

## CRITICS' PICKS



View of "Julio Le Parc," 2013.

## PARIS

# Julio Le Parc

### PALAIS DE TOKYO

13, Avenue du Président Wilson

February 27–May 13, 2013

For the past half century, Julio Le Parc has created disorienting and elating sensorial experiences by manipulating light and reflection with kinetic constructions. The entry to the artist's largest-ever survey in France is via a dense forest of suspended full-length mirrors. Navigating through *Passage-cellule agrandie du labyrinthe de 1963* (Cell-Passage Enlargement of the 1963 Maze), 1963–2013, the viewer is besieged by his own undulating, infinitely reflected image—and thereby initiated into a dual role as spectator and active participant.

Never straying far from a basic recipe of mirrors, motors, and a light source, Le Parc's illusions are dazzling, but not mysterious. In fact, the candid design of his perception-altering oeuvre—which ranges from articulated Op art paintings (the "Contorsion" series, begun in the mid-1960s) to immersive installations—encourages investigation. A particularly spectacular example is *Continuel-Lumière Cylindre* (Continual Light Cylinder), 1962–2005, which gives the impression of laser beams crisscrossing an enormous smoky orifice. Closer inspection

reveals an empty wall-mounted frame whose circular design bounces light, originally emanating from a box on the floor, back and forth over a slightly textured wall.

Though formative works from the 1960s and '70s are duly represented, this exhibition is not couched as a historical retrospective. The emphasis, rather, is on the eighty-four-year-old artist's remarkable contemporariness. Instead of linking Le Parc to artists of his own generation such as Jesús-Rafael Soto and François Morellet, the nonchronological presentation seems to allude to younger artists who also work with light and reflection, including Olafur Eliasson and Jeppe Hein. A re-creation of Le Parc's interactive playthings in the exhibition's final room further emphasizes the artist's youthful spirit. Though nearly fifty years have passed since these works first appeared, *Jeu enquête: Les mythes* (Game Survey: Myths), 1965–2013 (a ball toss with targets ranging from Mickey Mouse to Uncle Sam), *Miroir en vibration* (Mirror in Vibration), 1965–2013 (a motorized fun-house mirror), and *Douze Lunettes pour une vision autre* (Twelve Glasses for an Alterior Vision), 1965–2013 (vision-altering eyeglasses that won Le Parc the Grand Prize at the 1966 Venice Biennale), still offer pure delight.

— *Mara Hoberman*

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