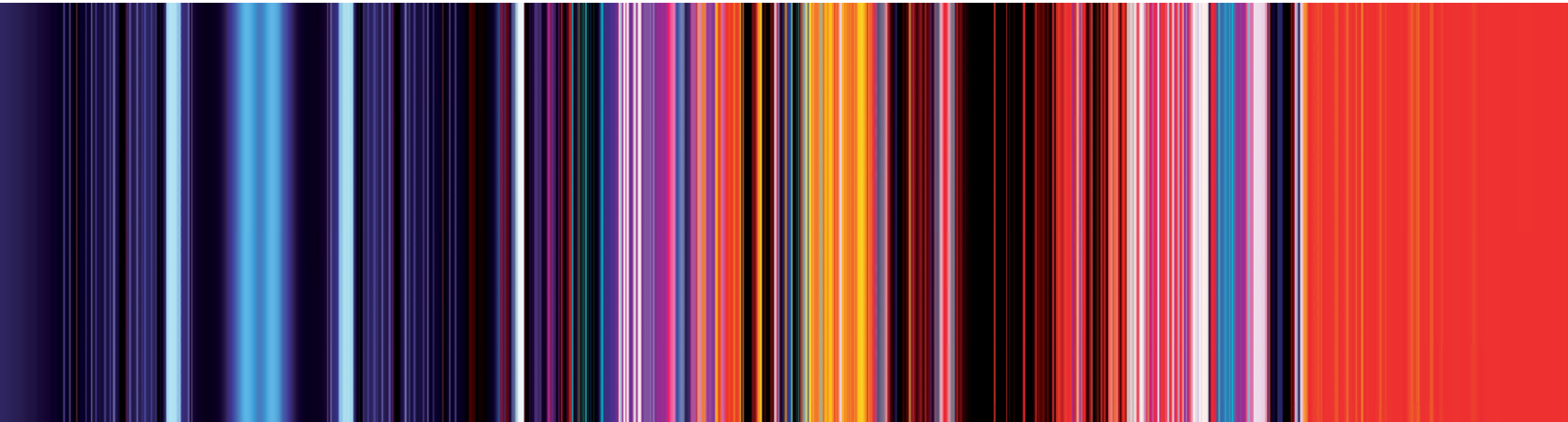


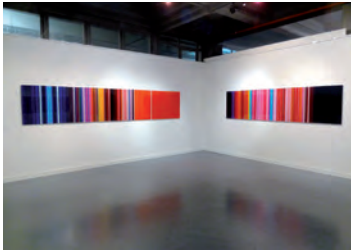
PAUL SNELL / DECODING NEW YORK



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JUNE 26 - JULY 20 / 2013



CATALOGUE ESSAY BY:
Eric Hiller - Lower Mt. Hicks May 2013

I have sought to throw off the shackles of conventional representation. - Paul Snell

Paul Snell's art works glow tingle and excite. They come to us straight from the shop, straight out of the box, bright and shiny and new.

At the end of the 19th century artists began to react against merely mirroring reality – they began to personalize their experience of it. Artists rejected the idea of 'copying nature, often opting for greater spontaneity, bursts of brilliant colour, simplified forms and even new and shocking subject matter. Much was required of the audience.

Ashile Gorky suggested that 'art must force the viewer to contribute something of himself in order that he extract as much as possible out of the particular work'. Peter Morrin advocated that 'the transformation was from art as a mode of description to art as a mode of experience.'

An artist hopes that his or her work communicates directly with the person viewing it - either aesthetically or in a narrative sense. The 'informed' viewer does not spend a whole lot of time in galleries and museums reading labels and statements for greater edification. They rely on their own understanding.

Visual art is a language often more powerful than the language of words but convention dictates that not only is it mandatory to have words printed in the catalogue but the person opening the exhibition speak about the artist and the work – perhaps giving a translation of the work to the assembled throng. Then follow the critics and

reviewers who add their interpretation.

The timid amongst us will check these various interpretations to see whether we 'got it right'.

For the artist, of major importance is the conception of the work and the final resolution of the art piece. The artist interprets or distils the essence of his or her chosen subject in a most personal way (unless a forger or copier).

Look at the work and trust your intuition.

I am inviting the viewer into the space for a contemplative experience with the work. - Paul Snell

Paul Snell is a Tasmanian artist of high repute whose early training was in photographic and digital media. He has been a highly respected teacher over many years and has a thorough knowledge of art history which has always been reflected in his artistic practice.

This current show reflects a recent fascination with New York.

His plan was to randomly select locations within central New York and for them to be the focus of extensive exploration, documentation and data collection. The images he collected became the basis for this new and exciting collection of work - his aim being to show New York from an entirely new perspective.

Through the restructuring, removing and refining data I have attempted to throw off the shackles of conventional representation of the city. The streets of New York have been reduced to data. - Paul Snell



NY # 40.78N_73.96W (in 2 parts) - 2013
C-Type Print face-mounted 4.5mm Plexiglas, 80 x 500 cm

When viewing Snell's work one can see links with post-painterly abstraction of the early 1950s or 60s and 'Colour field' painters such as Kenneth Noland who with fellow artists set out to produce surfaces that were both impersonal and almost wholly decorative, as a reaction against the highly charged canvasses of expressionist or abstract expressionist artists of that time. The works were self-referential concentrating wholly on the colour relationships.

