

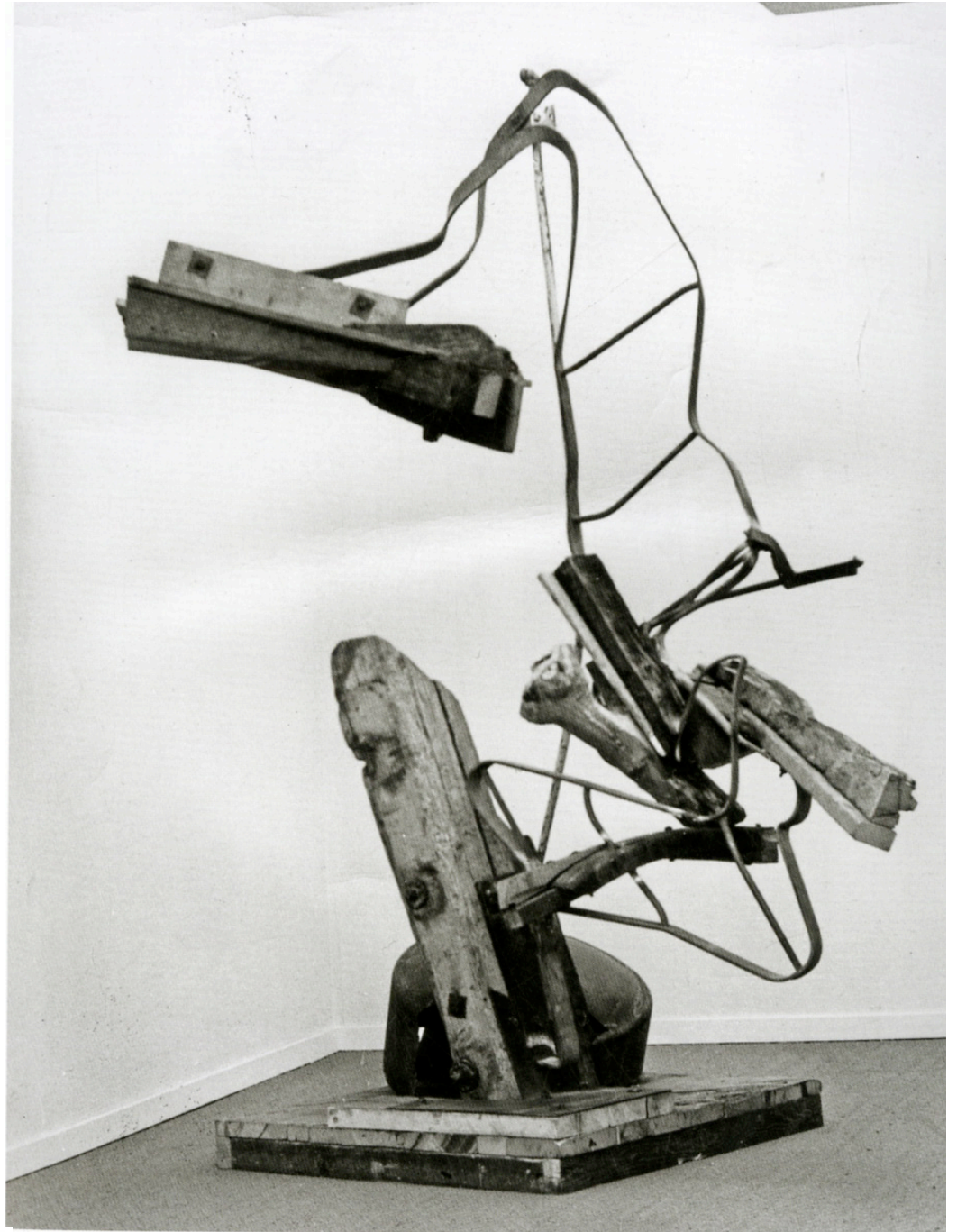
CHARLES ROSS

Mathematician by mind, sculptor by heart

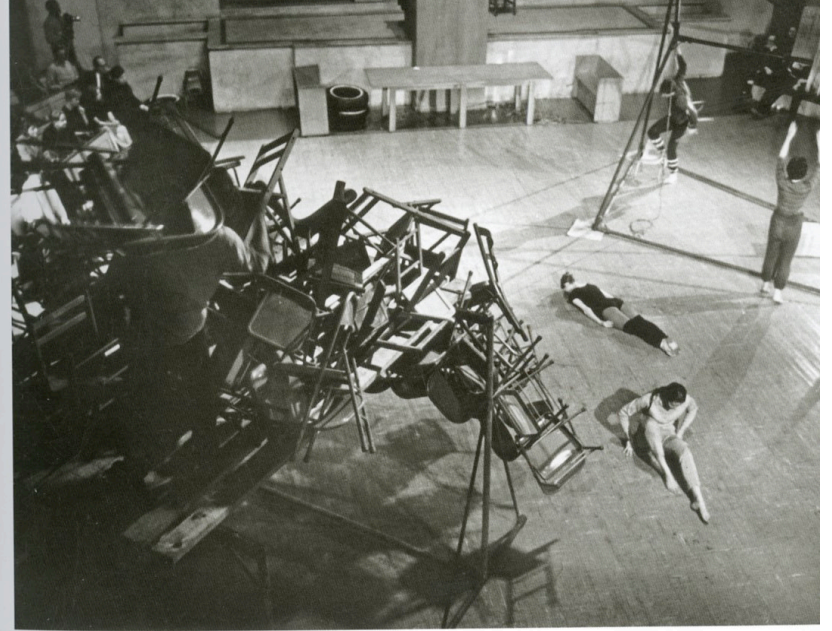
“While other creatures on all fours look down toward the earth,
man was given a face so that he might turn his eyes towards the sky
and gaze upon the stars.”

--Ovid, Metamorphoses 1.84-86

E A R L Y W O R K



OPPOSITE PAGE: *M*, 1961. Wood and steel, approximately 13' high
Exhibition: *Sculpture: Charles Ross / Drawings: Norman Cantor*, Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco: 1961



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: *A Collaborative Event: Charles Ross Chair Sculpture*,
Judson Dance Concert #13, New York: November 20, 1963
PHOTOS: Peter Moore © Estate of Peter Moore/VAGA, NYC

