

julio le parc

galeria

nara roesler

9 + 3 + RV

Alchimie 357, 2017

acrylic on canvas

200 x 200 cm

Simultaneously with the great retrospective of Julio Le Parc at the Tomie Ohtake Institute, **Galeria Nara Roesler | São Paulo** presents *Julio Le Parc: 9 + 3 + RV*, an exhibition that brings together works by the iconic Argentine artist. Nine recent paintings of the *Alchimie* series (2016/2017), large-scale acrylic on canvas, designed from various stages of drawings and smaller paintings that expand in progressively modified compositions are part of the exhibition; three sculptures of the series *Torsion* (2004), that in monumental sizes, occupy public spaces of countries like Mexico, Portugal and the United States; and for the first time in Latin America, *Alchimie Virtuel*, a work in virtual reality.

Alchimie Virtuel updates the question of virtuality presented by Le Parc for over 50 years and for which he was considered a visionary. Present in paintings such as *Réels et virtuels / serie Surface noir et blanc* (1950s), *Volume Virtuel* (70s), and *Cercle Virtuel* sculptures (60s), virtuality is updated in his work from technology.

In the words of critic Hans Ulrich Obrist, "the work of Julio Le Parc simultaneously experimental, visionary and playful, remains pertinent in the present, as it was in the 1960s, and his concerns related to politics, the role of the public, the artist and the power of arts organization are still relevant and significant."*



exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017



exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017

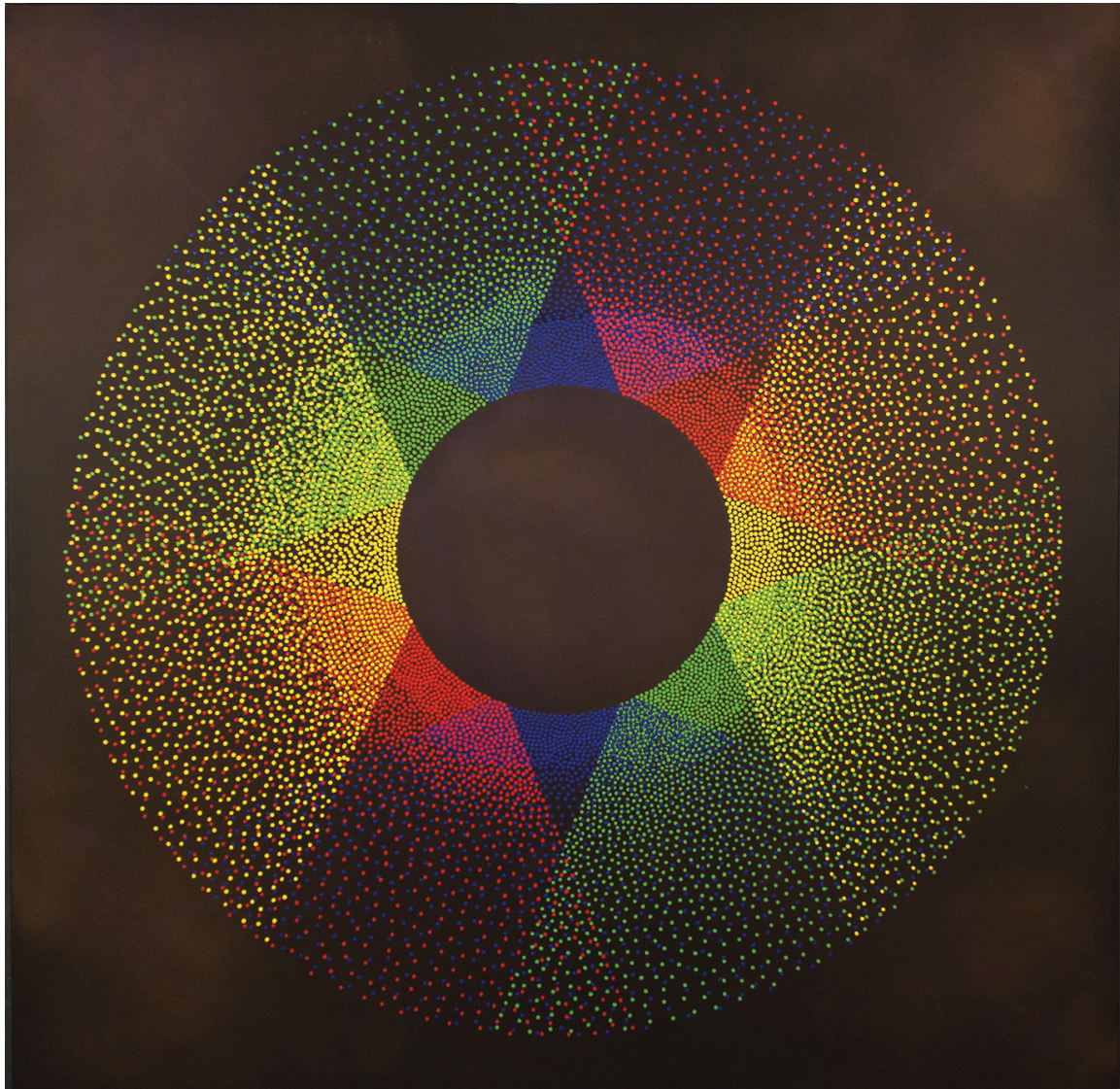


exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017



Alchimie 367, 2017 e *Alchimie 366*, 2017 -- acrylic on canvas -- 200 x 200 cm

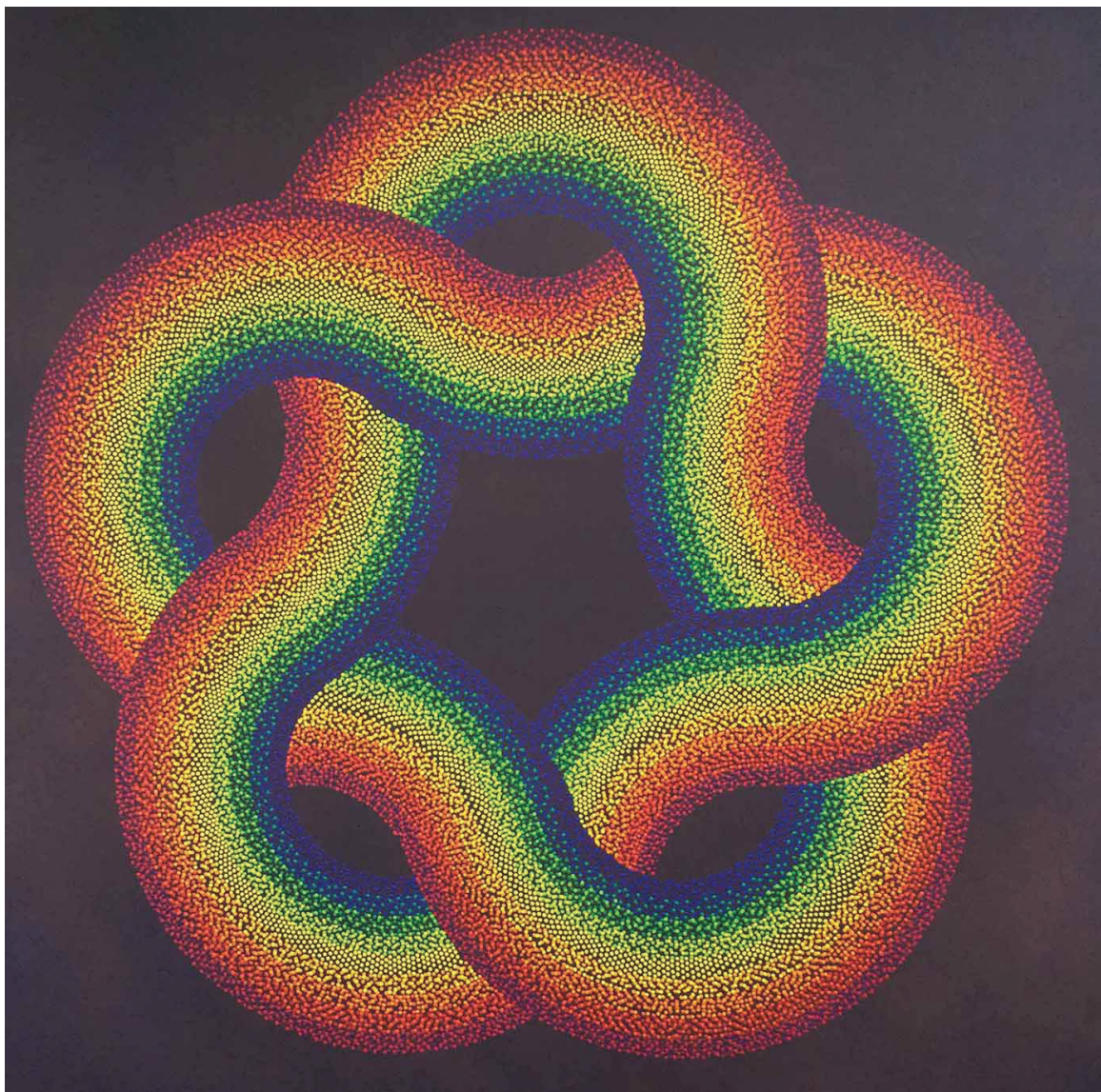
exhibition - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017