Nolan did a series of works based on the simplest patterns encompassing the target, chevron and stripe, seen as 'racks of colour' and nothing more. He wanted to have colour as the origin of his painting. Robert Hughes described Noland's works as 'blooming and pulsating with light; they offer a pure uncluttered hedonism to the eye.'

But that was all they did offer.

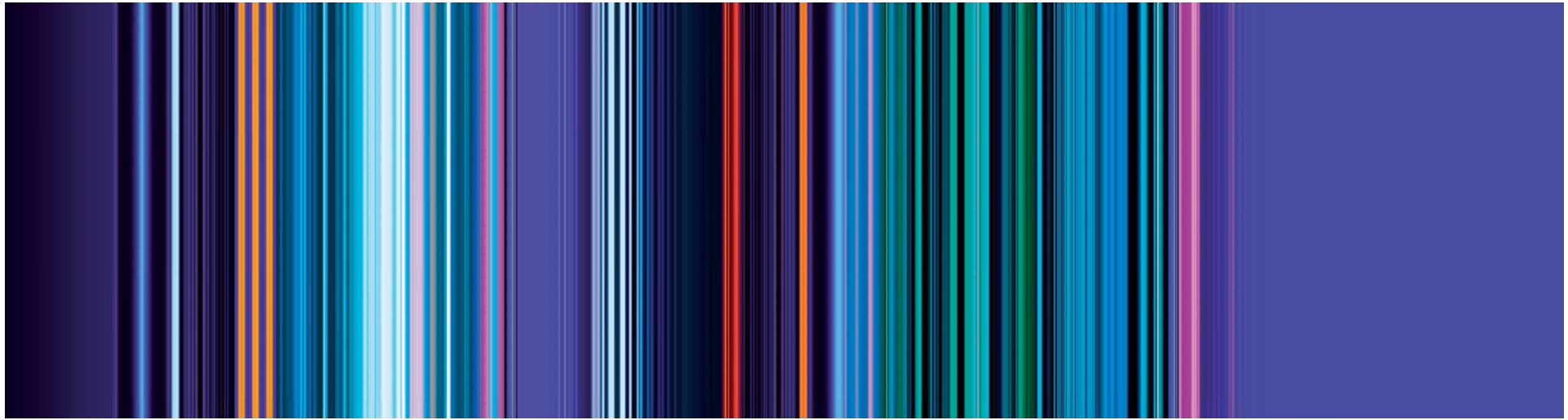
Paul Snell's works are not only delight the eye but add layers of meaning, distillations of time and place through a type of 'osmosis' because of their more complex origins and intentions. These works are a record of a visit and reflect an intricate and convoluted system of relationships between the artist and the city and between the images concocted by the artist for the viewer. Even though these

images are located in the "real" world" – each a specific place, are they photographs in the formal sense? Do they contain traces of reality? Are there vestiges of time passing or people going about their business, of life, death, muggings, tedium, excess, misery, power, sadness and triumph? Or are they just aesthetically satisfying works of art? You, the viewer, are the arbiter.

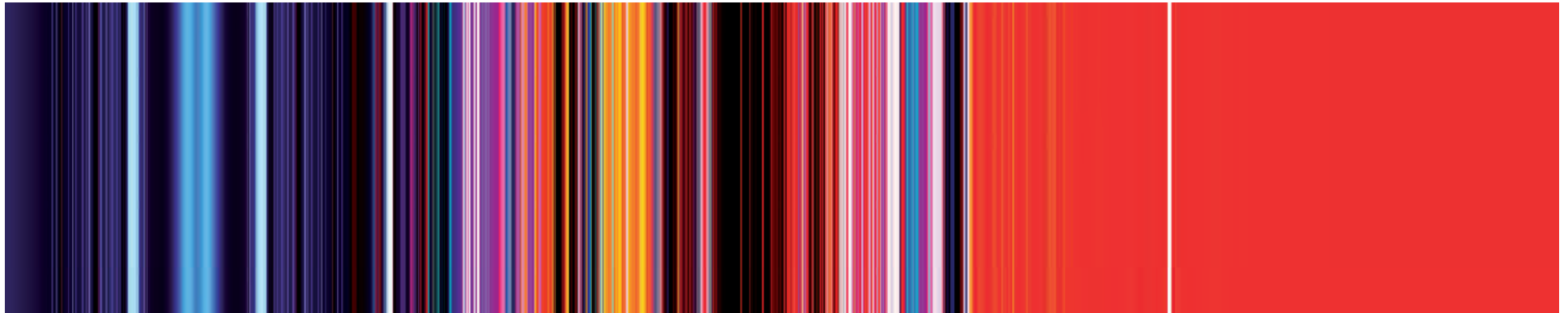
Snell has disassembled and reconfigured the real images into coloured bands thus immersing the viewer in the excitement of the colour, rhythm and space of the pulsating city which not only suggest many possible connections to modernist painting and visionary cinema but allows the gallery goer to relate it to their own experience and to use their imagination.

