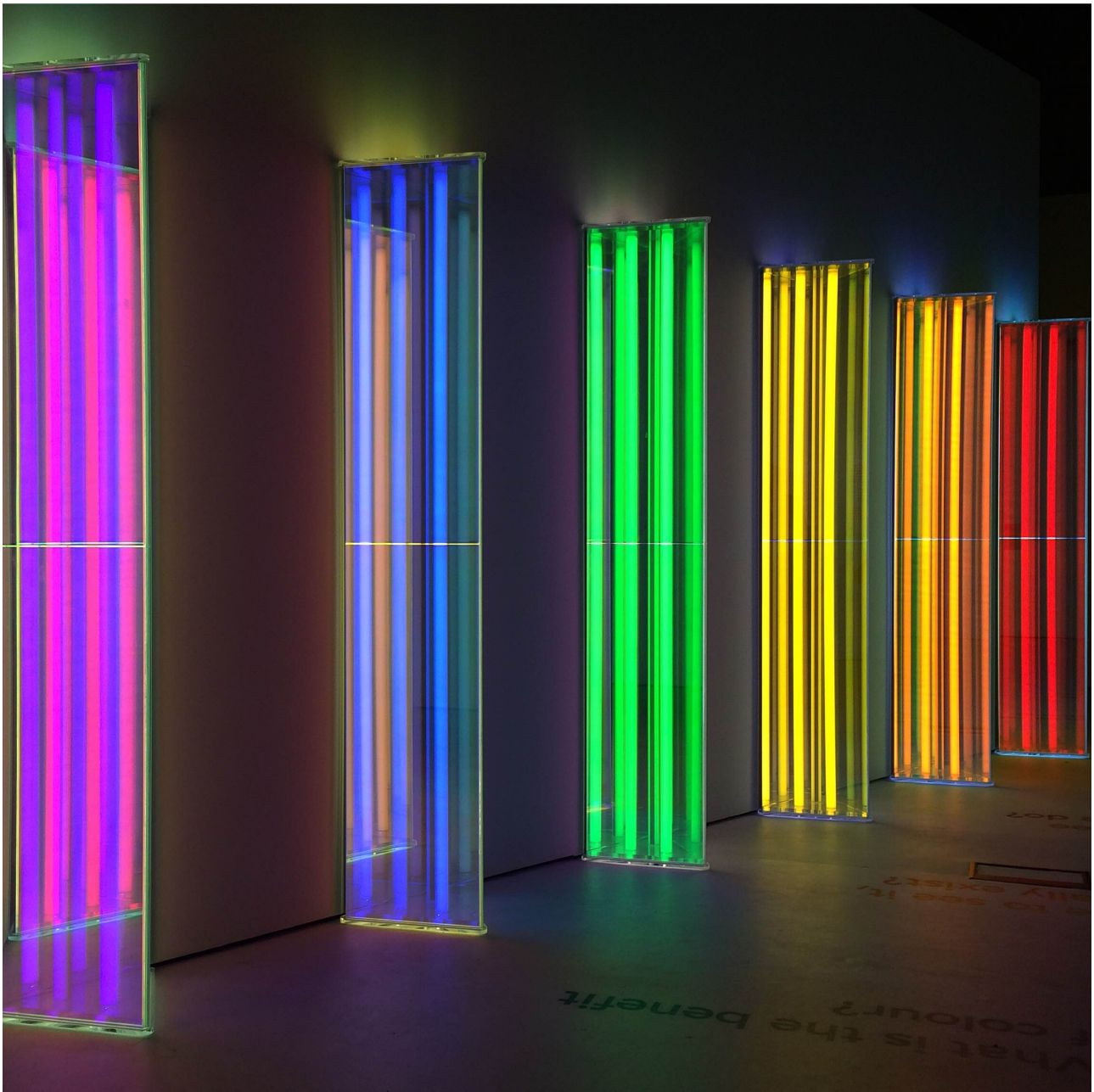


PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release



Our Spectral Vision, Liz West, 2016, Installation (acrylic, mirror, dichroic glass and LEDs) © Ian Theasby

LIZ WEST

OUR SPECTRAL VISION at NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON

British artist Liz West has created a new light installation *Our Spectral Vision* for the exhibition *Colour and Vision: Through the Eyes of Nature* presented at the Natural History Museum in London, UK.

Our Spectral Vision invites visitors to explore their relationship with colour and our understanding of how we see it. The work creates a vivid environment that mixes luminous colour and radiant light. Rays of light from every colour of the rainbow will beam through seven prisms made from special colour filter glass, creating an atmospheric illusion that will stimulate your visual perception of colour. The work is an interpretation of and inspired by Issac Newton's experiment with disassembling and reassembling white light into the visible colour spectrum using prisms.

Colour and Vision: Through the Eyes of Nature allows visitors to discover how the entwined histories of colour and vision have filled the natural world with the vibrant hues and shades we see today. Follow a 565-million-year journey through the eyes of nature. Uncover how vision first evolved and how colour in animals suddenly became the difference between life and death. Marvel at nature's spectacular palette and see how a rainbow of pigments and iridescence can be used as a warning, a disguise or even an irresistible invitation. Colour in nature is a big influence for art, design and innovation. The exhibition features more than 350 rarely seen specimens, from beautiful birds to fossils of the first organisms with eyes.

