

## Colombia in the International Year of Light



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### How we see the world?

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In 1875 the German physician and physicist Hermann von Helmholtz said with humor that: "Now, it is not too much to say that if an optician wanted to sell me an instrument (the eye) which had all these defects, I should think myself quite justified in blaming his carelessness in the strongest terms and giving him back his instrument.". Despite this rebuke from 130 year ago, we can say that the human eye is a paradigmatic example of a relatively simple optical instrument providing exceptional functionality. But even with the simplicity of ocular optics, there was a long process in reaching the nearly complete understanding we have today. Then, let's go to explore some of the characteristics of our eyes which allow us to contemplate the wonderful world around us.

¿Cómo vemos el mundo?

En 1875, el mdico y fsico alemn Hermann von Helmholtz expresaba con algo de humor que "no exagero en decir que si un optico trata de venderme un instrumento (el ojo) que tenga todos esos defectos, estaria bastante justificado reclamarle en los trminos ms enrgicos su falta de cuidado y regresarme su instrumento". A pesar de esta reprimenda proferida hace ya 130 aos, hoy podemos decir que el ojo es un ejemplo paradigmtico de un instrumento fsico relativamente simple pero maravilloso, que provee una excepcional funcionalidad. Intentaremos explorar algunas de las caractersticas que poseen nuestros ojos que nos permiten contemplar el maravilloso mundo que nos rodea.

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