transchromie* in his studio,
Paris, France, 2017

Photo: Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris / Lisa Preud'homme
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NEXT PAGE:

Inducción Cromática a doble frecuencia Cayón, 2016
Exhibition "Cruz-Diez", Galería Cayón, Convento
de las Hermanas Celadoras del Culto Eucarístico,
Madrid, Spain

Six canvas panels on the stained-glass windows of the
facade, 5.80 x 1.50 each one

Photo: Joaquín Cortes y Román Lores
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BIOGRAPHY

Carlos Cruz-Diez (Caracas, 1023 – Paris, 2019). French artist of Venezuelan origin. One of the most relevant artists of optical and kinetic art. His research on the chromatic phenomenon distinguishes him as the last color thinker of the 20th century. His work brought a different way of perceiving color to contemporary art. In his works, Cruz-Diez shows us color as an autonomous and evolutionary reality, which can invade space and is capable of existing without the help of the form and even without the help of the support.

In 1945 he graduated from the School of Plastic Arts in Caracas, Venezuela. In his early days as a painter, he adopted a figurative style, simultaneously working as an illustrator and graphic designer for major print media. In 1954 he produced his series of *Proyectos murales*, some of them manipulable and designed to be installed in public spaces. These murals are the genesis of his future monumental works of integration into architecture and public spaces.

In 1955 he settled in Catalonia, Spain. That same year he visits the *Le Mouvement* exhibition at the Denise René Gallery in Paris. His encounter with Kinetic art made him abandon figurative painting to begin his first abstract works entitled *Parénquimas*. In 1956, he returned to Venezuela where he founded the Estudio de Artes Visuales, dedicated to graphic and industrial design. In parallel, he begins his research on the instability of the plane and decides to center his work around color. In 1959 he produced the first *Couleur Additive* and the first *Physichromie*. In 1960, he settled in Paris where he continued to develop his research on the chromatic phenomenon.

The work of Carlos Cruz-Diez is articulated around different behaviors of the chromatic phenomenon and includes eight investigations: *Couleur Additive* (1959); *Physichromie* (1959); *Induction Chromatique*, (1963); *Chromointerférence* (1965); *Transchromie* (1965); *Chromosaturation* (1965); *Chromoscope* (1968) and *Couleur à l'Espace* (1993).

"The line, is not an aesthetic element in my work, it is the most effective means I could find to multiply the critical areas of vision between two color planes. This is how I can generate new and unstable color ranges. This does not prevent the result from being an expressive, communicative and sensitive event".

Carlos Cruz - Diez

For Cruz-Diez, the dialogue established between his works and the viewer is vital. Since 1967, he has developed an intense work of integrations in the urban space: Caracas, Miami, Washington, Houston, Paris, Seoul, São Paulo, Panama and Madrid are some of the settings for his monumental pieces.

The works of this artist are exhibited on five continents and are in the permanent collections of important museums such as: Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; Tate Modern, London; Center Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal; Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, Australia; Satoru Sato Art Museum, Tome, Japan. Cologne; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.



MY THOUGHTS ON COLOR

by Carlos Cruz-Diez, Paris, 1969

In 1954, I experienced an introspective phase, as all artists do at some point in their lives when they start to doubt the value and meaning of their work. During that period I developed a conceptual platform that led me to a non-traditional approach to color.

Extensive study and experimentation showed that color, as used in painting, had not deviated from the 'color-form' duality for a long time. First, draw a form, then color it, as though color were always something to be added to form.

My research showed me that color is unstable, that it is constantly evolving, that it depends on a number of circumstances, and that none of this has ever been addressed by artists.

I realized that an alternative to the eternal color-form relationship was to fragment the form, transforming the colored plane into an arrangement of vertical color parallels which I called 'Chromatic Event Modules'. I used these modules to show that color was constantly appearing, becoming visible for a period of time. Our cultural conditioning, however - which is based on the 'cult of form and image' - prevents us from seeing subtle events like these happening in space and time.

Color has been understood and used in exactly the same way for centuries: first form, then color. The 'something' that supplies the shape is the form. There is a widely-held conviction that color has always been and continues to be an 'anecdote of form'. Generally speaking, this concept has not evolved, and has perpetuated the color-form duality we know so well: the red apple, the white table.

Over time, Aristotle's definitions, Chevreul's treatise, the theories expounded by Goethe, Newton, and Young, and Albers's research have all confirmed the instability

of color. And yet, on the whole, color is used in art to create permanence and stability. Hence the attempts by some to subordinate color to drawing in the execution of a painting.

I propose... autonomous color with no anecdotal content, no symbols, just an evolutionary event happening, and we are involved.

My work has shown me how to make color appear as a fleeting, autonomous event: color in constant mutation, creating 'autonomous realities.'

'Autonomous' because they do not depend on the anecdotal content that viewers are accustomed to seeing in a painting.

'Realities' because the effects they cause develop in time and space.

Another kind of dialectic is therefore established between the viewer and the work; a different exchange of knowledge. Viewers discover that they can create or destroy color through their own means of perception, and be aware of their emotional response.

In my works, color appears and disappears during the course of a dialogue in real space and time. What also appears is the fact that the information we have acquired and the knowledge we have memorized during our lifetime are, probably, not true... at least to some extent.

When color is stripped of pre-existing meanings it can awaken other sensory mechanisms for apprehension that are more subtle and complex than the ones ingrained in us by our cultural conditioning and the ubiquitous barrage of information we face in our contemporary society.

Inducción Cromática a doble frecuencia Cayón, 2016
Exhibition "El color como acción", Galería Cayón, Mahon, Spain, Minorca, 2021
Five canvas panels on facade of the gallery, 5.80 x 1.50 each one

Photo: © Joaquín Cortés Noriega / Galería Cayón
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023



PAINTING LIGHT, PAINTING WITH LIGHT

by Silvana Cruz, Paris, March 2023

Since its origin, painting has been a testimony of what has been lived. The way in which humankind attempts to stop time. From the beginning of his pictorial adventure, Carlos Cruz-Diez became deeply interested in color, this fugitive and mysterious phenomenon became the object of his reflections. That is not a surprising fact, considering his personal history.

If literature urges us to think, art in its various visual and sound manifestations also triggers reflection. However, not everything can be narrated. Each discipline obeys a particular system of perception. A musical note cannot be narrated, it must be heard. A dance step must be

observed to be appreciated. The same happens with color in painting, it is necessary to see it to enjoy it.

At the time of his admission to art school, Cruz-Diez carried as part of his baggage, in addition to his vocation, a certain practice in drawing and color learned through his precocious obsession with drawing, comics and his childhood experiences, such as his frequent visits to the home and studio of Arturo Michelena (Venezuela, 1863-1898), thanks to his grandmother's close friendship with the painter's widow. From this period, the artist never forgot *La vara rota* (1892), a work that Mrs. Lastenia Tello, Michelena's widow, kept in her house.

Painting *Light* 1945 / 1959

Color on the Surface

When Cruz-Diez finished his studies at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas in 1945, the Cézannian and Cubist styles dominated among the recent graduates of the time. By this same period, when he was working in the graphic arts and advertising, he began to create his paintings of a social nature.

Yet, as a painter, he followed a traditional approach: depicting objects, landscapes, portraits of people, on canvas, cardboard, wood and others, using brushes and a palette of colors as his main working tools. In other words, he colored the surfaces, drew and filled

the shapes with colored pigments. What was most important was the form, the drawing, the interest of the anecdotal part of the work and the technique in the use of pigments, not the color *per se*.

The different periods in an artist's work cannot always be accurately distinguished. Often, art historians find advances, setbacks or different stages that can mark milestones in the artists' careers and that, nevertheless, tend to be nebulous borders. This is not the case of Carlos Cruz-Diez, whose work clearly distinguishes two periods, two different ways of using and thinking about color.

Painting *with* light, 1959

Color in Space

The year 1959 was a true turning point, a decisive moment that marked a radical change in his concept of color. Since 1954, Cruz-Diez had been conducting a series of studies, research and experiments that led him to conclude that the use of color in painting had not changed, or hardly at all, over time. This had always been seen as a filler for form, a sort of inseparable companion, when his experiments showed him that color is an unstable phenomenon that constantly evolves and that it is a key subject in our perception of the world. An element to which the great majority of painters had given a minor importance compared to the greater interest

given to the form or the conceptual content of the painting.

Until then, no other artist had given prominence to color, and even contemporary artists such as Joseph Albers (1888-1976), whose work is based on the perceptive appreciation of simple colored forms, especially the square, to which he devoted his famous *Homage to the Square* series from 1950 onwards, were still far from transcending the form-color binomial, i.e., separating color from form.

In 1959, with his first *Amarillo Aditivo* and *Fisicromía I*, Carlos Cruz-Diez achieved that

his works show color for what it really is, a phenomenon of ambiguous and unstable behavior that constantly evolves in time and space.

From 1959, with the dissociation of the form-color combination, Cruz-Diez makes the latter the center and axis of his work. Color is no longer a material that fills the form or the plane. Instead, color is now an autonomous reality capable of existing without the help of form and even without the help of the support. The artist initiates the second stage of color in his work when instead of painting light, he paints *with* light. He succeeded in surprising color while floating in space.



