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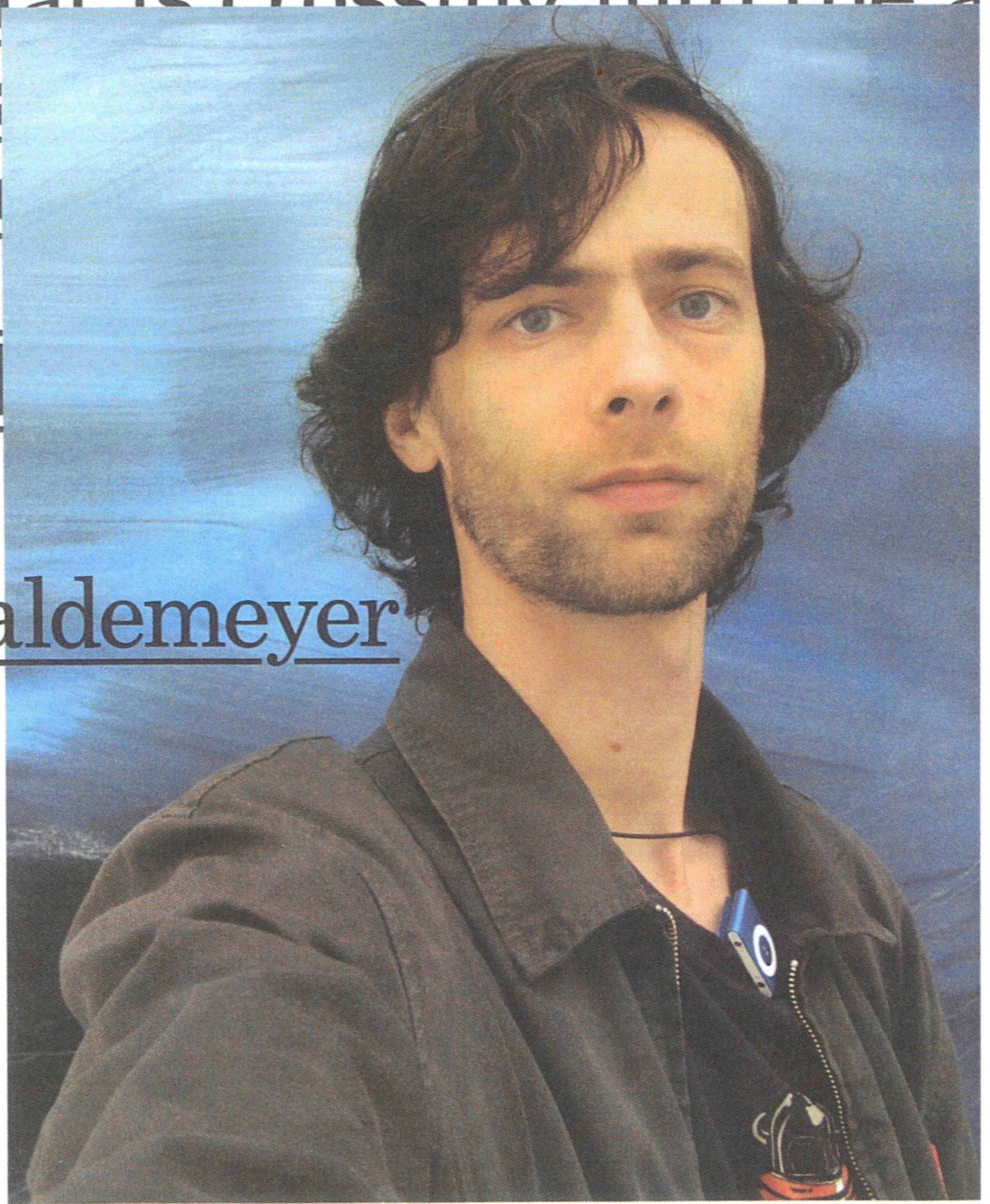
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ANTEDILUVIAN : PENNY DREADFUL :  
MUFFRAGETTES : CHINA'S MISTRESS ECONOMY :  
BEIRUT : BUENOS AIRES :  
SHANGHAI : HOLLYWOOD IN CAMBODIA :  
JEBEL AL-JAIS MOUNTAIN RESORT :  
VERTICAL CITY : PERFORMANCE DESIGN :  
THE RISE OF THE MACHINES :  
MORITZ WALDEMEYER :  
CELESTIAL AURA : LIGHT FUTURES :  
COMPUTER-GENERATED TREE :  
SUPER SYNTHETICS :  
A FISTFUL OF QUARTERS : \$100 LAPTOP :  
LAKE OF STARS : SCATTER URN :  
ROLODEX TEENS : POSTCODE TRENDS :  
TEA GANGS :



