

**CARLOS CRUZ-DIEZ**

[1923, Venezuela - 2019, France]

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Carlos Cruz-Diez first studied art at the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas de Caracas from 1940 to 1945. While studying there, he participated in a lively discussion group, which included artists Jesús Rafael Soto and Alejandro Otero, key figures of the Venezuelan kinetic art movement. He also was influenced by his study of impressionism, especially as it applied to experiments with color. In his earliest work, Cruz-Diez painted figurative canvases intended to reflect and comment upon social issues. In 1954, influenced by his study of the Bauhaus and European avant-gardes, Cruz-Diez created his first abstract and interactive project. A year later, he began a series of *Objetos rítmicos móviles* that consisted of multicolored, movable figures made from wood, and, in 1957, he began experimenting with colored light. His first *Physichromie*—translated as "physical color" (these works explore the physical dimension of color)—was made in 1959. The following year, Cruz-Diez and his family moved to Paris, where he met Argentine artist Luis Tomasello and members of the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV), and he quickly became an important member of the artistic communities there.

In 1971, Cruz-Diez established his workshop on the rue Pierre Semard, in a former Belle Epoque-era butcher's shop. From that workshop, he pursued his explorations of color and light with *Physichromie*, *Chromosaturation*, *Chromointerférence*, and large-scale public projects, all of which were developed as investigations into visual and perceptual experiences of color. Other lines of research he pursued were *Couleur Additive*, *Induction Chromatique*, *Transchromie*, *Chromoscope*, and *Couleur à l'Espace*. The artist describes his *Chromosaturation* series as the exploration of an often-unnoticed reality: "That reality (which I consider visible) leads us along other paths, both perceptive and sensory, to parallel ideas of beauty and sublimation." Cruz-Diez is internationally considered a master artist of the 20th and 21st centuries for his contributions to the theory and practice of color. The documentary *Free Color* (2020), directed by Alberto Arvelo, tells the story of Cruz-Diez's life and follows along as he embarked on the most ambitious work of his career.

Cruz-Diez's works have been shown in numerous important solo exhibitions, including *(In)formed by Color: Carlos Cruz-Diez*, Americas Society (AS), New York City, New York, USA (2008); *Carte Blanche*, Galerie Denise René, Paris, France (2007); *Environment Chromatic-Interferences*, Guangdong Museum of Art (GDMoA), Guangzhou, China (2010); *Latin American Art*, Hayward Gallery, London, England, UK and Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden (1989); *Carlos Cruz-Diez: Didaktik und Dialektik der Farbe*, Das kleine Museum – Kultur auf der Peunt, Weissenstadt, Germany (2015); *Cruz-Diez en noir et blanc*, Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris, France (2014); *Cruz-Diez. Color-Arcontecimiento*, Museo de Arte Costarricense (MAC), San José, Costa Rica (1991); *Carlos Cruz-Diez: Color in Space and Time*, Museo de Arte de Lima (MALI), Peru, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA), Argentina, The Museum of Fine Arts,

Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA, and Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil (2011); *Cruz-Diez: El Color Autónomo*, Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá (MAMBO), Colombia (1998); *Cruz-Diez*, Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín (MAMM), Colombia (1985); *Apuntes sobre el Color*, Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela (1993); *Cruz-Diez. Afiches. Exposición Homenaje a los 80 Años de Carlos Cruz-Diez*, El Museo de la Estampa y del Diseño Carlos Cruz-Diez, Caracas, Venezuela (2003); *The Weight of Form: The Graphic Design of Carlos Cruz-Diez*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid, Spain (2021); *Carlos Cruz-Diez. Mastering Colour*, Puerta Roja, Hong Kong (2017); and *Réalités de la Peinture*, The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia (1989), among others.

Cruz-Diez's works are represented in several major collections including Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, France; Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas, USA; Centre National d'Art Contemporain (CNAC), Paris, France; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Essex Collection of Art from Latin America (ESCALA), Colchester, England, UK; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, USA; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark; Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris (MAM Paris), France; Musée de Grenoble, France; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Bogotá (MAC), Colombia; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas (MACC), Venezuela; Museo de Arte Costarricense (MAC), San José, Costa Rica; Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín (MAMM), Colombia; Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela; Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA), Santiago, Chile; Museo La Tertulia, Cali, Colombia; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Brazil; Museum für Konkrete Kunst (MKK), Ingolstadt, Germany; The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, California, USA; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City, New York, USA; Palm Springs Art Museum, California, USA; Tate Modern, London, England, UK; Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London, England, UK; and Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, Germany.