Alchimie 346, 2016
acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm



Alchimie 350, 2016
acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm



Alchimie 363, 2017
acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm

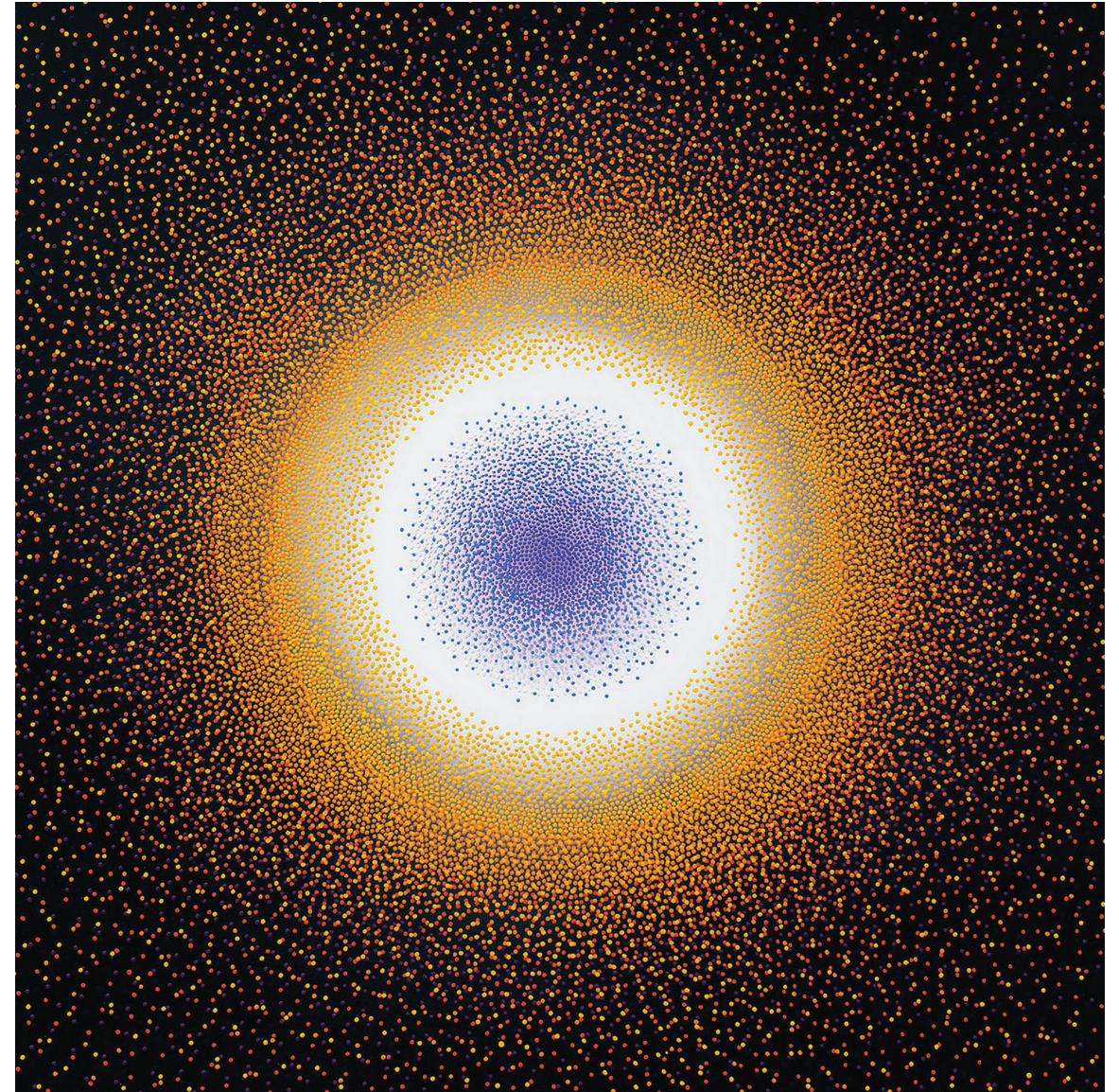
Alchimie 358, 2017
acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm





