

Electrifying!:The Art of Light and Illumination
March 3 – December 31, 2007

Exhibition Opening Event: Saturday, March 3, 2007, 7-10pm

The Revolving Museum's *Electrifying!:The Art of Light and Illumination* will feature a gallery exhibition, public artworks, and special events of dynamic light-art works created by over 100 youth and artists. Inspired by the history of Revolving Museum building (originally the Lowell Gas & Light Building built in 1859), the building once supplied the piped coal gas that lighted the mills, businesses, houses, and street lamps of the city. This location will serve as a powerful metaphor as The Revolving Museum generates new creative energies and illuminates a diversity of artistic, educational, and community-focused functions.

Electrifying will unfold a wide diversity of artworks including *light-bulb sculptures* created by youth in our educational programs during the fall of 2006 and throughout 2007 based upon the common curriculum "Project Light". These students will collaborate with create *illuminated alters and lanterns* focusing on Lowell's ethnic diversity, *contemporary art installations* using new technologies, and public artworks including *experimental video and film projections* on city spaces. All the artworks will feature "Light," as the central part of our life, how artificial light has revolutionized our everyday life, and how the metaphorical concept of "Illumination" can spark ideas, future dreams, positive self image, and community expression, all of which "highlight" the power, symbolism, and metaphors of light.

Youth will gain an understanding of how the use of light and dark can create or depict moods, emotions and atmospheres. It can also represent the sublime, invention, thought, idea, mystical and natural phenomenon. This year is the tercentenary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, the inventor of the lightning rod and the concept of producing electricity. The show takes off from there, illuminated by the history, myth-making and magical properties of light. Working with light affords a wide spectrum of possibilities, and connects us the universe and our own creation. At the center is the sun (with a force of 3.8×10^{26} watts), both omnipotent, enlightening, and life giving and finally our human abilities to make electric light and solar energy that will help sustain our future.

Each youth will learn about the science and art of light as well as produce both personal and collaborative art forms that will culminate into gaining artistic, technical, and technological skills that will lead to invaluable experience through an exchange of ideas and experiences. Through the rigorous investigation of the medium of light, youth will be inspired in numerous how to deal with light, color, and movement.

Electrifying will also focus on conceptual issues dealing with the fields of problems and perception of immaterial light, private or public applications and the study of the history of light from the medieval to the avant-garde including different genres such as Futurism, Constructivism, the Bauhaus, film, Kinetics, Op Art, Concept Art, Arte Povera, and light art pioneers and artists such as László Moholy-Nagy, Thomas Wilfred, Zdenek Pesánek,

Hans Richter, the group ZERO, Jean Tinguely, Dan Flavin, Bruce Nauman, Sylvie Fleury, Dennis Oppenheim, and Jenny Holzer.

Electrifying will make the bridge between science and art. How Albert Einstein solved the mystery of light's essence in 1905 through wave-particle duality. How light is an electromagnetic wave and a current of particles, a form of energy that in a vacuum would travel at a speed of 299,792,458 meters per second. How when light hits a prismatic structure it divides into different wavelengths that are visible as colors; how its brightness describes the stream of light, and or the amount of light that is emitted from a source of light; how the depiction of natural light and the wave phenomena are known from optics and other areas. Very few mediums have revolutionized and democratized our living space in the last hundred years as much as electrical light has.

The most diverse areas of everyday life, of working life, consumption, media, etc., have transformed through artificial light - and so has art. Since the beginning of the last century, artificial light has increasingly illuminated ever more streets, shop windows, billboard signs and houses in an unprecedented abundance and form. We reside in cities and gardens of light. Observed from airplanes and satellites, the nighttime Earth glows like a cluster of stars. Light works become artificial stars that change the visible world and change people's lives as a whole. Ever since the victory over the night and the sun, we have lived in paradises of artificial light.

For nearly a hundred years, artists have confronted this immaterial medium in the form of light bulbs, luminous substances and neon tubes, glowing LEDs and powerful floodlights. Art has increasingly turned from the illusionary representation of natural light to the real application of artificial light. The artwork is transforming itself from a representative screen depicting the wave phenomena of natural light - the prismatic decomposition into rainbow colors - into a real sender of electrons and photons of artificial light. Artists create autonomous, luminous objects and rooms, and even illuminate entire landscapes.