Cromoestructura, 2015-2016

Edificio Kenex Plaza, Obarrio District, Panama City,
Republic of Panama.

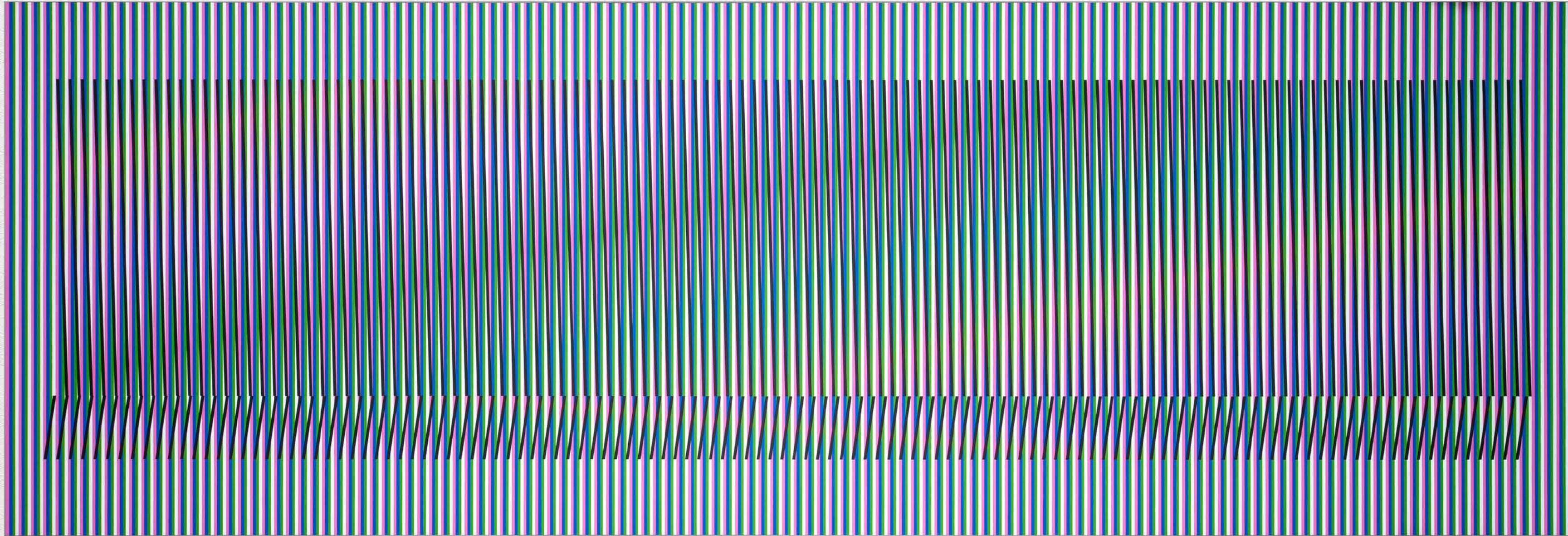
Lacquer on aluminum structure,

North Facade : 9,36 x 42,5 m, West Facade : 9,36 x 36,25 m

Arch. Fernando Ponce de León

Photo: Artacruz S.A. Panama / Rafael Guillen

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1

Induction Chromatique à Double Fréquence Tinaco 1

Paris 2018

Ed. 1/3

Chromography on aluminum

70 x 210 cm

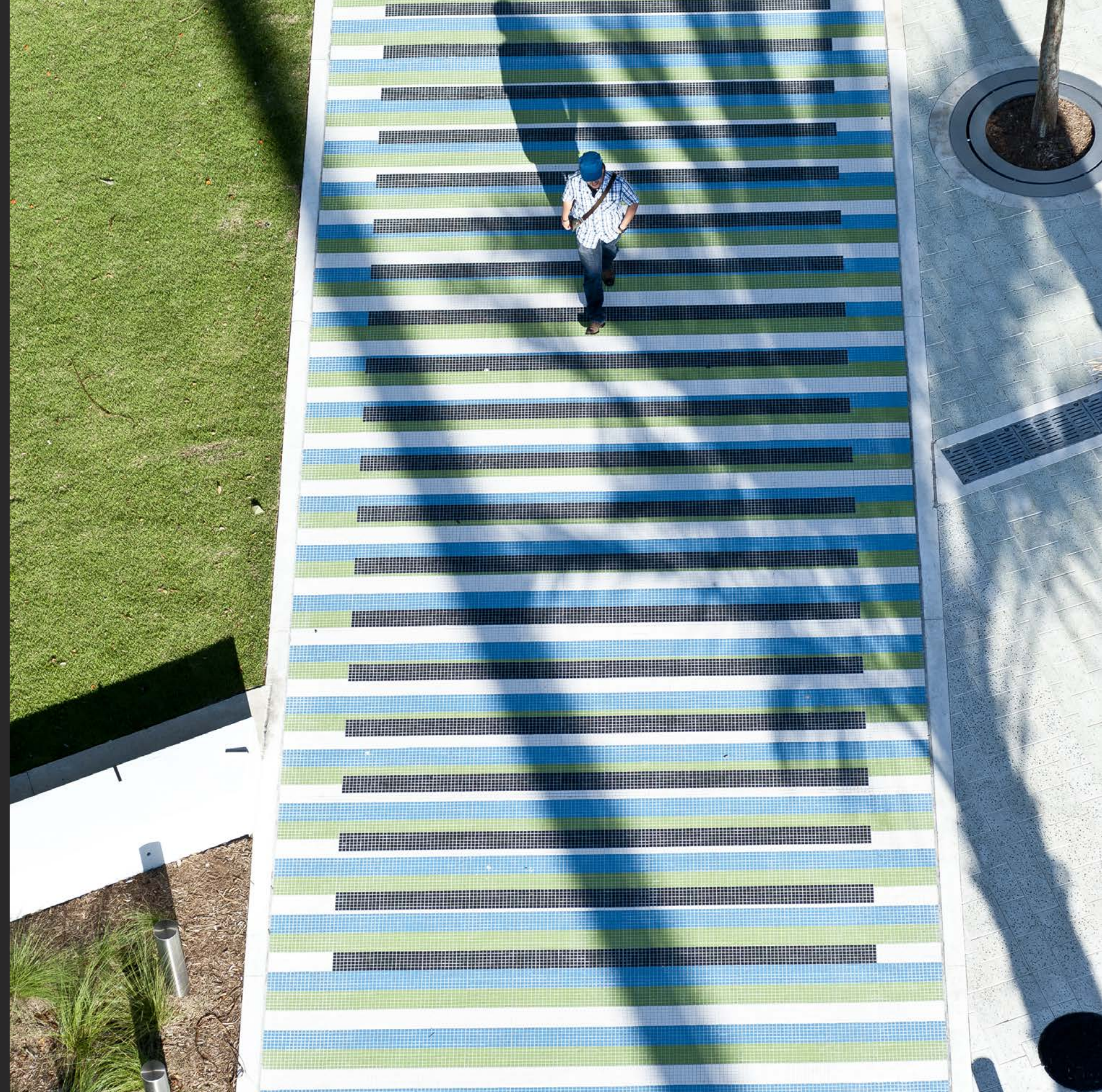
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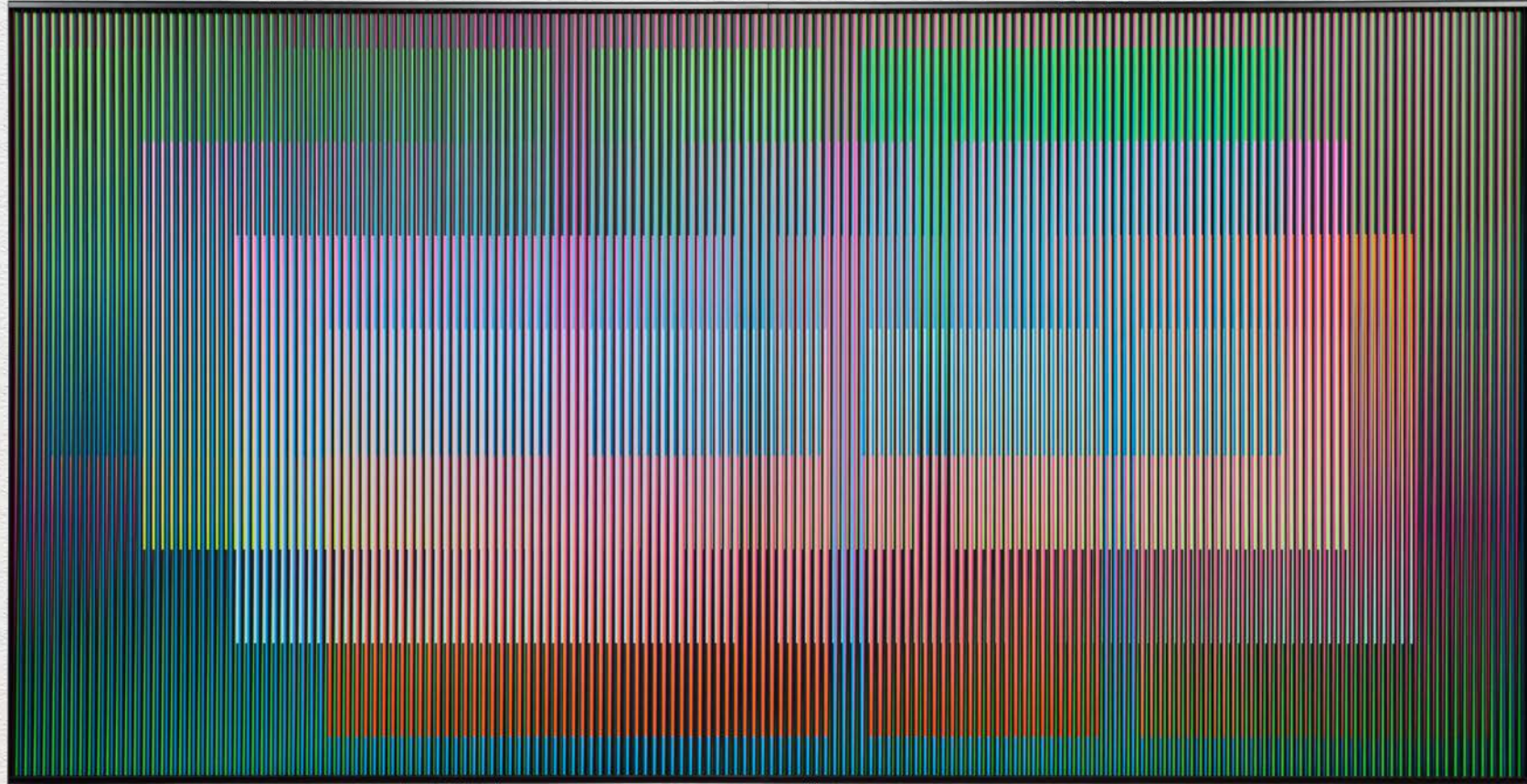
Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris

