

Holograms are given new dimension

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CHICAGO, ILL. — The best show at Chicago's Museum of Holography is the holograms. The second best enter-

tainment is watching people experience the holograms. Visitors bob and weave, duck and

stretch, trying to catch every detail of each laser-generated three-dimensional image.

Watch people as they walk by the Dizzy Gillespie hologram, then back up three steps and walk by again to see Gillespie fill his cheeks with air, blow a trumpet note and smile.

Watch people sway to the left, sway to the right, as pieces of a jigsaw puzzle assemble themselves into an image of Marilyn Monroe. Watch disbelieving kids fight the temptation to touch. That hologram *couldn't* be just a flat plate; they saw the dice tumble; they saw them move.

For a family outing that captures the imagination of adults as much as children, you pay \$2.50 per person to visit this small, entertaining and educational museum at 1134 W. Washington Blvd. just west of Chicago's loop. Hours are 12:30 to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday.

The real crowd pleasers are the holograms with movement — the one of Dizzy Gillespie, for example, and another of a young woman raising a wine glass to her lips to drink.

Some of the holograms displayed are for sale. For \$60, you can take home a small one in which a baseball player appears to be pitching when viewed from one angle, batting when viewed from another.

For \$170, you can entertain guests with a hologram in which balls magically appear between the widespread fingers of an extended hand as the viewer walks past.

More popular souvenirs, however, are embossed holograms that sell for \$5 each. As the light catches them, the flat, silvery sheets reveal 3-D images that change color and in some cases seem to move. One reproduces the image of the young woman drinking from the wine glass.

It's pretty hard to get by that minuscule gift stand, with \$2 holographic "sparklers," \$3 holographic glasses that break light into rainbows, holographic jewelry and other novelties.

The Museum of Holography opened in 1977, roughly 15 years after laser developments made it possible to record images in three dimensions, as the eye naturally sees the environment. The galleries are part of the Fine Arts Research and Holographic Center, a teaching and research facility billed as "the most complete institution in the world devoted to holography."

There is educational as well as entertainment value to holograms, says Loren Billings, executive director of the facility. "It's important for children to become more high-tech oriented because they'll be technically illiterate if they don't."

