

**#MuseumFromHome  
with the  
Elmhurst Art Museum**



COLOR





Previous image: Luftwerk, *Parallel Perspectives* (sketch), 2019

Above image: Luftwerk, *Luftwerk, Dimension of Color*, 2019. Photo by John Faier.

# WELCOME

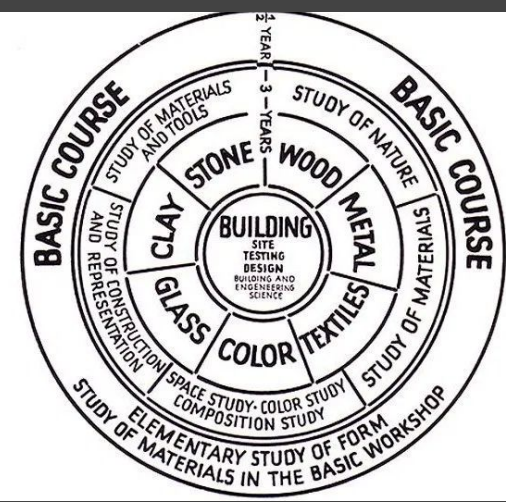
Color is produced when light, striking an object, is reflected back to the eye. In art and design, color has a slew of attributes which are primarily subjective. Those include characteristics such as harmony — when two or more colors are brought together and produce a satisfying effective response; and temperature — a blue is considered warm or cool depending on whether it leans towards purple or green and a red whether it leans towards yellow or blue.

Subjectively, then, color is a sensation, a human reaction to a hue arising in part from the optic nerve, and in part from education and exposure to color, and perhaps in the largest part, simply from the human senses.

# Modern Understanding of Color

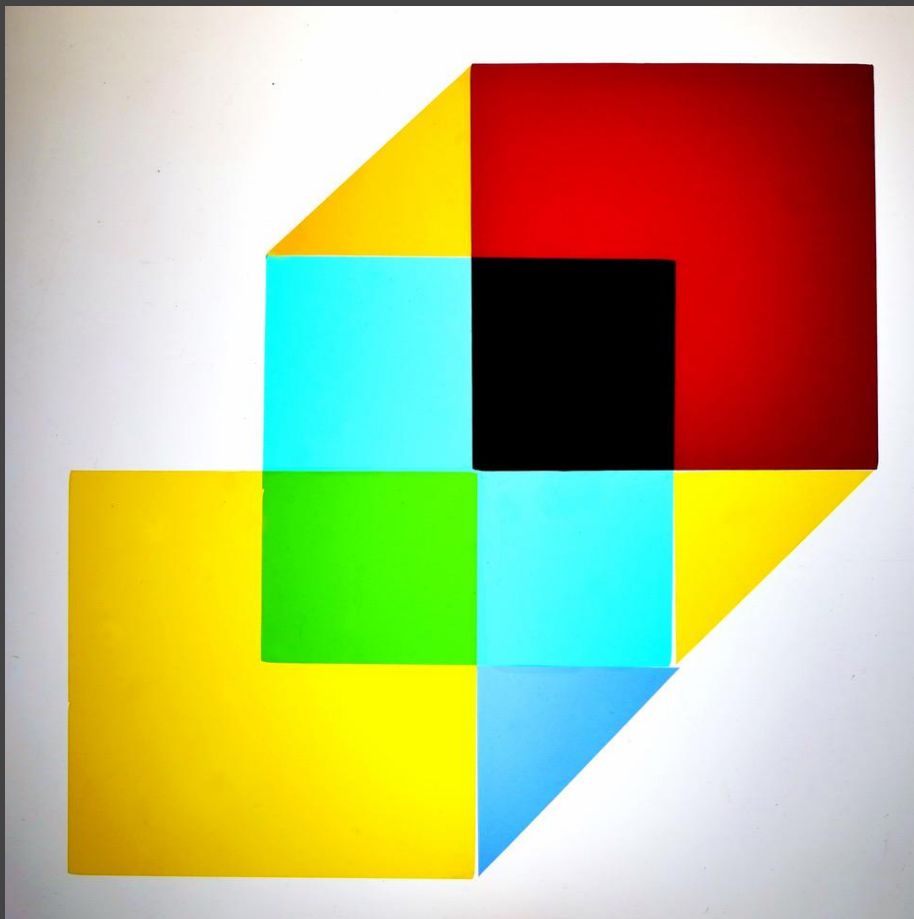
The teachers of the Bauhaus created much of what we currently understand and believe about color. The teachings of these four artists helps us understand not only the formation of modern color theory, but indeed how color theory is developed and transmitted.

