



ASTRID KROGH

LIGHT TAPESTRIES

Radical exchanges are taking place between art and architecture today, with minds, as well as materials, pooling into immense, multi-faceted collaborations. Astrid Krogh's work moves at the same speed with which such new ideas are being born, dawning new horizons for textile design as she transforms interior landscapes into otherworldly environments. Krogh's work creates a momentary pause in a high-speed world, showing that the cutting edge of art and design is not razor sharp, but as sensuous and soft as the subtle illuminations she creates.

Arne Jacobsen once said that light gives all things their presence, highlighting the important role it plays in bringing surfaces to life. Krogh, a classically trained textile designer, set out to take Jacobsen's observation further by integrating light into her work rather than using it for effect. Combining her design skills with technological know-how and state-of-the-art materials, Krogh harnesses the phenomenon of light to give her textiles a presence of their own.

Krogh's point of departure from conventional textile design was not merely her fascination for light, but also her attraction to shape-morphing objects and shifting colourways. 'I use light as both a material and a technology,' Krogh explains. 'The presence of light is

an essential component of my work. Light enables my textiles to pulsate, change patterns and create an entire spectrum of ever-changing colourways.'

These characteristics are especially evident in Krogh's 'Ikat' series of textile installations. Most ikat weavers adjust the warp repeatedly as they weave to maintain pattern alignment, but some styles are created on loose warps to create a blurred appearance. Krogh's 'Ikat' installations are created from optic fibres programmed to subtly change patterns and colourways to create a blurring effect. Krogh arranges the fibres systematically, creating warp-like substrates that allow the colours and patterns to speak at their own volume. Different colours fuse and blur as light pulsates through them, creating a kaleidoscope of colours and patterns.

Krogh also uses LEDs to make colourful wall-mounted works that create new patterns continuously. 'Waltzing', for example, is a large-scale, wall-mounted tapestry measuring two meters wide and nearly seven meters in length. The tapestry's colourways were inspired by ikat motifs and created by software programmed to continuously reconfigure the LEDs into new patterns. Each pattern is static for four seconds, then morphs into a new pattern during an eight-second sequence. The tapestry also has an interactive dimension. When linked to a technologically-enabled floor mat, viewers can control the patterns by the movement of their feet.

Long before the design work begins, Krogh maps out the visible and invisible components of the space the work is commissioned for. 'I begin each commission by travelling to the site to look at existing lighting, the flow of human traffic and the general buzz around it,' Krogh says. 'I set out to truly integrate work into the space so that it becomes a part of it. Every building has a unique atmosphere; every space has its own soul. My work is born out of feeling, yet, takes shape according to the physical characteristics of the space.'

In an installation commissioned for the foyer of the newly-built Maasland Hospital in The Netherlands, Krogh created a design that provides an uplifting focal point and projects subliminal messages about well-being. Called 'Flower of Life', the installation is suspended from the ceiling by a rotating arm that enables it to complete one revolution every 60 minutes. As it rotates, LEDs embedded within it change colour and intensity in response to the human traffic beneath it. 'The installation is a circle of light based on the geometrical Flower of Life motif that is considered to be a sacred symbol,' Krogh explains. Although the Flower of Life is an ancient symbol, its strict geometric shape is well-suited to contemporary architecture, and it provides the hospital with an eye-catching, decorative form.

Although Krogh's installations are technologically advanced, they still connect with textiles' long history. 'My reference point is almost always Gobelin tapestries or ancient kelim carpets,' she says. 'From a distance, their colourways appear to be distinct, but closer examination reveals how the boundaries between them contain entire spectrums of colour.' Krogh reproduces this fusion of colours in the hi-tech tapestries she crafts from neon tubes. In works created for the Danish Parliament and commissioned for public spaces in Norway and Denmark, Krogh showed how long, slender lengths of neon glass filaments can mimic fibres by creating colours and motifs. 'Neon tubes show the

magic of light,' Krogh explains. 'As they glow, they cast an aura around them that creates new tints as colours overlap and blur into one. The colours they create are ephemeral. They only exist when the neon is switched on, and vanish completely when deprived of light.'

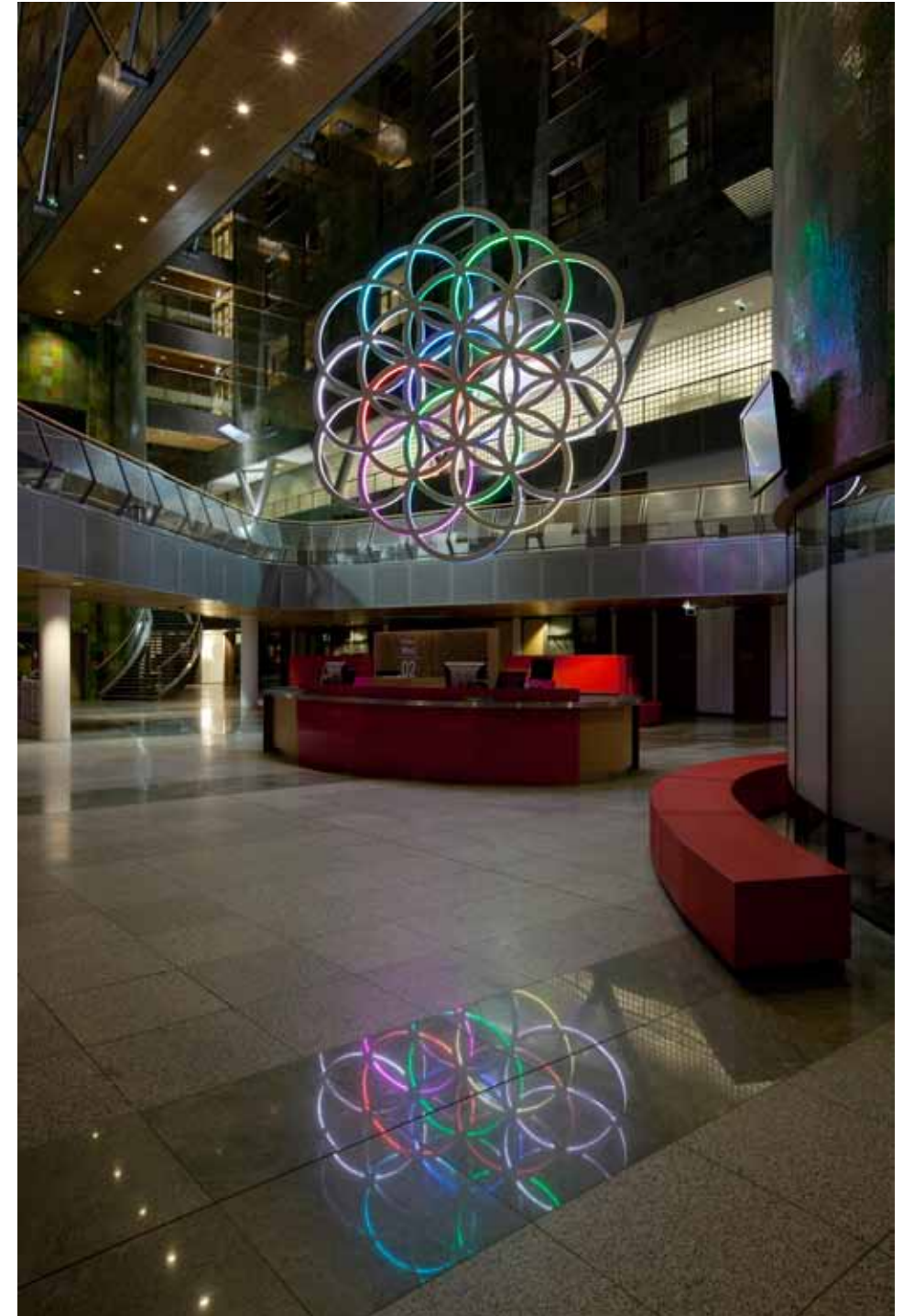
As she pioneers a new genre of light-infused tapestries, Krogh's impact on the fields of art, architecture and design is considerable. Whereas tapestries, and fabrics in general, were once regarded as decorative additions to the interior, Krogh has shown how textile technology can create architectural elements. By integrating textiles into architecture, Krogh has paved the way for forms that are fluidic as well as fixed, and designs that promote shifting relationships between onlooker and object. The tactility associated with textile forms was once limited to fingertips alone; in Krogh's work, it is gauged by the eye and experienced with all the senses.