Liz West says: "The iridescent patterns and colourings present on the birds, insects and animals in the Natural History Museum collection have inspired the variety and selection of colours in this artwork. The science behind the natural processes of colour researched here at the Museum has provided the backbone for my work."

Liz West studied at The Glasgow School of Art, graduating with a BA (Hons) Sculpture and Environmental Art in 2007. Previous large-scale works have included *Your Colour Perception* in Manchester, *An Additive Mix* at the National Media Museum and *Our Colour Reflection* at 20-21 Visual Arts Centre in Scunthorpe and St. Mark's in Mayfair. Recent months have seen her shortlisted for the Light Art Project of the Year at Lighting Design Awards, the annual Aesthetica Art Prize and receiving a Bursary Award from the Royal Society of British Sculptors as well as completing a major outdoor public commission in the Spinningfields district of Manchester.

Our Spectral Vision is a new work by Liz West commissioned as part of exhibition *Colour and Vision: Through the Eyes of Nature* at the Natural History Museum, London from 15 July until 6 November 2016. For further details about *Our Spectral Vision* and about the future projects please visit www.liz-west.com.

- ENDS -

EDITORS NOTES

Colour and Vision: Through the Eyes of Nature runs from 14th July through until 6th November 2016.

For media inquires, further information and press quality images please contact:

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Video Link

Follow British artist Liz West as she creates a stunning light installation for the *Colour and Vision* exhibition. From the scientific theory through to the final installation, see how *Our Spectral Vision* joined over 350 specimens telling the story of colour and vision in nature

<http://bit.ly/NHM-ColourAndVision-YT>

Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 5BD

Colour and Vision: Through the Eyes of Nature is a special temporary exhibition with the Natural History Museum
Open daily

10am to 5.50pm. Last entry 5.15pm

Adult £10.80 | Child and concession £5.40 | Family £27.00 | Free for [Members](#), [Patrons](#) and children under four

Switchboard: +4420 7942 5000 (9.00-17.50 daily)

Exhibition website: www.nhm.ac.uk/colourandvision.

Artist website: www.liz-west.com

About Colour and Vision

Nature's diverse beauty has been an inspiration for artists through the ages. Discover how the intertwined history of colour and vision has shaped nature's palette in a new Natural History Museum exhibition opening this summer. *Colour and Vision*, sponsored by LG OLED TV, will take a journey through the eyes of nature.

The exhibition will span from when animals first started seeing images millions of years ago through to today's visual culture with colour's pivotal role art, design, and technology. Bold-hued plumage, metallic-winged beetles and iridescent butterflies will illustrate how natural pigments are used for paints and dyes. It will consider the limits of our perspective, comparing how we see the world to other animals. Colour can also make the difference between life and death, when it is used as camouflage, disguise or to attract the ideal mate.

Dr Suzanne Williams, colour evolution researcher at the Museum says;

"The diversity of the natural world today is the legacy of an evolutionary arms race between hunter and hunted, observer and observed. Our research is helping to uncover exciting new evidence demonstrating that colour and pattern evolve over time, affecting the survival of species. Pigments and structural colour together create the enormous diversity of iridescence and bold colours that contribute to the incredible beauty of our world, inspiring artists and scientists alike."

Other highlights include:

- More than 350 rarely seen specimens, including nature's finest examples of structural colour: Jewel beetles, *Chrysina* and bold-hued hummingbirds, *Trochilidae*.
- Select specimens from the rarely-displayed national eye collection.
- Digital installation on LG OLED TVs displaying imagery of eyes from across the animal kingdom and interviews with scientists and artists.
- An interactive exploration of how humans perceive and relate to colour.

Sir Michael Dixon, Director of the Natural History Museum comments:

"Vision and observation are how we appreciate and understand the world around us. The influence of the linked evolution of colour and sight has shaped the natural world and the world humans create. This long history underpins our highly visual culture through art, design and technology. For scientists such as those at the Museum, observation is the first step to understanding delicate ecosystems and how to enable their future sustainability."

About Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum welcomes more than five million visitors a year and is a world-leading science research centre. Through its unique collection and unrivalled expertise it is tackling the biggest challenges facing the world today. It helps enable food security, eradicate disease and manage resource scarcity. It is studying the diversity of life and the delicate balance of ecosystems to ensure the survival of our planet.

Discover South Kensington brings together the Natural History Museum and other leading cultural and educational organisations to promote innovation and learning. South Kensington is the home of science, arts and inspiration. Discovery is at the core of what happens here and there is so much to explore every day. www.discoversouthken.com.

About Liz West

Liz West creates vivid environments that mix luminous colour and radiant light. Working across a variety of mediums, West aims to provoke a heightened sensory awareness in the viewer through her works. She is interested in exploring how sensory phenomena can invoke psychological and physical responses that tap into our own deeply entrenched relationships to colour.

West's investigation into the relationship between colour and light is often realised through an engagement between materiality and a given site. Within physical and architectural space, West uses light as a material that radiates outside of its boundaries and containers. She playfully refracts light through using translucent, transparent or reflective materials, directing the flow of artificial and natural light. Our understanding of colour can only be realised through the presence of light. By playing and adjusting colour, West brings out the intensity and composition of her spatial arrangements.

Colour isn't a secondary consideration or simply an aesthetic choice in artist Liz West's work. Colour and light are the primary materials in her installations. She treats them as other artists might treat tangible material-molding and stretching them out, splicing them and using them as a lens or film.