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Art writer

Wedding of science and art

"Actually, it is the first school of holography in the world," said Loren Billings, director of the Fine Arts Research and Holographic Center, 1134 W. Washington, where the school is beginning its second year. "We are dedicated to holography as an important art form and as a developing technology."

Holography is the science, or art, of capturing on film the interference pattern of pure light, usually from a laser beam, whereby a three-dimensional image can be made to float in space. Objects and figures on flat film seem to project toward the viewer, changing with the viewer's position. A circle of film can evoke an image visible from all sides.

Holograms tend to be small for technical reasons, but holographers dream of holographic movies and bigger than life-size images. Already some spectacular results have been achieved, judging by exhibitions of holography at Billings' Gallery 1134, where changing exhibitions of holograms from the center's permanent collection now may be seen.

THE WEDDING of art and science is an ancient rite. In recent years there have been sporadic attempts to unite the talents of artists and scientists, led by Billy Kluever of Bell Laboratories and Robert Rauschenberg through the organization called Experiments in Art and Technology.

EAT staged at least one mammoth display of works produced by artists and engineers in collaboration. Enough was done to give substance to the vision of untrammelled artistic imagination, supported by scientific technology, for which little or nothing is impossible.

Currently, the Museum of Contemporary Art is presenting "Art and Technology," a series of lectures, performances, and discussions, beginning with a lecture by Robert Irwin at the Zolla-Lieberman Gallery, 368 W. Huron, at 8 p.m. Oct. 12. Admission is \$1 for adults, 50 cents for students and

Holography is the marriage of science and art

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senior citizens and members are free. The series is aimed at exploring the interface of technology with contemporary art.

Composer Alvin Lucier follows at 8 p.m. Oct. 27, at MoMing Performing Space, 1034 W. Barry, with "A Video Event" by video-art pioneer Nam June Paik at the Film Center of the School of the Art Institute.

MEANWHILE, CHICAGO'S School of Holography is off and running, with a fall quarter offering of 10 courses plus seminars and a faculty of nine artists and physicists, headed by holography innovator Tung H. Jeong

of Lake Forest College as special consultant and physicist Rudolph P. Guzik, special instructor on optics and photochemistry.

Al Ornelas teaches "Art and Holography," designed to explore the esthetic potentials of holography. Other instructors are Harold Salaba, John Hoffman, Kevin Huotari, Victor Heredia, Lon Moore and David Wender.

Courses for credit are offered students of the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus. Similar programs with other area colleges are being discussed.

Students working for credit have the lowest tuition rates.

COURSES RANGE from an introductory one with no prerequisites, to highly technical advanced courses. A crash course in holography, two 12-hour sessions, also has no prerequisites.

"Our main thrust is in art and holography, providing opportunity for artists to work and explore in this new field," Billings said.

Like photography, holography needs time and the contributions of many artist practitioners before it can escape being a novelty.

It is the substantial practical and scientific foundation of holography that distinguishes it from the contrived adaptations of scienti-

fic technology by artists looking for novelty. We live in an age of mindless decorative art and mind-expanding experimental art. While the first can be found in all ages, the second presents a special problem because it ranges from near idiocy to sheer genius, both of which may receive the same respectful attention from galleries and museums because it is generally risky to anticipate the judgment of time.

Devotees of holography have a craft and a growing technology to master, after which their only restrictions are the limits of imagination. Holography is an opportunity and challenge for artists.