REBECCA CUMMINS
Selected Works 2003–2013
Rebecca Cummins explores the sculptural, experiential and sometimes humorous possibilities of light and natural phenomena, often referencing the history of optics in installations that have included a machine for making rainbows, a photographic rifle, paranoid dinner table devices and a variety of sculptural and photographic approaches to marking time.

She has exhibited widely in Australia, the U.S., and Europe; exhibitions include the Shanghai Biennial, The South Australia Biennial of Australian Art, Adelaide; The Biennial of Seville, Spain; and Wireless Experience, Museum of Contemporary Art KIASMA in Helsinki, Finland. Public commissions include the SkyLight Aperture Sundial (the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs and the Seattle Public Library, Montlake Branch); Solar Hour Benches and Oculus Table (with Woody Sullivan) and Simply Smashing at the Exploratorium: Museum of Science, Art and Perception. Commissions in progress include a Washington State Arts Commission at the University of Western Washington (with Paul DeMarinis) and South Delridge CSO 169 Artwork Project, The Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs and Seattle Public Utilities, both to be installed in 2014.

Cummins grew up in a tiny river valley town in Iowa. She has a BFA from the University of Northern Iowa and an MA from the University of New Mexico. Her Doctoral dissertation (PhD, University of Technology, Sydney, 2003) is entitled Necro Techno: Examples from an Archaeology of Media. She taught at the University of Sydney for 16 years before moving to Seattle in 2001, where she is currently a faculty member in the Photomedia Program, School of Art, University of Washington.


Catalogue designed and typeset by Molly Boyd.

2nd Edition, October 2013
Light Rain, 2004

In collaboration with Paul DeMarinis.

Computer, amplifiers, water, stainless steel, electronics.

9 x 9 x 5 feet.

A mist of water creates primary and secondary rainbows when the sun shines. Six water streams are specially modulated with audio signals; visitors hear music (such as *Singing in the Rain*) by walking into the free-falling water. Their umbrellas function as resonating surfaces.

Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland, 2004

Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, PRC, 2006

Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, at night, Helsinki, Finland, 2004

YOUNIVERSE, Seville Art Biennial, Seville, Spain, 2008
Canberra Sculpture Forum, Old Federal Parliament House, Canberra, ACT, Australia

The Rainbow Machine, Shenzhen, PRC, 2008

Light Rain, Shanghai Biennial, Shanghai Museum of Art, Shanghai, PRC, 2006

The Rainbow Machine, 1998

Water, steel, plastic, electronics
9 x 9 x 5 feet

A steel apparatus creates a wall of water that allows the viewer to see primary and secondary rainbows when the sun shines.
Baghdad by George, 10:10am Seattle, 9:10pm, Baghdad, 2003

In collaboration with Woody Sullivan
Metal, paint, vinyl

This statue of George Washington was co-opted as the gnomon in a giant horizontal sundial; his head indicated the time in Baghdad as it crossed the yellow hour marker lines.

Solar Arcade, 2003

In collaboration with Woody Sullivan
Metal, paint, vinyl

The projection of light through a huge circular southwest facing window was utilized to tell solar time on the summer solstice. Four ellipses (two of which were partially on the library walls) were marked to indicate the path of the sunspot (June 21, 210-4:30 PDT).

In the winter, the sunspot appears high above the walkway.
Skylight Aperture Sundial, 2006

Glass, steel
Skylight: 15 x 3 feet
Glass discs: 20 inches

5 glass discs in the ceiling project a row of colorful sunspots that slide through the library as the sun appears to move from east to west. The orange disc is the “nodus” or time indicator. As its projection crosses a line on the library floor, it is solar noon. Floor markings indicate where this sunspot lands at noon on the summer solstice, the opening date of the library—and the equinoxes. By night, artificial lights illuminate the colored discs.

Summer solstice: June 21, 2006
5:10 pm PDT west
5:35 pm PDT east

Installation view (looking west). Commissioned by the Offices of Arts and Cultural Affairs and the Seattle Public Library, Seattle, WA. Photography: Westestish AE.
Shenzhen Gallery Skylight Dial, 2008

Tape
25 x 60 feet

Patterns cast by the skylight are marked through the days on June 25 and August 14, 2008 in the Shenzhen Institute of Fine Art Gallery, Shenzhen, PRC.

Mr. Yan’s Chair, 8:45am-4:45pm, Shenzhen, PRC, August 9, 2008

Digital print
18 x 28 inches

Documentation of study with chair and string; sun rays were traced and made visible using colored string every 1½ hours. Shenzhen Institute of Fine Art, Shenzhen, PRC.
**Tilt, 2003**
Digital Print
This shelf is tilted to visualize the angle of the sun's rays at Solar Noon in Seattle.

