



That Which is There

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Painting & Drawing
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Introduction

Light exposes the contradiction between materiality and invisibility. I explore the impression of nuanced spaces and notions of illusion to suspend optical perceptions of spatial temporality. Using light to alter visual experience, regardless of how physical objects structure boundaries, I illuminate our consciousness of these subtle shifts and how they transform perception and thought. Light, shadow, reflections, and shifting impressions are tools that I use to generate a new sensation of space and time constructs — between the physical nature of the external world as we perceive it and our cognitive processes.

Light remains a principal component of human experience; it changes how we see and what we see. The simultaneity of light, space, and moments construct experiential phenomena invariably. Even a slight shift in light generates an entirely new perception and builds upon previous experiences for a cohesive ontological awareness. Light remains a phenomenon that makes our experience of space and time possible, it is continuously connected to consciousness. Though scientifically we can begin to comprehend how the human eye reads and registers light through cones that classify colors and distances, an empirical analysis of feedback loops does not account for our true experience through vision.

Phenomenology of Vision & Thinking

The phenomenological methodology of philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty posits a distinctive structure for being and how we perceive light as well as space and time. Merleau-Ponty states, “The phenomenological world is not the bringing to explicit expression of a pre-existing being, but the laying down of being. Philosophy is not the reflection of a pre-existing truth, but, like art, the act of bringing truth into being” (Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, xx). To approach the concept of

light as perceivable object, first an overview of seeing is necessary. Merleau-Ponty often uses art, particularly painting, to expose experience as consciousness of something that incorporates various facets of perception. The act and sensation of seeing is always unique, it cannot be replicated or isolated (Bean, 84). Vision is a privileged mode of perception and reveals horizons or contexts for visualization. “The horizon, then, is what guarantees the identity of the object throughout the exploration; it is the correlative of the impending power which my gaze retains over the objects which it has just surveyed, and which it already has over the fresh details which is about the discovery” (Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 68). Art provides a sensual horizon to further consciousness of perception and how we perceive.

For Merleau-Ponty, living and action are integral to thinking and being. “But phenomenology is also a philosophy which puts essences back into existence, and does not expect to arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their ‘facility’” (Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, vii). Merleau-Ponty resists a specific methodology as a working premise; rather he embraces the transcendental practice that there cannot exist a set approach. There is a fluid interchange between lived experience, revealed truths, and thinking. Merleau-Ponty sees this flux as an essential aspect of phenomenology because within the framework of truth as that which becomes unconcealed, it is possible to question and allow the depths of the essence of truth to evolve rather than confine its ultimate goal to the binary realm of correct or incorrect.

The notion of binary (or yes/no, black/white) is interesting to consider. While at times these methodologies and labels are helpful tools, they should not encompass the framework for thinking and being. We should not strive to arrive at conclusions and uphold judgments (evaluations of objectives or truths) as the epitome of investigation; rather we must embrace the concept of truth as process and

acknowledge that the hiddenness of things is outside of our control. Though there is a temptation to rely on technology and empiricism as a means of revelation, the more we employ them as a basis for investigative methodologies the more we constrain possibilities for an open posture of questioning and being. This is why it is essential to uphold a valuable phenomenological mode of thinking and being. As Merleau-Ponty writes, “There is no break at all in this circuit; it is impossible to say that nature ends here and that man or expression starts here. It is, therefore mute Being which itself comes to show forth its own meaning” (Merleau-Ponty, *Eye and Mind*, 188). We must look more deeply at how things come about and what kinds of inquiries cause them to appear new. The action of creating connects thinking and truth, there we see depth without criticism and consider our perceptions.

Vision remains the link that mediates the body and surroundings and the role of light as an activating object in the dynamic, cohesive conformity of experience. According to Merleau-Ponty we “perceive in conformity with light” just as we perceive through language and verbal communication what it intended (Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 310). This artful communication with light as an intended object of consciousness is certainly a noteworthy aspect of the work that I present here in my exhibition and hope to continue to explore. When considering Merleau-Ponty’s thoughts on artists and paintings, it may be safe to assume that he would have embraced this mode of art-making and readily transitioned to including it in his phenomenological investigations. It is also important to note that perception should directly involve the body.

Phenomenology of Light

Philosopher Nolen Gertz discusses light within the phenomenological framework to investigate a unified approach to the topic in his article, “On the Possibility of a Phenomenology of Light.” Gertz analyses the work of three philosophers and their pointed interests concerning light within the context of

their writings — Husserl, Heidegger, and Levinas. Gertz observes that because each of them became preoccupied with light, it is necessary to regard their approaches to synthesize a phenomenological attitude toward light (Gertz, 41). Gertz states, “...in each case we shall be forced to follow the account beyond its origin, and in the end I shall argue that a difficult return to light is necessary” (Gertz, 41). Light is a phenomenon that makes our experience of space and time possible and exposes “things” to us; the origin of light remains a central interest.