# Moritz Waldemeyer's astonishing work with Chalayan, Ron Arad and Fredrikson Stallard high-tech design that is crossing into the art world pushing the boundaries. Among his extraordinary projects are an interactive Corian kitchen designed by Zaha Hadid, an undulating Swarovski crystal chandelier by Yves Béhar and a video dress designed by Hussein Chalayan.

## Moritz Waldemeyer



Moritz Waldemeyer's astonishing work with star designers such as Zaha Hadid, Hussein Chalayan, Ron Arad and Fredrikson Stallard heralds a new era of high-tech design that is crossing into the art world. Waldemeyer thrives on pushing the boundaries of what both technology and design can achieve. Among his extraordinary projects are an interactive Corian kitchen designed by Zaha Hadid, an undulating Swarovski crystal chandelier by Yves Béhar and a video dress designed by Hussein Chalayan.

Everything started with an email to Ron Arad. Waldemeyer contacted Arad while he was working at Philips' London research campus, developing wearable technology and futuristic technologies. 'He invited me to the studio, and then we started doing some projects together. Straight after that, the Lolita chandelier came about.' Lolita is a crystal chandelier embedded with LED lights that can display text messages on the crystals, created for Swarovski. The chandelier arguably began the tech-design trend that is now attracting such attention and admiration from the design fraternity, as well as launching Waldemeyer's singular talent.

### Moving Experiences

Many of Waldemeyer's design/technology collaborations are pieces that are at their most stunning when they are in motion. Waldemeyer believes this is central to engaging people with design. 'People don't just want to see a beautiful object any more, they want to play with it and see what it does. That way people get more involved with it, and I imagine they will remember it more if they can have some fun with it.' He also believes that design for its own sake is no longer enough. Indeed, design commentators too are noting a growing interest

in pieces that are not merely visual but that also create an emotional engagement. 'People have tried to reinvent chairs hundreds of times, and now we have all these different designs of chairs, so what are we going to do, go and produce just another chair? No, because we've seen it so many times before. I would rather look at something new – a chair where the technology is the innovation, rather than the form.'

### Celestial Aura

Waldemeyer's latest project, a chair, is just that. Created for the launch of gallerist Libby Sellers' new space during London Design Week, the chair evokes the idea of a royal or celestial throne, by creating an aura of light around the sitter according to what colour they are wearing. 'There are sensors built into the backrest which pick up the colour of what you wear and project it onto the wall behind. If you are wearing blue, the light behind you will be blue,' says Waldemeyer. 'It looks like a relatively simple chair, but it's got that innovation which is not just the shape, so it's more about what it does than how it looks.'



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Waldemeyer concedes that much of the work he has done in the past has been about making a designer's vision a reality, rather than developing his own ideas. He hopes that in the future he will be able to work on more of his own projects, such as the light chair or earlier projects such as an electronic roulette table made from Corian. However, his big-name client roster, which includes Swarovski, DuPont and Flos doesn't leave a lot of free time.

## Fashion in Motion

One of Waldemeyer's newest projects builds on one of his most astounding creations: the video dress from Hussein Chalayan's autumn/winter 2007/2008 collection. The fabric of the video dress is embedded with 15,000 LEDs which work like a television screen, depicting a time-lapse image of a rose opening and closing. Waldemeyer promises that the new collection of Chalayan dresses he is working on for spring/summer 2008 will be even more technically challenging than the video dress, with new and different effects, although the exact details are being kept under wraps.

'The video dress project was really interesting to work on, to collaborate with people from lots of different fields, especially from the fashion world. The projects are very stressful, but the whole environment is fantastic,' says Waldemeyer. Unsurprisingly, he believes strongly in the fusion between design and other disciplines, seeing the future of design in collaborations between innovative designers and varied, seemingly unrelated disciplines such as medicine or automobiles. 'I think in the future designers will be using topics or areas outside design and bringing them into their own work and their own audience. I think that in the future, design will be less about the pure form.'

