

BravinLee programs

Michael Somoroff's *Illumination* and *Illumination I*
BravinLee programs unveils the new video installation as
The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum features the sculpture it inspired.

Illumination

June 21 - August 10, 2007

Opening: 6-8 p.m., Thursday, June 21

BravinLee programs Off Site

Ground Floor location at: 508 West 26 Street
NYC, NY

Illumination I

June 24- October 14, 2007

Opening: 3-5 p.m., Sunday, June 24

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT
(round trip transportation available)

For more information contact Karin Bravin: 212-462-4404

For immediate release – *Illumination* and *Illumination I*, **Michael Somoroff's** unprecedented creations can be counted both separately and together as groundbreaking. Each work generates a total immersion experience realized through the application of invented technologies; each reflects the artist's passion for light and its provocative use as both a real and virtual medium – for video that is sculpture, and sculpture that is architecture. Together, they comprise an ever-evolving art event – and the overlapping of the exhibitions in New York and Connecticut this summer provides the first opportunity for viewers to experience the symbiotic relationship between the two installations.

For *Illumination*, Mr. Somoroff has created an immersive 3-D surround sound video installation using high definition video technology and one of the first completely surround video projectors ever used in a video art project. *Illumination* is a synthesis of film, video, high-definition computer animation, and virtual photography components that together with its architectural environment culminate in one seamless, 270-degree surround experience. Mr. Somoroff has developed custom-made projectors and software for the installation. He invited veteran production designer **Keith Ian Raywood** to collaborate with him as the exhibition's architectural designer. The videos that will be experienced inside the space will be enhanced further by a musical score by acclaimed experimental electronic music composer **Robert Rich**.

The artist's interest in sacred architecture, spirituality and politics provoked his analysis of light patterns on March 20, 2003 when the U.S. first attacked Iraq. He combined his empirical observations and personal reflections with the movement of sunlight through a historically-accurate digital model of a mosque in ruins – and thus he conceived the *Illumination* project.

BravinLee's presentation is a prequel of sorts, allowing the viewer to see and experience the genesis for *Illumination I*. Previously exhibited at the **Rothko Chapel** in Houston (November 2006), *Illumination I* will make its final U.S. appearance at **The Aldrich Museum** before heading to Cologne in 2008. The unveiling at the Rothko Chapel marked the first time in its history that The Rothko Chapel invited an artist other than those involved in its original creation (painter Mark Rothko, artist Barnett Newman, and the architect Phillip Johnson) to exhibit a work of art on its grounds. "This genre-defying work blurs the boundaries between architecture and sculpture and functions as much as a place as it does an object," explains Aldrich exhibitions director Richard Klein.

Illumination I is always installed with its open side facing east, toward the rising sun; it stands over 20 feet high and weighs more than 22,000 pounds. *Illumination I* reveals once again its relationship to the phenomenon of light and the artist's interest in sacred architecture. The hybrid sculptural object was designed with the use of hi-tech software programs, including digital photography, computer modeling, and CNC milling. It is composed of fiberglass and resin, with a final coat of traditional, hand-applied stucco, combining sophisticated industrial production with painstaking ancient craftsmanship.

A catalog is available with an introduction by **Christopher Rothko** and text by **David Anfam**.

The CD *Michael Somoroff Illumination* composed by Robert Rich is available.

Both exhibitions are sponsored by: **Rhein Design** and **Mill Creek Capital Advisors, LLC**.

Note: At 2pm on June 24 at The Aldrich, there will be a dialogue between Michael Somoroff and art historian David Anfam; this will be free and open to the public.

More about Michael Somoroff

Michael Somoroff's mediums of choice include photography, installation, filmmaking, and a variety of "new media" technologies. He is represented in many important collections, a sampling of which include the Museum of Modern Art; New York (AICP), The Houston Museum of Fine Art, Houston, Texas; and The Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. His work has been included in museum exhibitions around the world, including ICP The International Center for Photography, New York City; The Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago; The Frankfurt Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany; and "The Great Color Exhibition" of 1986, curated by Manfred Heiting in Koln, Germany. He has participated in gallery exhibitions in New York and abroad, including the major international art fairs. He is a long-standing member of the Directors Guild of America.

More about BravinLee programs Off Site

Following up on the success of last summer's Studio in the Park, 11 public art installations in Riverside Park, BravinLee programs seeks to bring work out of the traditional gallery space, off-site and into the public arena. The gallery remains committed to focusing on drawings and works on paper in their space at 526 West 26th street. Summer hours: June: Tuesday-Saturday 10-6; July: Tuesday-Friday 11- 5; August: Tuesday-Friday 12-5. 212.462.4404 www.bravinlee.com