

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

George O. Stadnik, Lumia Composer

Soulton Solstice Lumia Project
December 2020

LUMIA: COMPOSING WITH LIGHT

Historical Context

In the fall of 1968, while visiting the Museum of Modern Art in New York, I discovered the work of Thomas Wilfred, the originator of the art of Lumia. Experiencing Wilfred's Opus 158, inspired me to incorporate his principles into my lifelong pursuit of creating Lumia Compositions.

Natural Light Lumia

A mirror is an optical material that reflects light in real time. Without the viewer, a mirror still reflects light, but a viewer is needed to see and interpret that reflected light into an image. As the viewer, your point of view determines what is visible to you. Your mind translates the reflected light you see into an image, a feeling, a memory or an inspiration of imagination. Lumia Constructs are essentially, deeply layered mirrors. They are different in that they combine materials to modify light. Constructs exist in three forms: stationary objects, sculptures that move and as image sources for recorded compositions.

Stationary Constructs

These are self contained objects that create transformational images as a result of their environment, time of day and perspective of the viewer. A unique innovation in this format is the Squirkle. I invented this as a solution to increase the amount of light that reaches the back of a deep construct. It is a shaped mirror that collects light to illuminate the inside of the construct with more intensity. The surrounding environment provides color, imagery, and light. As the viewer changes their perspective, they create a moving montage of real or imagined images.

Moving Constructs

Wilfred proposed that Lumia be perceived as a visual journey, seen through an imaginary window into space. He intended that his images originate from deep darkness. He specified speed, direction and transitional attributes for brightness, color, shape and texture. The resulting pieces were performed live on specialized instruments using visual scores. Wilfred created self-contained opto-mechanical sculptures that would repeat his compositions over periods of time that ranged from fifteen minutes to infinity.

Today, creating and presenting a moving visual composition would incorporate a variety of technologies. The process is inclusive of digital programming techniques, controllers and connected equipment. The result is streamed across the Internet or private networks for display on a myriad of screens and devices.

We experience light creating evocative images daily: Light casting shadows on a moving curtain, sunlight sparkling on a lake, trees casting dappled shadows, street lights refracted through a glass of wine, or a campfire projecting mysteriously dancing shapes.

In creating Moving Lumia Compositions, I assemble groups of stationary constructs. These are built as panels that capture and modify light. Instead of gears, pulleys, or programming code, I apply the forces of wind, water, fire, gravity, momentum and inertia to manage the choreography of the composition.

The panels mimic sails, channeling, blocking or amplifying forces. They can be constrained to move in a specific direction or they can move freely. Panels interact with each other, producing images that are complex and nuanced. Transitions between interactions are randomized, captivating the viewer with unpredictability and suspense. Together these combinations of applied forces and reactions assure that repetition will be infrequent. On a visual level, the transforming images build, recede, decay, or come forward, akin to the perception of sounds in an orchestral performance.

Recorded Compositions

Stationary and Moving Constructs offer a vast resource of original still and moving imagery for recorded compositions. They have unique perceptual qualities that I am just beginning to explore. I have made recordings of the imagery produced by both forms and have incorporated them into live performances as well as compositions set to original music.

Process

My compositions stimulate memories, connections and emotions, to create a highly personal, sensory experience. The attributes of light offer a palette of expressive qualities that are evocative, other worldly and open-ended. As a painter uses brushes and other methods to represent reality or abstraction. I use optically reactive materials that reflect, refract, diffract, interfere, obscure, amplify or multiply light. I shape, cut, overlay, emboss materials to assemble them into layers of different combinations.

Soulton Solstice Lumia Inspirations, Observations, Revelations

This project is a creative adventure that continues to reveal its expanding possibilities as it develops, even at this early stage of development, several have already become apparent.

This piece is a 21st century implementation of a mid 20th century artform that will become part of a Neolithic astronomical structure. Imagine being one of the original inhabitants, experiencing the solstice sunrise as it activates the Lumia composition. What would they think? How would they feel? These are the very thoughts and emotions that compelled me to get involved in this project and create this piece.

For inspiration, I searched the Internet for stone carvings. I would bring forward the art of the Neolithic creators by merging it with 21st century materials. For several panels, I used traditional embossing and raising tools to transfer the lines to holographic diffraction grating stretched over the panels. The process changes brightness and color of light. The images float over the surface. Like spirits who reappear in the present from a distant past. As I was building the Neolithic art panels, an overarching theme became evident. It was that Neolithic and contemporary humans experience the

same emotions about life and death even though so much has changed. These panels evoke the timelessness of feelings: disruption, disturbance, loss, denial, ending, and then, beginning, hope, peace, reconciliation and truth.

George O. Stadnik
Lumia Composer

<https://stadnik2.wixsite.com/lumiacomposer/cv>

Copyright 2020 George Stadnik