Johannes Itten taught at the Bauhaus from 1919 until 1922, and he taught one of the fundamental preliminary courses that – among other things – grappled with color theory. Itten gave us a color sphere comprised of twelve colors (three primary, three secondary, and six tertiary) that shows the relationship among colors, as well as gradations of saturation. The influence of psychoanalysis is apparent in Itten's color theory, as he was one of the first to associate different colors with specific emotions and study the impact of color on our moods. He also studied how individuals perceive color.



A. Itten, 1921

Top Left: Unknown Designer, Scheme of teaching, from the publication "State Bauhaus Weimar 1919–1923, 1923" 1923, © Foto: ifa, A. Körner, bildhübsche Fotografie  
Bottom left: Colour star used by Itten as the basis of his teaching at the Bauhaus c. 1921, showing English translations of the 12 hue divisions he derived from his teacher Adolf Hoelzel.



Inspired by concepts from Johannes Itten and the teachings from Bauhaus, modern artists have embraced these ideas on color and applied to them to exhibitions, in particular, in our McCormick House. These artists created immersive experiences in the McCormick House, using a variety of artistic materials, light, and film. While color is relative, saturating an environment with color impacts how we interpret and see the space. Creating such dynamic and dramatic environments enhance our understanding of color as the subject matter as well as a method to communicate other ideas.

Luftwerk, Sketches in the making of *Parallel Perspectives*, color gel and light, 2019



Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, *Untitled Film (Red)*, 2018  
Transparent, red colored polyester film

## Iñigo MANGLANO-OVALLE

Manglano-Ovalle's intervention *Untitled Film (Red)* radically altered the experience of the McCormick House and all its views to the exterior. Viewers were immersed in color saturation as their expectations of the house's nuances are disrupted by a simple gesture of applying red celluloid to the glass curtain walls Mies van der Rohe is known for.



Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, *Untitled  
Film (Red)*, 2018  
Transparent, red colored polyester  
film

Red permeates the whole of the environment, including the visitor and their view of the exterior. It is a color with optical, emotive, psychological, social, as well as political connotations. Its meaning is filtered by a set of individual interpretations which in turn are colored by historical and cultural associations we assign to red.

