

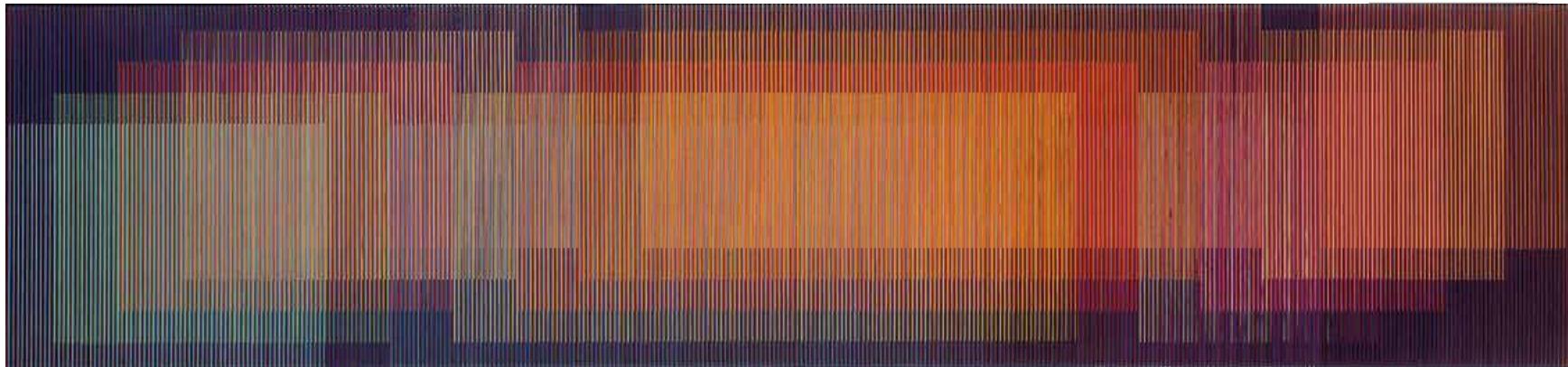


OPEN WORKS. Art in Movement, 1955-1975

La Pedrera, from 28 September 2018 to
27 January 2019

**Fundació
Catalunya
La Pedrera**

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Carlos Cruz-Diez *Physichromie 497*, 1970. Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris.

The Catalunya La Pedrera Foundation presents a survey exhibition of kinetic art that focuses on the concept of the *open work*, the theory formulated by Umberto Eco in 1962.

Curated by the art historians Jordi Ballart, who runs the Documentation Centre at the Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris, and Marianna Gelussi, an independent curator, the exhibition brings together an extensive and carefully selected group of works by international artists who were keen to bring about a profound transformation in the role of spectators through their participation and interaction with artworks.

Art in movement

The issue of movement runs throughout the history of art but became a central question in the 1950s. However, what is movement?

The critic Guy Brett writes that movement may simply be the ability of the artwork to breathe freely in new dimensions.

Major changes took place around the 1950s and 60s in the practice of art, which moved away from the traditional categories of painting and sculpture and the conventional object. This came about thanks to experimentation and research into new materials and supports and the openness of the artistic space to more experimental approaches.

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These new ideas went beyond a purist aesthetic, and artists appropriated the materials and technologies of science and industry that enabled them to explore the space, light and movement. A dialogue was established between art and science that revealed a new vision of the world in the constant throes of change and movement. The network of artists associated with the new tenets, which had considerable political and utopian implications, were keen to bring about a profound transformation in the role of the spectator, who was now given an active role through their participation and interaction with the artwork.

The exhibition features a selection of works by 37 artists that convey the kaleidoscopic, utopian and radical image of that moment in history and which communicate its international, heterodox and undogmatic spirit—in all its complexity—while exploring the different formal and methodological investigations of the various artists into the concerns they all shared, such as **time, space, colour, vibration, reflection, movement and light**.

The exhibition includes text panels that explain some of the scientific principles used by the artists in their works. For these panels, we have been advised by the **Institute of Photonic Sciences**, a centre that specialises in research and training in photonics, the science and technology of light.

“Kineticism is not ‘that which moves’ but an awareness of the instability of reality.”