Alchimie 349, 2017
acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm

Alchimie 341, 2017
acrylic on canvas
200 x 200 cm





exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017

Torsion 6, 2004
stainless steel
228 x 104 x 104 cm

Torsion 5, 2004
stainless steel
241 x 118 x 118 cm

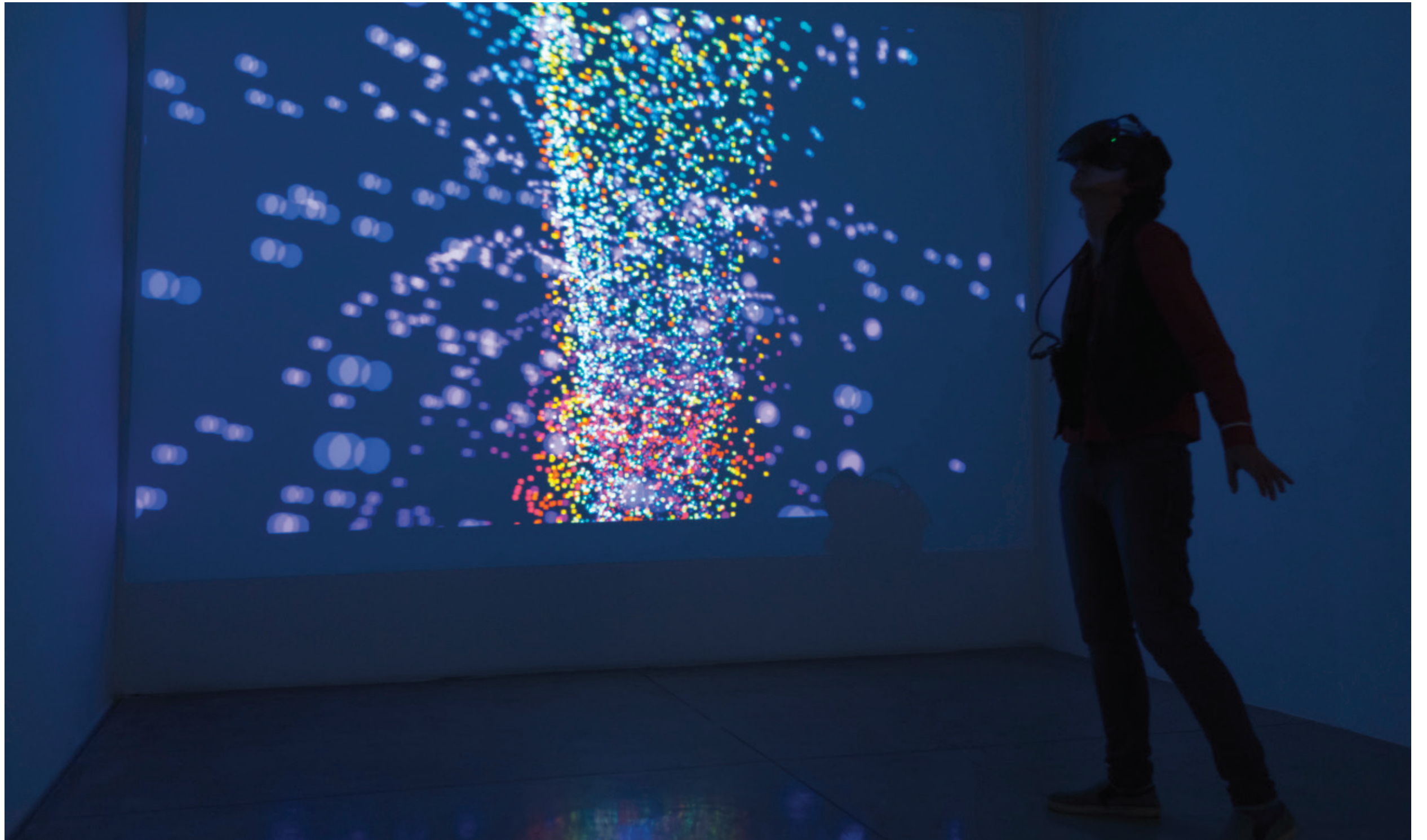


exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017



exhibition view - galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017

Torsion 2, 2004
stainless steel
241 x 118 x 118 cm



Alchimie virtuel, 2016 -- virtual reality -- variable dimensions -- exhibition view -- galeria nara roesler | são paulo, 2017

“Who can be interested in what some children think about an exhibition?”¹

Rodrigo Moura

The answer to this question has the name of its formulator: Julio Le Parc. Since his work emerged in the international art scene in the late 1950s in Paris, Le Parc is a defender of a kind of democracy in the arts. As a way of applying his Marxist education, with his pro-participation and pro-emancipation values, he thinks that in art as in politics, all power emanates from the people and in his name will be exercised. And in that sense, no one is better than children to affect themselves, to think, and to turn the wheel of time.

“It is forbidden not to participate.

It is forbidden not to touch.

It is forbidden not to break.”

Thus proclaimed the pioneer manifesto of GRAV (*Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel*) in October 1963.² In this, somewhat idealistic, creed, art has the ability to activate the libertarian potential of each of us by simply awakening our perceptive faculties. Pure form thus becomes political, and it makes the notion of spectator emerge with force, as the emulator of the electorate or of a revolutionary mass. The form teaches to liberate, they proposed, in a radical revision of the constructive teachings of the beginning of the century.

“A spectator who is conscious of his power of action and tired of so much abuse and mystification may himself make the true ‘revolution in art’”, they prophesied.

The emergence of kinetic artists in Paris coincides with the emergence of other group manifestations, having the city of light (no pun intended) as a center in the early 1960s. I think here especially of literary works that experimented with form, gathered around the Oulipo group (acronym for *Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle* or Workshop of Potential Literature), or even in the *nouvelle vague*, in the cinema. All these initiatives aimed at freeing the viewer or reader from the bonds of naturalistic illusionism, by exposing the foundations of artistic creation and making him or her participate more actively in it. Some books might have more than one end or reading orders (as in Raymond Quène's *Cent mille milliards de poèmes*, 1961, in which the verses of poems can be recombined in reading through cuts in the pages of the book), and films deconstructed some of the bases of verisimilitude, such as the synchrony between sound and image. Le Parc's proposals, such as his *Unstable floor* (1964) or his luminous reliefs of apparent mechanisms, also seek this viewer's awareness.