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Induction Chromatique à double fréquence, 2012
Walkways at the Marlins Ballpark Stadium, Miami, United States, 2012
Enamels and Mosaic of Briare, 1672 m2
Arch. : Populous

Photo: Rolando de la Fuente
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023





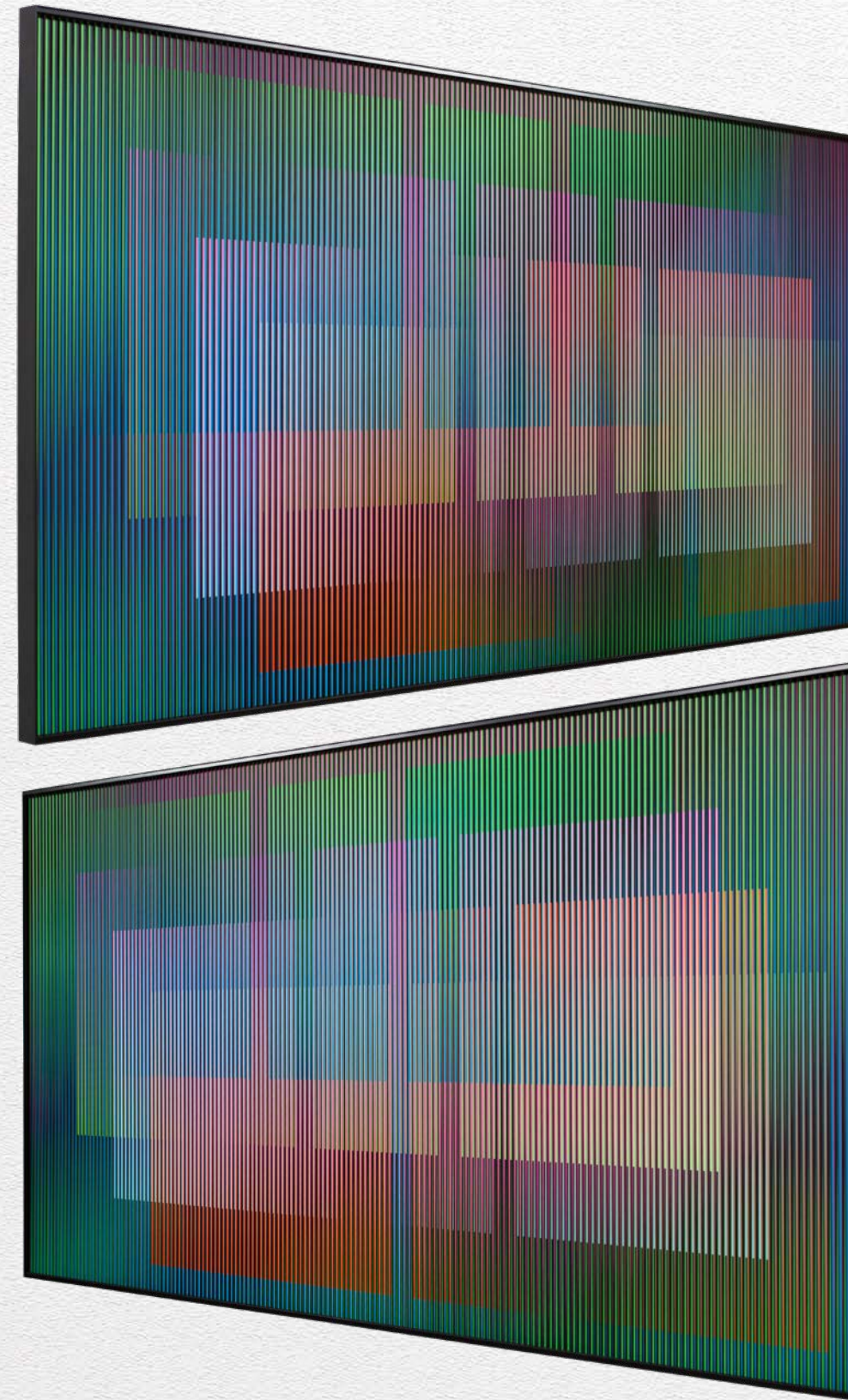
2

Chromointerférence spatiale Paris 32 Caparo 2

Paris 2019

Chromography on aluminum, elastic cord

100 x 200 cm



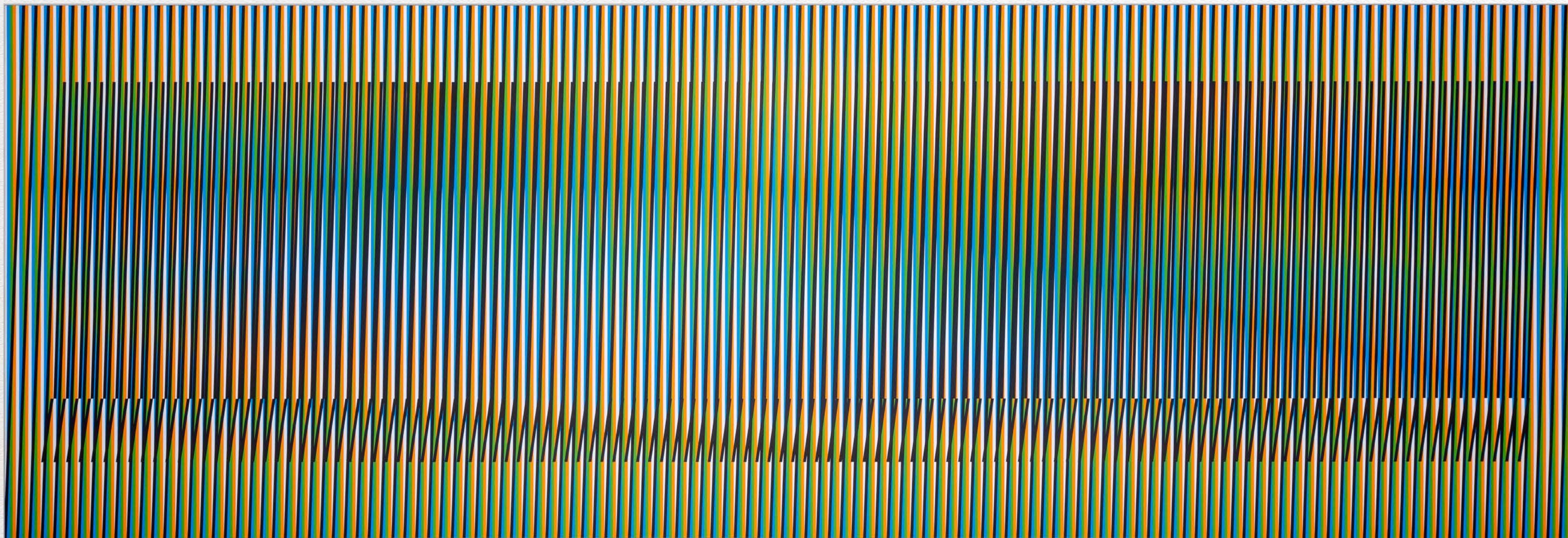
Multiple perspectives of:
Chromointerférence spatiale Paris 32 Caparo 2

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
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Photography by Luis Pérez-Mínguez.



