

Victoria Coeln | Atelier Coeln

Crossing Realities TÜRKİYE

EN

Foreword

Yunus Emre Enstitüsü

Vienna is viewed as the artistic capital of Europe with good reason. The waltzes, important composers and writers were and are at home in the city, while Vienna's architecture and history constitute the framework for their creative accomplishments. With the realisation of a variety of events in the fields of art and culture, the Yunus Emre Enstitüsü aspires to follow this path and to make its contribution to the active cultural life of Vienna. Since its foundation in 2007, the Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, currently with more than 50 cultural centres in 40 countries worldwide, be it in Japan or the USA, in South Africa or Great Britain, creates a gateway to Turkish language, art and culture. The cultural exchange with other countries is particularly important to us, and we are constantly striving to promote it.

Our extensive cultural and historical knowledge, from which we profit today in our cultural activities, without doubt has its origin in the geographical location of Turkey and the legacy of the different cultures, languages and religious communities which developed side by side on Anatolian soil over the millennia. In the course of history numerous cultures and civilisations flourished here, including the Hittites, the Lydians, the Phrygians, the Urartians, the Roman and the Byzantine empires, the realm of the Selcuks and the Ottoman empire. Yet Anatolia presents enigmas not only in the past but also today. Findings are constantly emerging which reshape our view of human history, as was recently the case in Göbekli Tepe. Anatolia, as the cradle of civilisation, has maintained its appeal and acts, as before, as a magnet for people from all over the world. The artist Victoria Coeln creates a unity out of contemporary art, and history. The ability to view cultural sites which are thousands of years old, such as Ephesus, Cappadocia and Göbekli Tepe, from the perspective

of an artist fills me with great excitement. With her exceptional artistic interventions she creates a novel sense of perception of existing spaces. The polychrome light images which she generates through her light interventions, she calls chromotopes.

Human beings exist in space and time. What differentiates us from other living beings is however the fact that we are aware of this, and that we are able to make use of and classify this awareness. The individual consciousness of space and time varies from society to society, from culture to culture, from person to person. Notwithstanding this disparity, Victoria Coeln gives rise to a new understanding of these two concepts. With her chromotopic light interventions the artist transforms Ephesus, Göbekli Tepe and Cappadocia into utopian spaces, thereby causing space and time now to be only perceivable in indistinct contours. It is precisely in this that the power of art lies.

I would particularly like to emphasise that the exhibition also makes an important contribution towards Austrian-Turkish friendship. I am convinced that the promotion of collective projects is of essential significance for the future relationships between the two countries.

My gratitude is expressed here to everybody who has participated in this project, and in particular to the artist Victoria Coeln, who has enabled the realisation of „Crossing Realities TÜRKİYE“. I wish everybody all conceivable success for the exhibition.

Warmest best wishes,

Prof. Dr. ŞEREF ATEŞ,
President of the Yunus Emre Enstitüsü

Crossing Realities – TÜRKIYE

LUCAS GEHRMANN

When Victoria Coeln projects specially wrought light-images for the creation of her Chromographies on the places, spaces, or sites chosen and visited by her, which are scarcely or not at all illuminated by sunlight or artificial light, she achieves, as she herself says, not really their illumination but rather their “exposure”. That is: Victoria Coeln’s specific art of illumination of her subjects is preceded by the exposure of photographic film material – the intended chromographic image already exists for the duration of the projection in the real three-dimensional space. Its photographic copy then serves primarily its transformation into a two-dimensional image format, presentable and reproducible elsewhere. Yet “to expose” also means above all: to make visible, to make manifest. And precisely in this sense Victoria Coeln’s first exposure effectuates a spatial deepening of the actual in situ conditions, as well as their alienation, in particular with regard to aspects of colour and form. And this alienation is able – also in view of its photographic depiction – to bring about a polymorphic guess-ing game: what does this image depict, where was it made, what is hidden behind its visible surface? Is it more or something other than a photographic, possibly painterly, or otherwise produced aesthetic art image? And here at the same time the second phase of the “exposure” begins: a conceptual, investigative-reconstructive or also fantasizing archaeology on the part of the beholder. This search for connections of a topographic, historical, political and/or aesthetic nature guides us along beneath the surfaces, swathed in coloured light, of the cultural and natural monuments which Victoria Coeln has selected. Contemporary, yet also chronologically far removed layers are brought out into the light, the layers of the past are spiritually exposed. “When I am in the space for a certain amount of time,” says the artist, “I begin to lay down spiritual traces in

the space. When somebody enters the room, in my imagination lines are created on the floor, a two-dimensional grid pattern. When this person scans the room with their gaze, an additional three-dimensional web is formed in the space. I see this as white lines, which span the room for me. If I then imagine further that this person in the meantime thinks in the past and into the future, then through these timelines an immense, dense, at least four-dimensional matrix is formed, which fills the room, expands it, and is diffused through it.”