Jean Clay, “La peinture est finie”, *Robho*, 1 (June 1967), n.p.



Gianni Colombo *Bariestesia*, 1974-1975.

1955 - 1975

The early Avant-garde movements, the Futurists and the work of pioneers such as Marcel Duchamp and Alexander Calder raised the issue of movement, with the latter finally gaining the attention of the public and critics alike in the exhibition *Le Mouvement*, held at the Galerie Denise René in Paris in 1955.

Movement burst onto the scene just as a new artistic concept was emerging in the 1950s in response to Art Informel and Tachisme, driven by a host of artists and groups of different nationalities living mainly in Paris, Dusseldorf, Milan and Padua. Guided by the same urge to experiment, they worked initially in a spontaneous and uncoordinated manner, exploring the same problems: **openness to a reality that is mobile and continually transforming**; the **rejection of the myth surrounding the artist** and of the elitist nature of art through their formulation of a **new objective and non-personalist universal language** that could be understood by a wider audience; the **reactivation of the role of art in society** and of the **participation of the spectator**; and the incorporation of **new techniques and materials** typical of industrial manufacturing.

Open Works

These works refute the dogma of the unique, stable and definitive work by breaking down the boundaries between the traditional categories of painting and sculpture, embracing the multiple and the space, and reinventing aesthetic pleasure by transforming it into a direct and total experience.

In the words of the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco, they are **open works**, that is to say, they are finished yet indeterminate, always different, a field of infinite possibilities that **the spectator is free to interpret**, the metaphor of a new vision of reality in which nothing is fixed and permanent and everything seems caught up in the throes of constant transformation.

Open Works. Art in Movement, 1955-1975 seeks to celebrate this “adventure of mutability” described by Eco in his essay “Opera aperta” (1962) and to convey the kaleidoscopic and utopian image of this trend and of its **international and undogmatic spirit**.

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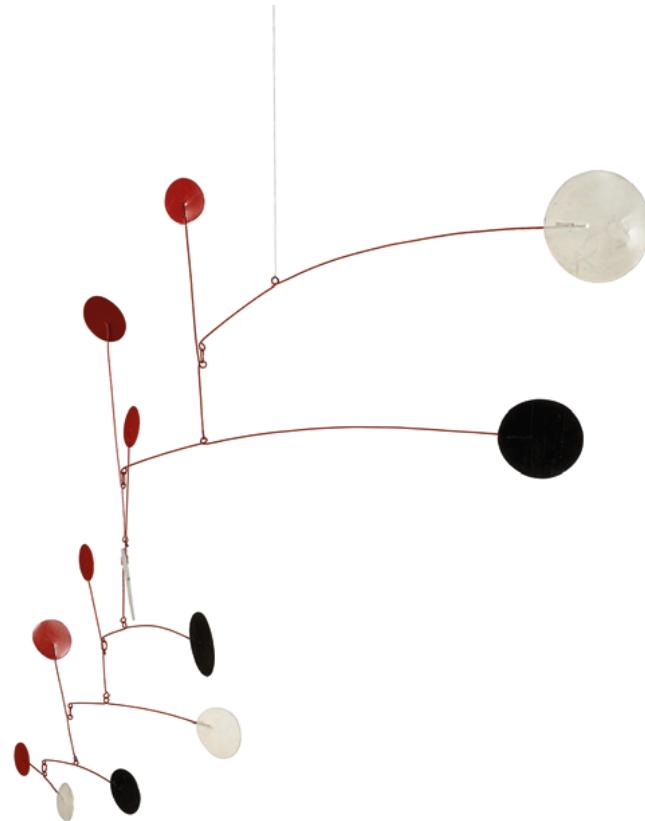
Mona Hatoum *+ and -*, 1994. Courtesy of the artist.

The exhibition spans the period from 1955 to 1975 and features the work of 37 artists, among them Marina Apollonio, Pol Bury, Lygia Clark, Gianni Colombo, Leandre Cristòfol, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Dadamaino, Hans Haacke, Julio Le Parc, Heinz Mack, François Morellet, Jordi Pericot, Nicolas Schöffer, Francisco Sobrino, Jesús Rafael Soto, Takis, Jean Tinguely, Günther Uecker and Victor Vasarely. In addition, it includes the occasional piece by the precursors Alexander Calder and Marcel Duchamp and the contemporary artists Mona Hatoum and Ann Veronica Janssens.