Induction Chromatique à double fréquence, 2011-2012
Walkways at the Marlins Ballpark Stadium,
Miami, United States, 2012
Enamels and Mosaic of Briare, 1672 m2
Arch. : Populous

Photo: Rolando de la Fuente
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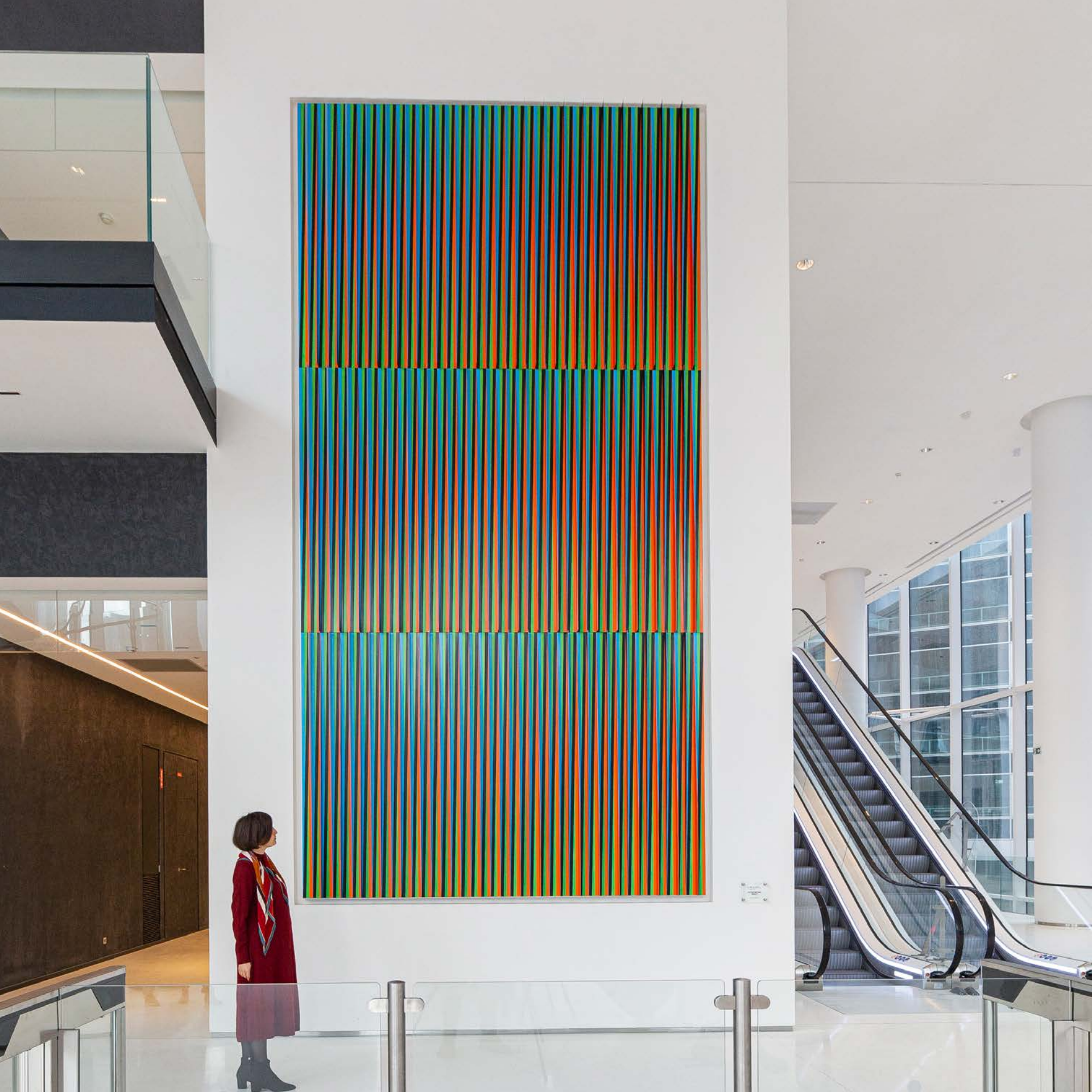


3

Induction Chromatique à Double Fréquence Tinaco 1,
Paris 2018
Ed. 1/3
Chromography on aluminum
70 x 210 cm

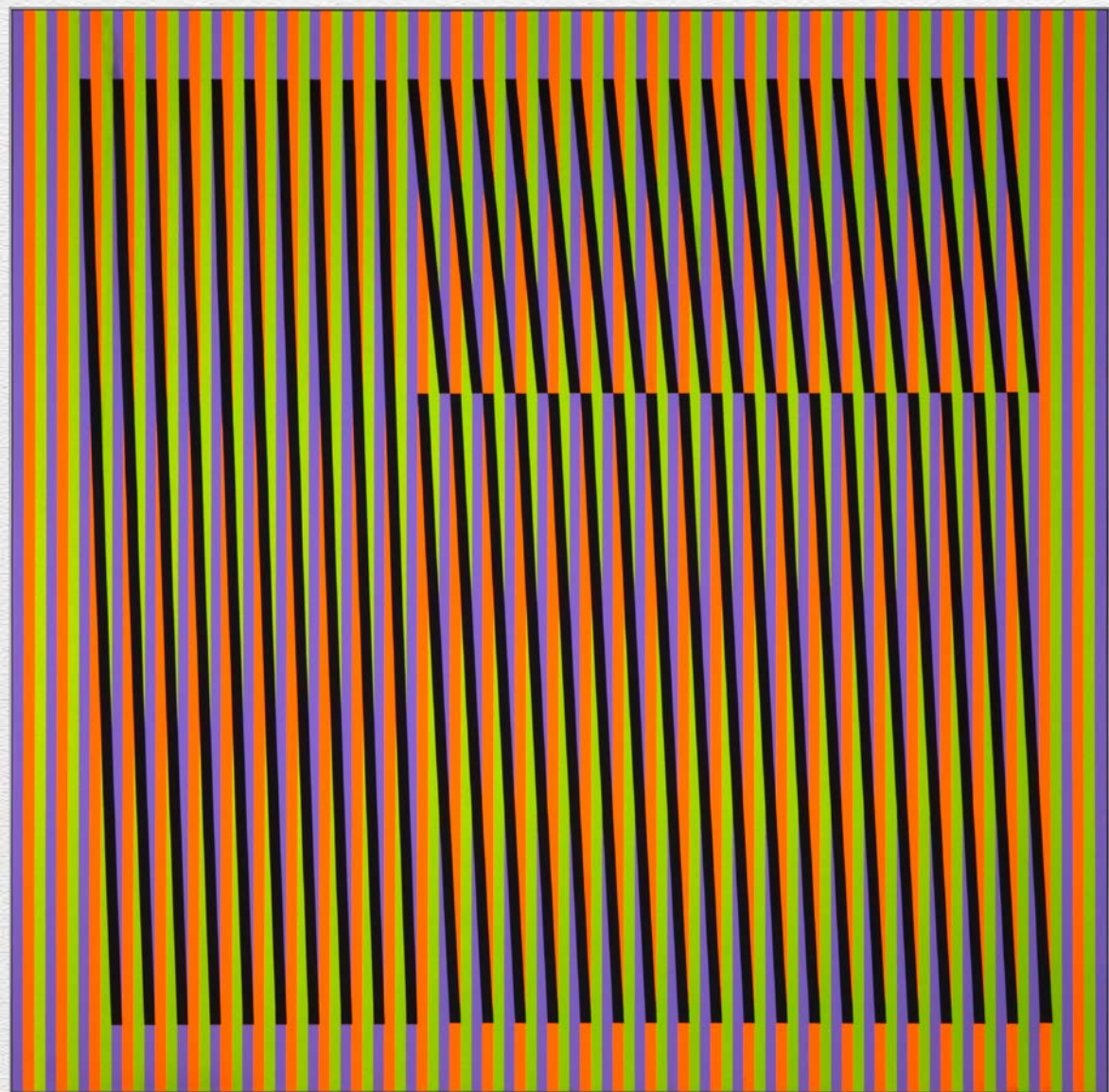
Induction Chromatique à Double Fréquence Tinaco 2

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
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Physichromie Trinity, 2017/2020
Tour Trinity, Paris (La Défense), France
Chromography on aluminum, 6 x 3,05 m
Arch. Cro & Cro Architecture

Photo: Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris / Sindbad Bonfanti
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023