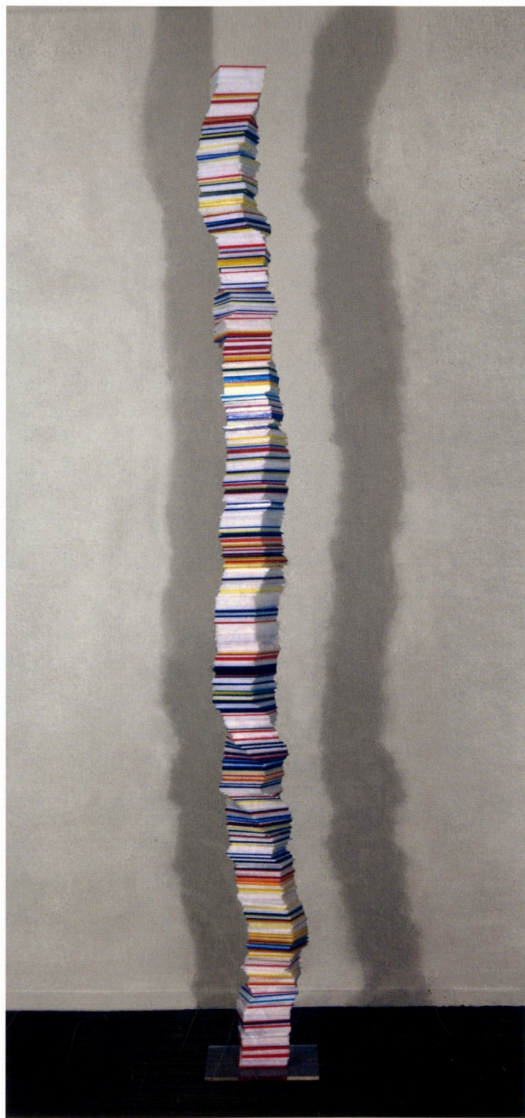


ABOVE: Press release from the Dilexi Gallery, 1965

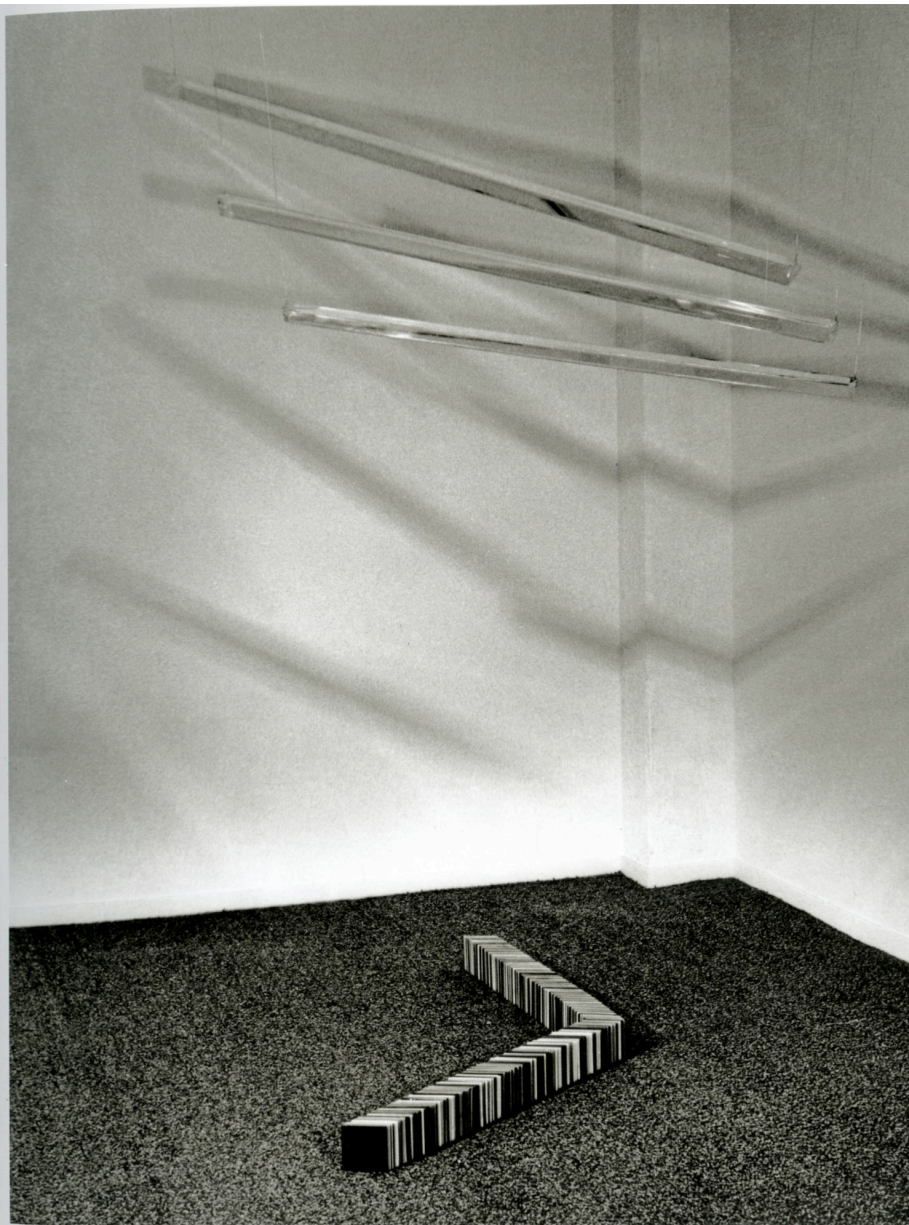
OPPOSITE PAGE: *An Environment* by Charles Ross, 1965

Trees cut off top and bottom reaching from floor to ceiling
with 2" wide strip of mirror around all walls at eye level.

Performers: John Graham, Anna Halprin, A.A. Leath, Daria Lurie, Lucy Lewis, and Yvette Nachmias.
Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco: January 18-30, 1965



is from
the Diexi Gallery, San Francisco, 1966



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: Installation views from
Spirals, Columns, Lenses, and Prisms, Diexi Gallery, San Francisco: 1966

P R I S M S C U L P T U R E

“The Monument to the Third Internatinal”
Vladimir Tatlin 1920

earth to sky





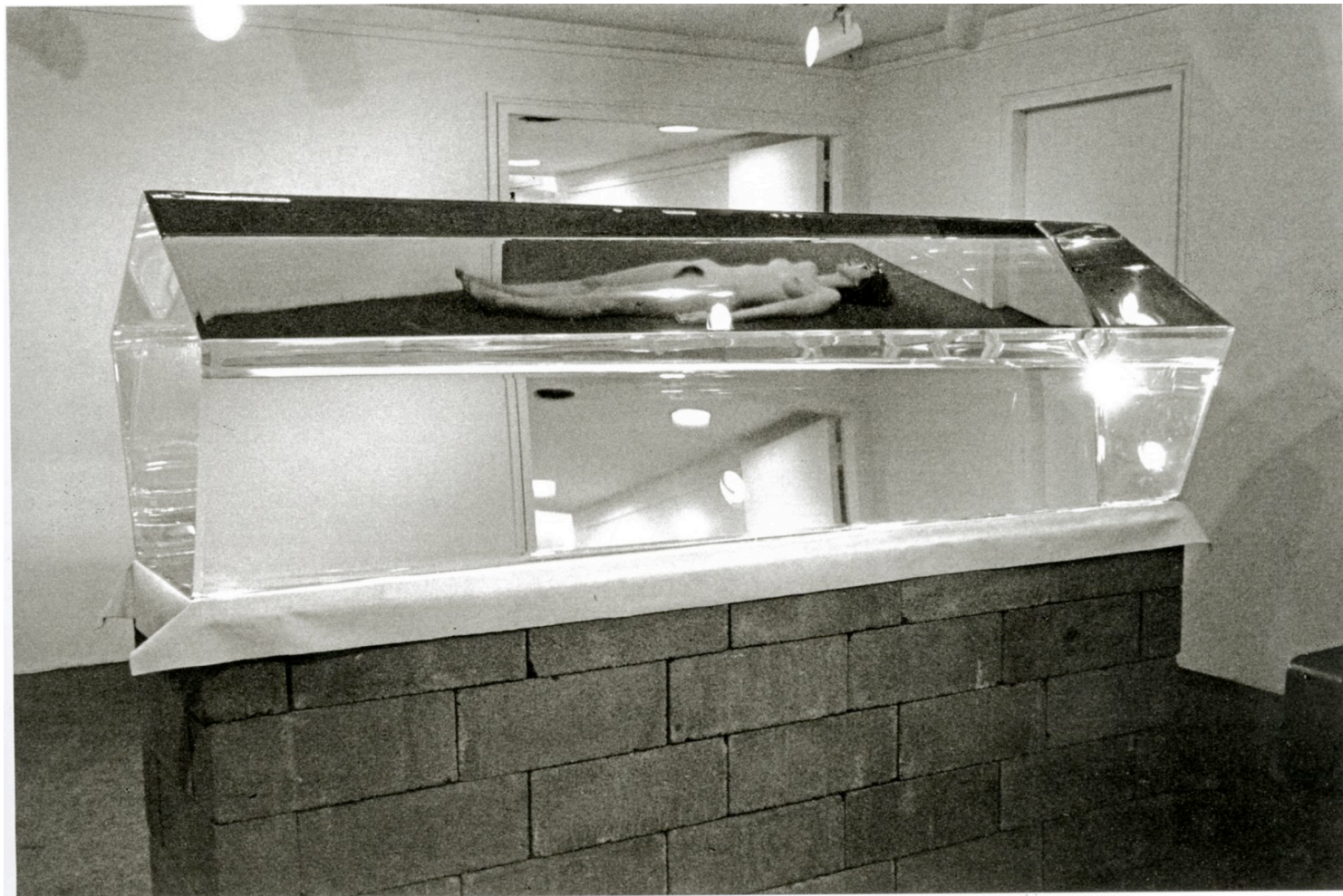
Charles Ross at the exhibition *Prisms: Charles Ross*, Dwan Gallery, New York: 1968
PHOTO: courtesy Dwan Gallery Archives



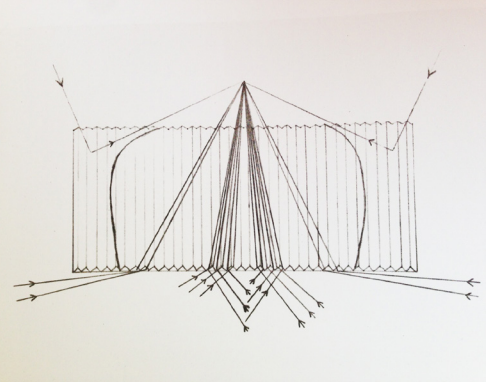
Never seen through *Double Wedge*, 1968, 101 x 52 1/2 x 31 1/2 inches (256.5 x 133.4 x 80 cm)
; *Ross: Prisms*, Dwan Gallery, New York, 1968