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FROM THE EYE TO THE BODY

In open works, the artwork and the spectator are united in a new relationship in which both are active participants: the work is like a living, mobile organism that reflects the physical and emotional movement of the person looking at it, while the spectator is involved in a direct and total perceptive experience, as the work transforms before his eyes as he moves. The aesthetic encounter no longer occurs solely through the eyes but encompasses the entire body.



Alexander Calder *Typography*, 1972. Twentieth-Century Art Collection. MACA, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Alicante.

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Francisco Sobrino *Structure permutationnelle*, 1963-2014. Sobrino family.

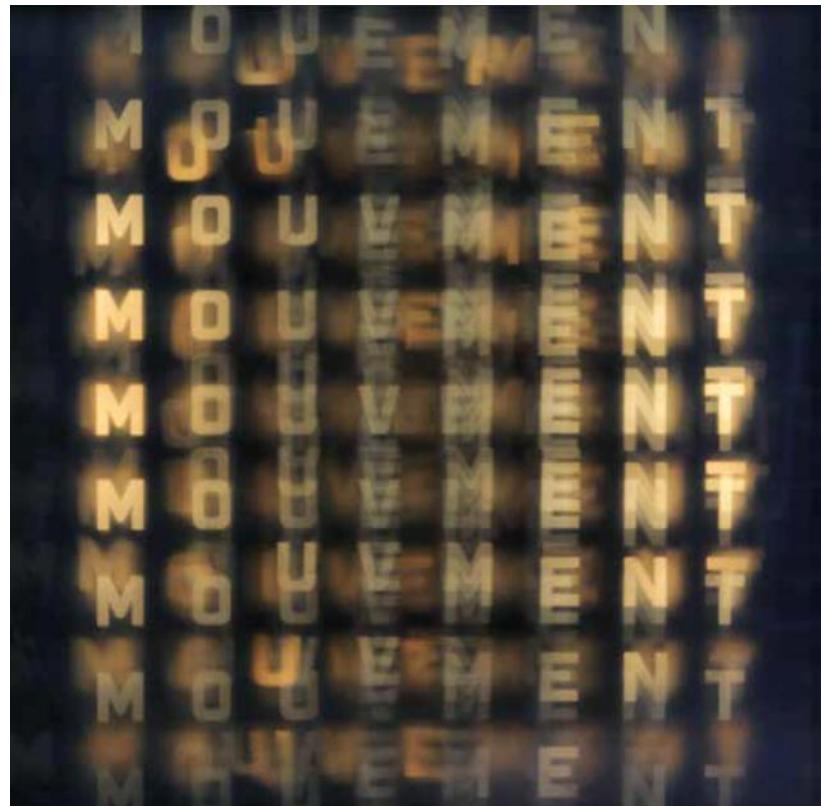
The sculptures move through the space like free bodies. Seemingly fixed, the works change and come to life in the eyes of the moving spectator, altering as he shifts his point of view and thereby encouraging him to circulate around them, to interact and merge with them while they reflect and break up his image and that of the surroundings, making him rethink his vision of reality.

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INSTABILITY. PROGRAMMING CHAOS