There is a constant interchange between lived experiences, revealed truths, and thinking that light reveals. Gertz discusses the way that philosophers Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Emmanuel Levinas approach these ideas and each takes a slightly different posture on light (Gertz, 54). Each thinker began their contemplation of light with light, but then their discussion evolved away from “light itself” (Gertz, 54). Gertz states,

“To avoid these shifts, to bring the interest back to light itself, we must then focus our attention once again on whatever it is that originally draws our attention to light and linger there; otherwise we will again be continually making the mistake of turning light into a tool for comprehension rather than into the end of contemplation that it deserves” (Gertz, 55).

Light must be inextricably linked to our perception of time and space; it provides a connection between the physicality of the external world as we perceive it and our cognitive processes. We must continually seek out the “origin of light” and the way people initially experienced it as primordial beings to build upon this thinking (Gertz, 56). Evidence of other dimensions is readily available, though not fully integrated into our visual consciousness, that visualizes and responds to the corporeal world. Light behaves differently in endless contexts and moments — the experiential qualities of light weave together truths.

Gertz arrives at some interesting conclusions that seem to align with those of Merleau-Ponty. Though Merleau-Ponty does not officially suggest a “phenomenology of light” and dedicate an entire chapter or essay to this concept, he discusses light regularly. In many cases he emphasizes the nature of light as object and resolves that a focus on light as thing reveals a great deal about perception. An example of his phenomenology of light includes the following:

“Light's transcendence is not delegated to a reading mind which deciphers the impacts of the light-thing upon the brain and which could do this quite as well if it had never lived in a body. No more is it a question of speaking of space and light; the question is to make space and light, which are *there*, speak to us. There is no end to this question, since the vision to which it addresses itself is itself a question. The inquiries we believed closed have been reopened” (Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, 178).

The primacy of light is essential to the primacy of perception and this quote directly inspired the title of my exhibition, *That Which Is There*. This decisive aspect of light consideration is one that I seek to enframe in my practice. For these particular projects in my thesis exhibition, I am using hundreds of dichromatic mirrors as an element or tool to enframe light.

Contemporary Context

Dark matter and dark energy cannot be seen directly, thus astronomers and cosmologists develop indirect ways to see them. How can artists develop new ways of seeing? How we perceive was a central inquiry in the 1960s and '70s for a visual art movement that began among a group of young artists in southern California. These artists rejected the notion of art as object and instead focused on generating ephemeral experiences within spaces using light as an essential component. Their artworks provided new experiences that isolated phenomena in a valuable and beautiful way. Art can isolate the sensational fluctuations between the invisible and simultaneous realities of space and time. Robert Irwin was one of the first artists to establish this kind of practice and initiate the movement. He stated, “The intention of a

phenomenal art is simply the gift of seeing a little more today than you did yesterday” (Butterfield, 18). This attitude of framing the qualities of light, space, and perception in a meaningful way to encourage consciousness of these things set the tone for many artists to follow in this endeavor.

One prominent artist, James Turrell, a colleague and collaborator with Irwin in the beginning of the movement, has always held a deep fascination with perception and consciousness. How we see and how we can know remain an impetus for his work and this set the foundation years ago for how he approaches art making. Though the work of Robert Irwin should not be ignored, an analysis of Turrell’s work will provide a more direct link to a phenomenology of light. As art critic Jan Butterfield notes, “Irwin’s work examines perception. Turrell’s work also examines perception – but with a difference. Irwin begins with the material and dissolves it into light. Turrell takes the light itself and makes it material. ‘There is no object in my work.’ Turrell states firmly” (Butterfield, 68). Turrell’s posture toward light as preeminent substance, toward making his work simply *light*, instead of incorporating light or making his work *about* light, is significant.

Instead of looking at light, Turrell began his career believing that direct perception of light should engage and confront consciousness. “I’m interested in the revelation of light itself and that it has thingness. It alludes to what it is, which is not exactly illusion” (Turrell). One of many artworks that beautifully directs attention to the ‘thingness’ of light is Turrell’s earlier piece from 1993, *Gasworks* (Image 1). In the beginning of his career he used gas and flames to generate light subtleties and color shifts. *Gasworks* consists of a very large hollow steel sphere on a platform that has a chamber inside where one viewer at a time may lay on a table that slides into the sphere. Inside the chamber the viewer is isolated in an atmospheric, neutral white space without angles. The only subject matter within the sphere is light and Turrell postures it as a “pure entity” that surrounds the viewer with its “primal power” (Turrell). The

shifting light effects and colors of the gas tube lighting mitigate the entire concept of the space within the sphere. This work has value because it facilitates enquiries and alters perception; ultimately it reveals meaning, the 'unconcealment' of light.

More recent work that frames light as material effectively is Turrell's piece *Twilight Epiphany* built in 2012 (Images 2 & 3). In this work he focused on daylight in combination with LED lighting effects. Turrell designed a square white canopy structure with open sides and a square window in directly in the middle of the top. The canopy is on top of a stone pyramid with steps leading up to it, which lead to an internal space for viewers to sit and watch the light. *Twilight Epiphany* is one of many unique "Skyspaces" that Turrell has built over the years to combine the experience and beauty sunlight and the sky with the notion of constructed space and enframing light. He was commissioned to create a space at Rice University in Houston Texas and the amorphous qualities of light are exceptional. Before and after the sunset or sunrise the space typically fills up with over one hundred people to witness the transformation between light and dark in the sky. The sunlight and atmospheric effects of the sky as witnessed through the square opening in the canopy are not the colors one would witness merely looking up at the sky because of the LED light sequence projections from below. Framing the light in such a massive yet minimal way and within a grand space generates a new revelation of light materiality.

Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson also explores an interest in the de-materialization of art and participatory movement is very important for him. Eliasson requires awareness and interaction, he leads with light and incorporates embodiment in his installation pieces. One of his many installation pieces that exhibit these qualities well is his large sculpture *Your Double-Lighthouse Projection*, 2012 (Images 4 & 5) which he exhibited at the Tate Museum in London. The piece consists of two structures that have circular chambers of differing sizes situated within a dark, empty gallery. Light leaks out of the circular "rooms"

through their open ceilings and thin doorways causing an ethereal effect. As the viewer enters the chambers the smooth circular walls are projection panels that house computer-controlled colored lights that slowly shift and reflect across the panels. The dissolving light and sensations within the space shift the viewer's focus.

Eliasson encourages a posture of receptivity and active consciousness that acknowledges modes of appearance; this is emphasized in this title of the work to include 'Your,' suggesting the viewer should take ownership of their experience. These concepts connect back to Merleau-Ponty who wrote, "Space is not the setting (real or logical) in which things are arranged, but the means whereby the positing of things becomes possible. This means that instead of imagining it as a sort of ether in which all things float, or conceiving it abstractly as a characteristic that they have in common, we must think of it as the universal power enabling them to be connected" (Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 243-44). Through the creation of this new world, Eliasson emphasizes that "vision shows forth more than itself" and every time we perceive we are perceiving new worlds and not merely re-arranged objects within a setting (Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, 178). This focus on active reflection and active reception inspires Eliasson in his working methodology; he too speaks of his attitude toward light within these contexts,

"I was interested in light from the very beginning because it negotiates strongly with the spatial conditions, which means that it can be an independent object on the one hand, a projection such as a form on a wall, a light projection; yet it can also be the source of light in general, the lighting for the entire room. That means we have a situation where an object and a phenomenon exist simultaneously. There is also no separation between the transition from the phenomenon to the space. One could say that the space and the phenomenon become one." (Broeker, 12).

Though Turrell and Eliasson are not the only artists who have dedicated their artistic careers to this explorative focus, their work certainly stands out given their lengthy and relevant careers. Merleau-

Ponty suggests that we must submit to vision and also eliminate barriers that we may maintain between the senses (Bean, 84). Turrell and Eliasson also encourage this with their work; they generate spaces and phenomena that require an astute awareness of sensations and responses within these new contexts. The synesthetic nature of light as it illuminates experience and the active shifts that alter our cognitive perception remain a central interest as they transmit the notion of perception as a continual creation of new worlds.

Methodology

I research and experiment with perception, specifically within the philosophical framework of Phenomenology. Evidence of other dimensions is readily available, though not fully integrated into our consciousness that visualizes and responds to the corporeal world and the visible spectrum of light. The dynamic shifts that alter our cognitive perception remain the overall impulse for my projects. Manipulating light and shadows through original 3D printed structures, a variety of glass lenses, and constructive elements such as wood, I frame immaterial phenomena and encourage the sensation of illusory dimensions. The following series, “Light Fields: Projective Analysis” included in my exhibition demonstrate some of these strategies.



Light Fields: Projective Analysis n.7, 2016

Graph paper, acrylic paint, gouache, artist tape, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors on wood

While I am dedicated to drawings on paper in my practice, I chose to recontextualize some of my serial pencil and graph paper productions with an added materiality and layered complexity for my thesis presentation. I included four pieces on wood panel to expand some of the philosophical concepts that I integrate in my production. The piece pictured above includes collaged drawings and 3D printed elements to house dichromatic mirrors. I layered pencil drawings and white acrylic paint to allude to ideas of drafting and preparation, while continuing to paint over collaged layers to conceal colors and marks. My intention with this layering process was a consideration of thinking: we may arrive at a conclusion on what we believe is truth, yet with time and experience these ideas devolve or fade and new ideas emerge.



Light Fields: Projective Analysis n.2, 2016
Graph paper, acrylic paint, gouache, polylactic acid, various glass lenses on wood