Stair Set, 1968
39 x 39 x 3 inches (99.1 x 99.1 x 7.6 cm)

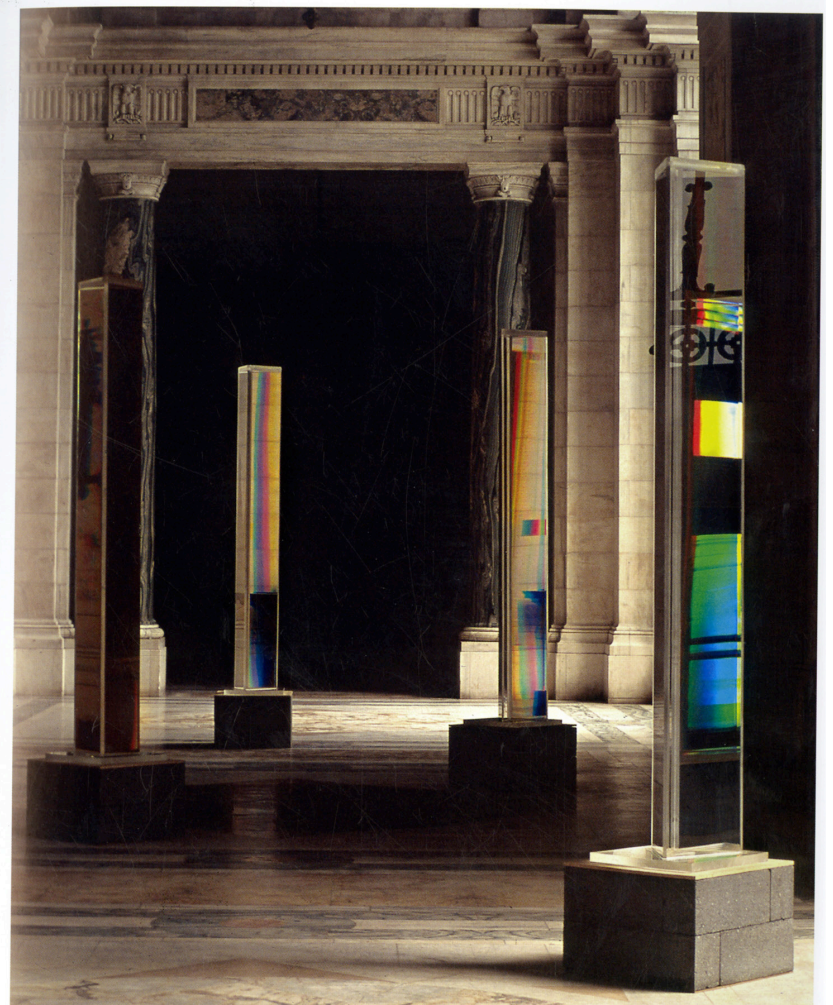


Nude seen through *Prism Coffin*, 1969, 30 × 96 × 32 inches (76.2 × 243.8 × 81.3 cm)
Photo taken during the exhibition *Charles Ross: Prisms* at Dwan Gallery, New York: 1969
COLLECTION: Virginia Dwan



S U N L I G H T D I S P E R S I O N

Prism installations projecting primal solar color events that evolve through the day in a living space.



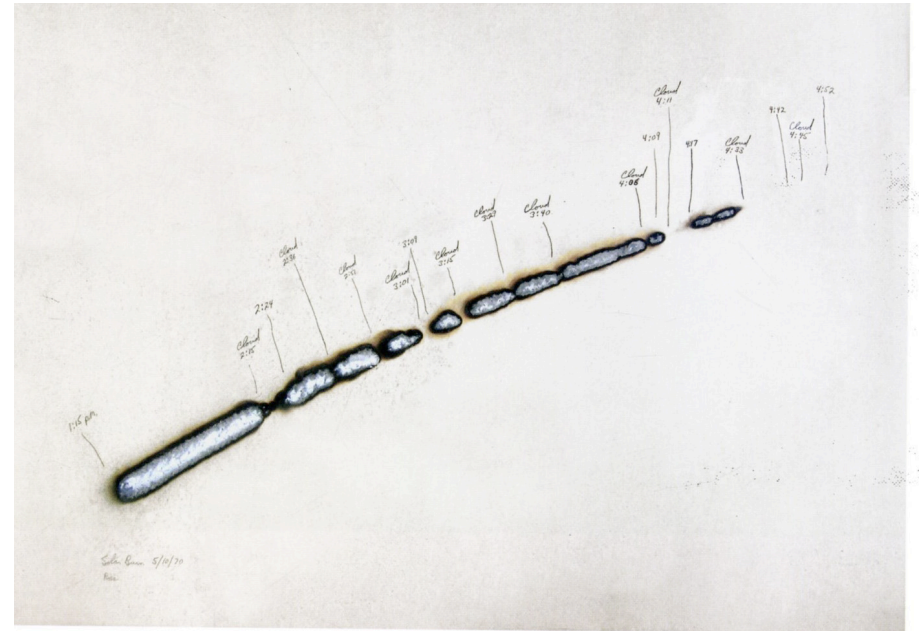
IVE AND OPPOSITE:
sm Installation, U.S. Customs House, New York: 1977. A Creative Time project.



Installation view of *Dialogue of Hours*, 1980-82
Prisms and the Exploded Spectrum, Heydt/Bair Gallery, Santa Fe: 1982
PHOTO: Drew Everly, courtesy of the Heydt/Bair Gallery Archives

S O L A R B U R N S

The opposite of the solar spectrum. Instead of dispersing sunlight into primal color through a prism, sunlight is focused through a large lens into a single point of raw power.



Solar Burn 5/10/70
Solar burn and pencil on wallboard
20 x 30 1/2 inches (50.8 x 77.5 cm)
PRIVATE COLLECTION: Paris



Season Burns

TOP: *Summer, June 21–September 21, 1971*

BOTTOM: *Winter, December 23, 1971–March 19, 1972*

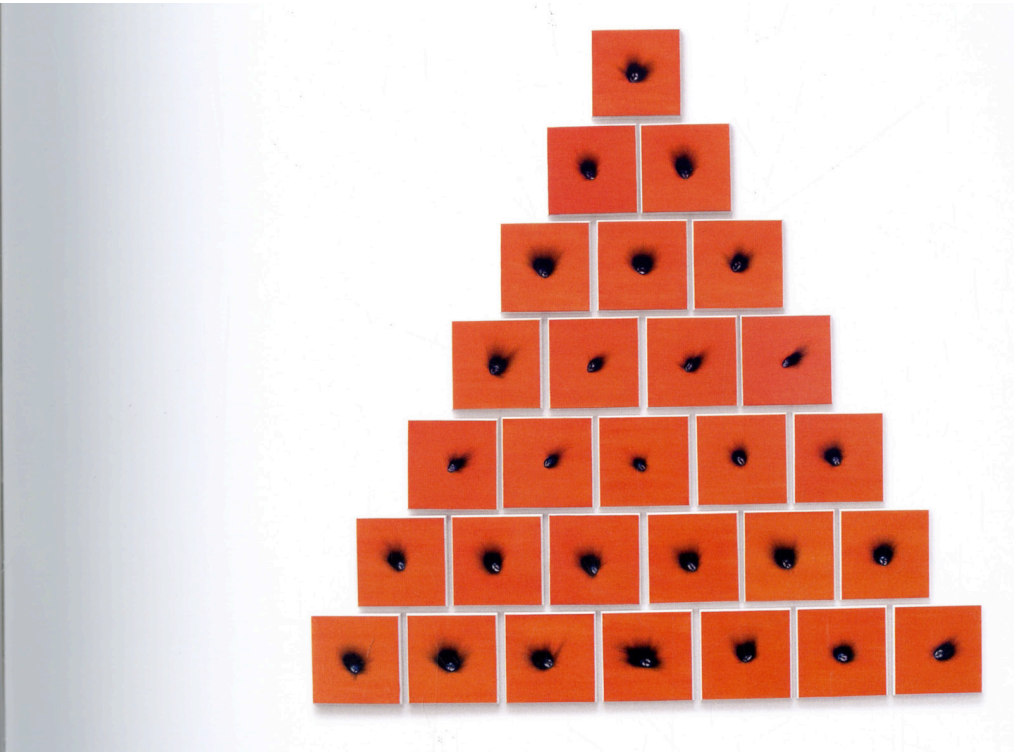
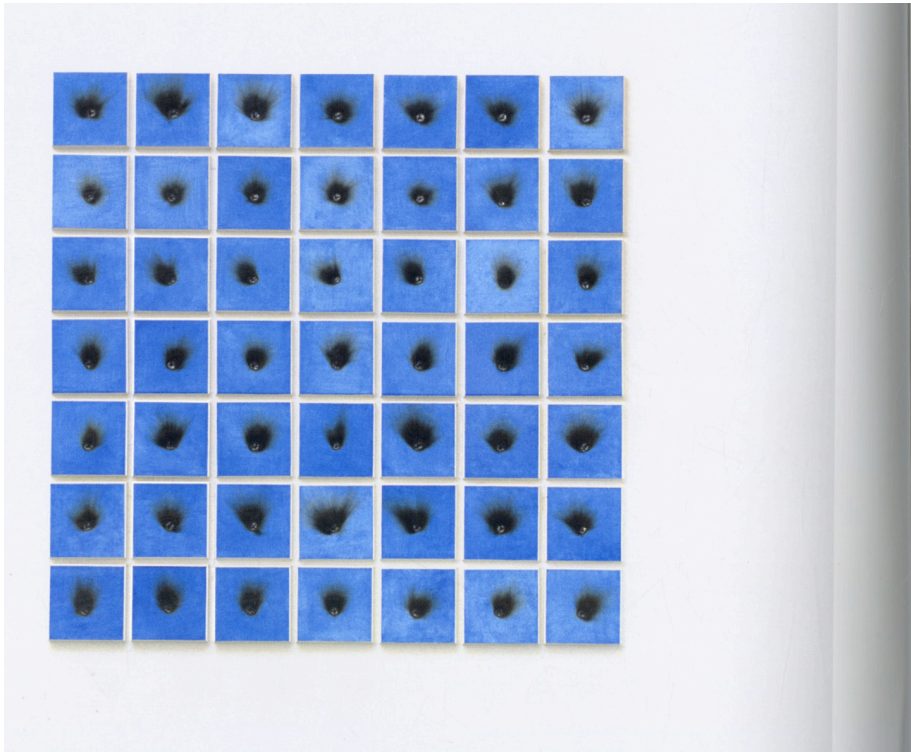
EACH: 32 × 48 × 3½ inches (81.3 × 121.9 × 8.9 cm)