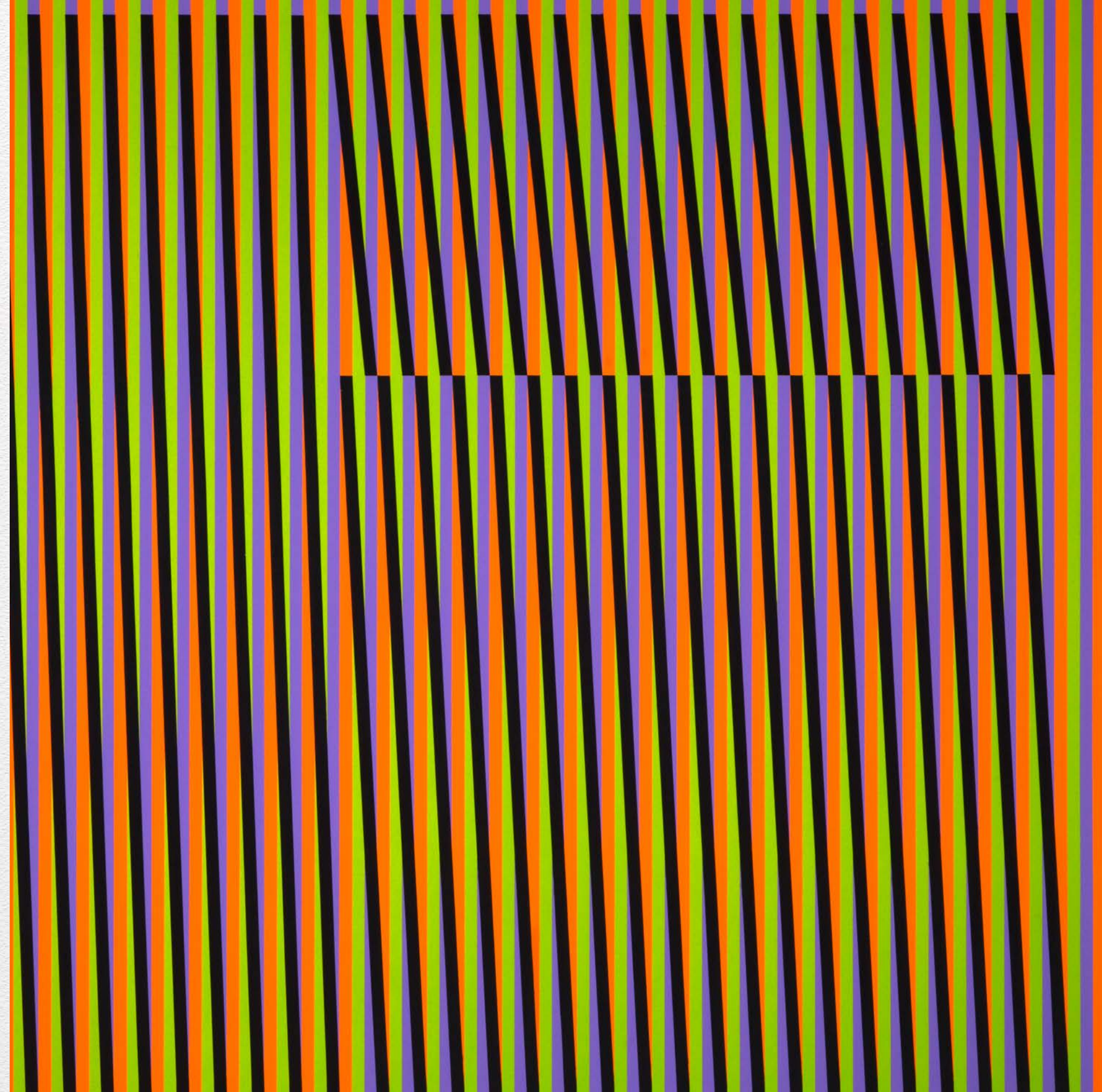
4

Induction Chromatique N°214

Paris 2016

Acrylic paint on aluminum

80 x 80 cm



PRADA

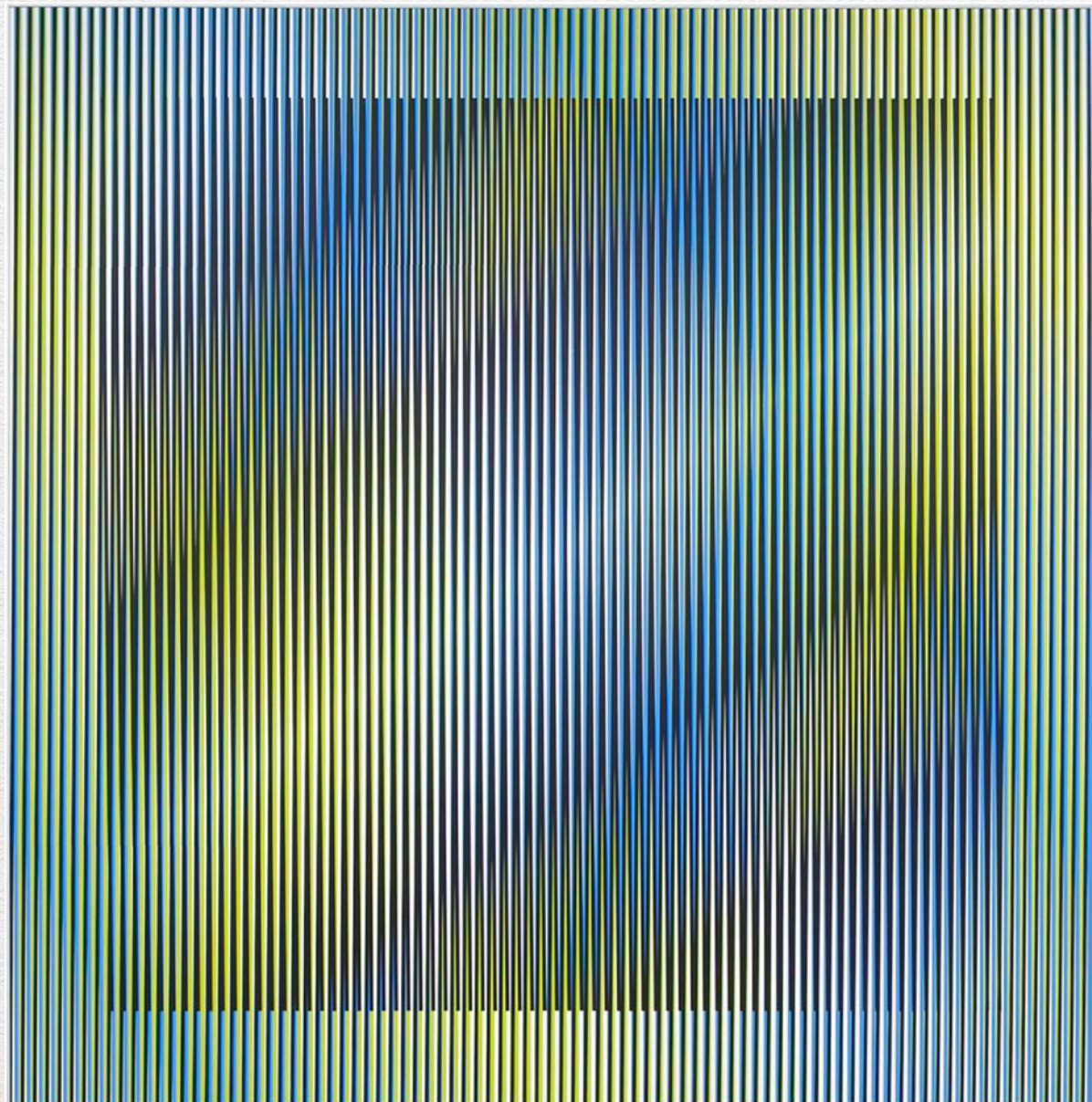
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5

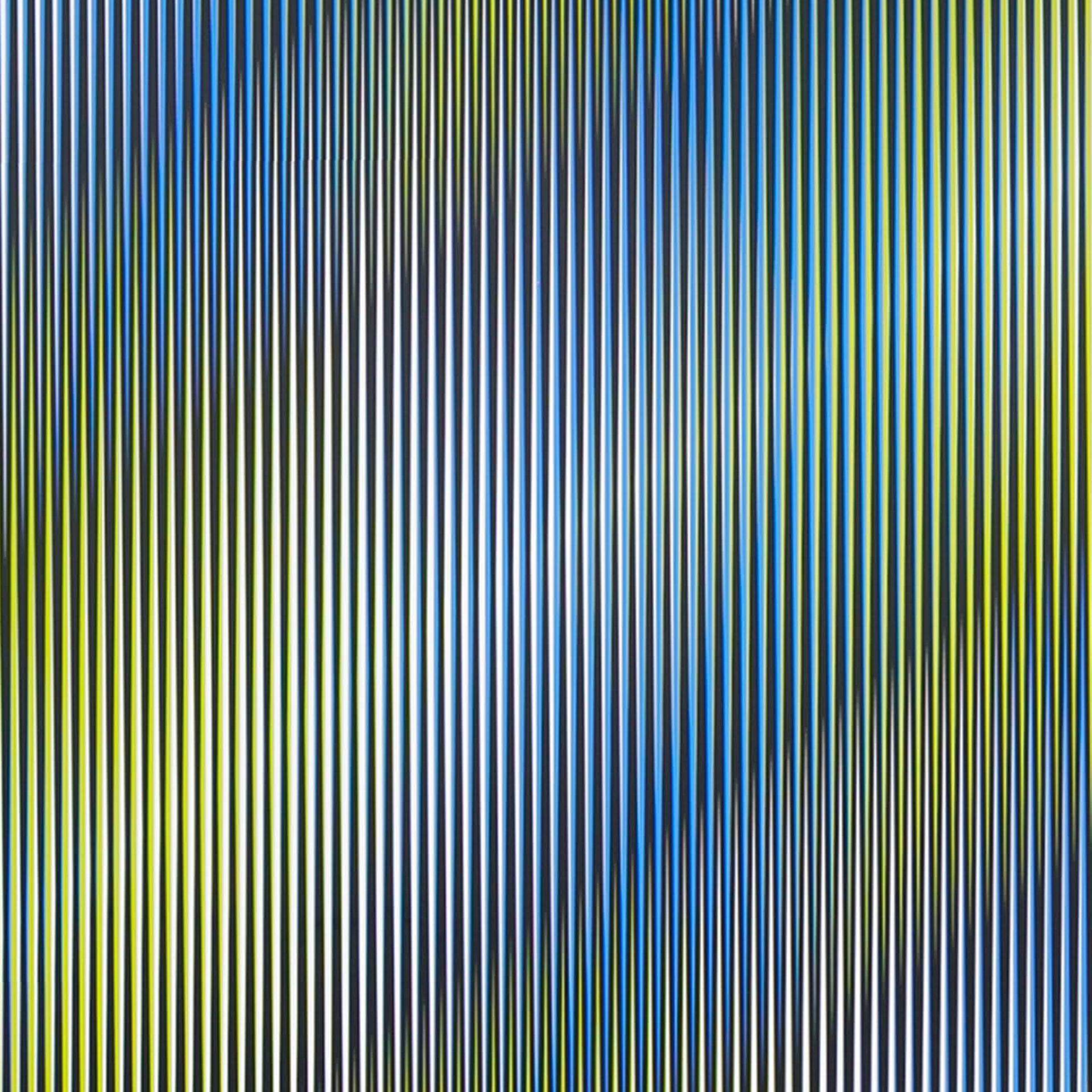
Inducción Cromática A Doble Frecuencia Panam 11