The spaces in which and over which Victoria Coeln places her light traces are already in and of them-selves multi-culturally and multi-chronologically charged. Göbekli Tepe, for example, one of the old-est and at the same time largest cult sites in the world, is viewed as the site of origin of the cultivation of grain, and thereby marks the transition from nomadic peoples to settled communities. The so-called Serapeion in Ephesus was first interpreted by archaeologists as a temple dedicated to Emperor Claudius, then as a Nymphaeum, later as a temple dedicated to the syncretistic Egypto-Hellenistic deity Serapis, and finally as a temple for the Muses. In the early Christian era this much-interpreted building was converted into a church. And the Cemetery of the Seven Sleepers at Ephe-sos, where, since their persecution by Emperor Decius, seven Christians are believed to have slept for 200 years, namely, until Christianity became the Roman state religion, is today a site of pilgrimage for Christians as well as for Muslims. Paşa Bağ, also called Valley of the Monks, lies in that region of Cappadocia through which the ancient Silk Road passed. Since the Bronze Age, people here expanded the original caves of volcanic tufa in the landscape, and developed them over the course of time into extensive residential and cloister complexes, even complete cities. In the rock ,bowl-

ing pins' that have been formed due to erosion, the 'fairy chimneys' of Paşa Bağ, after the 5th century the followers of Symeon Stylites the Elder, who is viewed as the first stylite, set up their hermitages. Instead of living and preaching on top of a column as Symeon did, these 'stylites' appeared out of their caves in the rock towers, scarcely accessible at a height of ca. 10 metres. Finally, the Tuz Gölü lake, with a proportion of 33% salt, is one of the most saline lakes in the world. 70% of the salt consumed in Turkey is obtained here. In the summer months a crystalline layer of salt is formed on its surface which, depending on the angle of the incidental sunlight, glimmers in numerous delicate colours. The chromotopic light of Victoria Coeln, in contrast, makes the white gold of Tuz Gölü manifest at night, and transforms the salt hills of its saline material into multi-coloured, luminous mountain scapes.

Chromotopia, as the artist calls the multi-dimensional results of her chromotopic interventions, could also be the name of a worldscape which Victoria Coeln bathes in her light from region to region, in order to make visible all of the realities contained in them, superimposed in them, crossing in them. For her exhibition at the Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, the Turkish Cultural Centre in Vienna, she envisions precisely that significant part of Chromotopia at which the pathways of eastern and western cultures since time immemorial encounter each other.

Glossary

DIACHROMES are miniature works of art, produced on site, which are deployed as multi-layered light filters in projectors. In other words, the projectors cast their light, filtered through the diachrome, in the places, spaces and sites and with the superimposition of light and matter they create the so-called **CHROMOTOPIA**.

CHROMOGRAPHIES are chromotopia captured in large format photographic film (analogue slides in 8x10 inch).

Images on following Pages:

CHROMOTOPIA PAŞA BAĞ

38.6772939° N, 34.8562242° E, 1022.13 m
Cappadocia, TR 2015

CHROMOTOPIA PAŞA BAĞ

38.6772939° N, 34.8562242° E, 1022.13 m
Cappadocia, TR 2015

CHROMOTOPIA TUZ GÖLÜ

38.67880° N, 33.52411° E, 905.00 m
Aksaray, TR 2015

CHROMOTOPIA YEDI UYUYANLAR

37.9355722° N, 27.3465383° E, 50.68 m
Ephesus, Selçuk, TR 2015

CHROMOTOPIA SERAPEION

37.9355722° N, 27.3465383° E, 50.68 m
Ephesus, Selçuk, TR 2015

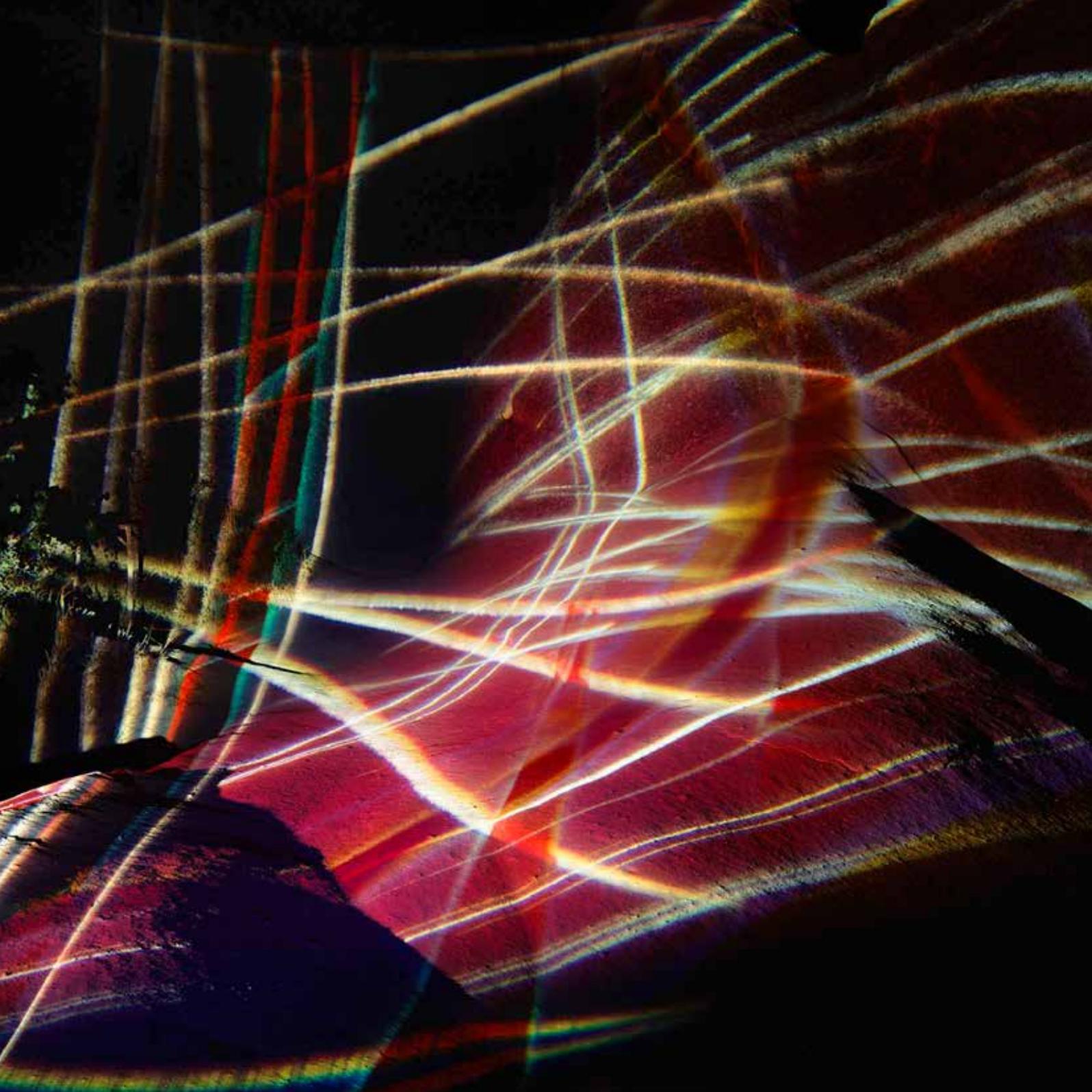
CHROMOTOPIA GÖBEKLI TEPE

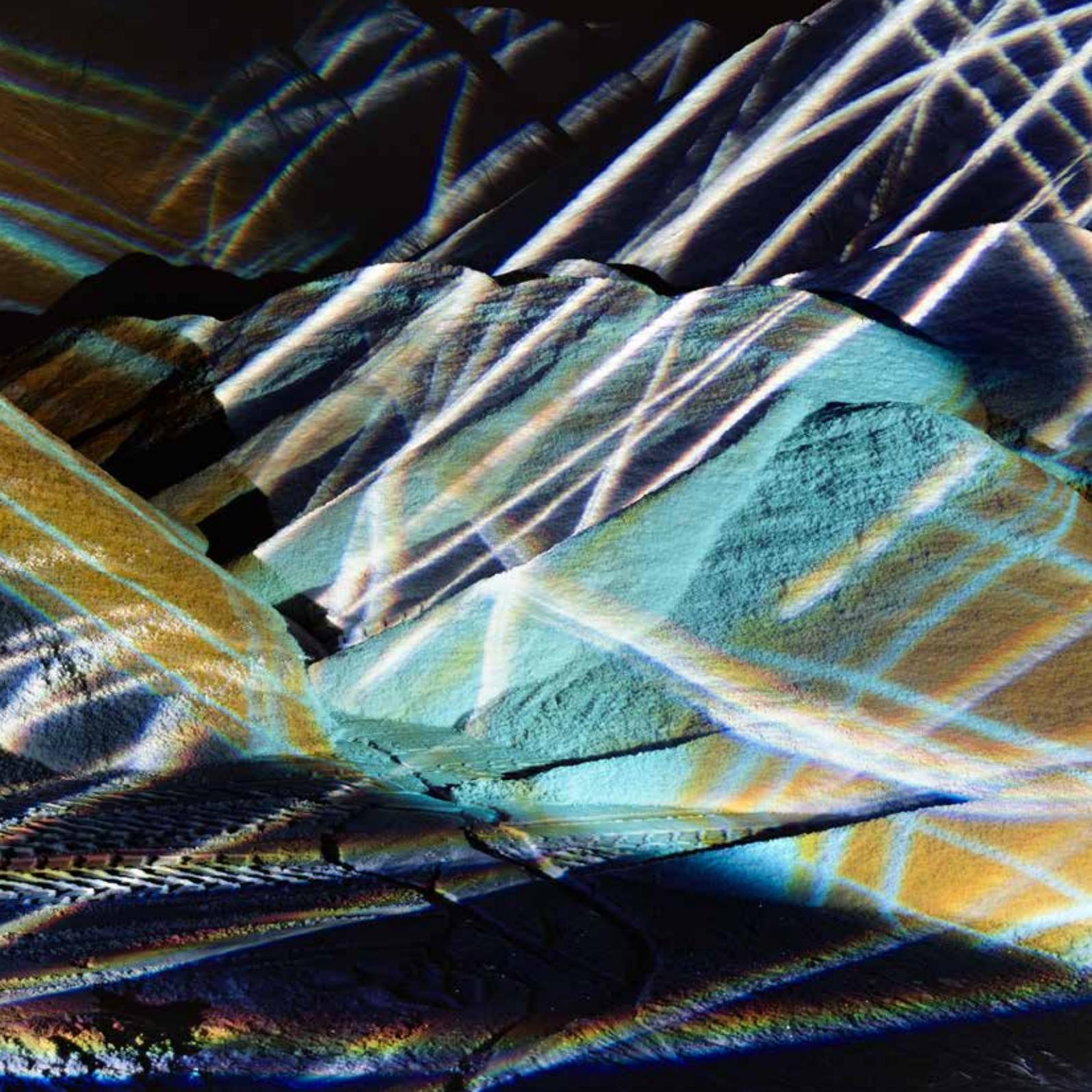
38.7627230° N, 33.3486170° E, 905.00 m
Şanlıurfa, TR 2015