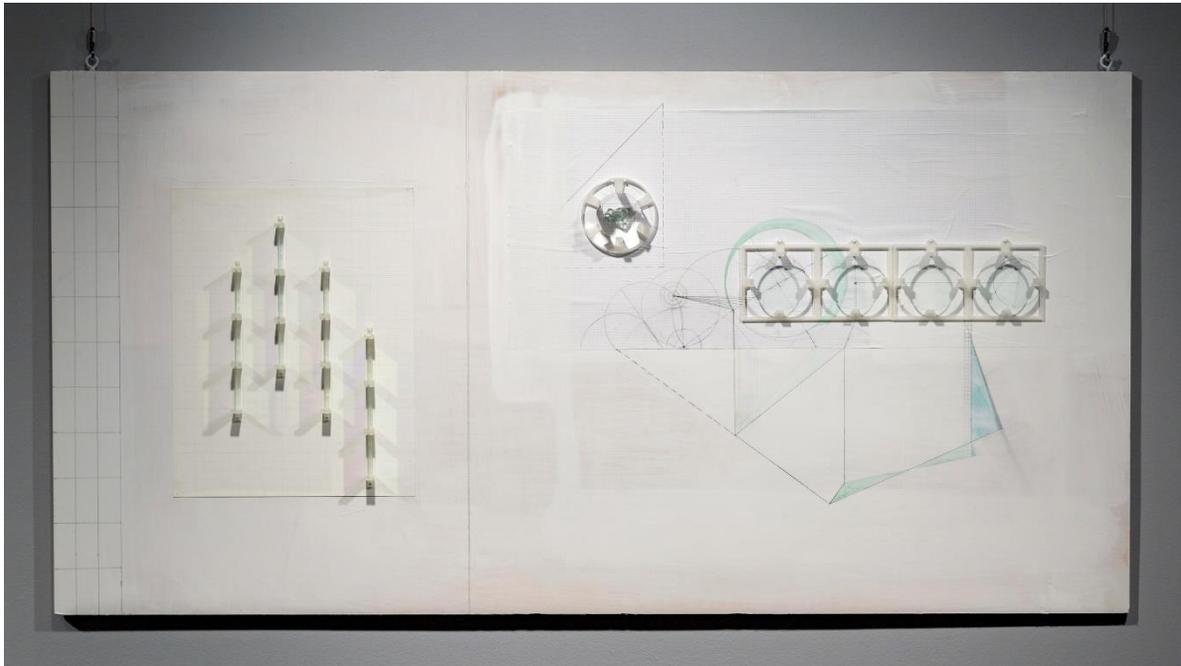
Along with the dichromatic mirrored rectangular lenses, I have many traditional optical lenses in my pieces. These lenses all have varying properties and colors that interact with my compositions in different ways. The lens does not always function in a transformative manner. While some lenses certainly distort or interact with the drawing below to provide an element of distortion, other lenses are not as satisfactory when the viewer looks through them. This is another way that I speak to the qualities of vision. We are habituated to reference lenses as transformative or revealing something hidden or out of view, yet some of my lenses may only reveal a straight, undistorted line traversing the plane underneath. Furthermore, the lenses are also formal elements and their circular forms, along with the shadows, cast new layers of marks on the surface. I collage and draw in response to these light elements and incorporate light in my drafting process. The cast light elements are objective marks within the composition.



Light Fields: Projective Analysis n.3, 2016
Graph paper, acrylic paint, gouache, polylactic acid, various glass lenses on wood

All of the lenses that I utilize in my compositions are housed in units that I design in CAD modelling software and 3D print in polylactic acid (PLA). This is an important aspect of my process because I am able to customize devices to serve as functional units as well as design components. 3D printing is an expanding field with a number of material applications and functions in a variety of industries. In my artistic practice I use it as a principal tool to experiment with custom applications for found objects, typically lenses, which I am most interested in exploring. With CAD modelling platforms such as Rhino 5, I employ a high degree of precision to draft the functional forms that I seek to integrate into my projects. Creating models in CAD platforms is highly fascinating to me as I conceptualize forms in virtual Cartesian space in response to drawings and drafts that I generate with traditional pencil and graph paper. The reciprocal nature of drawing and drafting in physical reality and subsequently virtually is a process I will continue to explore as

I layer these approaches in my future drawing practices. The juxtaposition of drafting and diagrams in the traditional sense, along with drafted forms of physical output using very recent technologies, adds metaphorical and textural layer to my compositions.



Light Fields: Projective Analysis n.3, 2016
Graph paper, acrylic paint, gouache, polylactic acid, various glass lenses on wood

In his excellent book, *The Practice of Light*, Sean Cubitt dedicates a considerable amount of discussion to lines and diagrams as elemental to a history of the language of light and its role in media throughout time. Cubitt builds from a dialogue about drawn and printed lines to vectors generated computationally in CAD programs in the context of “drawing as a mode of ordering” (Cubitt, 45). “So a mark instructed to travel at a fixed distance from a point of origin will describe a circle, but give a more complex instruction will describe a five-pointed star or an ellipse. Some of the more common of these vectors are treated as “primitive objects,” even though they may be mathematically complex” (Cubitt, 76). This description of mathematically defined lines digitally delineating 2D as well as 3D objects with anchor points and tangential segments leads to a discussion of the symbolic logic and weight associated with vectors. Vectors