OPPOSITE PAGE

Solstice to Solstice June–December, 1972

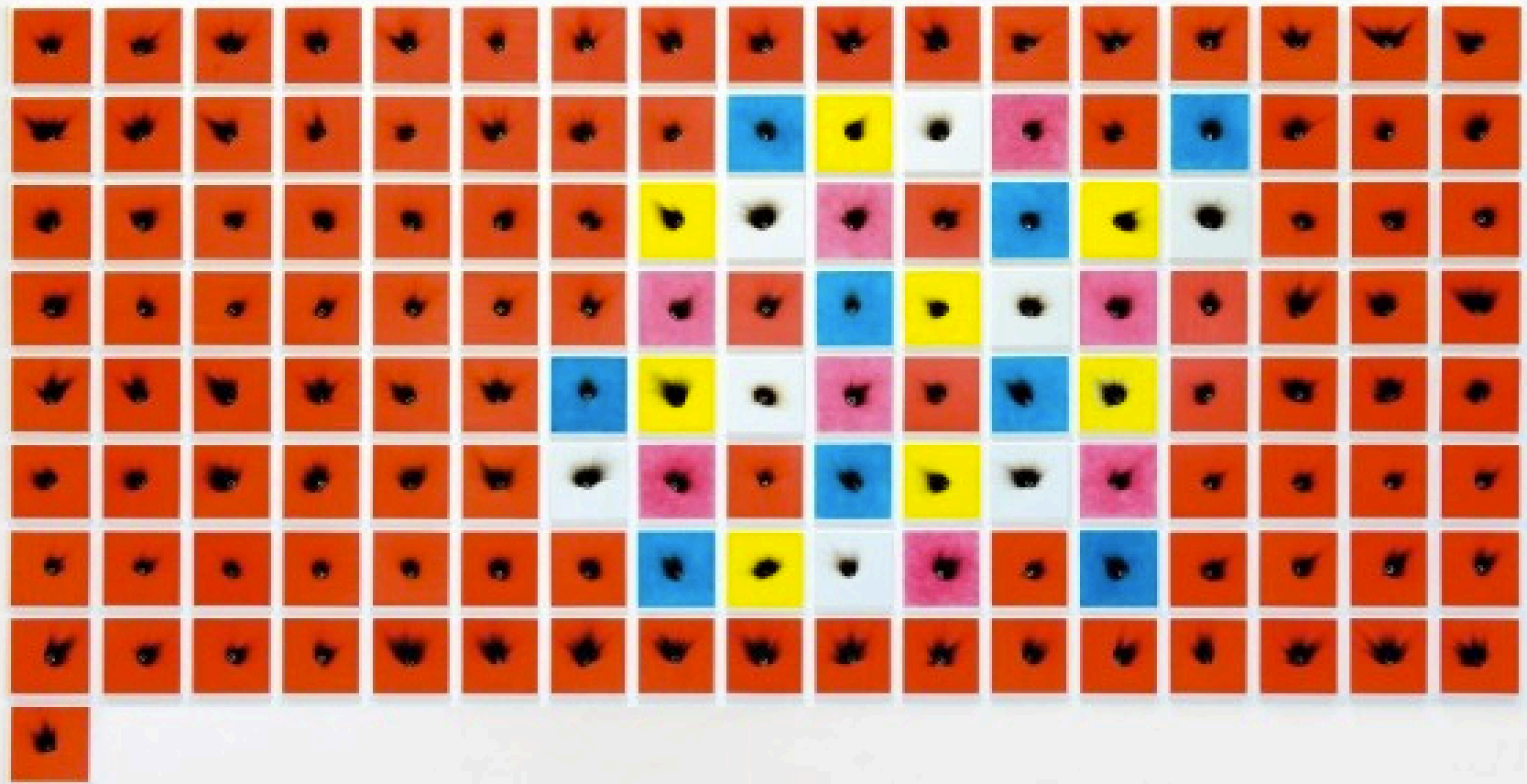
48 × 60 × 3½ inches (122 × 152.4 × 8.9 cm)



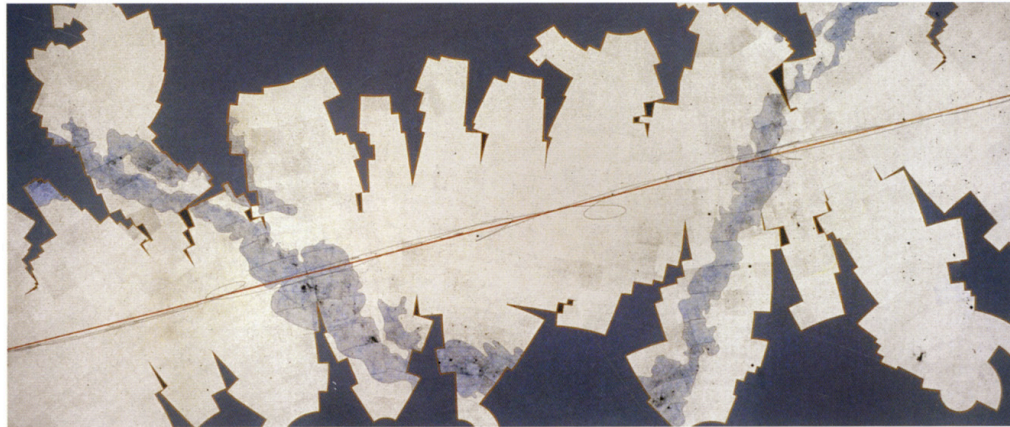
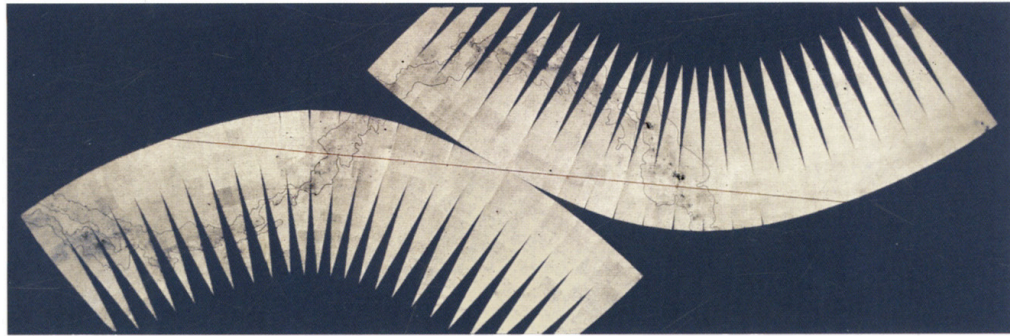
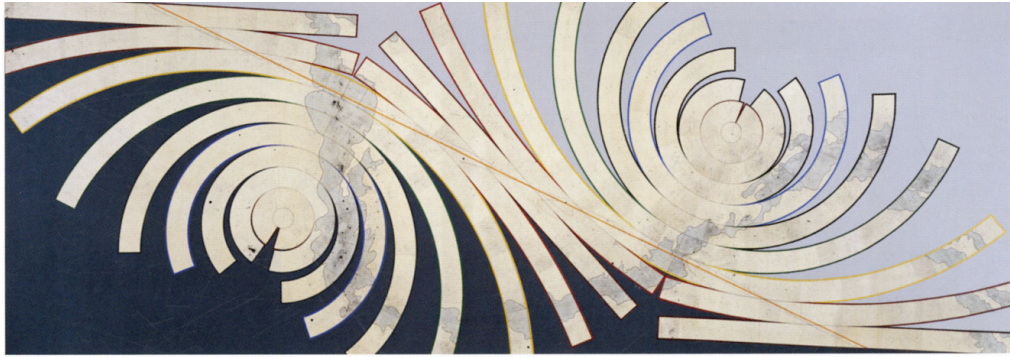