The works have a luminosity that is not only seductive in formal sense but incorporates, through reflection, the context of the space in which the work is viewed, thus creating a link between the subject, the viewer, the past and the present moment.

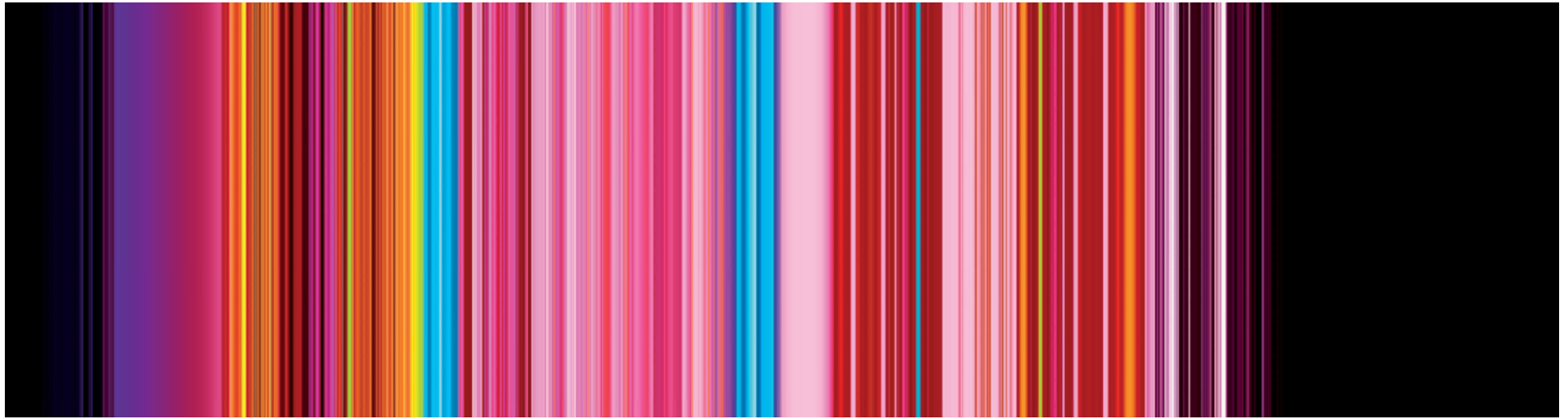
These pieces are not representations of certain realities; they are their own reality. - Paul Snell



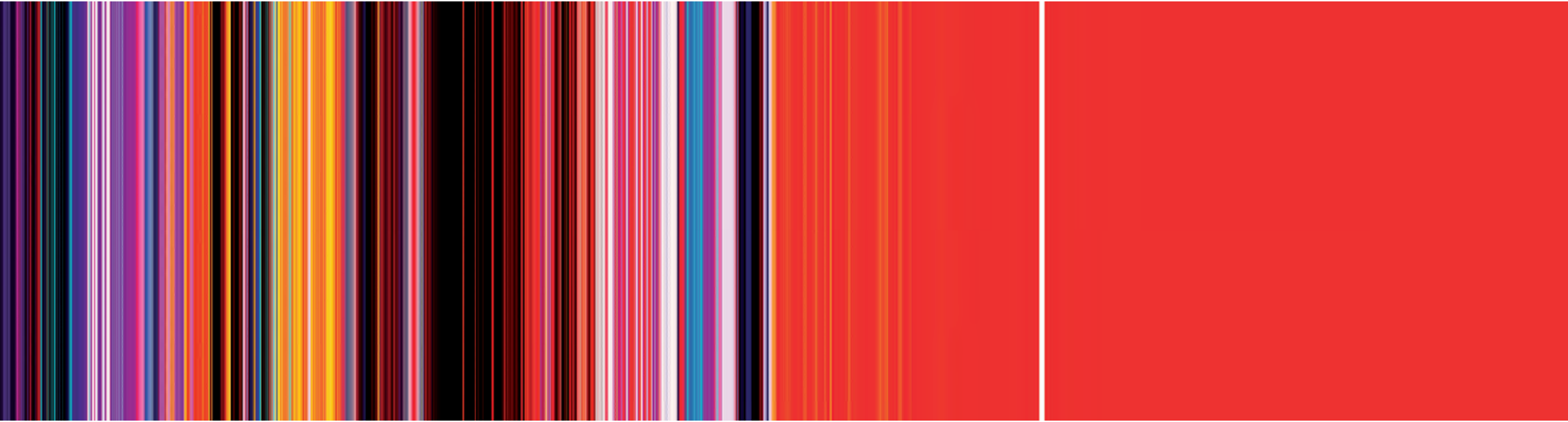
NY # 40.74N_74.00W - 2013
C-Type Print face-mounted 4.5mm Plexiglas
80 x 300 cm



NY # 40.70N_73.98W (in 2 parts) - 2013
C-Type Print face-mounted 4.5mm Plexiglas
80 x 400 cm



NY # 40.75N_73.98W - 2013
C-Type Print face-mounted 4.5mm Plexiglas
80 x 300 cm



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