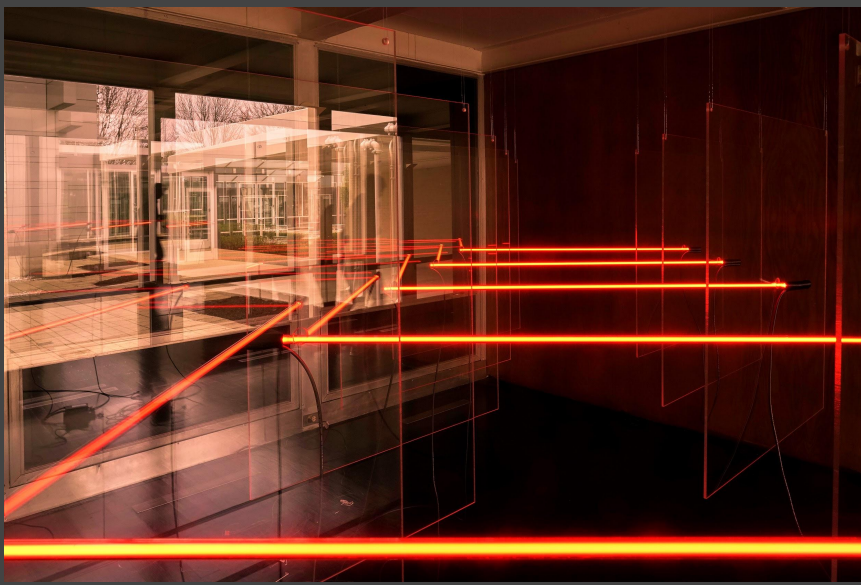




Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, *Untitled Film (Red)*, 2018  
Transparent, red colored polyester film

Manglano-Ovalle's architectural interventions have included projects at Mies's Farnsworth House, Barcelona Pavilion, S.R. Crown Hall at IIT, and Neue National Galerie, Berlin, as well as the fabrication of the architect's 1951 proposal for the as-yet-unbuilt House with Four Columns.





Angle of Reflection, 2019. Photo by John Faier.

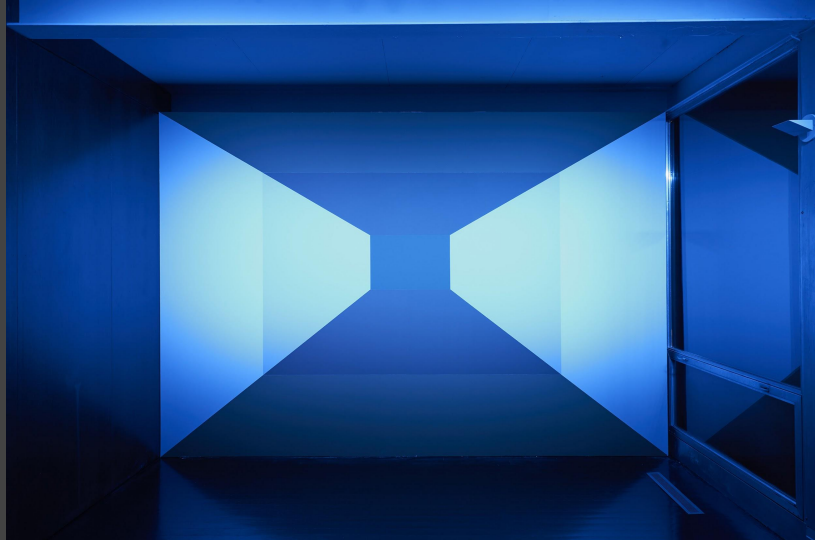
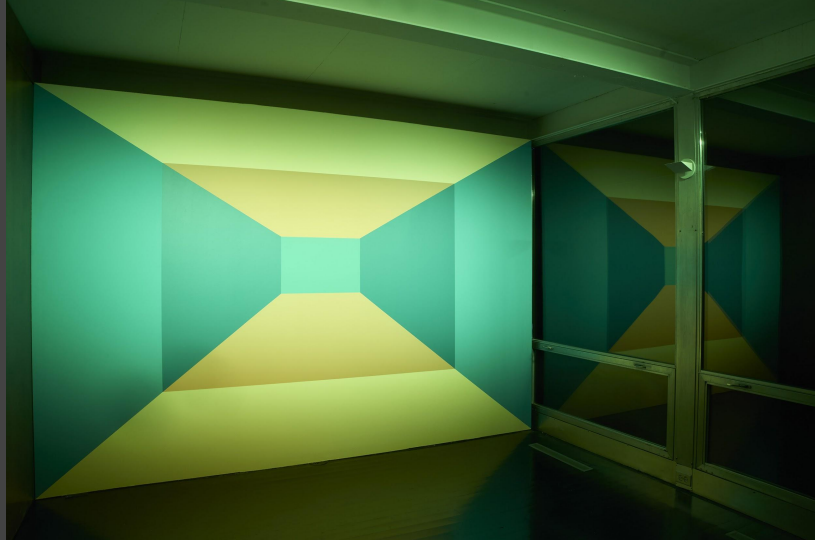
# LUFTWERK: Parallel Perspectives