Whether viewed in the clear light of day or in the dreamy, twilight shadows of night, Krogh's luminous tapestries are forging exciting new directions for architecture, art and design. As Krogh's works bring shape-shifting materials, programmable fibres and luminescent components to interior architecture, they reveal the potential to transform everyday surfaces into dynamic forms.

Bradley Quinn, 2011

Bradley Quinn is a British author and critic who has written about Astrid Krogh's work in books such as Design Futures and Textile Designers at the Cutting Edge.

FLOWER OF LIFE, 2009
Maasland Hospital, Sittard, The Netherlands
Mobile
LED, aluminium and acrylics
Diameter: 600 cm



BIOGRAPHY

Astrid Krogh was born in Denmark in 1968. After graduating from the textile faculty at The Danish Design School in 1997, Krogh established her own studio the following year. Since then, Krogh has provided a consultancy service to architects and product designers, received government commissions for public works and created site-specific artworks. Krogh's client list includes Mærsk, Danish State Railways, the Government of Norway, the Danish Parliament, the Royal Danish Library, The Netherlands' National Health Authority, Velux and Coloplast.

Krogh's artistic works have been shown at international design fairs, art galleries, museums and private exhibitions. Her commercial commissions and architectural collaborations show the extent to which contemporary textiles can create new possibilities for all aspects of spatial design and architecture.

SELECTED WORKS AND EXHIBITIONS

- 2011** - Design Miami/Basel, Galerie Maria Wettergren (Paris)
- 7th International Triennial of Contemporary Textile Arts of Tournai, Belgium
- 2010** - *Myriad*, 4 x 4 meter light tapestry, Halden Prison, Norway
- Mindcraft, Danish Crafts, Il Saloni, Milan
- 2009** - *5240 Vollsmose*, 4 x 4 meter light mobile, Vollsmose Kulturhus, Denmark
- *Flower of Life*, 6 x 6 meter light mobile, Maasland Hospital, The Netherlands
- 2007** - *Lightfall*, 2 x 14 meter optic fiber tapestry, NRGi Aarhus, Denmark
- 2006** - *Outside on the inside*, Ideal House, Cologne Furniture Fair, Cologne, Germany
- 2004** - 11th Int'l Triennial of Tapestry, Lodz, Poland
- 2003** - *Polytics*, 3 x 8 meter neon tapestry, The Danish Parliament, Denmark
- 2002** - *Tapestries*, Design Museum Danmark, Denmark
- 2001** - *Untitled*, 4 x 14 meter stainless steel and neon weaving, Mærsk Data, Denmark
- *Young Nordic Design: The Generation X*, Scandinavia House, New York, USA

SELECTED PRIZES AND AWARDS

- 2011, 2009, 2006** Danish Art Foundation Award
- 2011, 2006** Danish Crafts Award
- 2008** Thorvald Bindsbøll Medal
- 2004, 2002** National Bank of Denmark's Anniversary Foundation
- 2003** Ole Haslund Artist Prize
- 2002** Danish Art Foundation three-year art grant

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LIGHTMAIL , 2000

Lightmail, Exhibition at Trapholt Museum, Denmark
 Weaving in optic fibres, light monitors
 150 x 700 cm

Graduating from the Danish Design School in 1997, Astrid Krogh was one of the first textile designers to mix high-tech materials such as optic fibres with traditional techniques to craft her textiles. She anchors her designs to new technologies by weaving lengths of optic strands on a loom into iridescent tapestries that glow and illuminate into a rainbow of brilliant colours. The fibres are connected to monitors that radiate coloured light into the weaving at a slow, hypnotizing pace. An incessant flow of colour is constantly changing the appearance of the piece.

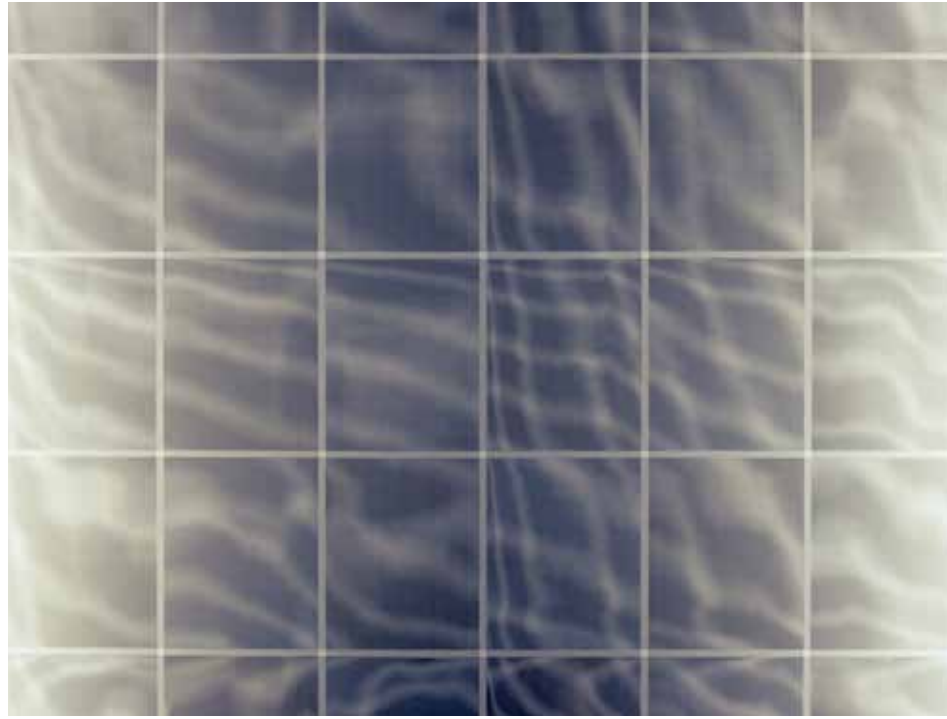




MÆRSK DATA A/S, COPENHAGEN, 2001
Private commission, Denmark
Woven stainless steel netting, neon light
Dimensions: 400 x 1400 cm

The Maersk Data building is characterized by pure concrete lines and large glass areas. The building is passed every day by thousands of cars. The wall rises vertically through several stories and is centrally placed in the Mærsk Data A/S. The woven steel netting has an acoustic regulation and has been executed as a living, constantly moving wall surface. The light effects vary tremendously, depending on the season, the time of day and the weather.