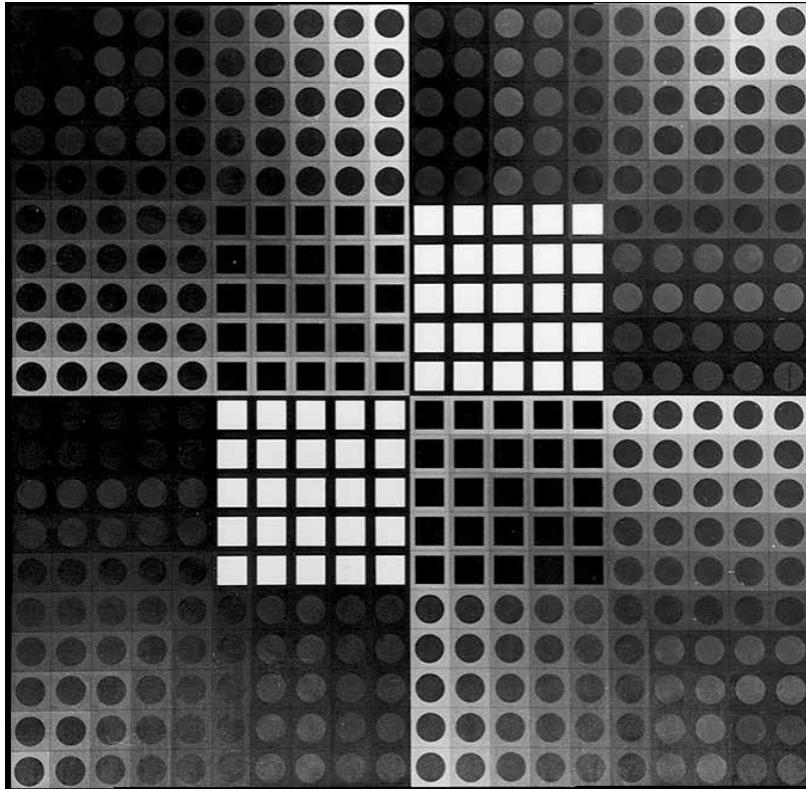
Works in movement reflect the growing awareness of the unstable nature of reality and sensitise the spectator to a new way of feeling things, the continual movement that dwells within them.

The openness of the work, its instability, is programmed in keeping with a rational, mechanical concept that gives rise to structured objects in which chaos is organised.



Horacio García Rossi *Mouvement*, 1964-1965. Centre national des arts plastiques (France). On long-term loan since 2009 to the Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d'art moderne / Centre de création industrielle.

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Victor Vasarely *Kodd II*, 1965.

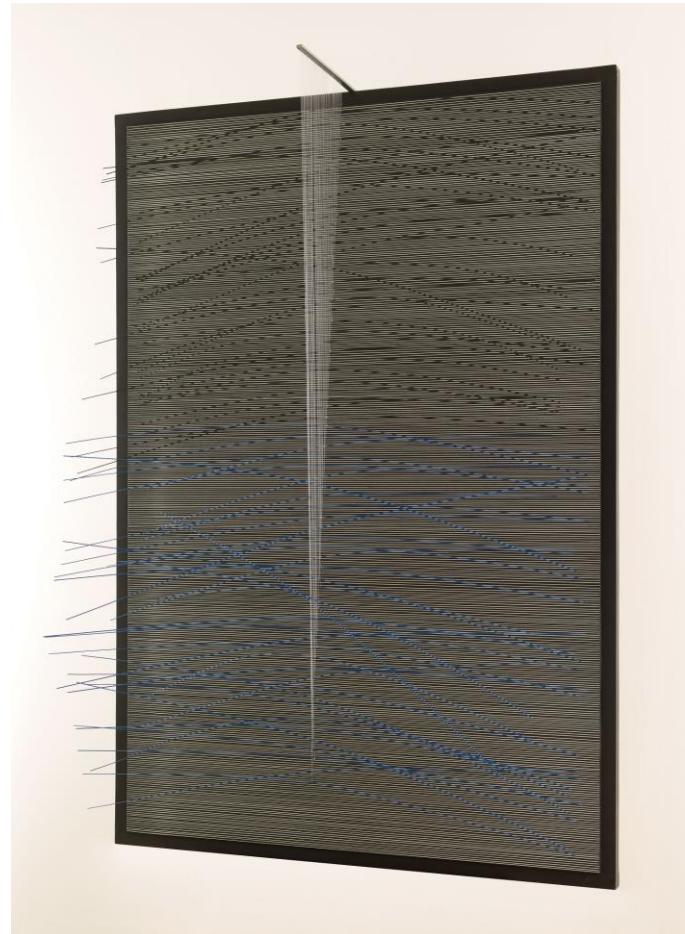
Centre national des arts plastiques (France). On long-term loan since 1981 to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Pau.

