

ART IN GENERAL

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Melanie Crean, *The Luminists*, 2007.

For Immediate Release

Melanie Crean

The Luminists

April 21-June 30, 2007

Opening Reception Saturday, April 21 6-8 p.m.

For Immediate Release New York, NY (March 28, 2007) Art in General is pleased to announce *The Luminists*, an installation exploring the nature of vision by **Melanie Crean**.

Melanie based *The Luminists* on conversations she had with three artists who have lost their sight but continue to make artwork: **Alice Wingwall**, a photographer; **Carol Saylor**, a painter turned sculptor; and **Tara Inmon**, a painter turned writer. They discussed a range of topics, including what vision means to them now that they have

no optical sight, how they visualize the world around them in their mind's eye and how optical influences continue to inform their work. Also under consideration was the process of perception, notions of beauty and how these three artists' consciousness has been affected by a change in their sensory capabilities.

Each of the three artists Melanie consulted with reveals a unique experience of vision. Wingwall, for instance, speaks of how her body's relationship to space is integral to her creation of a mental image, referencing the mental database she utilizes to access memories. Inmon relates her continuing need to see after going blind, and how she organizes her life through sets of internal visual maps. Saylor speaks about her waking dream life, and the abstract visual patterns—projected by the remnants of her optical nerve—that inspired her to return to her art after going blind.*

Based on her conversations with Wingwall, Saylor and Inman, and in collaboration with composer **Paul Geluso**, Melanie has created a 5.1 surround-sound audio installation to accentuate the visual references brought up in the piece. Additionally, Melanie and three collaborators—**Kuni Chang**, **Enrique Maitland** and **Luba Drozd**—have created experimental video work inspired by the sound installation that will be presented in programs held in conjunction with the exhibition.

*In adults who go blind, the visual cortex, after being deprived of external stimulation, often receives information from other parts of the brain to form visualizations. Some individuals have described apparitions of small points of light with odd shapes, moving in a form of abstract geometric animation.

Melanie Crean is an artist, teacher, curator and producer who has exhibited media art in the United States and Europe. As Director of Production at Eyebeam (www.eyebam.org), she created and managed a cooperative studio that supported the production of socially-based media, working with new forms of moving image, sound, public art and open-source software. Previously, Melanie worked at the MTV Digital Television Lab, managing a team of artists while designing special effects, performance animation, motion capture and speech recognition systems. She produced documentaries in Nepal, India and the United States on subjects that include the trafficking of women and the spread of HIV/AIDS along trucking routes in South Asia. Melanie received a BA in semiotics and film production from Brown University, and a MFA in computer art from the School of Visual Arts. Melanie has received fellowships and commissions from Harvestworks, NYFA, NYSCA and Creative Time for her video, sound, web-based work and public projects that have been exhibited internationally.

New Commissions Program

Art in General's New Commissions program directly supports artists in the development of their work from early inception and research through the production and exhibition phases, and is made possible by The Institute of Museum and Library Services, an independent Federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities; the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and the Booth Ferris Foundation. Additional support has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation, Peter Norton Family Foundation, The Greenwall Foundation, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, Jerome Foundation and George Mills.



About Art in General

Founded in 1981 in Lower Manhattan, Art in General is a nonprofit organization that assists artists with the production and presentation of new work. It changes in response to the needs of artists with the mission of informing and engaging the public about their work. In 25 years, Art in General has emerged as one of New York City's leading nonprofits devoted to supporting and stimulating the creation of contemporary art, providing an environment in which artists can exhibit unconventional work and exchange ideas with their peers. Art in General has exhibited the work of nearly 5,000 artists working across a wide range of media.

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