Panam 2011

Ed. 3/8

Chromography on aluminum

120 x 120 cm





ON PAGE 29:

A detailed view of: *Induction Chromatique N°214*

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris

© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023

ON PAGE 30 & 31:

Tribute to Carlos Cruz-Diez, 2014

Prada Beijing In88's Store facade, Beijing, China

ON PAGE 33:

A detailed view of: *Inducción Cromática A Doble Frecuencia Panam 11*

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris

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OPPOSITE PAGE:

Tribute to Carlos Cruz-Diez, 2012

Prada Singapore Ion Orchard's Store facade, Singapore, Malaysia



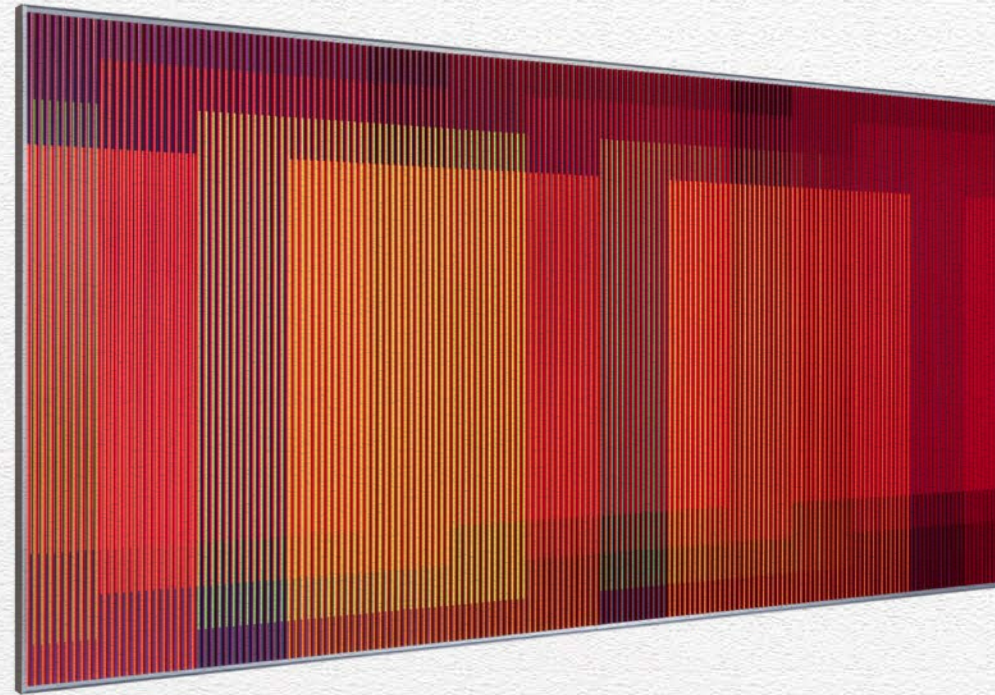
Physichromie Trinity, 2017/2020
Tour Trinity, Paris (La Défense), France
Chromography on aluminium, 6 x 3,05 m
Arch. Cro & Cro Architecture

Photo: Atelier Cruz-Diez / Sindbad Bonfanti
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023



6

Physichromie 1930
Paris 2014
Chromography on aluminum, plastic inserts
100 x 200 cm



Multiple perspectives of:
Physichromie 1930

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023

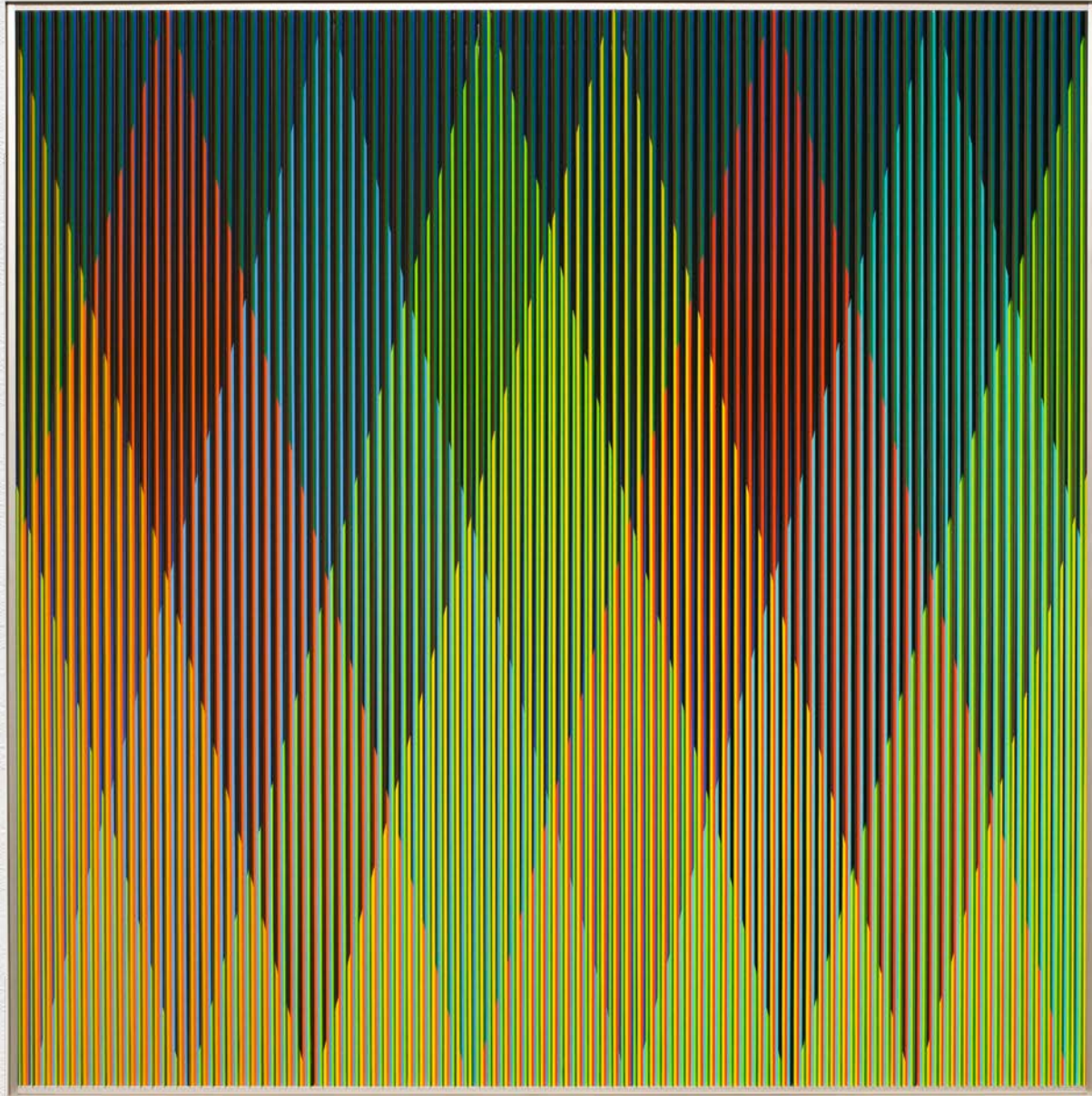
Physichromie double face, 1988

"Seoul Olympic Arts Festival. Olympiad of Art. The International Contemporary Painting", Olympic Park, Seoul, South Korea, 2 x 6 m