28 triangle orange, each in the time it takes sunlight to reach the Earth, 8 minutes, 19 seconds, 2007
60 x 60 inches (152.4 x 152.4 cm)

OPPOSITE PAGE:
49 blue, each in the time it takes sunlight to reach the Earth, 8 minutes, 19 seconds, 2005
60 x 60 inches (152.4 x 152.4 cm)



S T A R M A P S



TOP TO BOTTOM:
Point Source / Star Space: Sun Center by Earth Degree, 1975/86, 106 x 297 inches (269 x 754.5 cm)
Point Source / Star Space: Sun Center by Earth Hour, 1975, 106 x 327 inches (269 x 815 cm)
Point Source / Star Space: Sun Center by Constellation Cut, 1975/86, 99.5 x 231 inches (169 x 587 cm)
All: Mixed media on paper, mounted on canvas.

EXPLOSION PAINTINGS





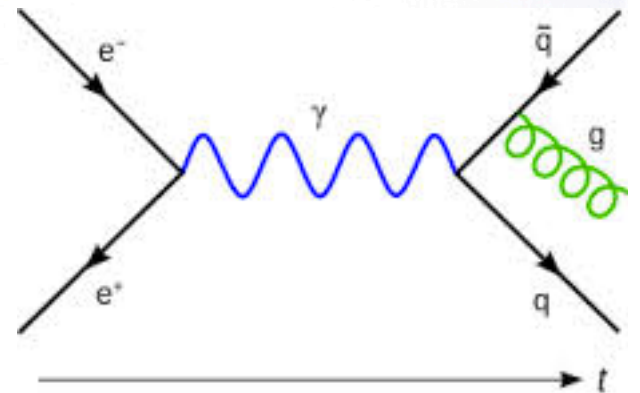
Compared to Cai Guo-Qing
<http://dailyserving.com/2010/08/cai-guo-qiang/>

performative
Guo-Qing ephemerality, immateriality
Ross need to instantaneously create art while working on Star Axis



Energy Navigation #1, 1982-84, 72 x 156 inches (183 x 396 cm)

Using dynamite Primacord, the Explosion Paintings are made by exploding dry pigment onto aluminium plates that are prepared with a wet alkyd ground.





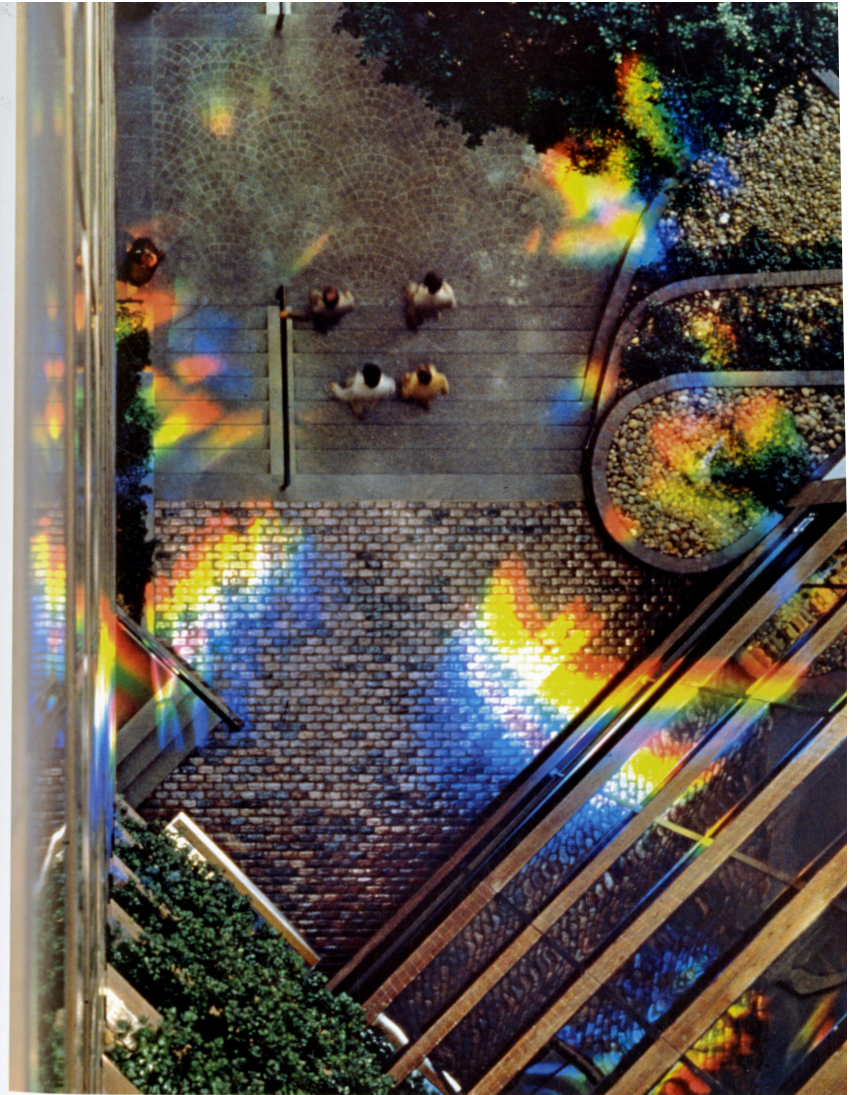
Light escapes an electron spiraling in a magnetic field, 2002. 68½ × 138 inches (174 × 350.5 cm)