*Parallel Perspectives* used color and light interventions to activate and interpret the McCormick House (1952) designed by Mies van der Rohe. This installation by Luftwerk—the Chicago-based collaborative of Petra Bachmaier and Sean Gallero—heightened the senses and altered the perception while celebrating the mid-Century prefab prototype. The exhibition title referred to the paired prefab sections of the McCormick House, and the works in this show inspired by the conceptual framework of Mies.



Luftwerk, Luftwerk, Dimension of Color, 2019.  
Photo by John Faier.

Color was central to Luftwerk's visual transformation of the architectural nuances and the history of the house. In fact, the original developers, Robert Hall McCormick and Herbert S. Greenwald, offered to tint windows of the proposed prefabricated housing with "almost any shade of the rainbow."



The installation included several works with static and dynamic color relationships, including an immersive light piece that transforms a bedroom, parallel neon light pieces with mirrored effects, pulsing lightboxes, and a colorful glass cube. The visual effects impacted the experiences and spatial perceptions of the viewer throughout the domestic environment.

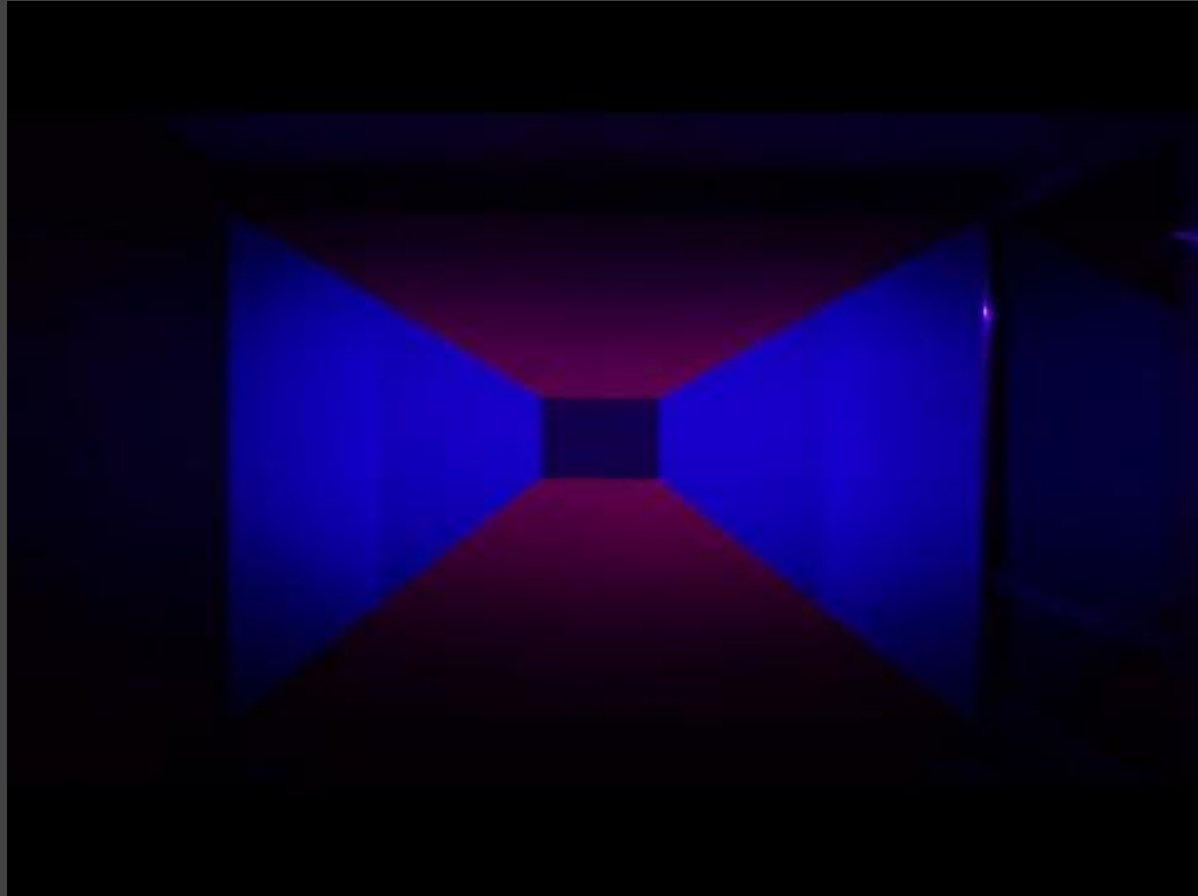
Luftwerk, *One point Perspective Study No 1*, 2019.  
Photograph by John Faier.