Photo: Atelier Cruz Diez Paris

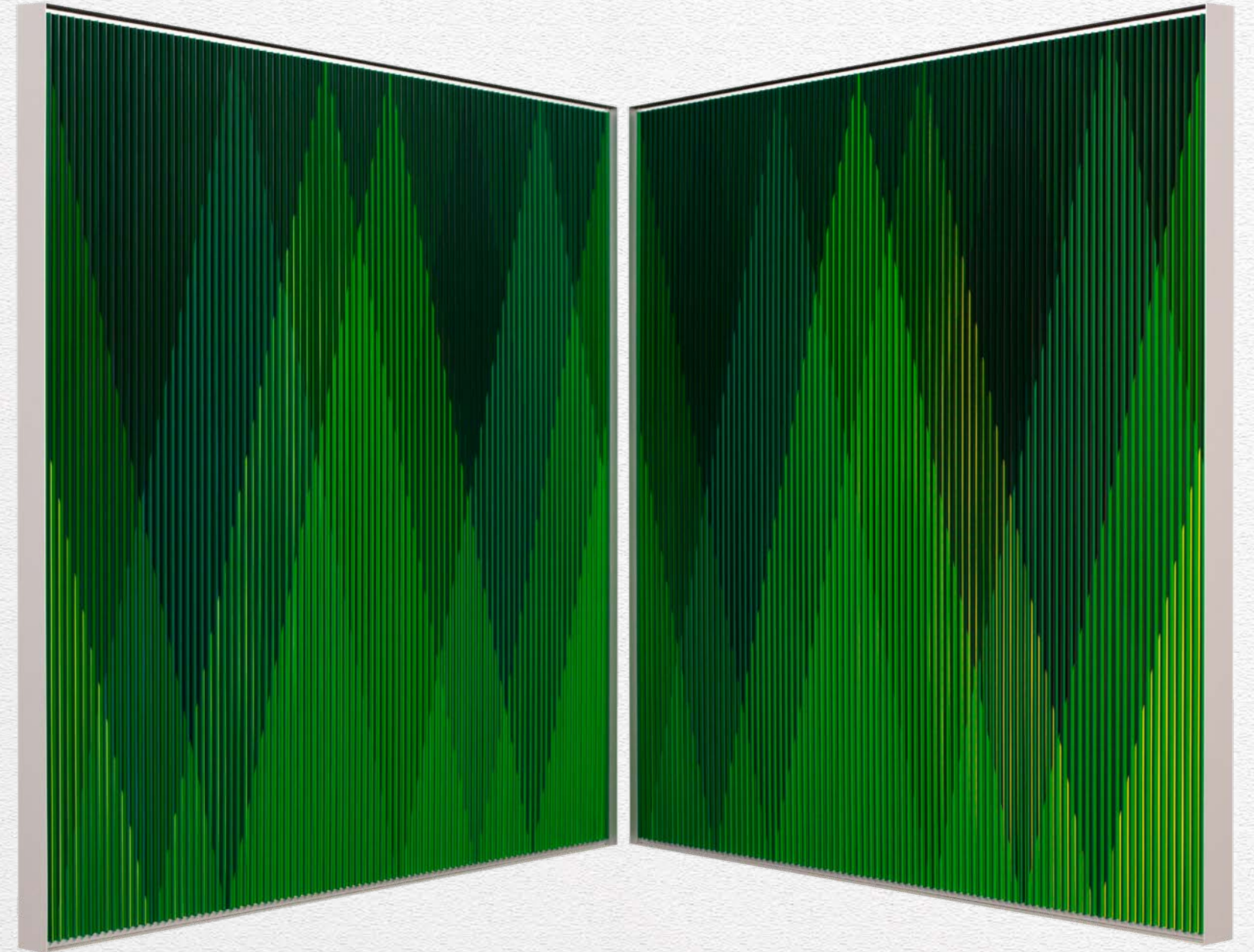
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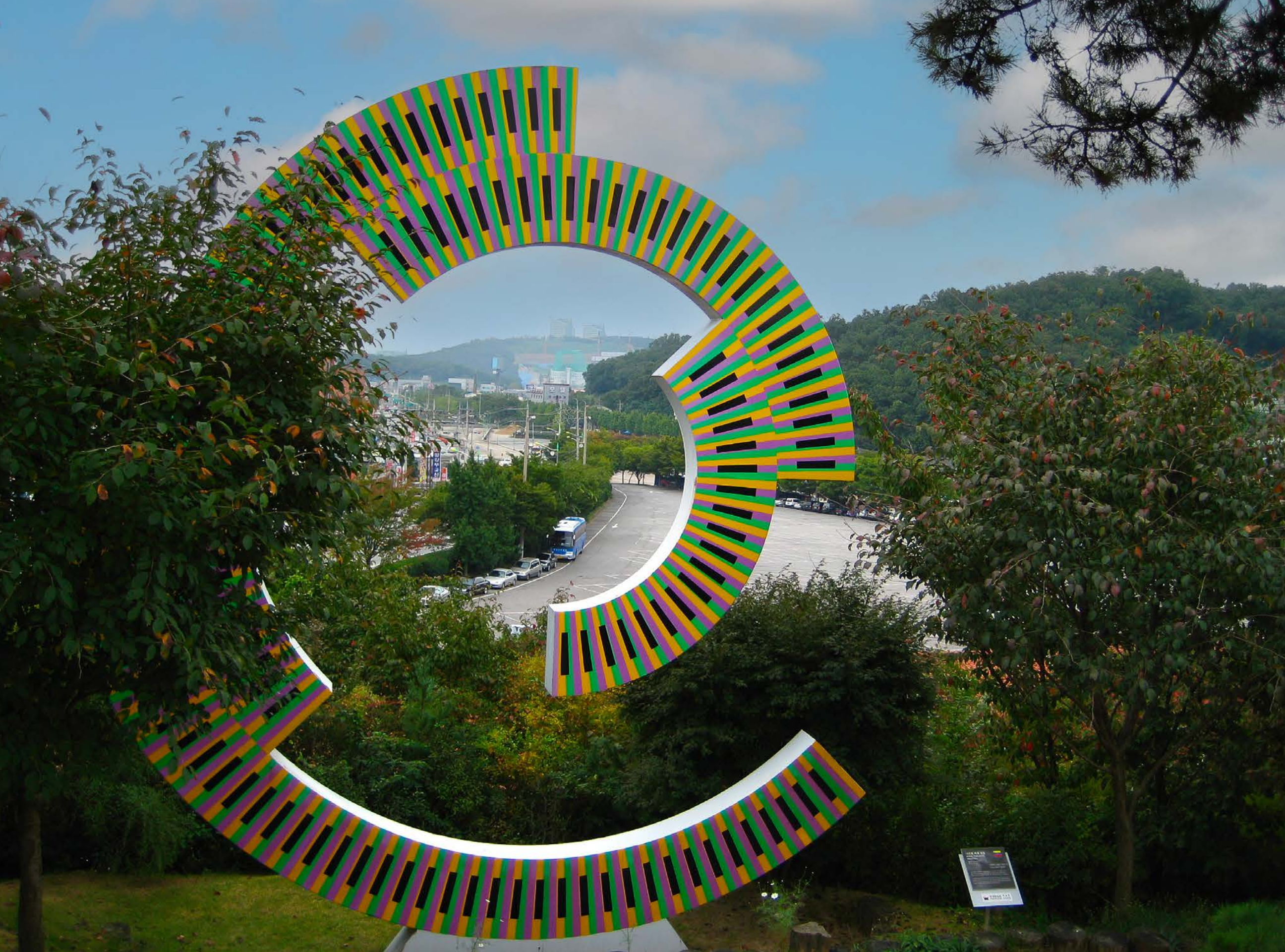
7

Physichromie 1979
Paris 2015
Chromography on aluminum, plastic inserts
100 x 100 cm



Multiple perspectives of:
Physichromie 1979

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023



Spirale virtuelle, 2001
Korean Folk Village, Yongin, South Korea
Painted steel, 8 m

