
WOLVERHAMPTON

 Irene McManus

Holography

A HOLOGRAM looks like a plain sheet of glass generally—but when you hold it angled in a strong beam of light, you see a three-dimensional image floating behind, or sometimes in front of the glass. Holography is the newest, most genuinely surprising art form of recent years—a here-and-now high-technology photographic process, utilising laser beams and producing dramatic three-dimensional images. It'll be fascinating to see how this young form will develop in the hands of contemporary artists.

This exhibition has doubled normal attendance figures at the gallery—around 3,500 visitors a week are dropping in for the holography show. It comprises 18 pieces by 10 artists working at Goldsmiths' Holography Workshop between 1980 and 1982. The leading lights of the Workshop are Michael Wenyon and Susan Gamble.

But the star attraction of the show is Andrew Logan's terrific Goddess of the Void, a three metres high, mirrored sculpture in Jan Leeming earrings, two reflection holograms embedded in her picture frame torso: in the red-spangled heart lies a hand holding a jewel; in the gold-spangled, snake-wreathed square to the left a tiny, blue-painted Action Man in Indian garb raises an arm that stretches backwards into the hologram behind—the arm of Krishna, spinning a jewelled disc through the void. This piece, eerily lit and endlessly intriguing, was the result of an Indian trip, and will feature as part of a collection of 10 or more huge Indian figures to be shown later this year. Nobody has quite captured the spell-binding Alice Through the Looking Glass allure of holography quite as successfully as Logan in this sculpture, it seems to me.

Other works have their charms, of course: Gamble's lingerie and cakes, shot with beautiful spectral colour, are delectable. Bill Molteni's brilliant Hand and Yoyo is a provokingly lifelike yoyo travelling out towards the spectator, swung from an open hand behind. And Michael Wenyon's remarkable spectacles drift, all but graspable, tantalisingly in front of the hologram, making you long to fill the space between them with your own face.

Central Art Gallery, Wolverhampton, until June 25. Free lecture by Susan Gamble and Michael Wenyon at 1.00 pm on June 13. Then at Stoke-on-Trent city Museum and Art Gallery from August 6 to September 17.

McManus, Irene, 'The Holography Show', *The Guardian* (London, 1 June 1983), section Arts Guardian, p. 11