# VIDEO

Luftwerk, *One point Perspective Study No 1*,  
2019, Video by John Faier.

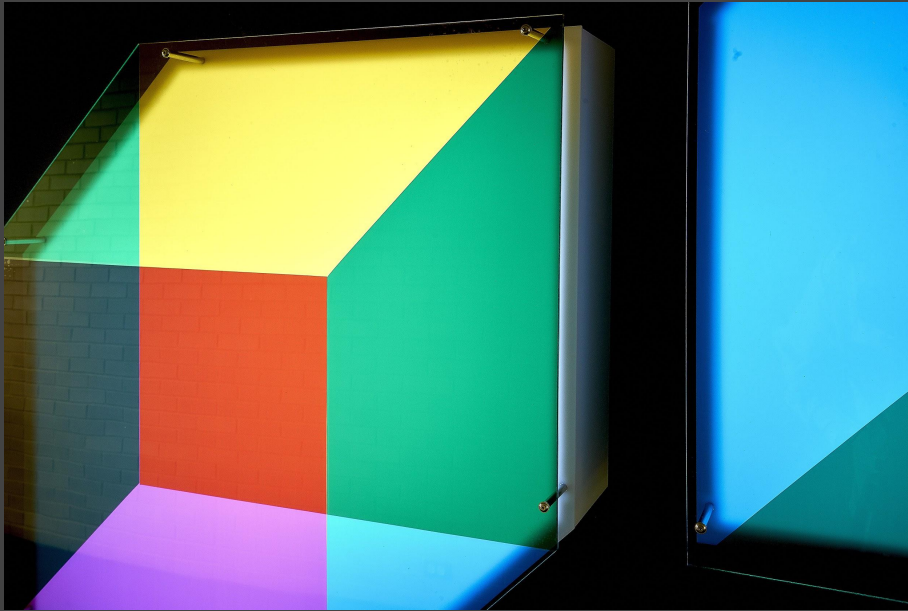


# Inspired by the Bauhaus

Why you decided to refer to the idea of the owner Robert Hall McCormick to tint windows “almost any shade of the rainbow”?

Luftwerk: “almost any shade of the rainbow” is the bridge between our interest in working with color and the McCormick House. It opens a space for the connection between Mies van der Rohe’s designed architecture to Bauhaus color studies, like Johannes Itten and Josef Albers. We see *Parallel Perspectives* as site-specific exhibition that articulates that connection.

While developing the work we kept asking ourselves: What would an architectural rainbow look like? This approach opened up a playful yet structured platform to engage concepts of perception and color theory.