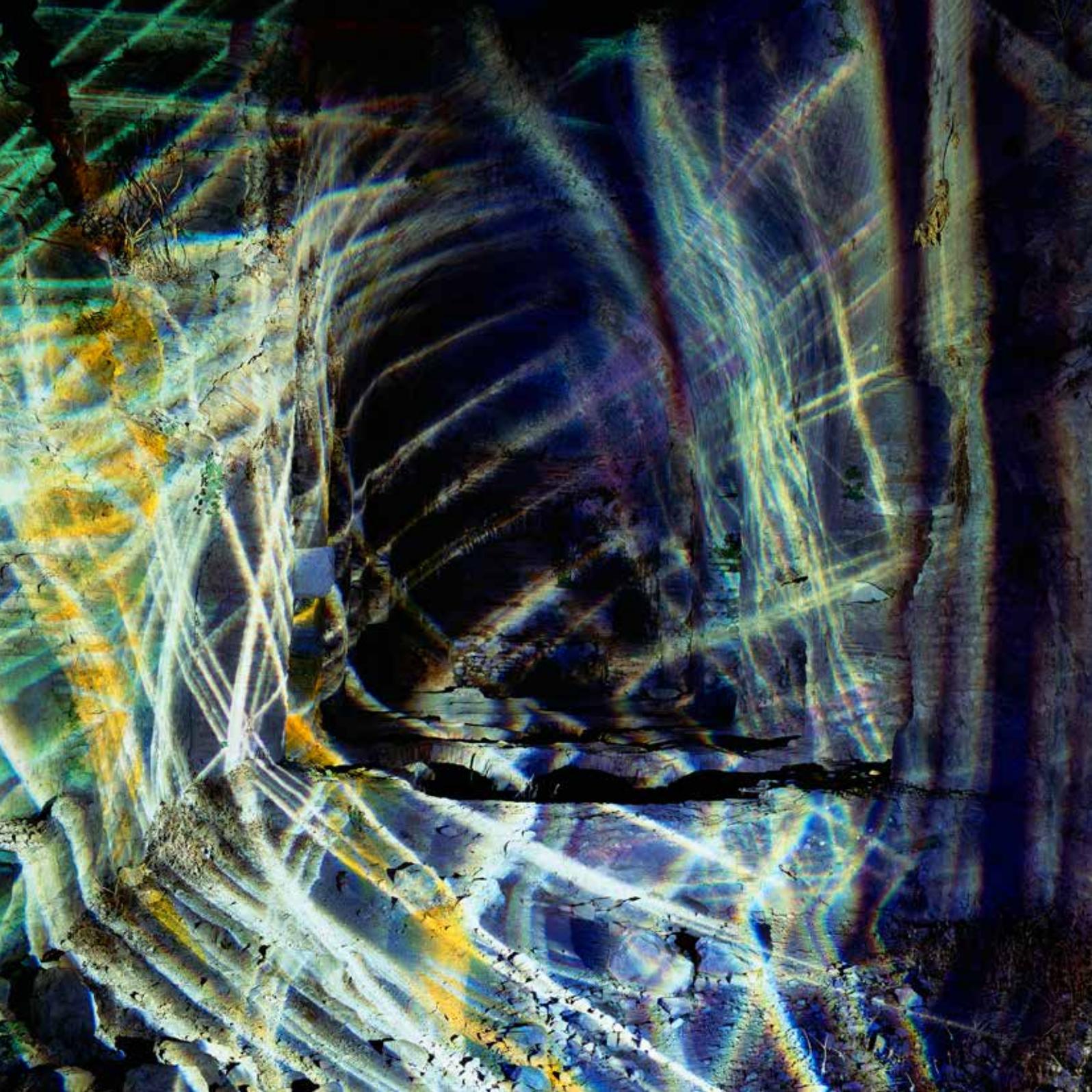
CHROMOTOPIA DERINKUYU