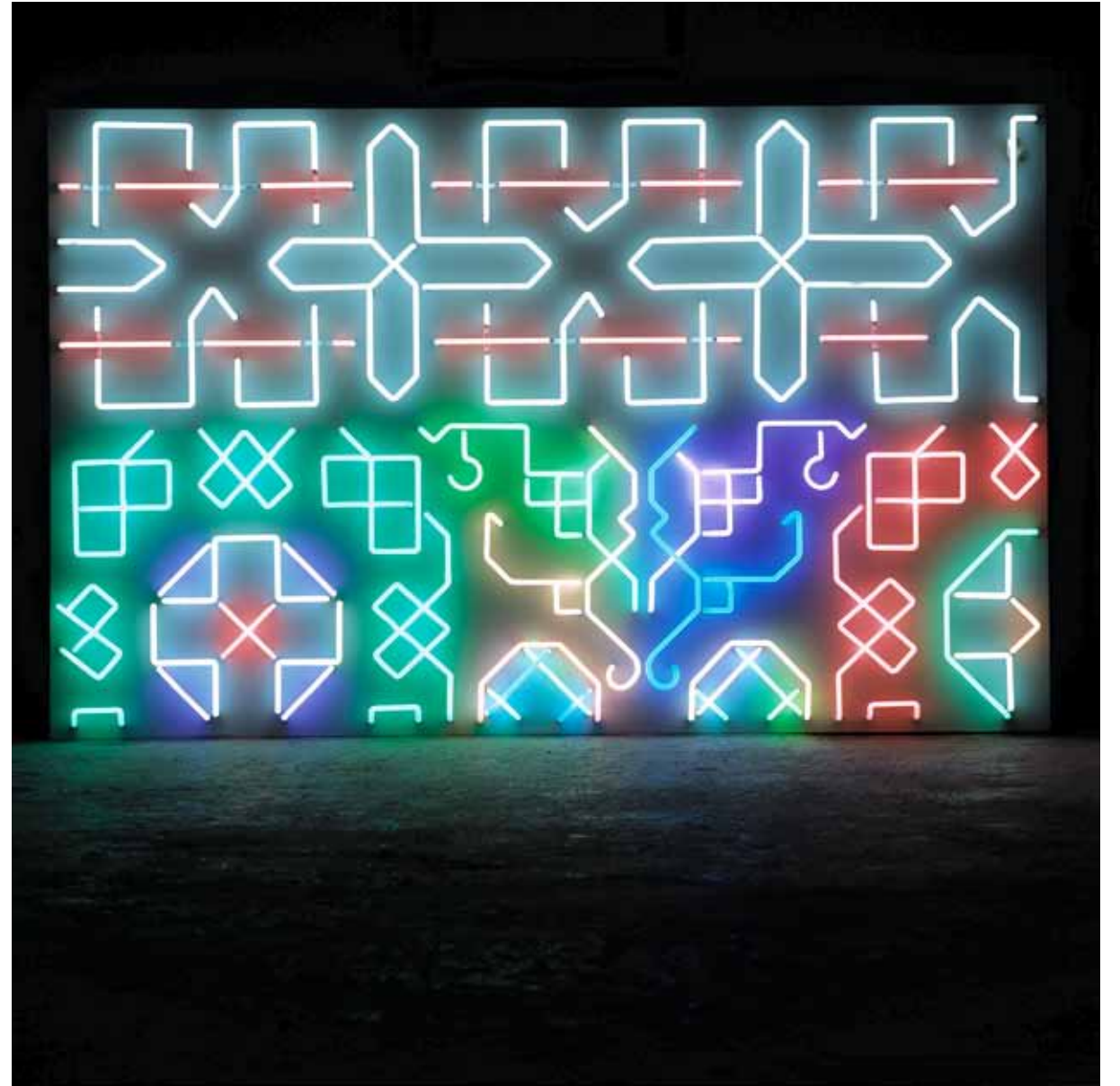
DANISH STATE RAILWAYS HEADQUARTER / MEETING ROOM, 2002
 Public commission, Denmark
 Steel tapestries, fluorescent tubes
 250 x 250 cm

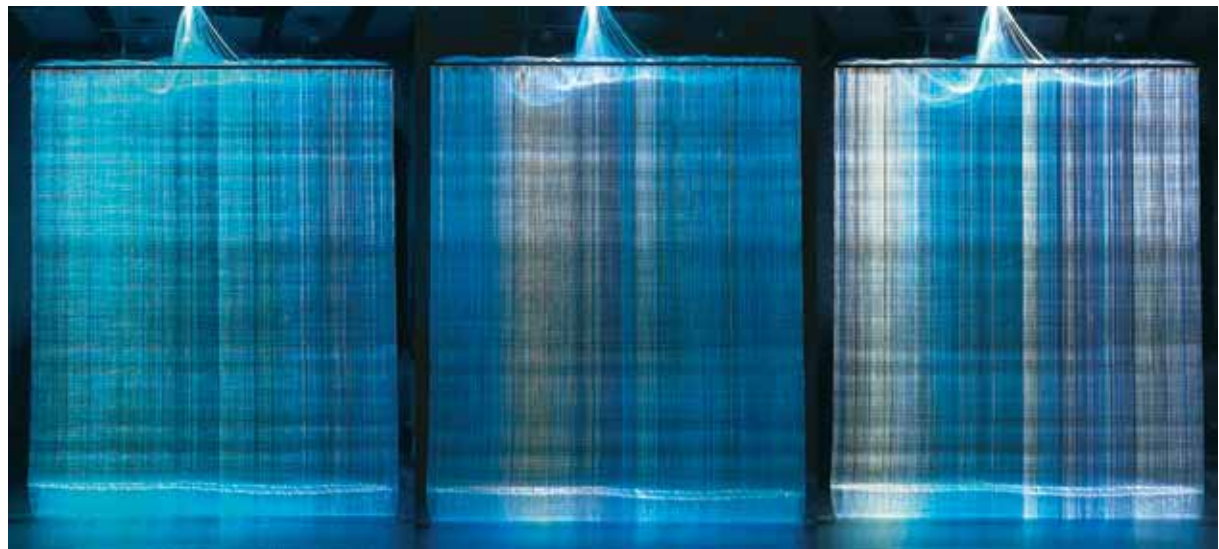
The DSB (Danish State Railways) headquarters in Copenhagen is housed in a building from the eighteenth century, just across the Royal Park. The pastel coloured walls are decorated with large tapestries of woven steel filters. Due to the reflection of daylight as well as to the fluorescent tubes behind them, these tapestries are producing interfering patterns, which are constantly transforming the space by the changing character of light, both the natural light and the artificial. The interaction of these two forms of light is crucial to the work of Astrid Krogh.