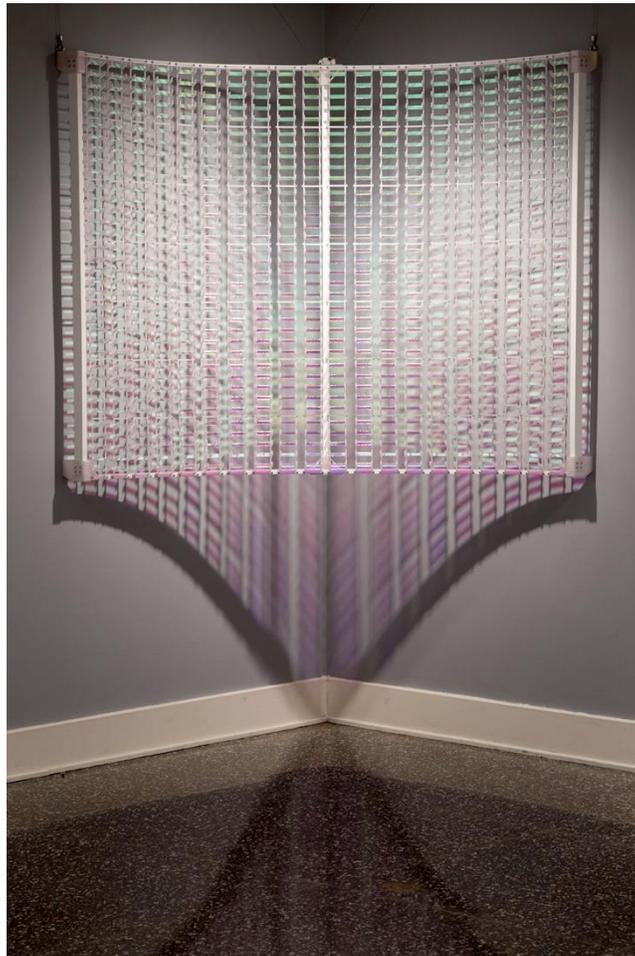
remain an interesting juxtaposition to the pencil drawn, pixelated line and maintain an interesting hierarchical value system with regard to the information associated with lines (Cubitt, 76). In my pieces, I explore some of these concepts of raw juxtaposition — algorithmically defined marks that are subsequently processed digitally and 3D printed to manifest as tools or aids for understanding, in contrast with gritty pencil marks travelling across the wood panel surface to designate elusive elements of light and shadow. The notion of line as vector, symbiotic with time and scalability, versus static yet tangible signs of the human hand. “In the particular magic of drawing with lines are three terms: the autonomy of the observed, the autonomy of the observer, and the autonomy of the drawn line” (Cubitt, 62). This trifold notion of autonomy is an aspect I explore in the works as viewer’s read lines and move to see the presented elements on the plane shift and change due to perspective and light.

When I considered aspects of the gallery section designated to my work, I spaced my “Light Fields: Projective Analysis” series along the abutting walls to cause a linear progression of pauses to give consideration to each composition. When I draft compositions that include lenses layered with drawings, I consider some of the formal aspects of placement that will cause the viewer to bend, turn, and peer around and through devices to navigate the piece. Though they are small, they maintain a level of autonomy in the way experience, seeing, and vision link to position of the body and active thinking. My large, suspended piece toward the back corner begins to enter territories of created space related to the scale of the body and provides a specific place for the viewer to sit, stand, or walk to activate the body within the space and elicit a focus on light itself.



That Which Is There, 2016
[Partial Exhibition View]

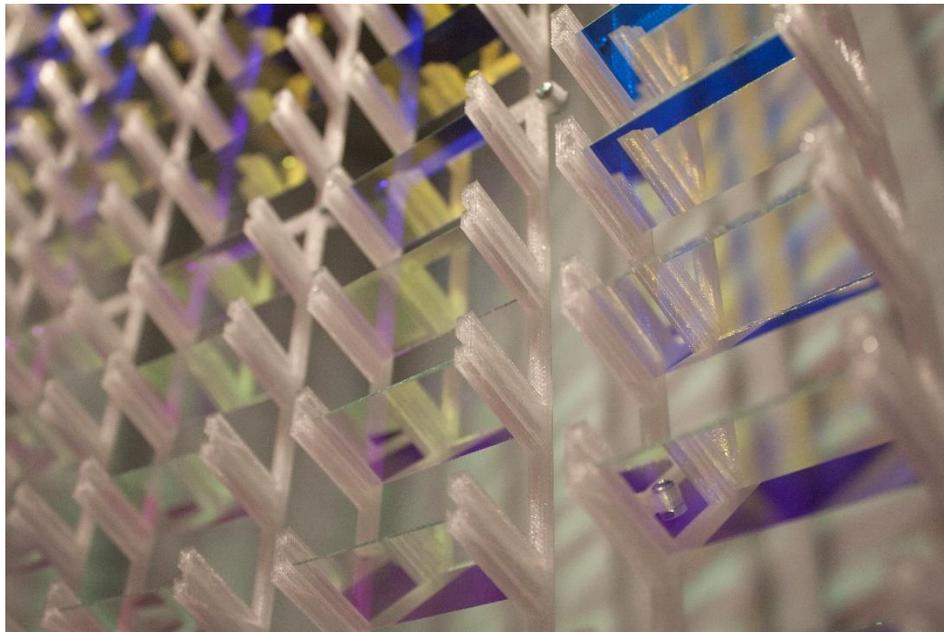
This, too, is an important aspect of perception for Merleau-Ponty. From here we must consider the phenomenology of light further to understand how “the lighting directs my gaze and causes me to imagine a theatre with no audience in which the curtain rises upon illuminated scenery, I have the impression that the spectacle *is in itself visible* or ready to be seen, and that the light which probes the back and foreground, accentuating the shadows and permeating the scene through and through, in a way anticipates our vision” (Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 310). The activation of light not as illuminator, but as active matter and “knower” frames the posture of the relation of the body to light in an active mode of perception.



Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous, 2016
Wood, acrylic paint, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors

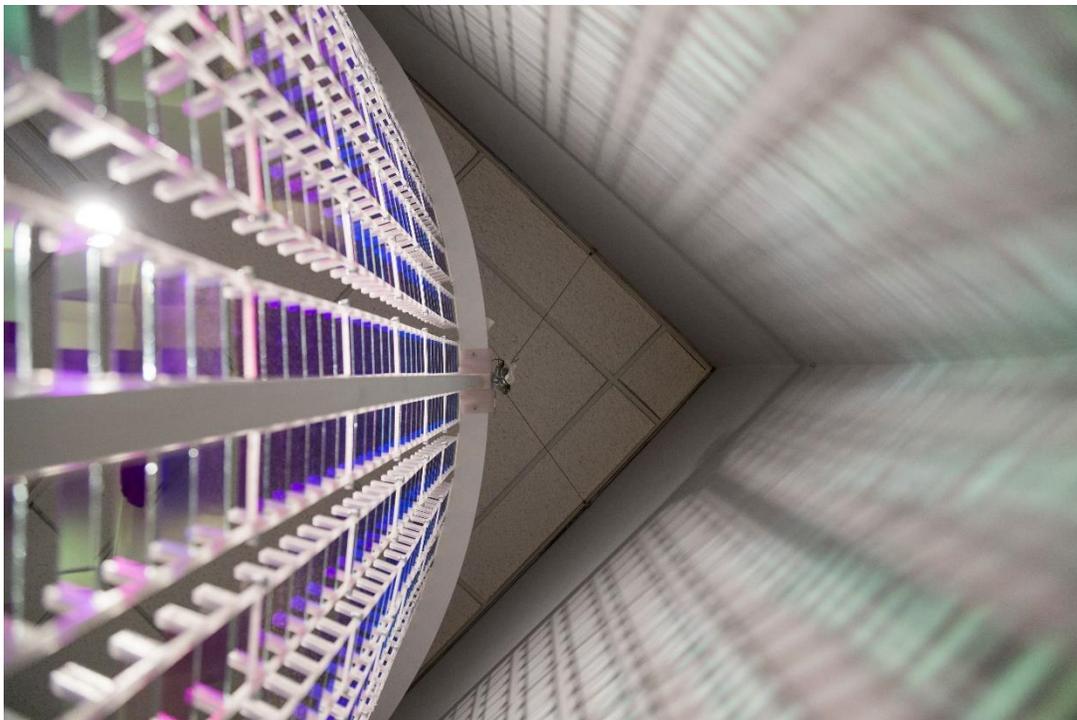
In my work I isolate and position phenomena in a meaningful way and maintain an effective concentration on the thing itself — light. I contemplate the phenomenology of light and perception with relation to the body that phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty designates, and enhance understanding of these concepts through the way movement and sight are connected to thought. The flux between object or thing versus illumination of experience exposes the contradiction between materiality and invisibility. A discussion of light as object can easily transition to a discussion of light as illuminator of other objects. *Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous* is the most direct example of these considerations in my exhibition.

My central focus when planning the exhibition was to create an installation element that referenced body scale and transformed an architectural aspect of the gallery. I planned to use hundreds of 1x2 inch dichromatic mirrors to generate a predominant and light infused effect in the space. These particular dichromatic glass tiles have many properties that make them versatile assets. They have mirrored faces that allow for certain lens orientations to capture and warp reflections of the drawings, gallery, and viewers' bodies and faces creating an interesting dynamic. They are also known as beam-splitters. Dichromatic essentially means "two color" and these lenses are treated to allow specific colors of the light spectrum to pass through or, conversely, to bounce back off of the mirrored surface. With general light sources and certain orientations the lenses split blue and dark violet hues from yellow and gold light tones. Spectral colors slowly shift and reflect across the panels, often casting a variety of colors ranging from deep magenta to pale mint. The dissolving light and sensations within the spaces shift each viewer's focus to how they perceive something so unusual and activate consciousness.



Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous, 2016 [Detail]
Wood, acrylic paint, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors

The title of this installation piece alludes to the written work of David Batchelor, an important contemporary artist and theorist dedicated to the study of color and light. In his short book, *The Luminous and the Grey*, Batchelor discusses the distinction between luminosity and surface. Luminous color is seen through a transparent medium while surface color results from light reflecting off of a surface (Batchelor 50). “There are for example cases in which what I see is both a surface colour and a luminous colour, such as when a material has a transparent glaze on its surface. In this instance light is reflected both off the surface of the material and through the glaze directly above that surface” (Batchelor, 50).



Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous, 2016 [Detail]
Wood, acrylic paint, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors

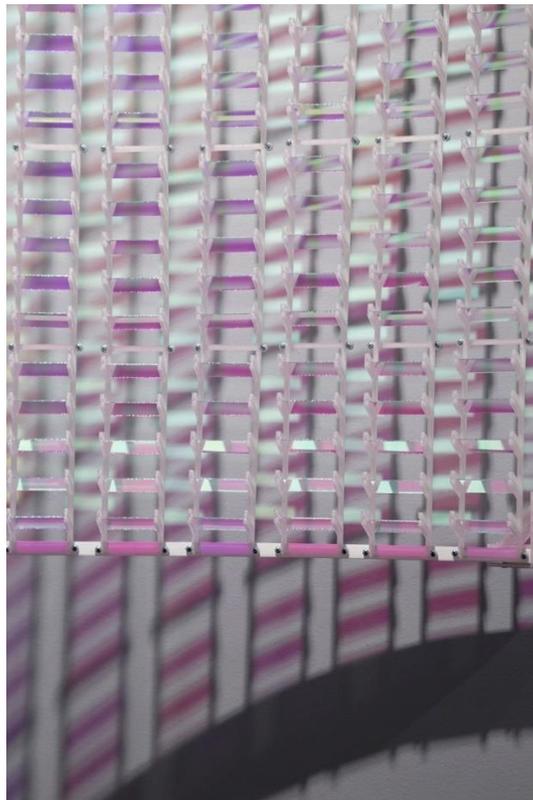
I decided to output 3D printed elements that would hold all seven hundred dichromatic mirrors at the same angle to eliminate variation and enframe the light, colors, and mirrored reflections in a more discrete manner. The consistency of the angle of incidence was an interesting contrast to curved structure of the framework that resulted in variable shapes in the reflections and shadows. This afforded an overall

luminous effect of the installation as the reflected light acted as pixel, bouncing off the wall and passing back through the negative spaces around the gridded lens structure. The pattern of the shadows and light below the piece displayed parametric curved elements that subverted the actual structure of the corner where the piece was installed. The algorithmic nature of the cast shadows become an elegant, analog drawing. The dimensionality, color, and space of the piece in the corner depends entirely on light, and thus light infiltrated the architecture through this new framework to challenge the rigidity and gloomy quality of the gallery space.



Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous, 2016
Wood, acrylic paint, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors

The exhibition gallery only permits artworks to hang on their pre-installed wire hanging system; this challenge became an interesting feature of the piece as I created the curved structure to allow the wires to act as tangential elements, referencing the structured architecture of the corner and ceiling and acting as essential points of tension. I modelled and 3D printed the brackets of the structure to generate a buffer and allow the framework to hang slightly away from the wall; viewers could contemplate the space behind the piece to see the light and lenses in a multi-dimensional format. An integral aspect to the piece was not only how light would behave bouncing off of and through the lenses, but also how viewers would interact with the piece to understand the phenomena and own their experience. I saw many people bending over, turning their heads, and even lying on the floor to see the piece shift. The corner was not only subverted by the light and shadows, but by the presence of people spending time in a forgotten, grey space.



Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous, 2016 [detail]
Wood, acrylic paint, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors

As we seek to know and understand things as they appear, we may ultimately realize that we cannot have absolute knowledge of things outside of experience. Is every experience a phenomenon, and how do we define phenomenon? In a globalized culture with technology and tools we strive to measure, accumulate, and quantify — asserting these tools and data pools are our sixth and seventh senses. Yet even as we evaluate, analyze, and witness invisible and simultaneous realities, we only supplement the phenomenological manifolds of our experience of them. Through my reciprocal practice of working with objects and reflected light, I embrace notions of experience versus empiricism.

With these overarching themes in mind, I incorporate drawings in my work that allude to modes of analysis while proving almost futile in their function. I execute my drawings with traditional drafting tools including pencils, compasses, and rulers on a variety of graph papers. The compositions evoke a strong sense of geometric construction and present orthogonal projections in a manner much like diagrams. However, while the concept of diagram holds a place of authority, I ground my drawings in the moments of mystery where mechanism and analysis result in a lack of conclusion.



Reflecting, Emitting: Light Code Diagrams, 2016
Graph paper, pencil, colored pencil, diffraction grating lens, artist tape

I chose to include a board of these drawings to again emphasize aspects of thinking. These images are bold and direct, diagrammatic attempts to understand an elusive phenomenon — light and its behavior in spaces. Abstracted orthogonal projections and geometric constructs are my attempt to convey the seemingly futile nature of technical diagrams. As Sean Cubitt states, “Practice involves ordering materials and techniques. The effervescent superfluity of light is one of the entropic instances to which we seek to bring order....Control over light, and its mediations through visual technologies, matters because it alters the constitutive grounds of sensing, knowing, and relating to one another and to the world” (Cubitt, 3). These drawings presented on the board pictured above represent a small facet of my collection and add a layer to my exhibition that includes imagination and an attempt to bring order; the viewer may associate this presentation with my studio or a scientific laboratory, an aspect of research and thinking made tangible.

