Fondation Louis Vuitton Unveils Daniel Buren’s ‘Observatory of Light’

The Fondation Louis Vuitton has revealed French artist Daniel Buren’s site-specific intervention on its Frank Gehry-designed headquarters in Paris. Titled “The Observatory of Light,” the work is installed across the building’s 12 glass “sails,” formed of 3,600 pieces of glass, which Buren has covered with colored filters in 13 different hues punctuated by alternating white and blank stripes.

“The transparency and quality of a color projected by means of a colored filter, as I see it, make it much more alive than painted color covering a surface,” said Buren. According to the Fondation Louis Vuitton, the colors selected for the filters make colored forms appear and disappear, ever-changing with the time of day and the season.

“There is a quantity of mirror effects here at the Fondation that actually don’t come from mirrors but from the windows,” Buren explained. “Almost everywhere something is reflected (…) through the coloring of the sails, all those reflections will become more and more present and will awake those sleeping mirrors that are everywhere.”

Bernard Arnault, President of the Fondation Louis Vuitton, said: “Daniel Buren has designed a grandiose project, pertinent and enchanting, the result of a real dialogue with Frank Gehry and his building. His work responds magnificently to the architecture, in line with his approach, going back to the 1970s, that sees a coming together of colors, transparency, and light.”