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**Moondial, Banks Lake, Washington, August 29, 2004**
7 C prints
Each 8 x 11 inches
Hourly by moonlight from 10pm–4am

Details, Banks Lake, Washington
Shadow Locomotion: 128 Years After Muybridge, The Red Barn, Stanford University, Palo Alto, 2004

Digital print
11 x 78 inches
Hourly from 11am–5pm, February 28, 2004 at the site of Eadweard Muybridge's sequential "horses in motion" photographs, commissioned by Leland Stanford in 1877.
Café Gnomonics, 2003–2011

The movement of shadows is traced over lunch in Rome, Seattle, Schuan, Miami and Sydney; coffee in Berlin, Pudong and Hong Kong; brunch in Shanghai; drinks in Seattle; and by moonlight in Shenzhen and Dry Falls, Washington. Gnomonics is the art or science of constructing sundials.
Coffee, Radio Tower, Berlin, August 13, 2004
Shenzhen by Moonlight (11 pm–12:15 am), July 17, 2008
Gnomon at the Roman Forum, December 13, 2003

14 digital prints
Each 8 x 10 inches

Every 30 minutes during the opening hours (9am-3:30pm) of the Roman Forum, Rome, Italy. For exhibition, the series is installed in one horizontal row.
Another Light, 2006

Digital print
dia 16 x 20 inches

Hourly by sunlight and moonlight at Snoqualmie Pass, WA, 8:23am-4:23pm; 6:15pm-4:15am, February 11-12.

Left: my shadow by sunlight. Right: my shadow by moonlight.

Lunartic Moonlight Dinner, Dry Falls, Grand Coulee, WA: August 5, 2009, 10pm–2am (119 d 21 m 32s W, 47 d 35 m 25 s N), 2009

Digital print, acrylic
dia 16 x 30 inches

By moonlight, the movement of shadows is recorded every 20 minutes in the desert of eastern Washington.
Shadows cast by plastic canines are traced on a heliodon (a mechanical apparatus that simulates the sun) every hour on the summer solstice, equinox and winter solstice; the shadow movement was then documented on video with voice over announcing time and date. In the installation, the dogs watch themselves on video as their shadows grow and retreat through the day at each time of year.

**Two Dog Dial, 2010**
Plastic, DVD/DVD player

On the heliodon, Integrated Design Laboratory, University of Washington.

Two Dog Dial, 2010, Seattle, WA

Art Center Gallery, Calvin College, 2011

Shadows from a souvenir of the Seattle Space Needle were traced at each stop on the third and last day of *The Long Walk*, an event organized by Susan Robb for 40 artists walking 40 miles from Seattle to Snoqualmie Falls, WA.

**Space Needle on the Long Walk, 2010**

Shadows from a souvenir of the Seattle Space Needle were traced at each stop on the third and last day of *The Long Walk*, an event organized by Susan Robb for 40 artists walking 40 miles from Seattle to Snoqualmie Falls, WA.
Installation, Jacob Lawrence Gallery, School of Art, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, 2009

60 Days in Shenzhen: June 21–August 20, 2008

DigiElan prints, acrylic
Each 6 x 6 x 1/4 inches

The sky in Shenzhen, PRC, was photographed every 6 hours: 6am (top), noon, 6pm and midnight (bottom) for 60 days (the duration of my residency at the Shenzhen Institute of Fine Art, Shenzhen, PRC).
Seattle Sky Pearls: Hourly, October 18, 2009

Digital print
10 x 8 inches
A document of Seattle weather over 24 hours.
Seattle Sky: Hourly, October 18, 2009
20 digital prints, acrylic
6 x 6 x 4 inches

Seattle Sky: 6am, 2pm, 10pm / Winter Solstice, Vernal Equinox and Summer Solstice, 2010–2011
9 digital prints, acrylic
20 x 20 x 20 inches

A set of nine circular views of the sky in Seattle; the left vertical column images the Winter Solstice at 6am (top), 2pm and 10pm—the middle depicts the Vernal Equinox and the right Summer Solstice at the same times of day to show the changing light through the seasons.
Special Charges: People Doing Strange Things with Electricity, 2007

Digital print series
Each 15 x 22 inches
Shooting Stars, 2007

Digital print series
24 x 36 inches

Glassworks donated by well-known Seattle artists were shot with a 22 rifle; the moment of impact was captured photographically.
Following a text excerpt from President George Bush’s address to the nation on March 13, 2003, stills of bust balloons are synced with the sound of missile explosions.

In China, if an object breaks around the New Year, it is said, “Blossoms Broken, Fortune Comes.”

Done while in residence at the Shenzhen Institute of Fine Art, 2008.

**Broken Blossoms: 2 Views of a Major Crash, 2008**
- Digital print series
- 36 x 22 inches

**Hot Air: National Strategy for Weapons of Mass Destruction, 2005**
- Video
- 3 Minutes

Ling Ling’s Lamps
Metro Bombs
Couples in Art, 2010

Digital print series (7 of 20)
Each 19 x 13 inches

Leo and Claire
Ellen and Jim
John and Stephen
Yoko and Scott
Magda and Gary
Test and Mark

**Liquid Sphere, 2005**
Glass, water
15 x 15 x 15 inches

**Liquid Tear, 2005**
Glass, water
20 x 15 x 15 inches

**Cabinet of Transparencies, 2005**
Glass, colored water
Various sizes

**Liquid Sphere, 2005**

**Liquid Tear, 2005**

**Cabinet of Transparencies, 2005**

**Detail, Studio view**

**Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, WA, 2005**
Bull’s Eye Lens, Sheridan, Wyoming, 2011

Documentation—holding the lens from a dissected bull’s eye during the Jentel Artist Residency Program, Sheridan, WY.