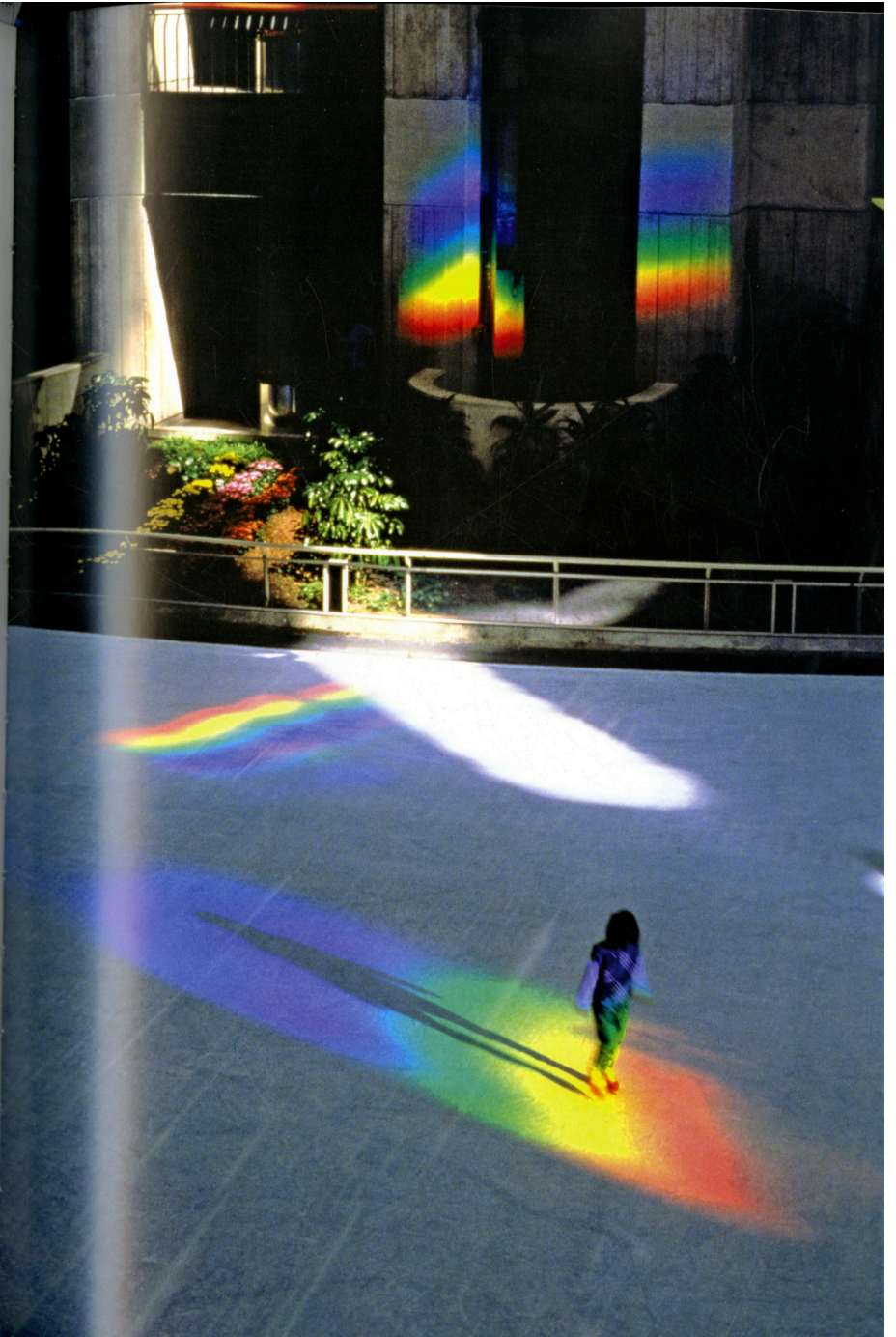
PRISM / SOLAR SPECTRUM
PERMANENT, SITE-SPECIFIC
INSTALLATIONS

Ross places groups of large-scale Prisms under skylights and in clerestories. Each Prism is specifically tuned to the sun for a particular time of day and season. The spectrums continuously evolve throughout the day as they move through the space propelled by the turning of the Earth.

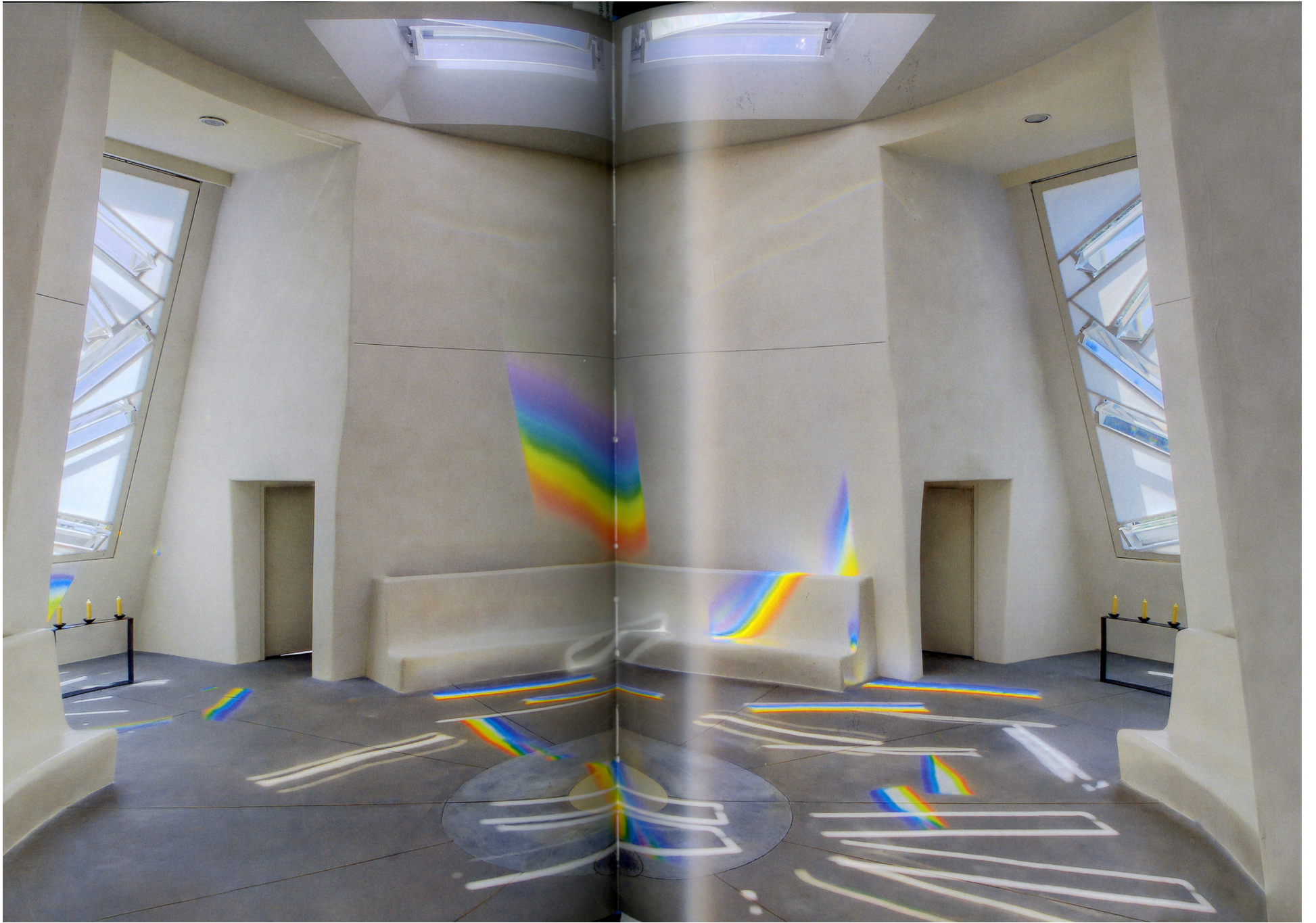


BOVE AND OPPOSITE:
pectrum Building, 1980, Denver, Colorado
ommissioned by Donald Todd





ABOVE, OPPOSITE, AND FOLLOWING SPREAD:
Lines of Light, Rays of Color, 1985, Plaza of the Americas, Dallas, Texas
ARCHITECT: Harwood K. Smith
Commissioned by Wynne/Jackson Inc. through Joyce Pomeroy Schwartz and Anne Kallenberg