The open work reveals itself on abstract surfaces constructed using an objective language made up of neutral elements that are repeated with subtle variations in accordance with a rigorous plan based on the simultaneous contrast between positive and negative. These multifocal compositions with no central viewpoint activate our peripheral vision, come to life in a virtual movement and present themselves as structures open to the spectator's intervention.

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BEYOND THE FRAME

Lines, dots and squares are mechanically aligned on the surface, they are repeated and intertwine in a rhythm that continues ideally beyond the frame to infinity. The work pulsates, its material transforms, dissolves and turns into energy: in these objects that live in the present, that literally make themselves before the spectator's eyes, the very support becomes unstable. The surfaces develop relief in geometrical, orthogonal, monochrome structures, areas of silence and of a new beginning, delicately mutating in accordance with slight variations in the ambient light or through the use of hidden motors.



Jesus Rafael Soto *Vibration bleue et noire*, 1966.
Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris.

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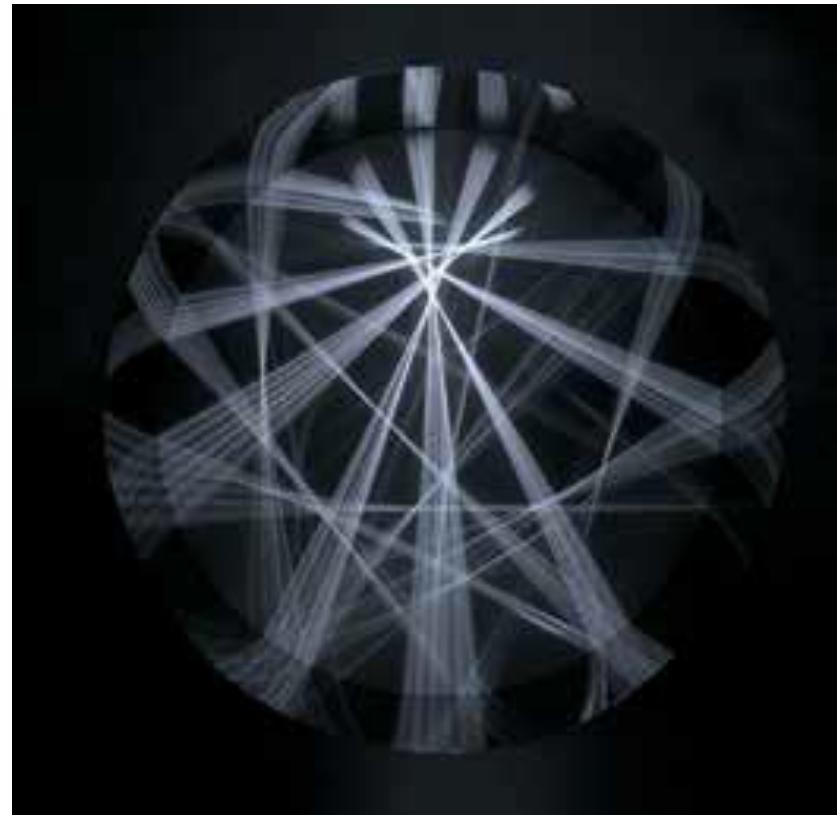
Lygia Clark. *Bicho Monumento a todas as situações*, 1964.
Galerie Natalie Seroussi, Paris.

The works exist in time thanks to the movement of the spectator and they reveal new intangible and spatial realities. The sculptures move to and fro like beings that are intensely alive, they respond to the spectator's gestures, they are filters for a new experience of time and space. The work evolves into an 'event' that transcends the traditional categories of painting and sculpture, eventually becoming a device, an environment that involves the spectator in a total physical experience and finally floats free in the space.

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THE INTANGIBLE. MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

The new artistic spirit was driven by a utopian urge. The artists embraced a new perspective, a cosmic vision that echoed the contemporary times, marked in the early 1960s by the Space Race. They went beyond matter, they explored internal connections and visible and invisible forces, and they captured the intangible and incorporated it, turning it into artistic material. They employed light, magnetic fields and the forces of nature, and they gave material expression to sound waves, creating objects that rendered the invisible visible.



