

What is a Lightscape?
by Philip A. Metzidakis

Caterina Bertolotto has combined the effects of a hologram and a kaleidoscope in a new technique that allows the projection of evolving shapes and patterns in three dimensions. Unlike a hologram, the system uses only standard projected light. Unlike a kaleidoscope, the images do not rely on mirrors for their absorbing intricacy, nor are they the result of a random process. Each lightscape is designed specifically for this system and is a unique piece of art.

Unlike all other projection systems, Ms. Bertolotto's does not rely on producing an illusion of three dimensions—it produces an actual three-dimensional projection. Multi-color stars hang in space; moving both in relation to each other and to the observer. Lines animate into complex three-dimensional ellipsoid shapes and then become lines again. Solid forms evolve simultaneously and differently on each axis. The observer's Euclidean assumptions about space are forgotten. Images bend, stretch, disappear and reappear; yet their underlying forms are never lost.

Perhaps most astonishing of all is that in reflection we realize that we feel no anxiety in losing our geometrical orientation: no frustration in not being able to fathom the changing figures hanging in air. We are much too enraptured by the magic in front of us to worry about the design and structure of Ms. Bertolotto's invention.

Ms. Bertolotto conceived of her system after many years of experimentation with projected light in New York and Torino (Italy). It has been utilized in dance and theater productions, but has been designed as a light sculpture for installation in galleries, museums, and homes. Although theater installations have been as large as ten feet high, twenty-five feet wide, and six and a half feet deep, units can be built on any scale to fit any space.

"All the better to highlight the magic, which includes three-dimensional lightscares or hologram, mystifying light sculptures by Caterina Bertolotto"
Markland Taylor—NEW HAVEN REGISTER
May 4, 1987

"...but the lightscares by Caterina Bertolotto are even more mysterious and theatrical..."
Malcolm L. Johnson—COURANT THEATER CRITIC
May 2, 1987

"...and the striking lightscares provided additional harmonics."
David A. Scheffler—WELCOMAT-AFTER DARK
September 17, 1986

"The artist Caterina Bertolotto created gossamer light sculptures that make us believe the place is magic."

D.J.R. Bruckner—THE NEW YORK TIMES

March 27, 1986

"...sensational visual effects..."

Allen Charlet—BACKSTAGE

November 23, 1984

"...magical effect...incredible lightscapes by Caterina Bertolotto."

Alisa Solomon—THE VILLAGE VOICE

May 29, 1984

"Lightscapes...a holographic-like forest..."

Mel Gussow—THE NEW YORK TIMES

May 23, 1984

"...its gorgeous set—a luminescent enchanted garden—...from within this iridescent wilderness, theatrical sparks fly."

Stephen Holden—THE NEW YORK TIMES

April 29, 1983

"Fascinating"

Cynthia West—OTHER STAGES

February 24, 1983

"...the absorbing light projections of Caterina Bertolotto complemented and even deepened the sound imagery."

Theodore W. Libbey Jr.—THE NEW YORK TIMES

May 16, 1982