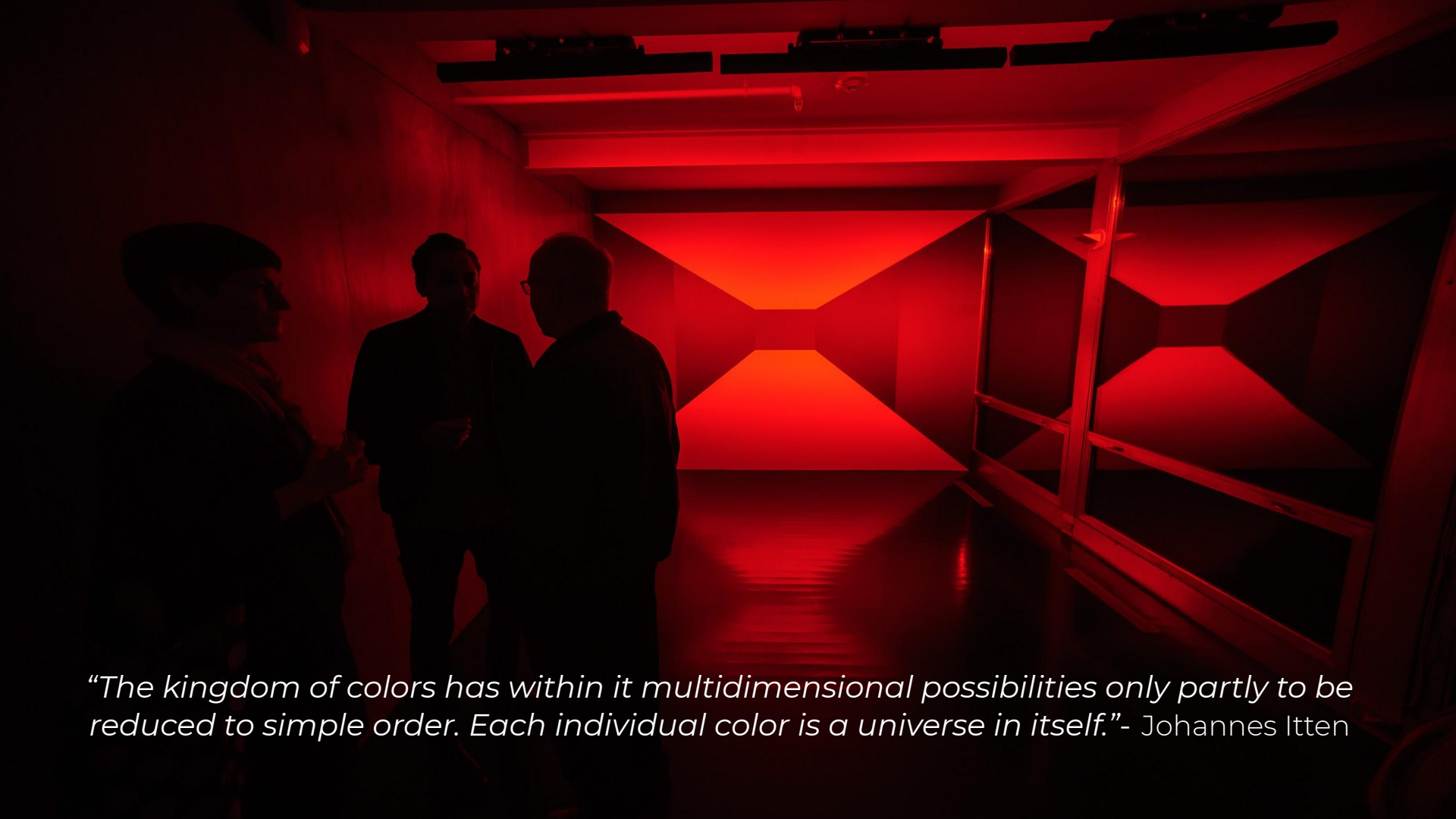
Luftwerk, *Spatial Animation No 1*, 2019. Photo by John Faier.