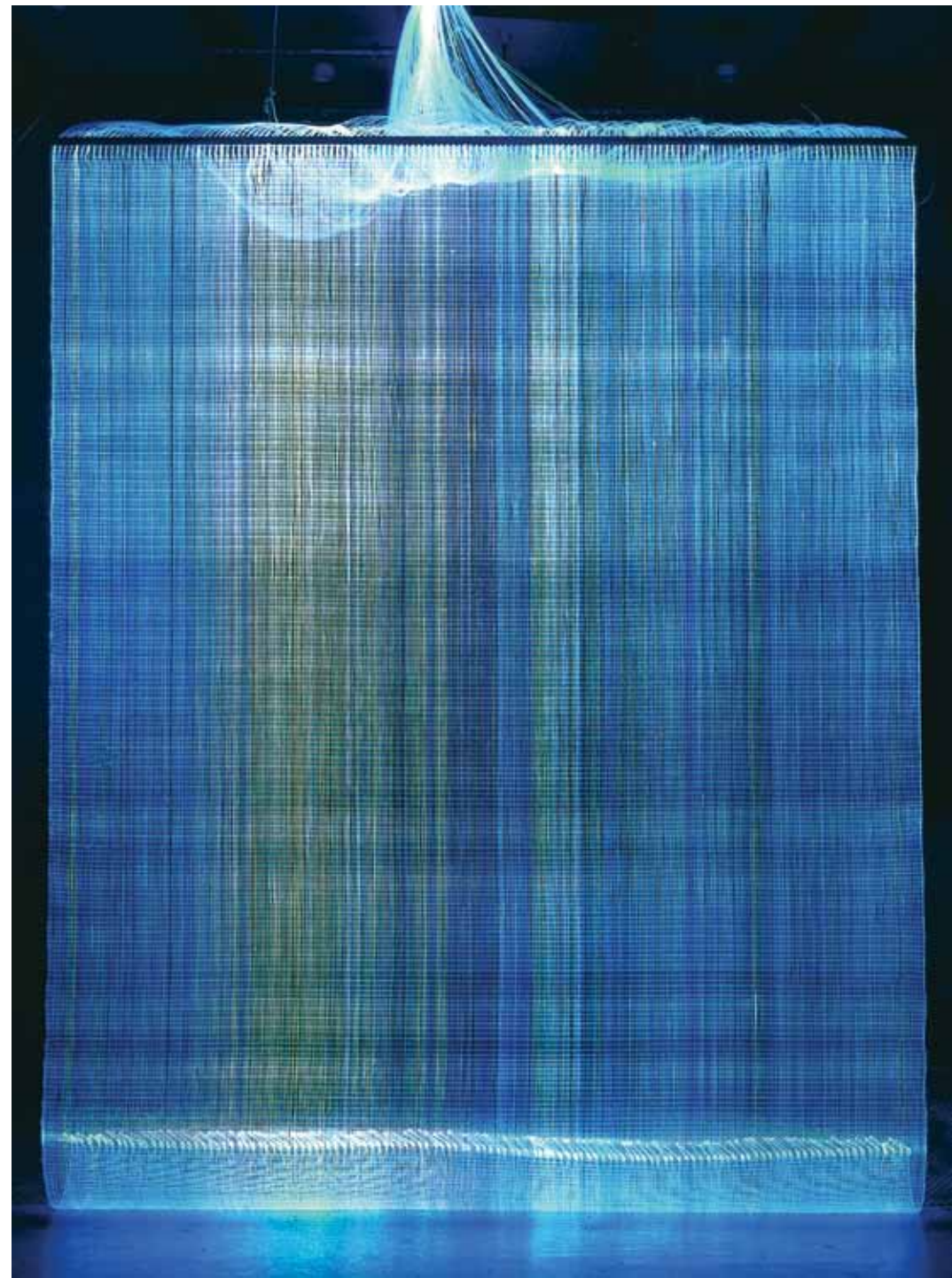


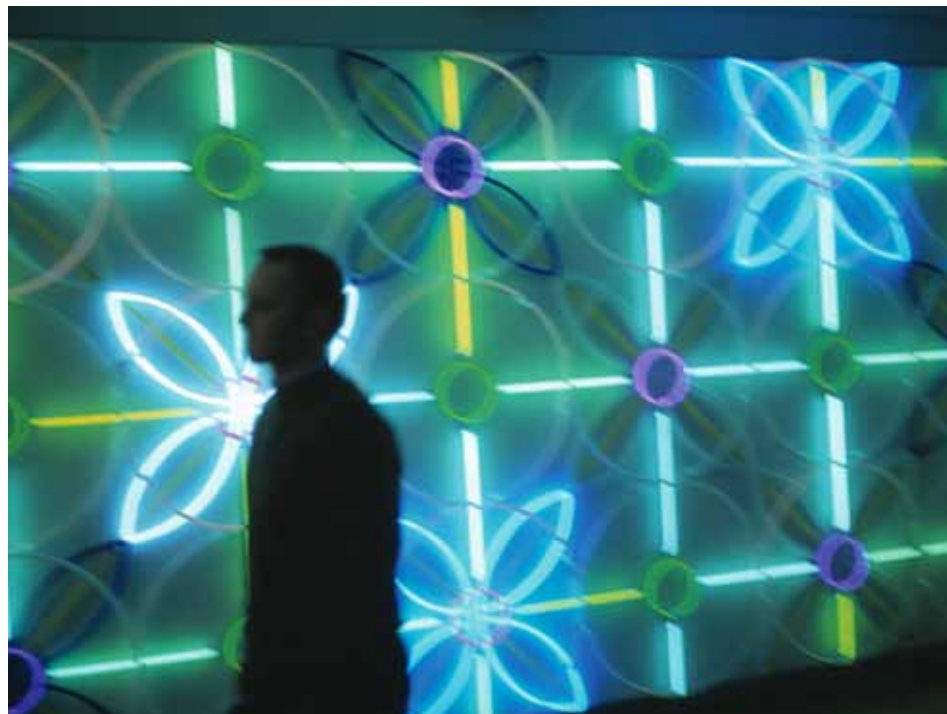
HOLBEIN, 2002
Tapestries, Exhibition at Design Museum Danmark, Denmark
Neon tapestry
200 x 320 cm





