

Obituary: Rockne Krebs (1938-2011)

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The North American multimedia artist Rockne Krebs died in Washington DC on October 10th, 2011. Krebs pioneered projected light as an art medium. He produced his first laser installation in 1968, only 8 years after the device appeared, at first as a scientific curiosity. Inspired by such Washington Color Painters as Kenneth Noland and Gene Davis, he subsequently combined lenses, mirrors and prisms to direct monochromatic beams into skies over some 2 dozen American cities. In a brief letter to me, dated April 10th, 1978, he wrote: '...my work with lasers and natural light is very much concerned with the tradition of the American sublime; the laser technology is only a tool which I use to draw in these spaces, collaging with these lines directly onto the landscape and lightscape of a place'. I once stopped off in Atlanta (August 25th, 1979) to see his nocturnal *Canis Major* (1975-76) at the Omni International Hotel, in which light projected from an argon gas laser was split into two green and two blue beams, which was complemented by his diurnal *Atlantis* (1973-76), in the same complex, dispersing the sun's rays through 1,000 glass prisms, and which crystallised into an image of his daughter's eye only each spring and autumn equinox.

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