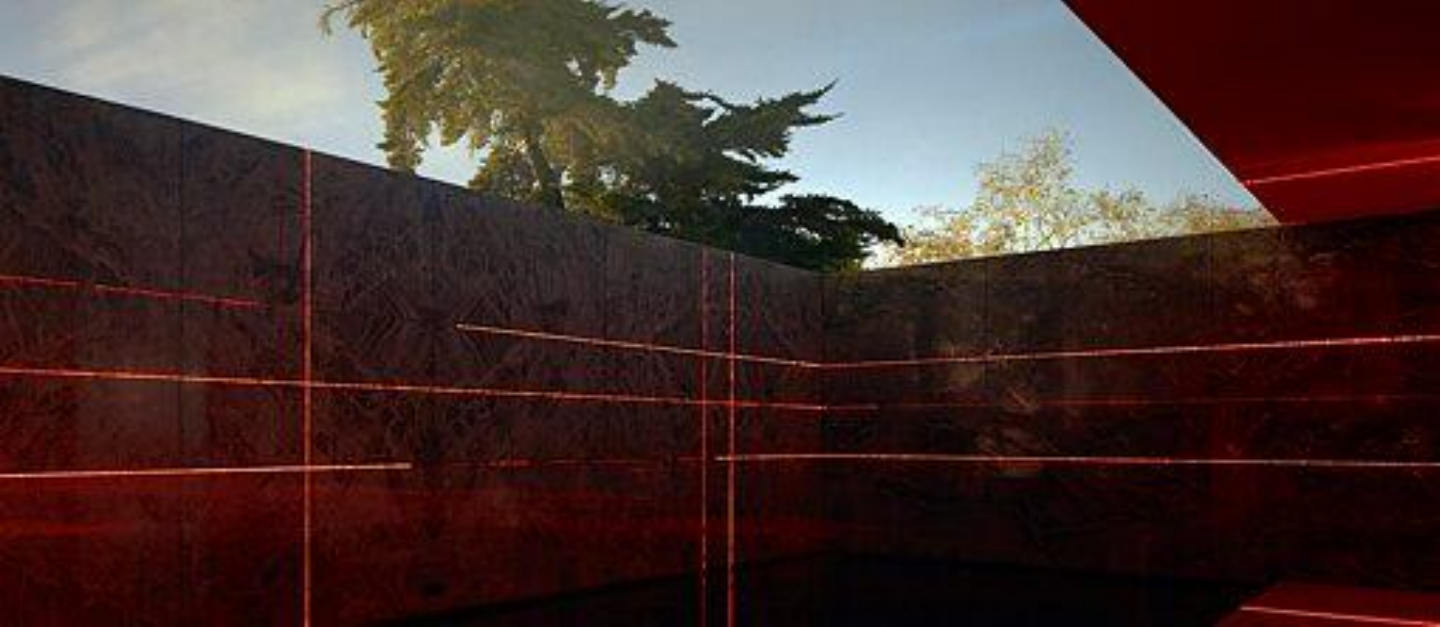
# VIDEO



Luftwerk, Spatial Animation No 1, 2019.  
Video by John Faier.



*“The kingdom of colors has within it multidimensional possibilities only partly to be reduced to simple order. Each individual color is a universe in itself.”- Johannes Itten*



# Artist Talk: Luftwerk on Mies

## Sunday, June 28th at 3pm

[RSVP HERE](#)

In this collaboration with the *Fundació Mies van der Rohe*, *Elmhurst Art Museum/McCormick House*, *Farnsworth House*, and *MAS Context*, we present images from light interventions and installations by Luftwerk on Facebook and Instagram, on June 28th at 3pm.

The online artist talk and discussion **Luftwerk on Mies: Reinterpreting Space Through Light and Color** is moderated by Iker Gil.