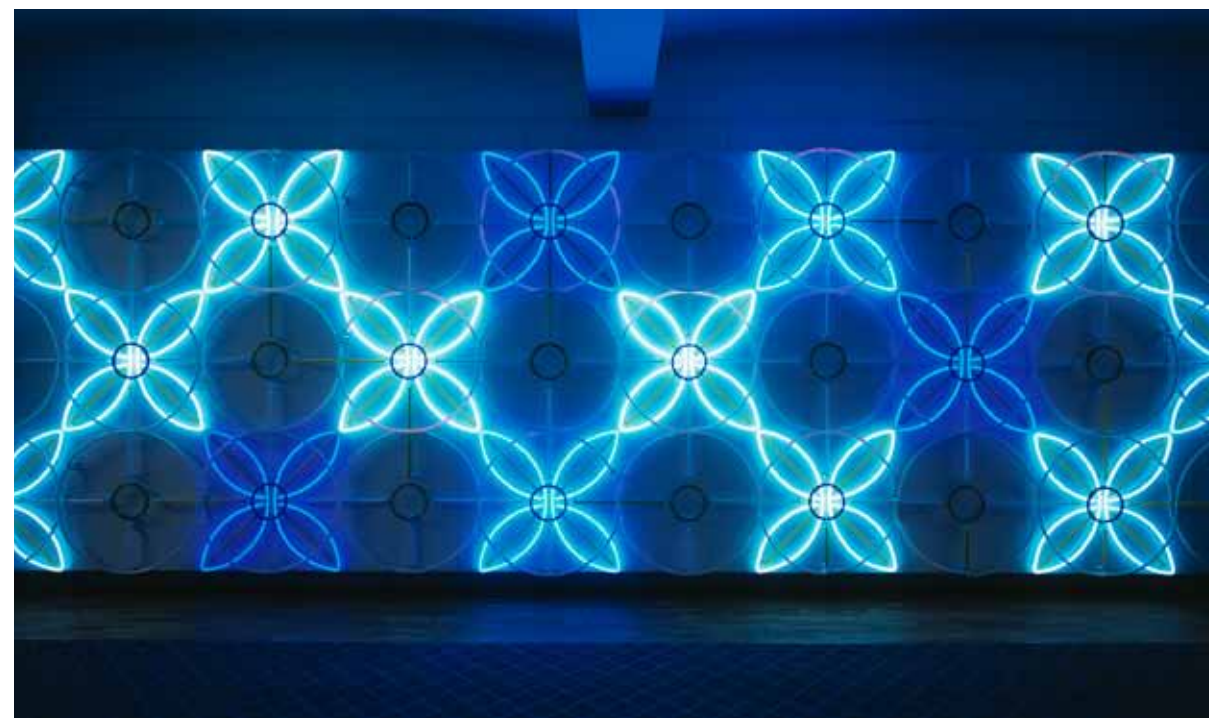
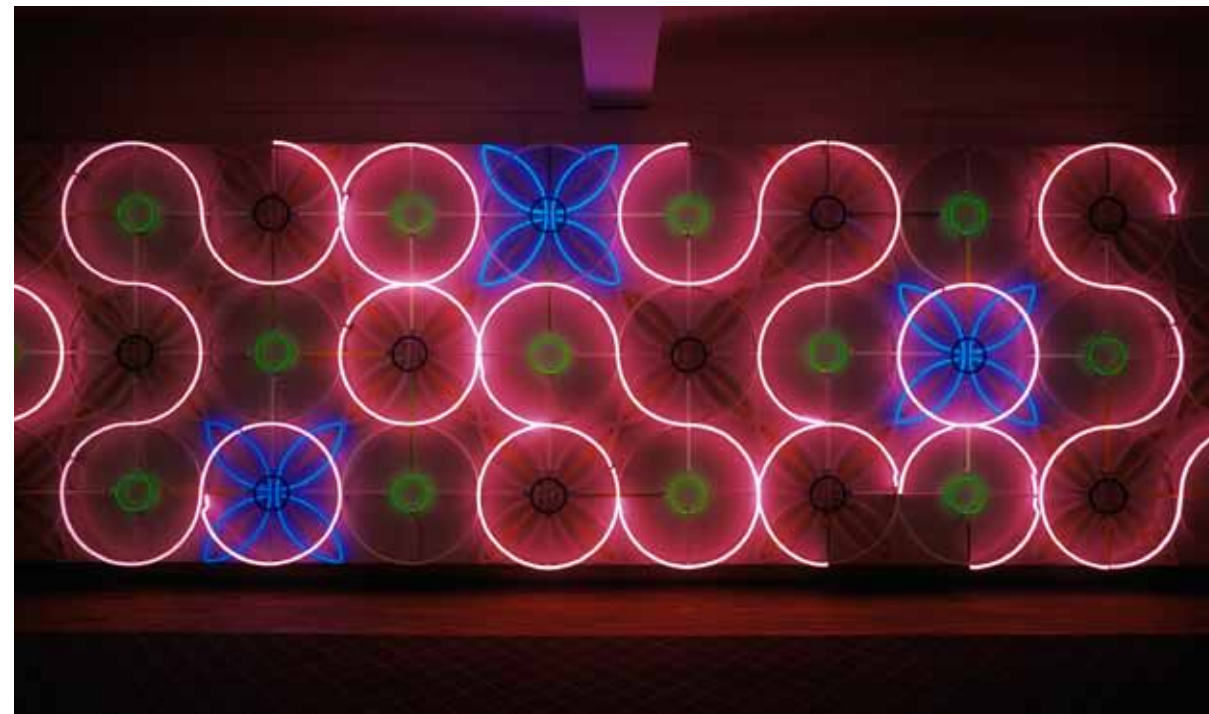
BLUE, 2002
Tapestries, Exhibition at Design Museum Danmark, Denmark
Weaving in optic fibres, light monitors
300 x 250 cm

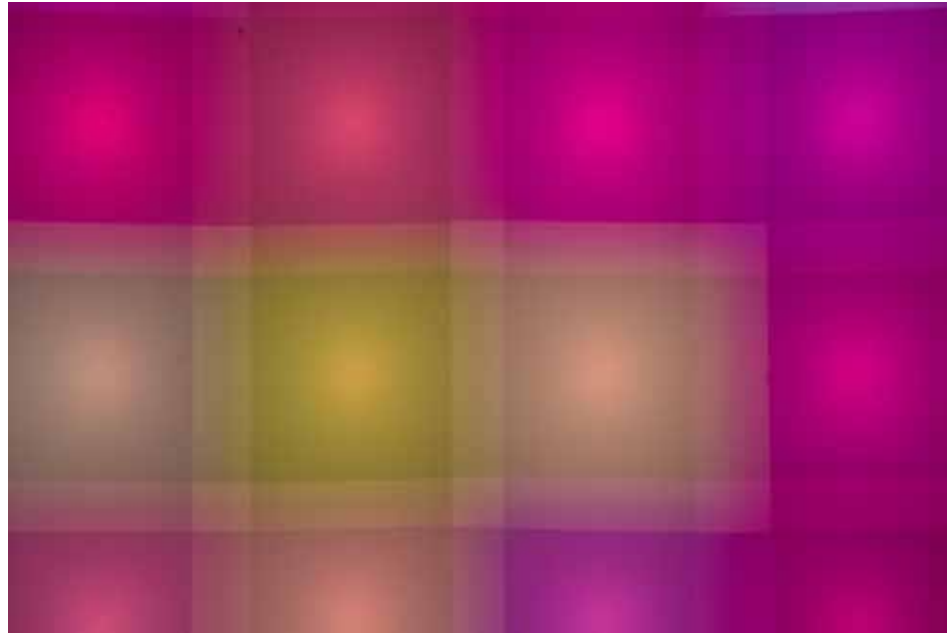




POLYTICS, 2003
 The Danish Parliament / Public commission, Denmark
 Neon wallpaper
 720 x 250 cm

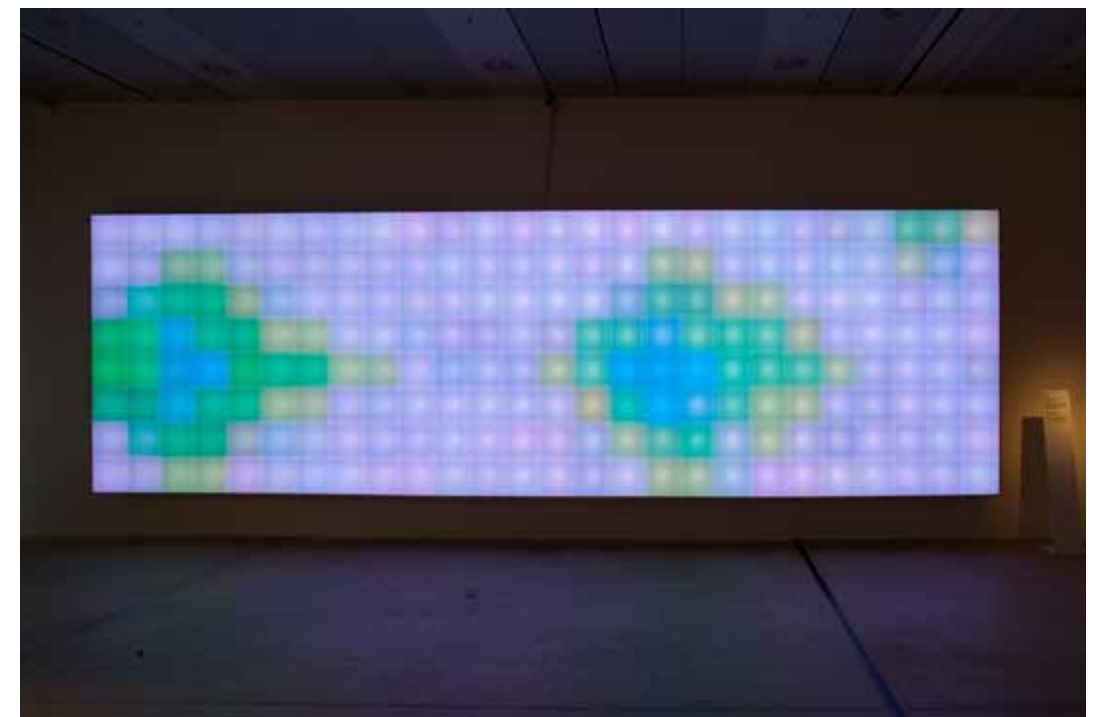
The Central Art Committee of the Danish Parliament requested for a decoration giving light and colour to one of the long and dark corridors of the Parliament. The solution draws its inspiration from a frieze painted by Rasmus Larsen in the years 1918-21, which runs as a decorative element through the central lobby of the Parliament. Polytics consists of neon tubes in combinations of circles, floral patterns and lines. Every 45 seconds, the neon tubes change in different combinations of light and colours. Every second combination is predefined, every other one is random. There are more than 100.000 possible combinations.