## Design as Art

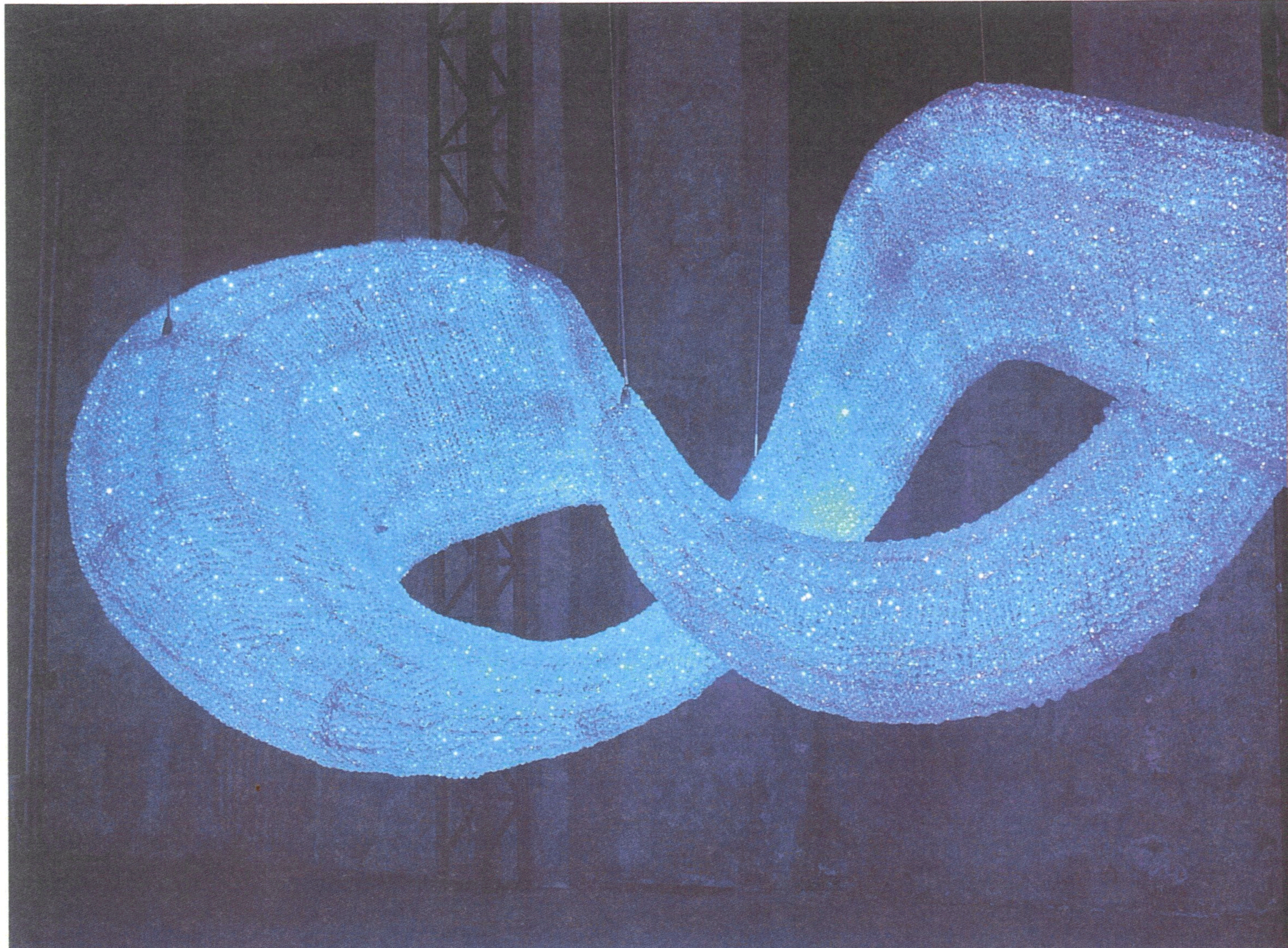
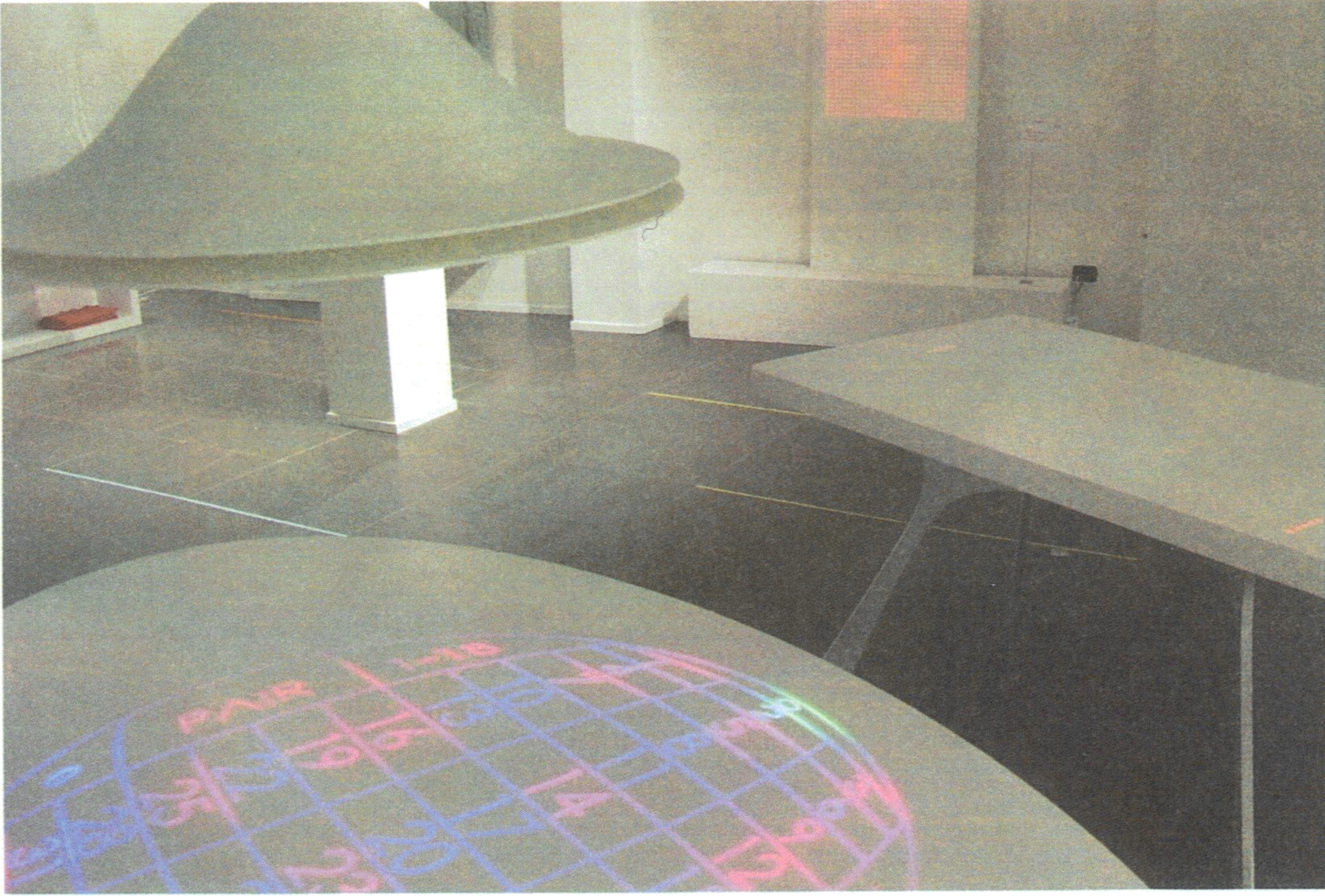
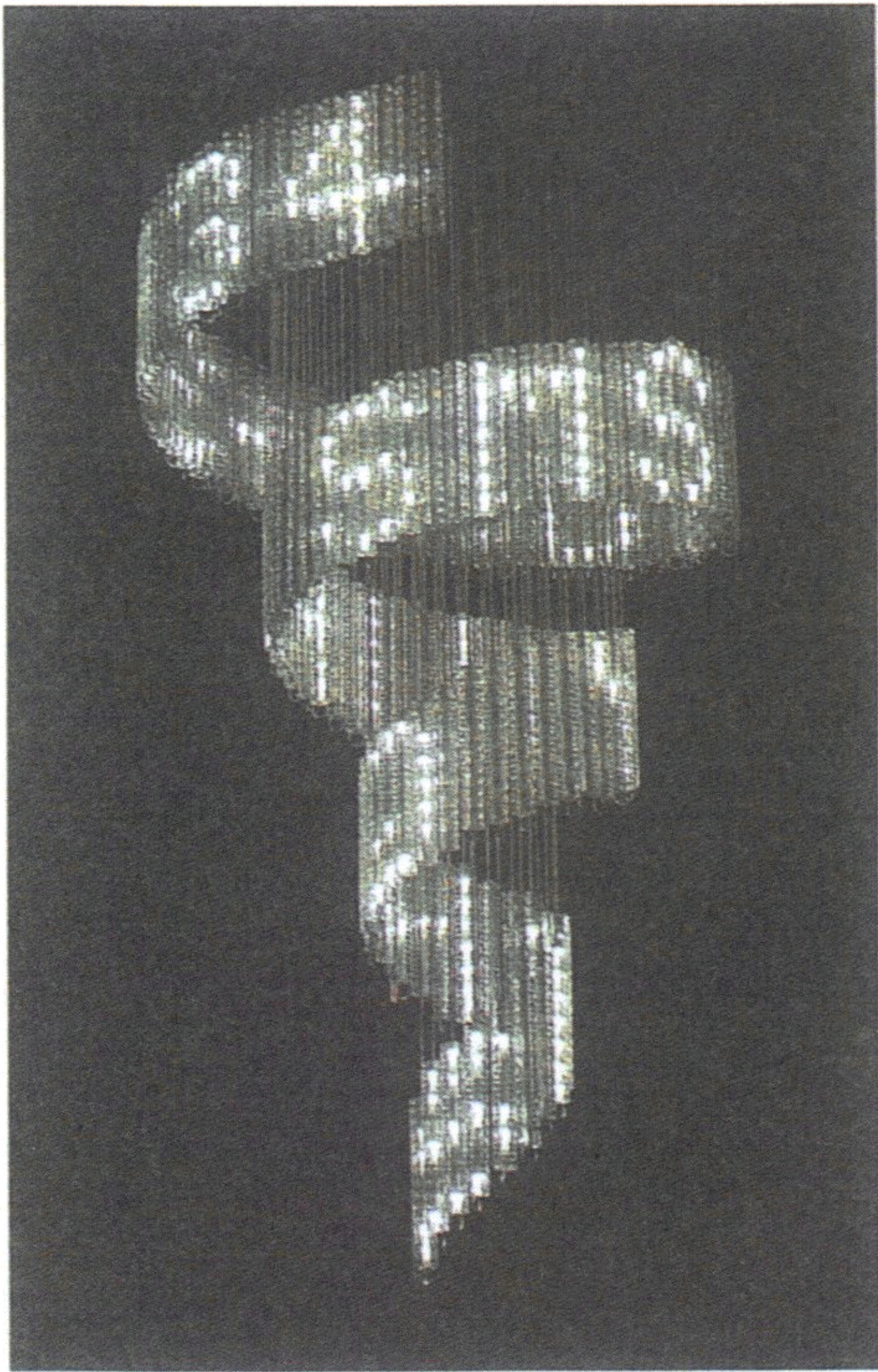
As the million-pound auctions of work by Marc Newson and Zaha Hadid demonstrate, design is carving a new niche in the art world. Waldemeyer believes that these innovations are filling a void, citing his work with designers such as Yves Béhar and Fredrikson Stallard for Swarovski as part of this new movement. 'I don't find the modern art scene very inspiring. You go and see a big exhibition and you never really get to see anything new. People want something special – they don't just want a canvas that's splashed with colour and doesn't mean anything. They'd rather go and buy a crazy-looking chair from Ron Arad that is incredibly well-executed and looks fantastic, and has a meaning.'

## Building the Impossible

The trail blazed by Waldemeyer and his collaborators means that there are now very few limits to designers' dreams, signalling the most exciting and inspiring period in design for decades. 'The lack of limits or boundaries is what makes my projects so exciting,' says Waldemeyer. 'I've been really lucky that, with most of the projects I've worked on, there have been few limits, even financially, to what we could do. So you get a free hand in creating something amazing, which is the ultimate project.'

*by Gwyneth Holland*







TOP LEFT TO RIGHT :

'LOLITA' CHANDELIER BY RON ARAD FOR SWAROVSKI CRYSTAL PALACE, 2004

ELECTRIC KID EXHIBITION AT RABIH HAGE GALLERY, 2006

BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT :

'VOYAGE' CHANDELIER BY YVES BÉHAR FOR SWAROVSKI CRYSTAL PALACE, 2005

LIGHT SENSITIVE CHAIR FOR LIBBY SELLERS, 2007

HUSSEIN CHALAYAN A/W 07/08

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