Resuming contact with Le Parc's works and ideas at a time when he holds a major retrospective of his work at the Tomie Ohtake Institute is an opportunity to revive this belief in the emancipatory role of art - today without the dogmatism that ruled his early ideas from within the kinetic art group - and the hope that it will be an opportunity for

transformation.

It is also opportune to note the vitality of Le Parc, producing new works on the eve of his 90th birthday. Let's call them new, but only because they are produced in the last months, since they relate to the ideas and projects that have been in his works for decades. It is with this freedom of action time, without the urgency of the early years, that Le Parc nourishes its current vitality. Therefore, the ideal way to see his works would be in a kind of permanent retrospective, something I would call, not without some humor, of Park Le Parc, where the environments could coexist with paintings, games with the reliefs and so on, into a transformational continuum that would form an almost dreamlike space of liberation, optimism, and self-consciousness.

In the exhibition at Galeria Nara Roesler, the title already gives the formula: 9 (paintings) + 3 (sculptures) + virtual reality. Among the first, we are faced with very recent examples of the *Alchemies*, which refer to previous series of paintings, since the *Modulations* of the 1970s. Here Le Parc is once again interested in the idea of chromatic permutation and refraction of light on the surface, creating possibilities of vibration from overlapping planes, concentric circles, spirals and Moebius tapes. What is most striking about these works is the capacity for environmental evocation that we find in it, as if each screen were a spacial body with its own depth and luminosity, evoking the eye / body dilemma, an old acquaintance of Le Parc. To see and to feel are sensations that become mixed up. My immediate reaction to these paintings is to walk into their interiors, engulfed by the hypnotic sensation of their repetitive forms - something that the virtual reality environment promises to fulfil. It is not just about the question of scale, for we find that same sensation in other works of different sizes, materialities, times and territories, but that relate to the *Alchemies*, such as the stained glass windows of Chartres or the Apache baskets.