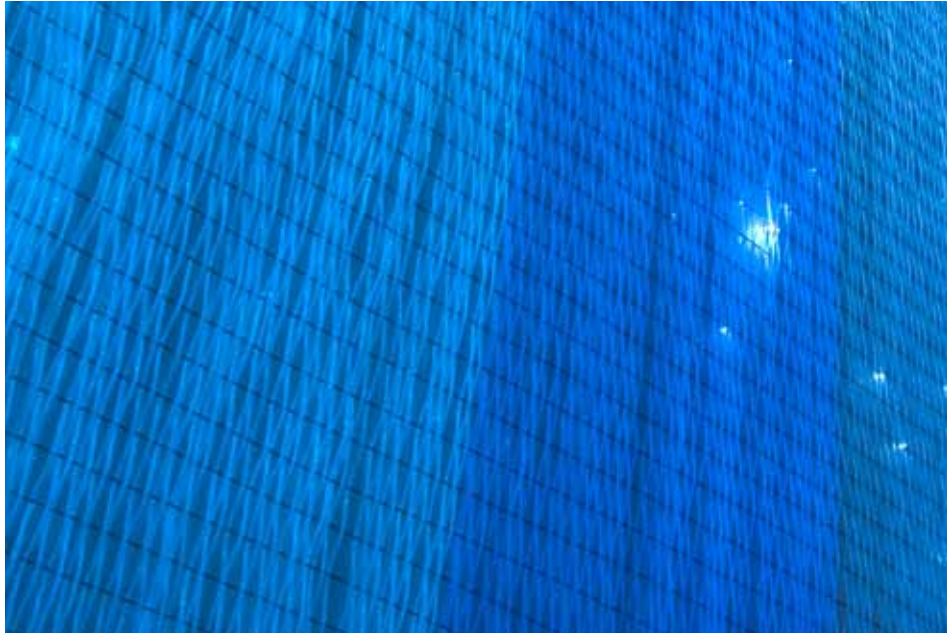




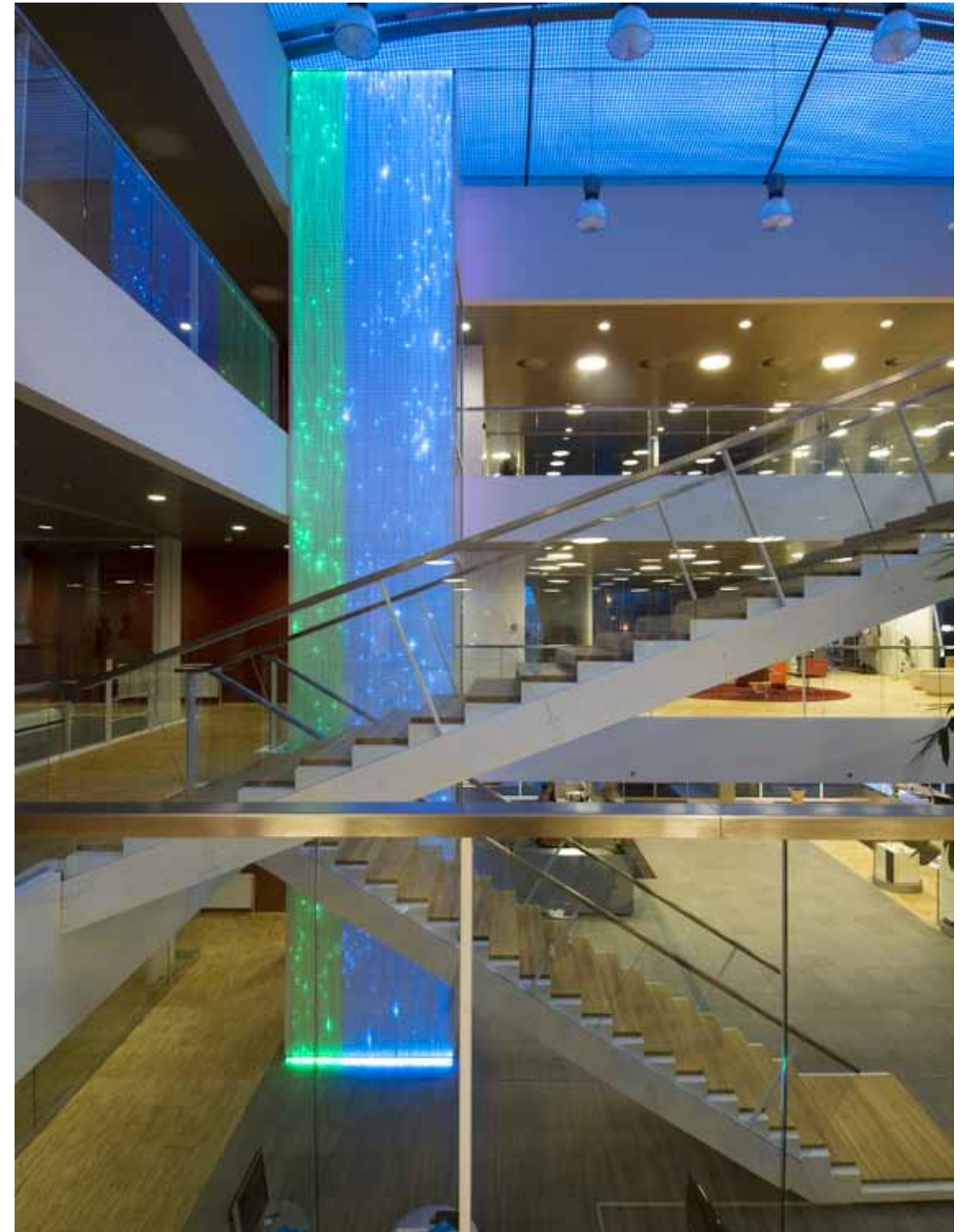
WALTZING, 2006
Honey I'm Home, Exhibition at Danish Design Centre, Denmark
Light tapestry, LED
680 x 210 x 20 cm

Waltzing is an interactive light tapestry combining old textile idioms with modern technology. Patterns and lights are forming an organic surface that constantly dissolves and creates new patterns. Each combination remains for four seconds then, over the next eight seconds, grows into a new form. Traditionally, a tapestry has both functional and decorative qualities. Waltzing' creates a dialogue with this tradition - in this case decoration is not monumental and static, but mobile and dynamic, interacting with modern technology.





