

RECENT PULSED STUFF AND OTHER DELIGHTS

"Recent Pulsed stuff and Other Delights" was the title of a suite of eight holograms by Ed Wesly exhibited <sup>from AUGUST 9, 1986 TO SEPTEMBER 5, 1986.</sup> at a hair salon cum art gallery in Chicago called Benny's Casino after the owner, Benny Casino. The title of the show comes from a classic 1960's Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass album, "Wipped Cream and Other Delights", whose cover depicted a young lady completely covered with the sweet sticky white stuff. The "Pulsed Stuff" was represented by four <sup>LASER LIT</sup> 30 by 40 cm plates, and four white light transmission holograms were the "Other Delights."

Two of the pulsed holograms were displayed in a massage room that was off the main gallery. This room is decorated as a cave, with <sup>SEQUINED</sup> soft sculpture stalagmites and stalagtites, dayglo flowers and plenty of black lights, done up by Melinda Harris, who also designed the show poster, Figure One. Wooden cage bars were installed with the holograms cleverly attached to them so that the viewer had the impression of looking into a human zoo. The hologram on the right, "Who Rattled My Cage," showed a masked naked woman in a leather jacket with a whip looking like a Joel-Peter Witkin fleshed out to three dimensions. The other captive, "The Batsman", appeared at first glance to be a nude man hanging from the ceiling but upon closer inspection one realized that gravity wasn't working properly <sup>(OPTIONAL)</sup> (on his penis). In reality the hologram was reconstructed upside down, as off to one side two people could be seen sitting on chairs firmly attached to the sky. The model, Jay Sebaceous, is a friend of Mr. Wesly's whose life has been topsy-turvy lately.

In the main gallery the four white light transmission holograms hung side-by-side. All of them incorporate HOE's - Holographic Optical Embellishments. They appear to be some sort of modulated diffraction gratings, with abstract color explosions which move around in space holokinetically.

In themselves they are pretty, but what the artist does with them is to collage them into various compositions. This body of work focusses on the female anatomy. For instance, "Tuesday", the first of these pieces, is his inter-

PUBIC HAIR

pretation of a friend who had an interesting way shaving her bush for the summer. "Connie B.", the only piece which had been shown publicly before, used a black and white photographic transparency that some people might find objectionable (a bound but not gagged naked woman) as the core for a Constructivist composition. By extending the rope lines in the photo with Formaline® graphic arts tape, the surrounding space is chopped up into geometric shapes which the artist judiciously fills with his rainbows. This one was a real show stopper. But next to it, "Connie II", was similar but did not have the impact of the first.

It is hard to believe that this mild-mannered young holographic scholar would have a streak of misogyny in him, and it seems that he is more than likely egged on by the company he keeps. Two fights almost erupted at the Saturday night opening, which consumed <sup>greater</sup> ~~more~~ than two kegs of beer. But <sup>when</sup> ~~while~~ asked why he does things like this, he explains that it is fun to mix up <sup>m</sup> something that is interesting to look at, the spectral patterns, with something taboo, that most people, men as well as women would have an aversion to. A conflicting confrontation. Thumbing his nose at artists and critics who claim to be open-minded but are the most uptight and square. For instance, a folksinger from the suburbs refused to sing in front of the artwork at a benefit held at Casino the following week. Plus, he excuses himself for not taking the photographs the designs are based on. But he did choose to use them, and he did take pulsed holograms. His defense?

"I can hear it now, give a tech a big laser and then they'll bring in the naked girls. <sup>BUT</sup> This was the opportunity of a lifetime. Somebody had to do it just to say that it was ever done, and I was <sup>IN A POSITION TO DO IT.</sup> ~~able~~. Some of the more butch feminists may not approve, but sometimes the artist must do things just for the experience of it. Imagine the adrenaline flow as we signed in at the security office of an unnamed National Accelerator Laboratory. 'This is Ms. Crankshaft. She's doing an article on what we do here.' 'Do you work for the Bugtussle Clarion-Ledger?' asked the guard, catching the "journalist" off-guard, whose shopping bags were packed not with reams of note paper and tape recorders but

minute somebody with the keys could walk into the laser room. This is something I'll never forget in my lifetime."

The last white light piece, "HP-1000", had a graphic design which looked like a slice of pie done in that purposefully bad prepubescent art style that was popular for a short while. When queried of the significance of this one, the artist <sup>CUNNINGLY</sup> replied that HP didn't stand for Hewlett-Packard but his favorite dessert.

At the end of this row was an installation of a peep show - the private movie booth, complete with sticky floor. "Homage to Johnny H.", a memorial to an <sup>long lost</sup> old friend who used to run around with him to seedy films and who once knocked a stripper on her rear trying to kiss her foot. One sat down, slipped their credit card into a slot for a <sup>timed</sup> peek at the same female model used throughout the show, Connie ("Bondage") Crankshaft, this time without the leather jacket and mask, but still keeping the whip.

Connie was the first person in Chicago to show Mr. Wesly's artwork in Chicago, in an era before he was introduced to holography, doing things like "The Captain and Tennille Crucifixion", "The Phi Sigs", and the "Motor City Mythological Mobile" <sup>AND POEM</sup>. ("The gods of the ancient Greeks and Romans, die cast and chrome-plated for a glide on the hood of an ethereal Cadillac...") Since she herself is an artist/model, he decided to sneak her into a place where he worked which had a rather large pulsed ruby laser and have some fun.

The results of the shoot looked like they did, plus having put in a bit of homework. Hans Bjelkhagen says that the laser transmission plates look as good as anything that he's seen by John Webster or Nick Philips. Which is not surprising, since they all use the same type of lasers, JK. The holograms, as illuminated by 7 mW He-Ne's showed scenes over 2 meters in depth, vertical parallax limited by the floor and ceiling of the laser room, with almost 180° field of view horizontally. In fact, Mr. Wesly is visible pushing the button of the laser directly to the right of the holo-plate in some of the shots.

The <sup>cl</sup>last of the Pulsed Stuff" was the biggest ego trip of an already large ego trip, a self-portrait of the artist on his motorcycle, complete with a pool of oil under. The scene looks like it was taken in an alley, until one realizes that those aren't junk refrigerators but the power supply cabinets in the corner. The cocky smirk on his face is second in smugness only to his statements on why he made the holograms.

Certainly this show won't be easily forgotten by anyone who saw it, as it was easily the most extra ordinary holographic extravaganza ever in the Chicago area. It undoubtedly will remain a legend for years.