Look-Out, Miami, FL, 2005

Publication

Envision Cascadia, 2009

Digital print
9 x 13 inches
South, 2012

Neon
8 x 20 x 4 inches

Neon sign of the cardinal direction created for the midwinter Onn/Of Festival of Lights, Seattle, WA

Golf Cam, 2011

In collaboration with Paul DeMarinis and class, Stanford University
Golf cart, wood, glass, artificial grass

A golf cart/traveling camera obscura; four lenses projected inverted views on three walls and the floor in the interior.
A cedar log / panoramic camera obscura; conceived in reference to the vast clearing and burning of timber in the early days of Kirkland, WA.

Log Cam, 2010
Log, glass, metal
5 x 1½ x 4 feet

Mirrored, 2009
Wood, glass, rubber
5 x 1½ x 1½ inches

De Cam, 2006
Metal, rubber, glass
6 x 1½ x 4 feet

Bagged, 2005
Paper, metal, glass
13 x 16 x 6 feet
Velo-Trope, 2010
In collaboration with Rusty Oliver
Bicycle parts, digital prints
6 x 5 x 2 feet

A hybrid bicycle in which the faster you peddle, the faster the animation (inspired by the bicycle shower of 1903). This double zoetrope features a portrait of Peter Kirk (founder of Kirkland), his mustache and an image of a child in front of what is now the Kirkland Art Center.

Peter Kirk’s Pull (After Lumière), 2010
In collaboration with Daniel Carrillo
5 x 10 x 4½ inches

Five glass collodion plates, each a photograph of the pull knob at a different focal length, are stacked to create a three-dimensional illusion. Inspired by Louis Lumière’s photo-stéréo-synthesis process seen in his Portrait of Auguste Lumière, 1920.
Paranoid Pedestal, NYC, 2006
Wood, glass
38 x 16 x 16 inches
A gallery pedestal on wheels is enlisted as a rolling periscope from which to watch others without their knowledge.

Paranoid Office Device for Grand Rapids, 2011
Wood, metal, glass
34 x 24 x 40 inches
A desk on wheels is enlisted as a periscope to be rolled around the gallery, in reference to Grand Rapids’s considerable history of furniture design and manufacturing.

Alan Kent Gallery, Chelsea, NYC, 2015

Cicero Art Gallery, Corner College, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011
Add clear liquid to a common red wine glass and it becomes a pristine lens that turns the world upside down.

Simply Smashing, 2000–2013

Wine glasses, acrylic, water or mineral oil

Various sizes

Alan Klotz Gallery, Chelsea, NYC, 2005

In the Cutting Edge, Exploratorium, San Francisco, CA, 2013

Port Angeles Art Center, Port Angeles, WA, 2008

Detail, photo credit: Amy Snyder

Photo credit: Jake Seniuk
Oculus Table, 2013

In collaboration with Woody Sullivan
Steel, vinyl, rubber, glass
33 x 28 x 28 inches

A rolling sundial conceived to interact with the Observatory’s oculus—a 28” hole in the ceiling.
Loosely based on a common ancient Greek sundial, the scaphe (σκαφή or “bowl”), the hemisphere interior mirrors the “celestial sphere.” Visitors align the table rim with sunlight streaming through the oculus and with visible landmarks on the horizon (Coit Tower, the Bay Bridge, etc.). The time and date are indicated by the position of the center ball’s shadow, cast on the interior of the hemisphere.

In collaboration with Woody Sullivan

6 Benches: corian, steel, wood

Each 17 x 60 x 18 inches

A slit aperture in each of six benches is angled and aligned with the sun specific to the hour it represents: 10am, 11am, Noon, 1pm, 2pm or 3pm solar time. For approximately 20 minutes before and after the corresponding hour, sunlight projects through an aperture; the date is also indicated by the location of the projection on the ground. Five benches are positioned on the terrace and one in the west corner of the Observatory. When considered together, they constitute a unique “hour planes” sundial.
The light slit crosses the center of the marker at the solar hour. A yellow nodus in the slit indicates the time of year. Shown above is May 21, 2013. On the Solstices (Dec. and June 21), the nodus will center on the marker.

Lunar Drift: Sun and Moon Pointers, 2014

In collaboration with Paul DeMarinis

Aluminum, electronics, glass, steel, digital prints, acrylic

Two slow-time kinetic sculptures will continually point at the moon and the sun, whether they are above or below the horizon, in daylight or night, clear skies or overcast. By observing the relationship between the sun and the moon pointers, the current phase of the moon can also be understood. For example, during a full moon, the sun and moon pointers will aim in opposite directions. Wall graphics will show the phases of the moon each night for one year.