LIGHTFALL, 2007
NRGI, Aarhus / Private commission, Denmark
Weavings in optic fibres, light monitors
1400 x 200 cm

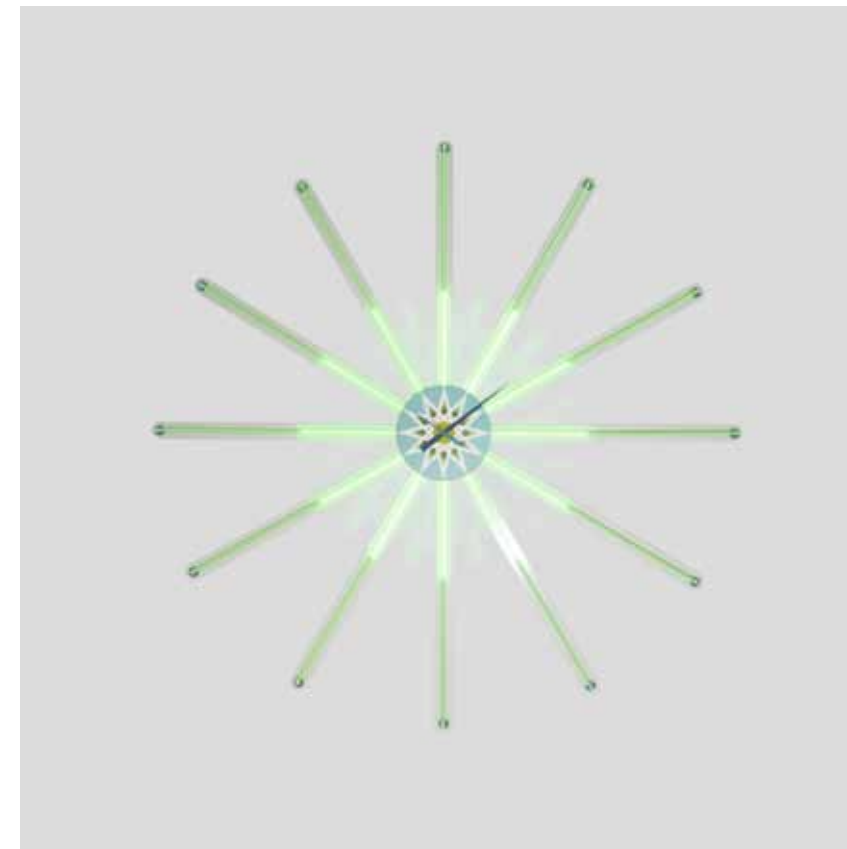




CIRCLE LIGHT, 2009
Il Saloni, Milan
LED, aluminium and acrylics
Diameter: 160 cm

TWINKLE, 2010
Neon, aluminium
Diameter: 300 cm

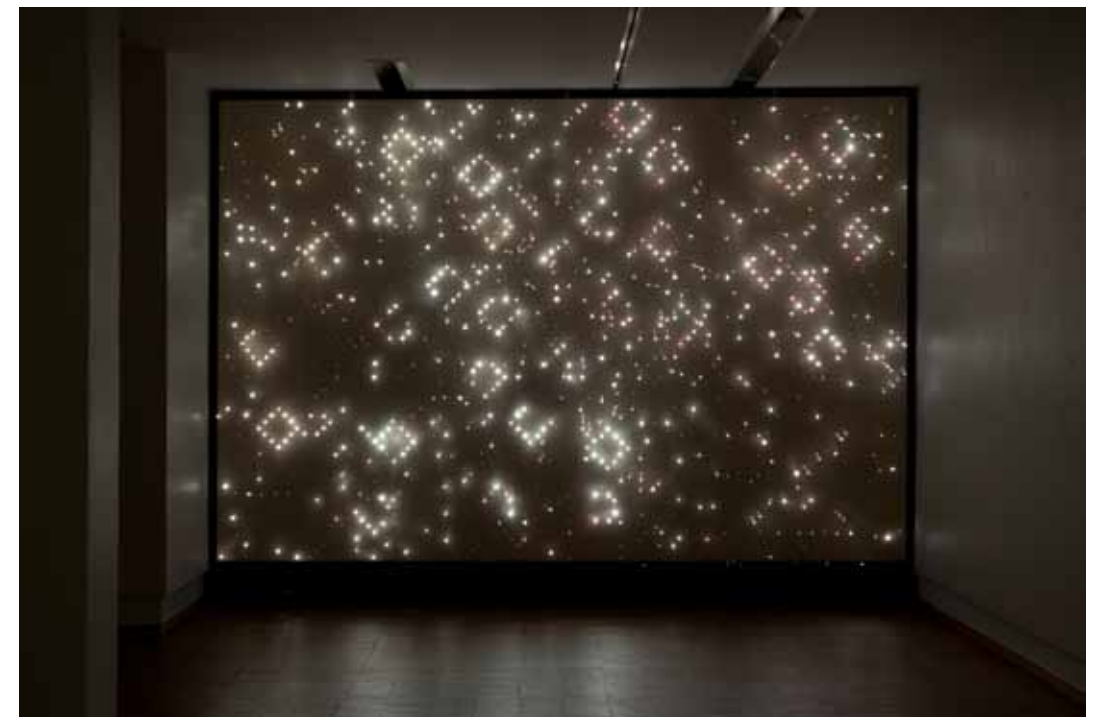
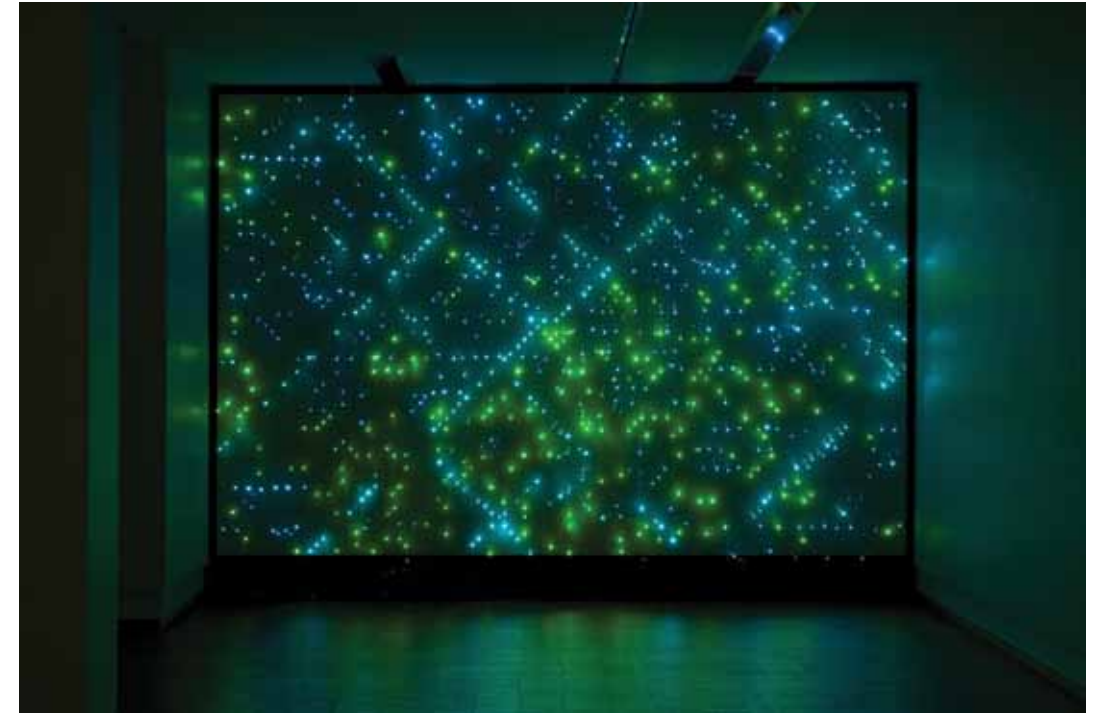
SWIRL, 2008
Il Saloni, Milan
Lamp element
Neon, aluminium
70 x 120 cm