# More on Luftwerk, Inigo Manglano-Ovalle, and Bauhaus



[Luftwerk: Parallel Perspective exhibition brochure](#)

[Luftwerk: Parallel Perspective exhibition page](#)

[Luftwerk artist page](#)

[Inigo Manglano-Ovalle artist page](#)

[Art21- More on Inigo Manglano-Ovalle](#)

[Chicago Bauhaus Beyond- McCormick House Revealed](#)

[Museum from Home- Bauhaus from Your House, online guide](#)

[Exhibition: The Whole World A Bauhaus, Elmhurst Art Museum](#)

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Activity  
[CLICK HERE](#)**



# PRESS

**Chicago Tribune** “A less-is-more restoration of a Mies house expands our view of a little-known episode in the famed architect’s career” by Blair Kamin

**New City** “Design Top 5: June 2018” by Vasia Rigou

**Chicago Architect** “[Elmhurst Art Museum McCormick House Renovations: Liberating a Little-Known Mies House](#)” by Chelsea Ross

**Chicago Tribune** “Elmhurst Art Museum opens Mies van der Rohe exhibit” by Graydon Megan

**WDCB The Arts Section** “Polishing An Architectural Gem” by Gary Zidek

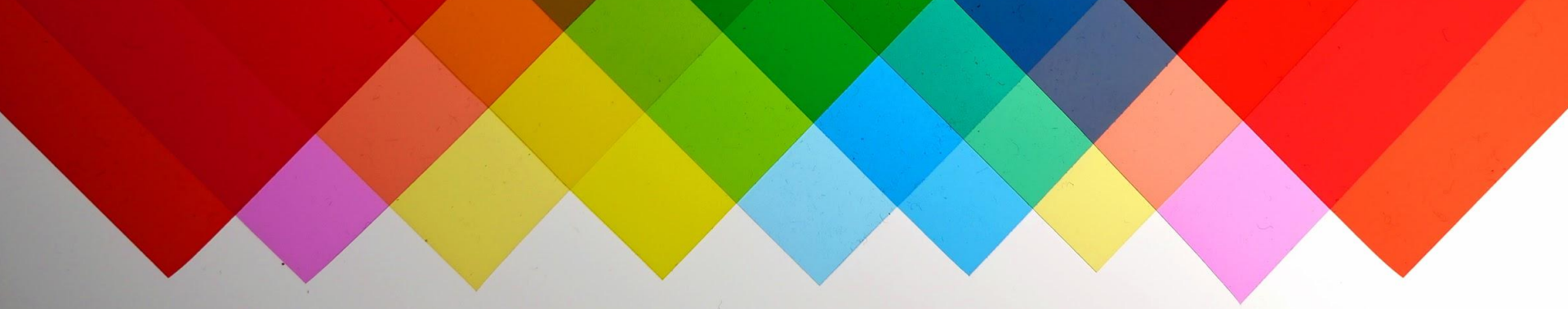
**Architect Magazine-** [A New Installation Covers Mies Van Der Rohe, Barcelona Pavilion](#)

**Chicago Crusader-** [Elmhurst Art Museum announces spring and summer programming for With a Capital P: Selections by Six Painters group exhibition and Luftwerk: Parallel Perspectives color & light intervention in Mies' McCormick House](#)

**ArchDaily-** “[Mies van der Rohe's McCormick House Transformed by Color Installation](#)” by Niall Patrick Walsh

**Colossal-** [Light Shines Through a Rainbow-Tinted Geometric Panel Installation by Art Duo Luftwerk](#) by Andrew Lasane

**Daily Herald-** ['Luftwerk: Parallel Perspectives' visually transforms Mies' McCormick House with color and light interventions at Elmhurst Art Museum](#)



*Luftwerk: Parallel Perspectives* was sponsored by contributors to EAM's Sustaining Fellows Soiree 2018. Part of Bauhaus100.

Part of Bauhaus100, the global anniversary celebrations of the legendary German art school. It continues the artists' year-long exploration of architecture by Mies, which began with the Barcelona Pavilion and will end with the Farnsworth House.

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