



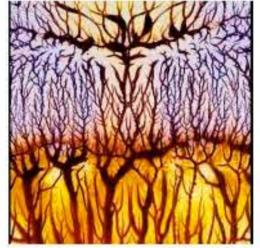
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## Peter Bynum | Illuminated Paint



The Art and Picture Collections at Mid-Manhattan Library present *Illuminated Paint* a site-specific exhibition of seventeen illuminated paintings on glass by artist **Peter Bynum**. Painters have long explored the physical limits of paint. Peter Bynum opens new territory for painting by exposing paint's intrinsic branching behavior, and then illuminating the complex nervous system it creates.



*Unified Field, Cerulean, 5th Ave. Window No. 2, 2014. 96 in. H x 48 in. W. Acrylic paint on tempered glass (2 layers), L.E.D. backlighting, remote dimmer, steel bracket*

The three-dimensional, illuminated paintings on glass, with their cosmic energy and ecstatic beauty, conjure everything from trees and rivers to capillaries and neurons, and are alive with movement, color and detail, biomorphic forms swimming in light and space. To reveal paint's complex intelligence, Bynum devised an innovative method of pressuring paint between panes of tempered glass, which he then layers through a precise bracketing system, and backlights with LED-powered screens. The resulting paintings show that paint has an innate exploratory genius, evocative of the life-force found in ecosystems throughout nature. The glass, the light and the artist are merely vehicles for illuminating paint's innate intelligence.

"With minimal help," **Bynum** says, "paint is capable of being its own protagonist in its own drama, creating a vast network of veins and capillaries, limbs and branches -- an entire interconnected ecosystem that's as complex as any organism, language, or network of ideas in the human brain." Art historian and former Neuberger Museum curator Dede Young writes, "Peter Bynum has invented a new way of painting with light, and pushed the language of painting into a new place. It changes the conversation." These lush poetic works unite paint, science and technology to expand the territory available to painting, and advance our contemplation of the Eternal Becoming and interconnectedness of all life.

Please join us for a What Inspires Artists series event on **Tuesday October 7 at 6:30 p.m. inside the Corner Room. Peter Bynum and senior art librarian Arezoo Moseni discuss the "Interconnected of All Life" the main source of influence on Bynum's work.**

The artist reception follows the event.

*Art in the Corner Room* series is curated by **Arezoo Moseni**.

### Artist Statement

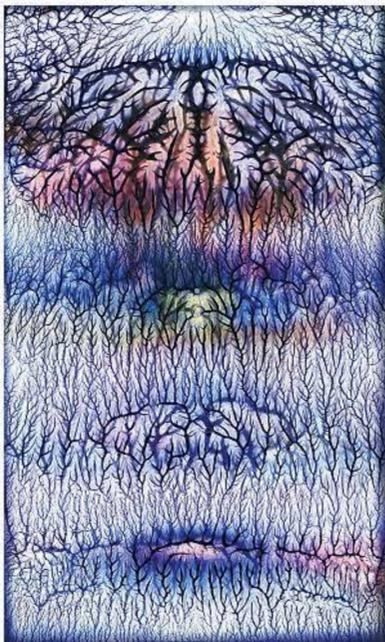
"We think of paint as being brought to life by an artist; but paint has a life and a mind of its own. With minimal help, paint is capable of expressing a complex intelligence and creating a vast network of veins and capillaries, limbs and branches -- an ecosystem that's as complex as any living organism or network of ideas in the human brain. My current body of work, *Illuminated Paint* on view in The New York Public Library's 5th Avenue and 40th Street windows, explores the interior life of paint and the use of light to illuminate paint 360°. I use an experimental method that presses acrylic paint between panes of tempered glass, which are then layered through a bracketing system and backlit with LED panels. Remote dimmers allow viewers to control the light and play with its optical effects. The results are 3D objects that merge light with paint's primal energy and reveal its innate exploratory genius, evocative of the life-force found in nervous systems and ecosystems throughout nature. Floating on layers of glass, biomorphic forms spread, pool, and flow tendrillike from spines and centers, swimming through light and space. Their internal veining and spontaneous dendritic branching is evocative of trees and rivers, capillaries and synapses -- the purposeful fluidity and exploratory courage of existence. Viewer control of the light further dissolves the centrality of the artist. On a metaphysical level, they resemble the way history, language, ideology and memory function -- with layers of discourse, complex patterns of thought, and hierarchical narrative threads. It's a burst of ecstatic growth -- a glimpse of the life-force in action and the Eternal Becoming of ideas and organisms."



*NYPL Window 1, 5th Avenue, 2014. 96 in. H x 48 in. W. Acrylic paint on tempered glass, L.E.D. backlighting, remote dimmer, steel bracket.*

**Peter Bynum's** light-infused sculptural paintings have electrified the art world from New York to Rome to Shanghai. In one of his recent museum exhibitions, *Playing with Fire: 50 Years of Contemporary Glass*, a 325 sq. ft. interactive painting was featured alongside James Turrell's work at New York's Museum of Arts & Design for most of 2013. MAD dubbed Bynum and Turrell two of the most influential artists of the last half century who work with glass. [His most recent solo show](#) was in Basel, Switzerland at [Jankossen Contemporary](#). His work is held in over 60 prominent private collections.

"At its most provocative, contemporary art turns a corner and moves away from the past," says art historian and former museum curator Dede Young. "Peter Bynum brings to this discourse a body of worked focused on the subject of light that both explores and pushes the boundaries of contemporary painting."



*NYPL 5th Ave. Vitrine, 2014. 39 in. H x 23 1/2 in. W. Acrylic paint on tempered glass (3 layers), L.E.D. backlighting, remote dimmer, steel bracket.*

Pushing boundaries has been part of Bynum's resume since the early 80s, when he studied film, photography and philosophy at New York University's Graduate Film School. Active in the East Village art scene of Basquiat, Haring and graffiti artists, he partnered with international drag chanteuses and hardcore punk rockers to provide financial support to fellow artists and progressive movements. Bynum left the art world in the mid-80's to devote his creative talents to revolutionary movements in Central America. From the mid-1980s to the late 1990s he directed creative projects for guerrilla forces in El Salvador, spiritual leaders in India, Medecins sans Frontieres in Africa, progressive causes in the U.S., and global movements supporting women of color and the working poor.

In 2001, after narrowly missing the World Trade Center disaster, Bynum renewed his full-time artistic practice and began creating large sculptural paintings on transparent media at the Tallix Sculpture Foundry in Beacon, NY. He refined his technique of pressing paint between glass, experimented with different forms of

lighting, jettisoned the frame, and moved to large-scale painting. Working today in a 3,000 sq. ft. studio on the banks of the Hudson River in Peekskill, NY, he is creating vivid optical experiences that illuminate the nature of paint and the structural perfection of nature itself.