Photo: Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023



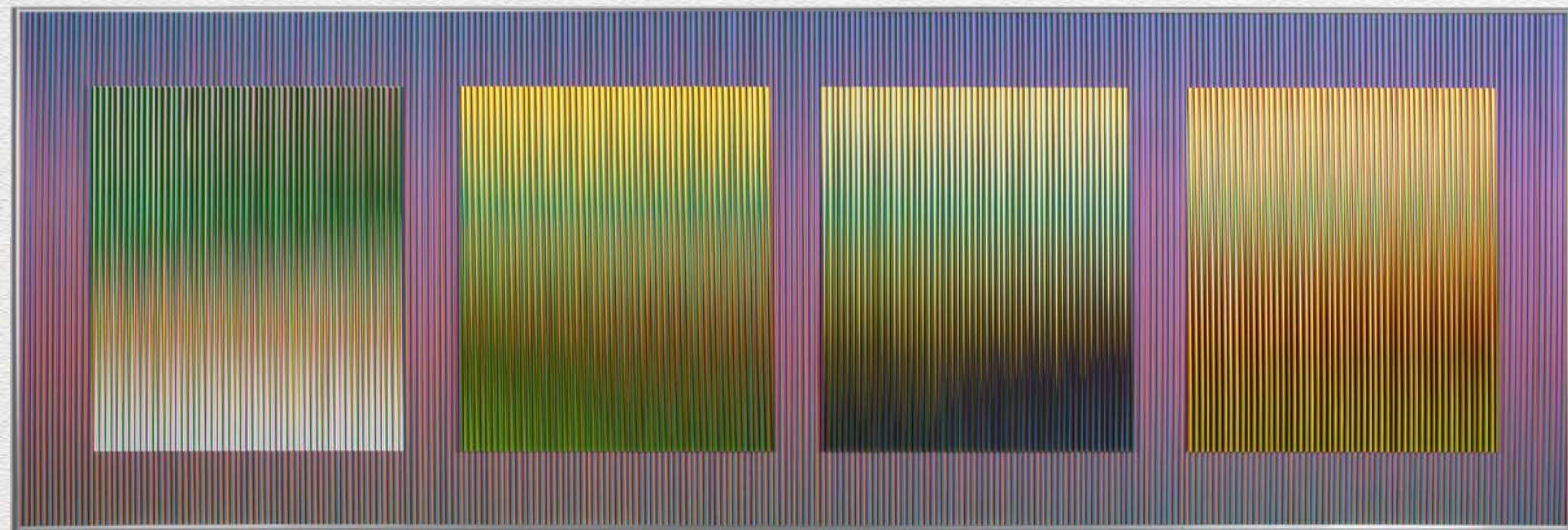
Inducción Cromática a doble frecuencia Cayón, 2016

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Five canvas panels on facade of the gallery,
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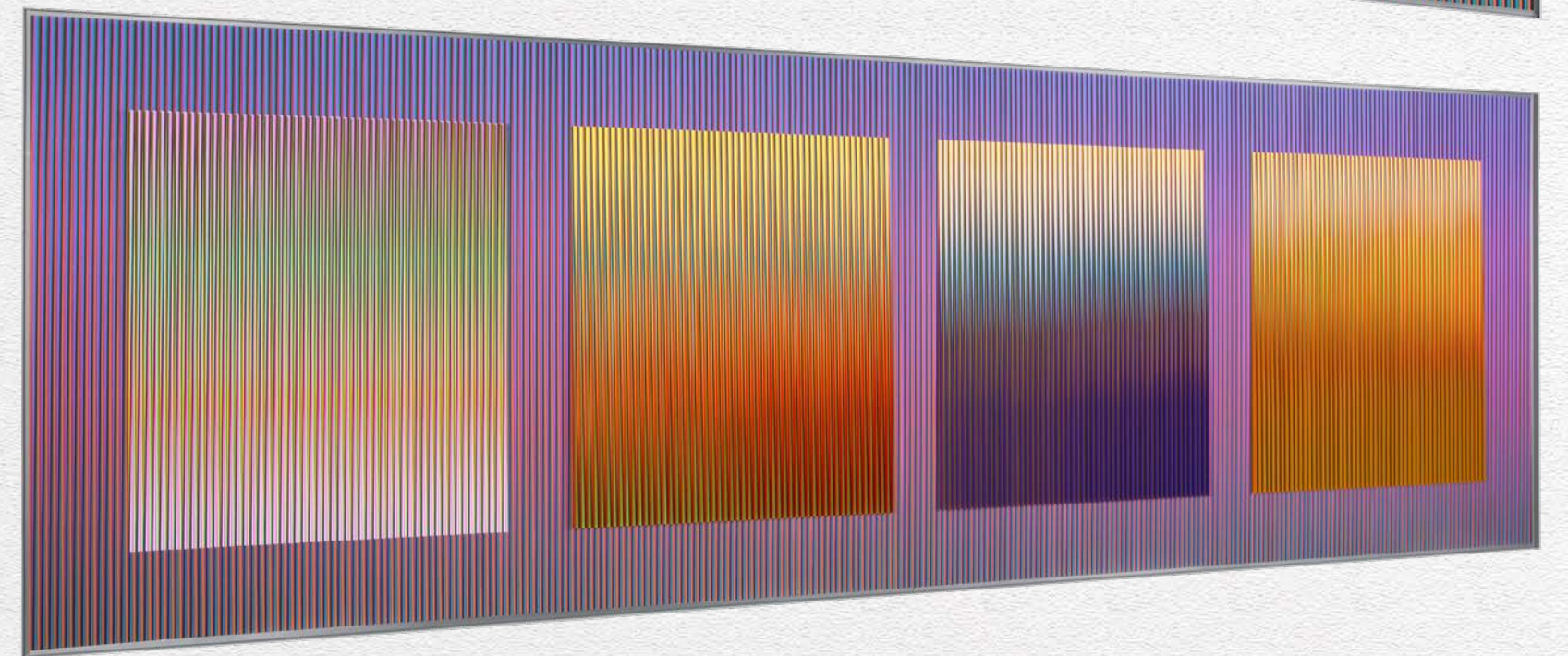
Photo: © Joaquín Cortés Noriega / Galería Cayón

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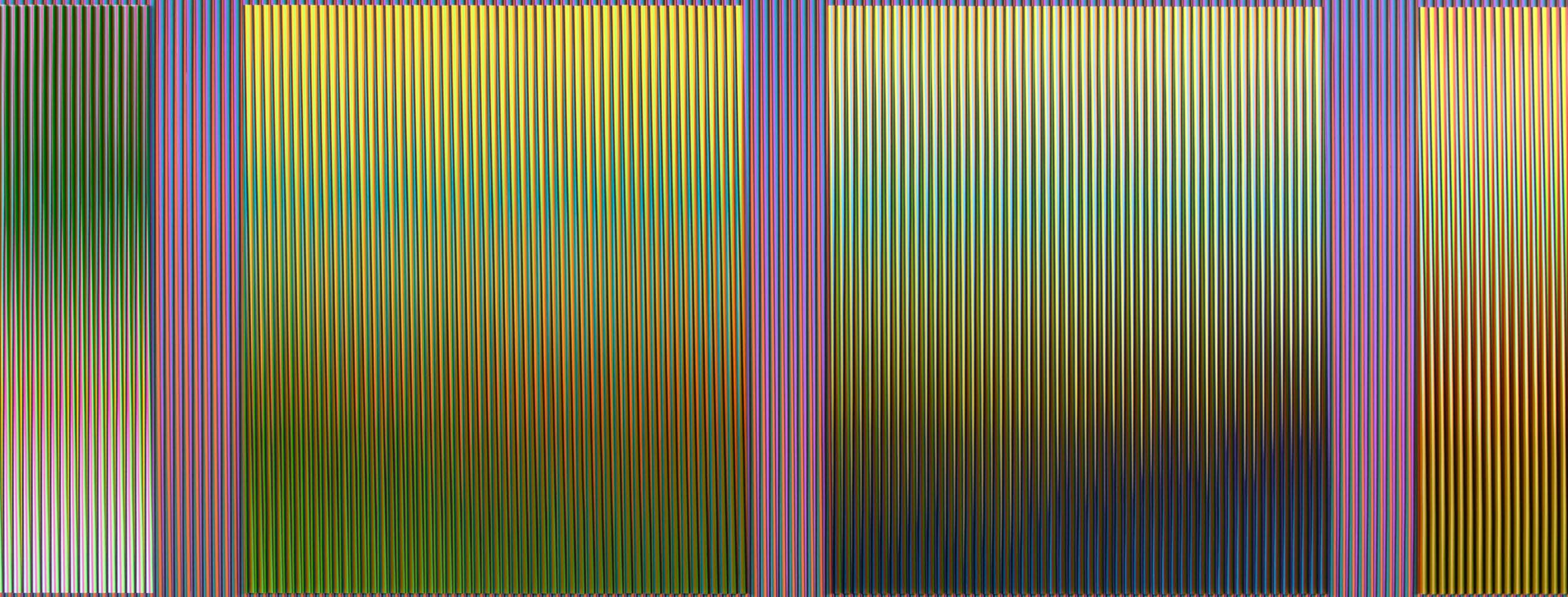
8

Physichromie 2690
Paris 2018
Chromography on aluminum, plastic inserts
100 x 300 cm



Multiple perspectives of:
Physichromie 2690

Photo: courtesy Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023



Inducción Cromática a doble frecuencia Cayón, 2016
Exhibition "Cruz-Diez", Galería Cayón, Convento de las
Hermanas Celadoras del Culto Eucarístico, Madrid, Spain
Six canvas panels on the stained-glass windows of the facade,
5.80 x 1.50 each one

Photo: Galería Cayón
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023

NEXT PAGE:
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North Facade of the Kenex Plaza Building,
Obarrio District, Panama City, Republic of Panama
Lacquer on aluminum structure, 9,36 x 42,5 m
Arch. Fernando Ponce de León

Photo: Artacruz S.A Panama / Rafael Guillen
© Carlos Cruz-Diez / Bridgeman Images 2023





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