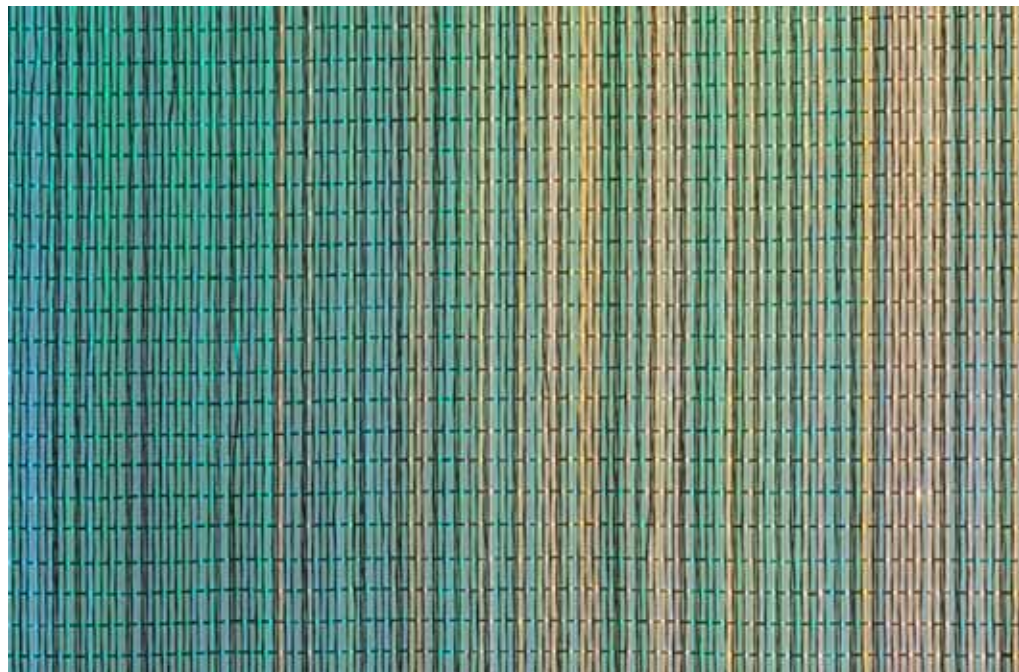




MORILD, 2010
Optic fibres and plywood, light monitors
370 x 210 x 30 cm

Morild is a delicate light tapestry made of optic fibres protruding a perforated wooden box. It is named after one of nature's spectacular light phenomena, phosphorescence, and the glowing algae visible beneath the surface of the sea. Krogh has reinterpreted this universal natural phenomenon, adapting it into an emotional tapestry of light. Constantly metamorphosing itself, Morild alludes to the endlessly changing patterns of nature, so chaotic and organized at the same time.

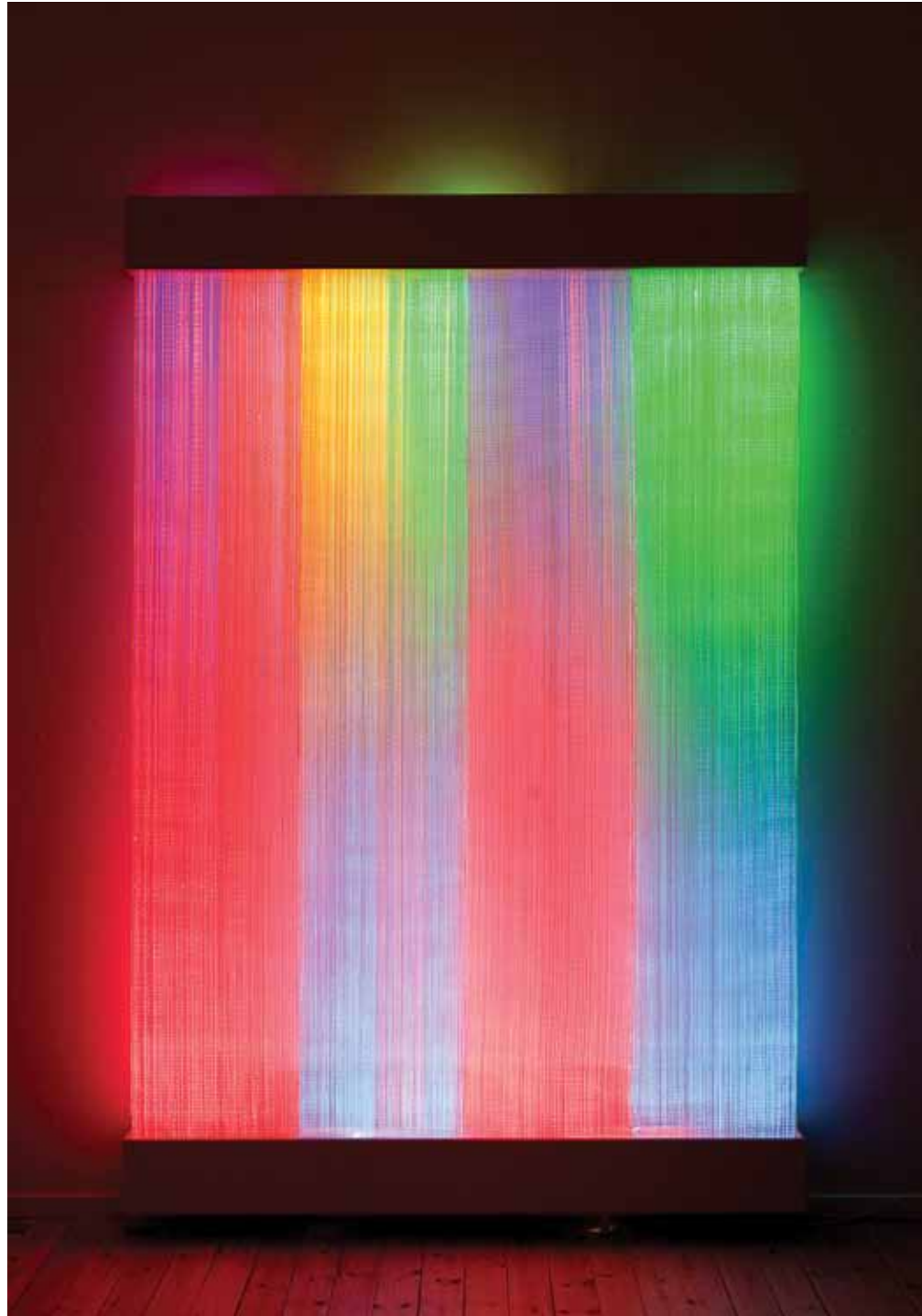




IKAT I-III, 2011
Weavings in optic fibres and paper yarn, light monitors
Dimensions:
150 x 250 cm
200 x 250 cm
250 x 250 cm

Ikata I-III is a trilogy of light tapestries, made of paper yarn and optic fibres. The tapestries allude to the ikat weaving technique, which is characterized by detailed colouring and immense precision, making it possible to create smooth transitions between the patterns. With IKAT I-III Astrid Krogh interprets the ikat tradition by using light as an imaginary dye creating its own patterns and shapes.





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