exterior images from dwanlightsanctuary.org

S T A R A X I S

“One can as well fall into height as into depth”
-Hoelderlin, Reflexion

Goal: build star geometry into the earth as space and form

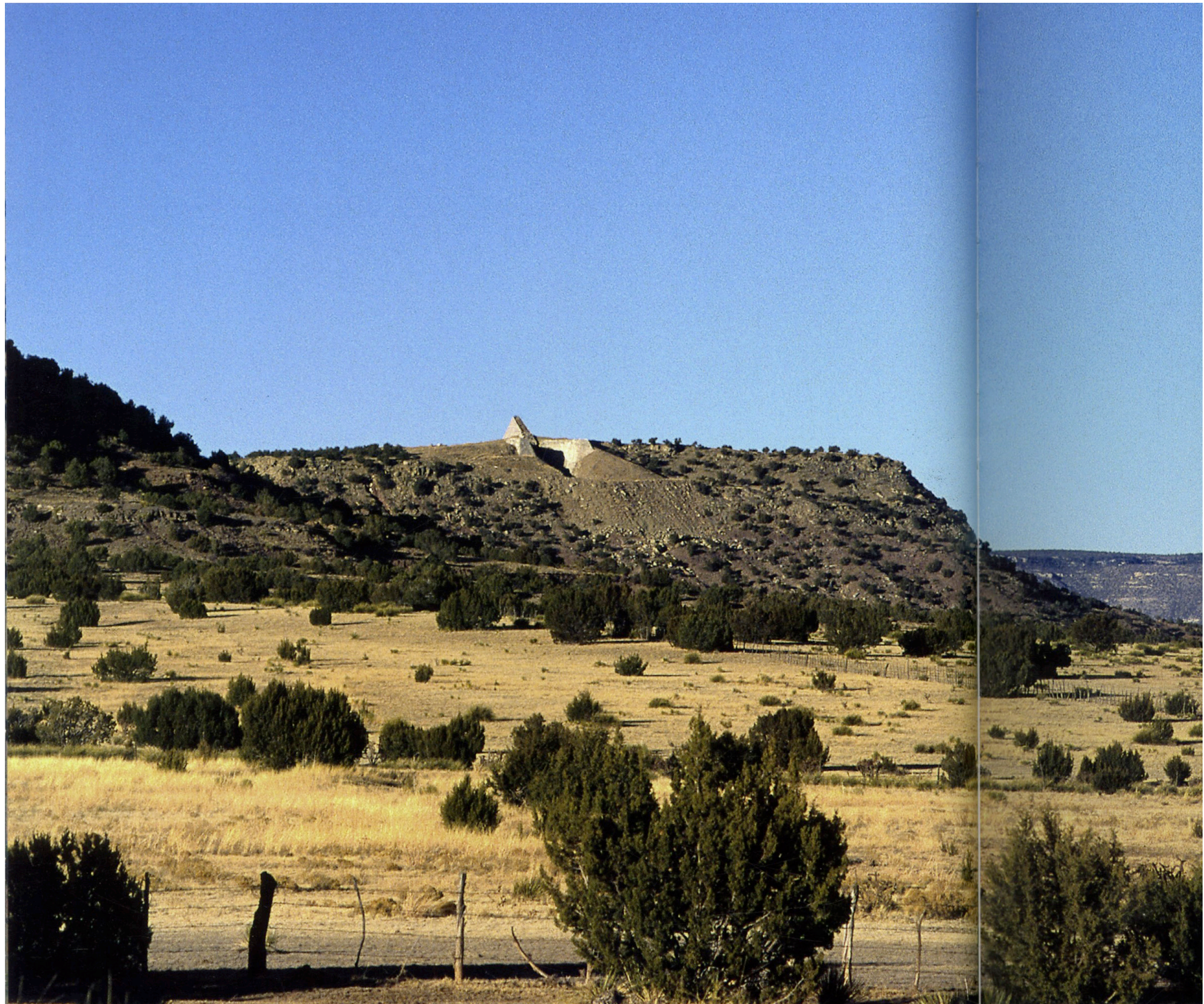


Axis (1/6/1983)
© Edward Ranney



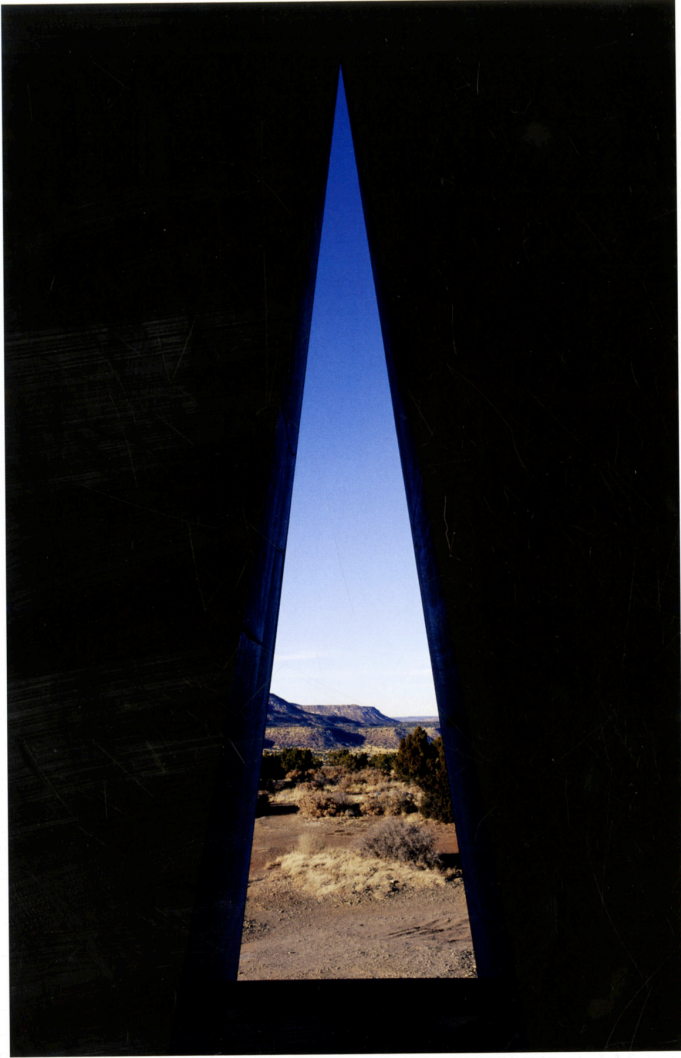
Star Axis (8/26/1983)
PHOTO: Edward Ranney







Solar Pyramid
PHOTO: JILL O'BRYAN, 2011



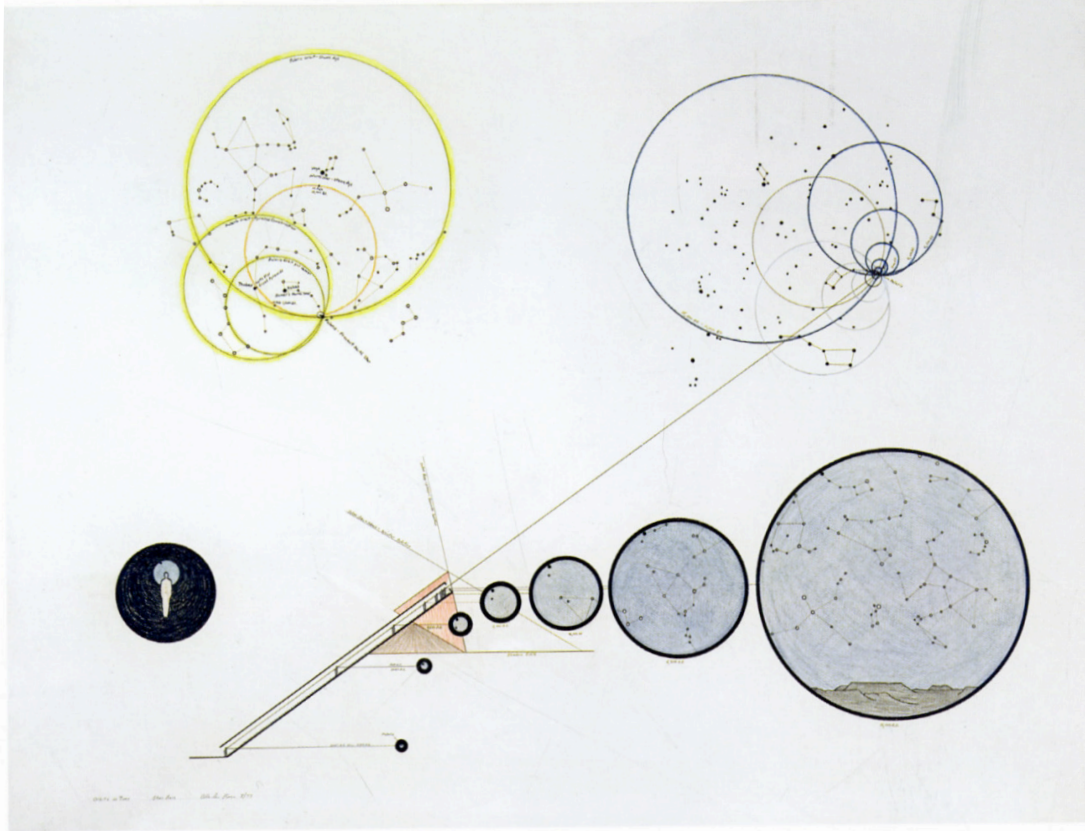
ur Chamber
Looking north from inside the *Hour Chamber*, day (above), and night (opposite).
Stars at the left edge of the opening take exactly one hour to reach the right edge. The North Star sits at the apex of the triangle. PHOTOS: 2011



Star Axis: Looking north at the entrance to the Star Tunnel with its central staircase, 2011. The upper stone rim is aligned with the circle of sky traversed by the pole of precession.



Star Tunnel/ Apertu
View from the top stair framing the largest and most distant past and future orbits of Polaris, 11,000 BC and 15,000 AD. PHOTO: 201



Over time, the Earth's axis slowly shifts to point to different regions of the sky causing the stars to turn around the pole in different sized circles for different periods of history.

The *Star Tunnel* focuses on Polaris and frames all of its changing orbits through the ages.

Within the *Star Tunnel*, as you climb the ten-story-high stairway toward the circular opening at the top, you see larger and larger views of the sky, each framing an orbit of Polaris for a particular time in the 26,000-year cycle of precession.

The stairs are dated to identify the years.

The smallest orbit of Polaris, viewed from the bottom stair in 2100 AD, is about the size of a dime held at arm's length.

The largest orbit of Polaris, occurring in 11,000 BC and 15,000 AD, is framed from the top stair and encompasses your entire field of vision.