When I consider the idea of framing, I link these concepts with my prevalent use of graph paper in my projects. The paper is a symbol for plans and communication, yet many of my drawings and diagrams are inconclusive. I do not see the grid as a rigid structure of modernist thought, rather I see an asset. It provides a framework for the elements of ephemeral light phenomena to fade into soft gradients or strike against the grid in opposite angular gestures. The grid provides a referential and familiar mode of navigation across a plane or through space, yet this subliminal solace can enhance the very qualities of light on surfaces that subvert convention. I incorporate many colors and scales of grids as structural formal elements that provide a platform for my concepts.



That Which Is There, 2016
[Partial Exhibition View]



Enframed Essence: Lost Light Spaces, 2016 [and detail]
Graph paper, acrylic paint, polylactic acid, dichromatic mirrors

Conclusion

Light transitions and transforms as a nebulous yet substantive “thing” and activates other senses; perhaps this is why a direct phenomenology of light is ever-evolving. My intentions in my work allow light to speak to us within the spaces that are there, spaces that I enframe in two- and three-dimensional planes. Light and space are in tandem continually because they are literal and metaphorical structures

that provide a format for the “consciousness of” upon which phenomenology rests. Artworks can address these notions both materially and objectively within the discipline of visual language, and this reopens inquiry. Light will continue to fluctuate in its objectivity and illuminatory role, but perhaps this is because at the very core of its nature it fluctuates between particle and wave. In UV form it also serves as a direct objective correlate to our physicality and embodied experience as object and essential Vitamin D.

I plan to expand on these philosophical and material investigations as I continue my artistic practice. My priority moving forward is to generate more site-specific installations. What are the “grey corners” of the world where my piece *Concave Framework: To Make A Grey Corner Luminous* can potentially subvert a space in a meaningful way? Are there other forgotten architectural spaces or social and historical significance where I can install new elements to alter perception or shift consciousness?

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Images



1. James Turrell, *Gasworks*, 1993.



2. James Turrell, *Twilight Epiphany*, 2012



3. James Turrell, *Twilight Epiphany*, 2012

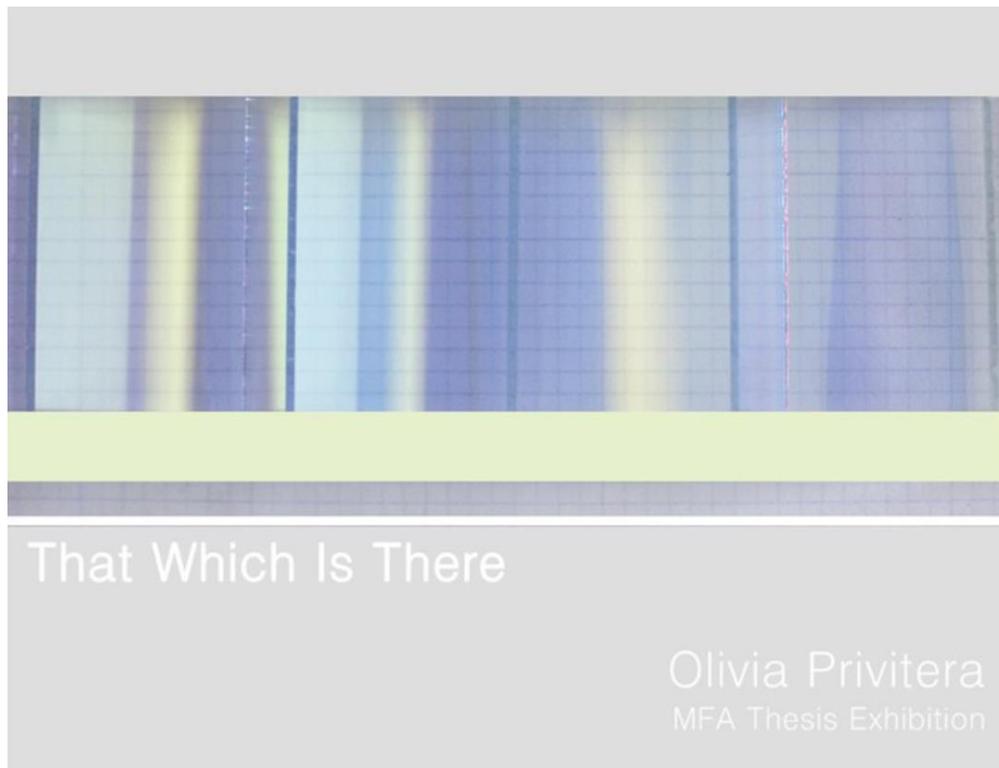


4. Olafur Eliasson, *Your Double-Lighthouse Projection*, 2002



5. Olafur Eliasson, *Your Double-Lighthouse Projection*, 2002

Show Card



Olivia Privitera
Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition

That Which Is There

Exhibition Dates: May 6–10, 2016
Opening Reception: Friday May 6th, 5–7p
Museum Hours: Friday–Tuesday 11a–5p

Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art
State University of New York at New Paltz
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