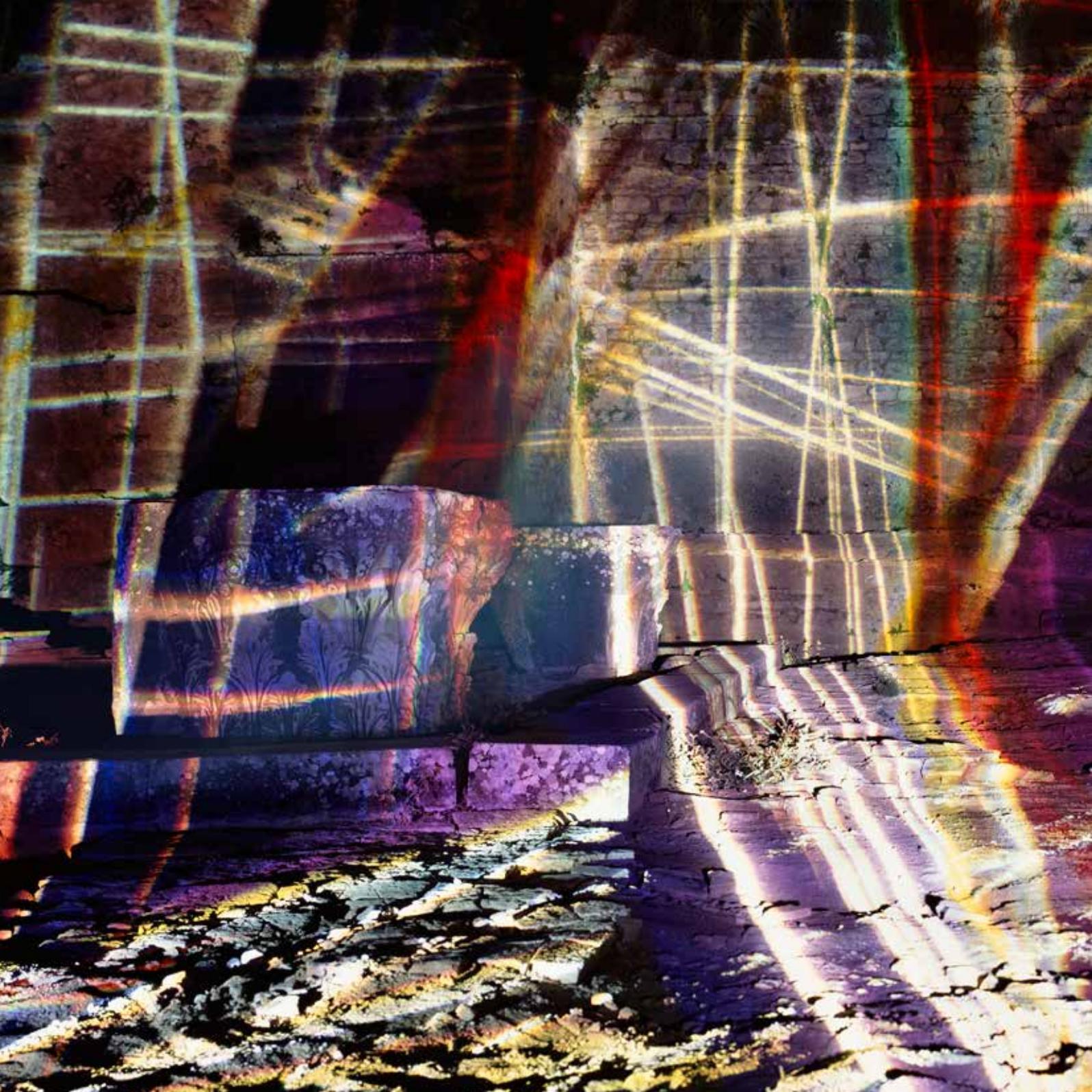
38.3733031° N, 34.7334723° E, 1352.17 m
Cappadocia, TR 2015

