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17th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20006

AUDIO/VISUAL PROGRAM

Set No. 245

Caracas, **Venezuela:** THE ART IN THE CITY

Venezuela is one of the South American countries which have given opportunities to the artists to make important contributions of their art right on the city itself, in the middle of the urban centers

The artists of the so-called kinetic trend are the most suitable to mix their art with the architecture of the cities. Kinetics is the study of forces that produce or change motion. Kinetic art is a general term for all artistic constructions that include moving elements, whether activated by mechanical or natural means, creating a constantly shifting "definition" of space. Kinetic sculpture is made to be seen while all or part of it is in motion. This motion may also be produced in the retina of the spectator by the interaction of lines and colors with other similar elements in their proximity. This is called the "moire" effect.

In this field, Venezuela is home to three outstanding artists of international renown - Carlos Cruz-Diez, Alejandro Otero, and Jesus Soto. All three were born in Venezuela and have lived and worked in Europe.

The Venezuelan critic, Alfredo Boulton has said;
"The kinetic artist has found a new means of identifying himself with the world. He does not wish to confine himself to the limited dimension of a canvas and the small number of persons who are able to view it. He wishes to move out into the world, into public places where all can participate in his creation. To achieve this the artists have had to invent a new language, one which permits dialogue between empty space and the people."

Photographs by Angel Hurtado





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Caracas, Venezuela: THE ART IN THE CITY

- 245-A The "Plaza Venezuela" is in the heart of modern Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. In the foreground, we can see the huge metallic sculpture by Alejandro Otero. In the background, another sculpture by Carlos Cruz-Diez is brightly colored.
- 245-B "Abra Solar" by Otero is constructed of a stainless steel frame in which several "sails" move freely in the light wind. The sails, also in stainless steel, are polished to reflect the light and color of their environment. (This sculpture was shown at the entrance of the Venice Biennial in 1982.)
- 245-C Profile view of the same sculpture.
- 245-D Another angle of the same sculpture at sunset.
- 245-E Also in the "Plaza Venezuela" is the sculpture by Carlos Cruz-Diez. It is made in painted aluminum and composed of several plates separated by a short distance, one from another. Here the colors are mixed in the retina of the spectator and seem to move along with the movement of the spectator.
- 245-F Another angle of the sculpture by Carlos Cruz-Diez.
- 245-G Close up of the sculpture, showing the disposition of the plates and the variations of colors which are produced either by reflections of the plates against themselves or by the mixture that occurs in the eye of the observer.
- 245-H "Plaza Chacaito" is another urban center of modern Caracas. Here we see a sculpture by Jesus Soto. It is composed of several rods of aluminum, painted blue and black, hanging from a structure in a croix shape. The rods form a huge cube oscillant by the force of the wind. This sculpture is located just in front of the metro station, Chacaito.
- 245-I A closer view, the cube composed of hanging rods floats in space. Underneath is a pit (invisible in this photograph) which contains another sculpture that can be viewed from the metro station, downstairs.
- 245-J Close up of the cube, showing the details of the rods.