On the other hand, his *Torsions*, for what he have been dedicating himself since the end of the 1990s, have a fateful tendency towards monumentality (curiously, echoes forms that we also found in the *Modulations*). Here the most obvious question is the incidence of ambient light on stainless steel filaments, evoking a dimension of duration as we move around them as if they were imperfect micro-mirrors or fragments of labyrinths. Therefore, the more extension, the greater the possibilities. This light phenomenon, however, occurs in a very subtle way, which makes these pieces difficult to understand or rather to like them for the least interesting reason, which is its clean industrial aspect.

The children return to the exhibition of Julio Le Parc. In some museums, we see the warning signs that notify parents to hold their younger children and also the faster ones. Think of these fast kids rushing through the museums. They seemed to be for me the ideal audience for the art of Le Parc.

1. Le Parc in interview to Hans-Michael Herzog, in the catalog Julio Le Parc/Obras cinéticas, published by Daros Latin America in 2014. P. 24.

2. *Assez de mystifications*. Manifesto signed by the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel and launched at the 3rd Paris Biennial in October 1963. In addition to Le Parc, Joël Stein, François Morellet, Francisco Sobrino and Yvaral were part of the group.

Rodrigo Moura (Belo Horizonte, 1975) is an editor and art critic. He was curator of the Inhotim Institute (Brumadinho, MG) and of the Pampulha Art Museum in Belo Horizonte and is currently assistant curator of Brazilian Art at the São Paulo Museum of Art (MASP).

about **Julio Le Parc**

Julio Le Parc (born 1928, Mendoza, Argentina) lives and works in Cachan, France. The artist presents the spectator with a fun and demystified vision of art and society through his perceptually illusive paintings, sculptures and installations. Le Parc interacts with color, light, shadow and movement so that the shapes appear to move, solid structures dematerialize, and the light itself looks plastic. As co-founder of the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV), he worked to break the limits in art and the participation of spectators contributed directly with his famous kinetic sculptures and light environments.

Beginning in the 1960s, however, he began to develop a series of distinctive works using "milky" light: these objects, usually constructed with a lateral white light source that was reflected and broken by polished metal surfaces, combined a high degree of intensity with a subtle expression of continuous motion.

Le Parc works were the subject of numerous solo exhibitions in Europe, Latin America and the United States, in institutions such as the Pérez Art Museum, Miami, USA (2016); Museum der Kulturen Basel, Basel, Switzerland (2015); Bildmuseet, Umea, Sweden (2015); Malba, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2014); Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2013); Luiz Angel Arango Library, Bogota, Colombia, (2007); Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City, Mexico (2006); Castello di Boldeniga, Brescia, Italy (2004), among others. The artist was also part of several collective and biennial exhibitions such as: the International Biennial of Curitiba, Curitiba, Brazil (2015); Mercosur Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil (1999); Biennial of Havana, Havana, Cuba (1984); Biennial of São Paulo (1967), the Biennial of Venice in 1966 (when he received the Prize) and the controversial exhibition of MoMA, *The Responsive Eye* (1965). As a protest against the repressive military regime in Brazil, he joined artists in the boycott of the Sao Paulo Biennial in 1969 and published an alternative catalog of *Contrabiennial* in 1971. Le Parc's later collective works include participation in anti-fascist movements in Chile, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Recently Le Parc has been the subject of major retrospectives, such as *Form into action* at the Pérez Art Museum, Miami, USA (2016), *Julio Le Parc at the Serpentine Gallery*, London, UK (2014); *Le Parc: Lumière* at MALBA, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2014); *Soleil froid* at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2013); *Le Parc lumière* at Casa Daros, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2013); and the *Dynamo* exhibition at the Grand Palais, Paris, France (2013).

*Hans Ulrich Obrist in the *Bifurcations* exhibition catalog. Perrotin Gallery, Paris, 2017.