ABOVE:

Orbits in Time: Star Axis, 1977

Mixed media on paper. 40 x 60 inches (101.6 x 152.4 cm)

OPPOSITE PAGE:

View from the Upper Room of the Star Tunnel PHOTO: 2010

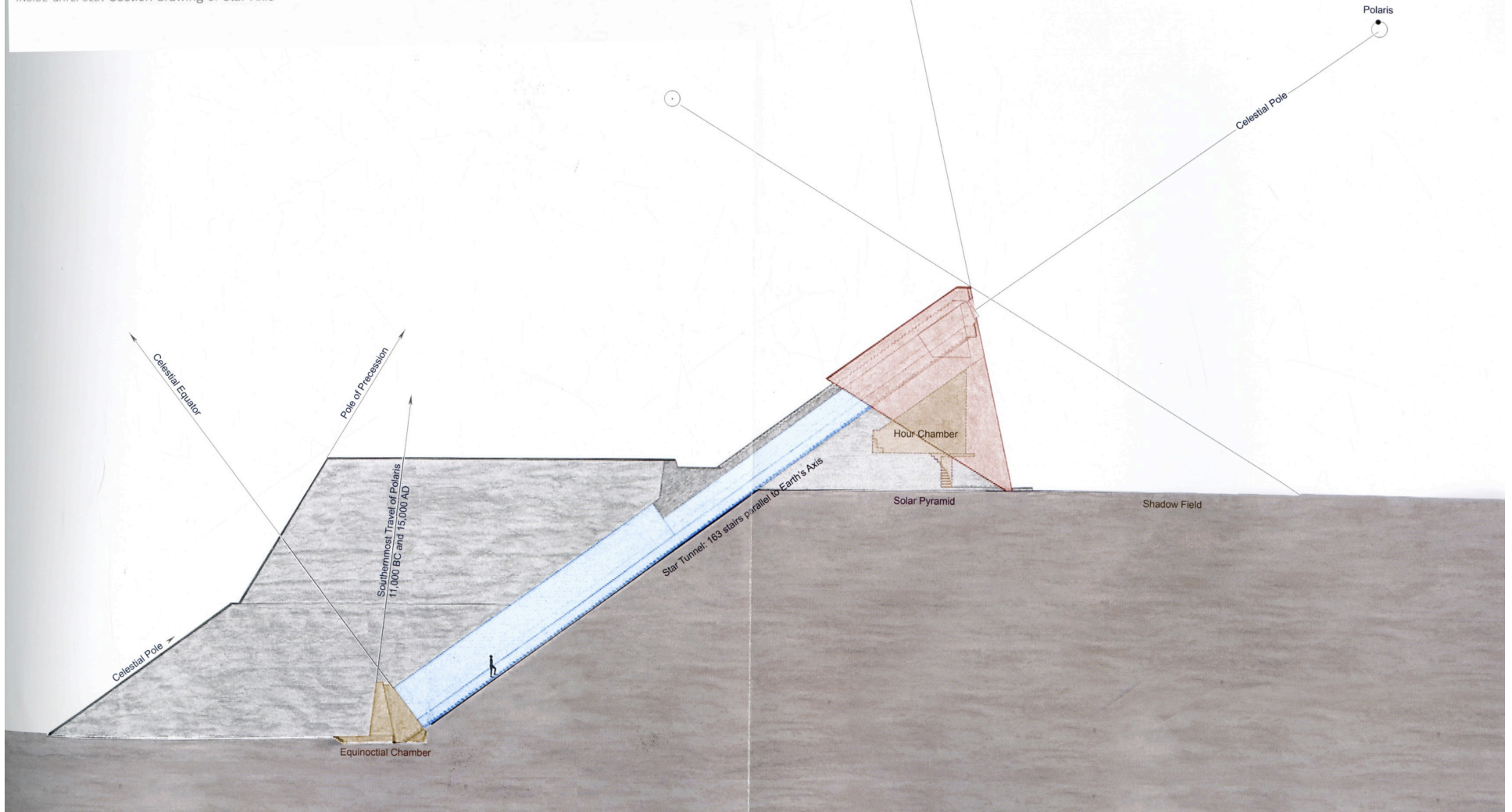


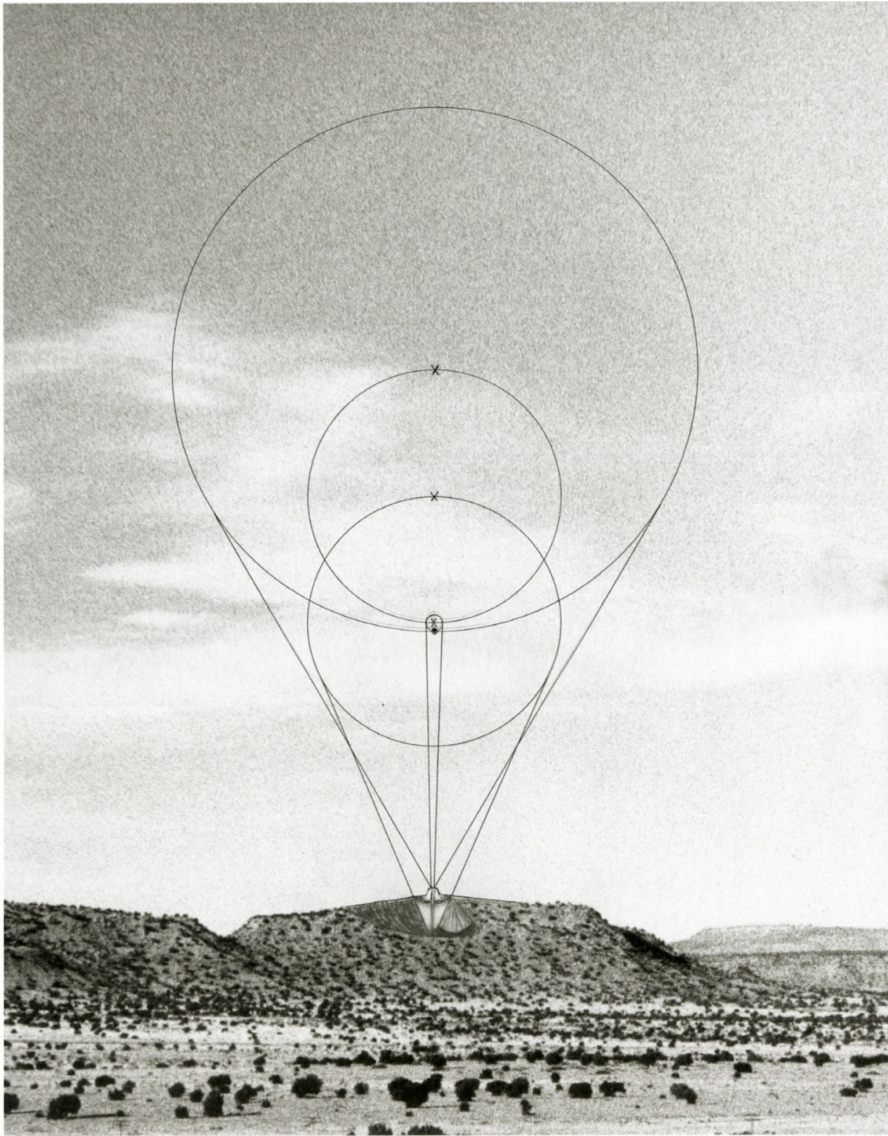
Star Axis has five main elements.

- The *Star Tunnel*, at the core of *Star Axis*, is precisely aligned with the Earth's axis and frames our North Star, Polaris.
- The *Solar Pyramid* includes a 55-foot-high granite tetrahedron whose form is defined by the summer and winter solstices.
- The *Shadow Field* captures the shape traced by all of the *Solar Pyramid*'s daily shadows over the course of the year.
- From the *Hour Chamber*, inside the *Solar Pyramid*, you look out to view one hour of the Earth's rotation.
- The *Equatorial Chamber* frames the stars along the celestial equator.

OPPOSITE: Model of *Star Axis* Shadow Field, 1979

INSIDE GATEFOLD: Section drawing of *Star Axis*





Star Axis (Polaris projection), 1978
Gouache, ink, collage on gelatin silver print, 14 x 11 inches (35 x 28 cm)
PRIVATE COLLECTION: Paris

Entering the Earth to reach the stars.

Capturing star geometry in human scale.

Star Axis is not just conceptual, but a whole body experience.

In the *Star Tunnel*, aligned with the axis of the Earth
space becomes time and time becomes space.

As you climb the stairs of the *Star Tunnel*, the further back in time
or the deeper into the future you go, the greater the physical effort.

Standing at the boundary where the Earth meets the sky.

— CHARLES ROSS

All uncited images in this presentation come from:

“Charles Ross the Substance of Light”
by Charles Ross
Radius Books 2012