Julio Le Parc *Continuel lumière cylindre*, 1962. Courtesy of Atelier Le Parc.

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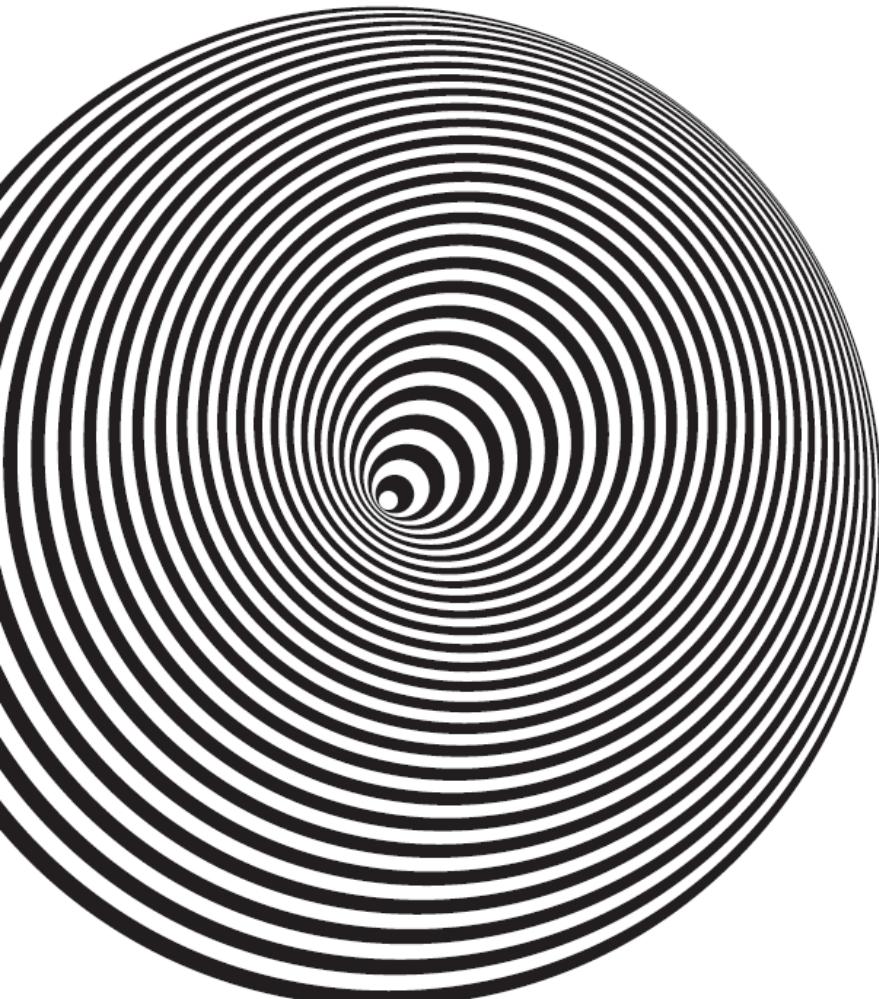


Carlos Cruz-Diez *Chromosaturation*, 1965/2018.
Cruz-Diez Art Foundation Collection.

The works vibrate and they make the spectator vibrate with them. They reproduce the infinite possibilities of light, they advance like constantly evolving currents, they point to a higher universal principle, they reflect the harmony of the movement of the stars, and they explore infinite dynamic space. The spectator is immersed in cosmic atmospheres, in the experience of pure colour.

OBRES OBERTES

L'art en moviment, 1955-1975



exposició 28.09 | 27.01

Marina Apollonio, Spazio ad attivazione cinetica, 1966-2018.

Monday to Sunday
from 10.00 am to 8.00 pm

Guided tours in Catalan
Saturdays at 6.00 pm
Sundays at 12.00 midday

La Pedrera
Passeig de Gràcia, 92
For information and tickets
www.lapedrera.cat and ticket office

**Fundació
Catalunya
La Pedrera**

Vernissage on 27 September

**Exhibition
From 28 September 2018
to 27 January 2019**

La Pedrera

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