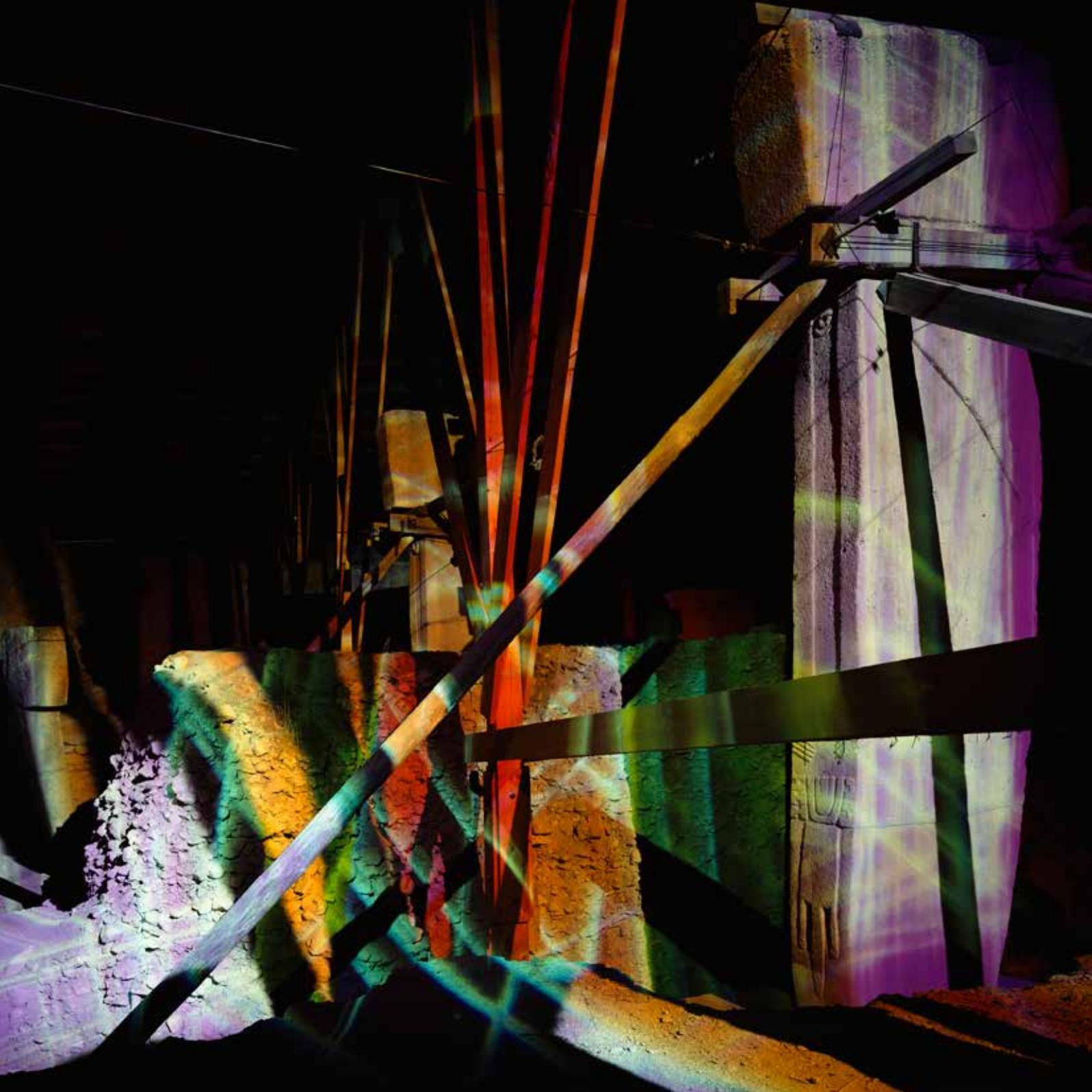


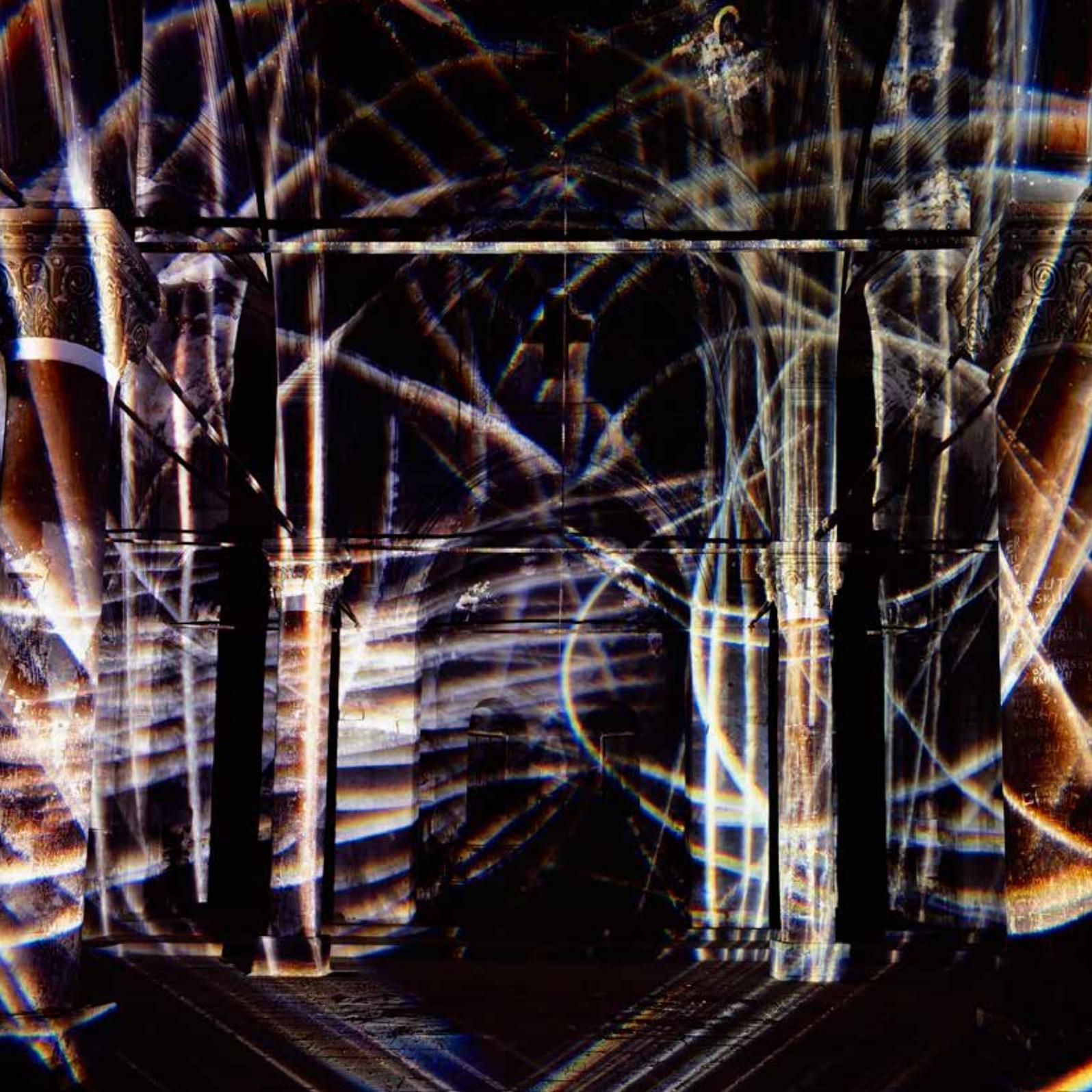












SEEING THE MIRACLE

VICTORIA COELN

*The essential is
unspeakable,
unspeakable but
not impossible
to shape..*

ANGELA KRAUSS

We see unknowingly. The human eye cannot see light per se. If light were visible, we could not see each other nor the world surrounding us, for innumerable particles of light would block our vision. However, all matter, whether micro- or macrocosmic,

is not visible without light – in other words, the entire world might be invisible. However: when two non-visible media, matter and light, are superimposed, they both become visible together!

In our daily life, we hardly ever think about this phenomenon, as simple as it is ingenious. It might be the greatest miracle ever. As soon as we see the light of day, we see – diffusely at first, but our visual perception immediately begins to process extremely subtle and complex information. Rays of light entering our eyes are immediately subdivided into units measuring only nanometres, into waves of light, and evaluated. This process of perception has worked for millennia. Only very late in history did we discover light as a substance. Plato, Aristotle, Democritus, Alhazen, Newton, Maxwell, Curie and Einstein (this list could be expanded in many directions) generated ever more knowledge about light and vision – knowledge which also forms the foundation of my work. For creative processes, insights about the phenomenon of light generate a radically new basis. Designing light is now as important as designing material objects. At the same time, this raises the question which other non-visible substances, radiation or transmitters of information have not yet been discovered? Since the epochal proof of gravitation waves in 2015/16, physics is also asking what else we might still be blind to today? Or, put differently: which miracles do we see and process which we are not yet even able to evaluate by today's technical means?

First of all, I consider light an independent means of design which can be shaped and formed independently of matter – most finely when subdivided into its parts, individual light waves. At the same time, I work in the knowledge that only the superimposition and interrelation of matter and light create visibilities and thereby new realities. In chromogrammes, chromotopic light* manifests itself across the surface of colour-photographic paper. This makes it possible to perceive what is inherent in the art in its purest form. We inscribe something non-visible upon the works – something that, to speak with Angela Krauß, cannot be described, but can still be formed and shaped.

IMPRINT

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VICTORIA COELN

The Viennese artist creates multi-faceted light interventions in the public space. The works she implements with her Atelier Coeln team relate directly to their location, never shy away from relevant social, political and ecological dimensions, and inspire the observer to question his or her own positions critically.

Amongst the sites of interventions in both interior and exterior spaces include famous cathedrals such as the Vienna Stephansdom, the Catedral de Burgos, the broad, Baroque landscape of the manor house gardens in Hannover, and recognised World Heritage and excavation sites such as Ephesos, Cappadocia and Göbekli Tepe.

