

BLOG

[Video] Jim Campbell's Sculptural LED Light Installations

By [Emerson Rosenthal](#) — Mar 19 2014
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Even the [Lumière Brothers](#) would glow over the work of artist and light engineer, [Jim Campbell](#). The prolific pioneer of patchwork bulb-wiring's career spans three decades, and his work keeps on getting better—the artist's newest works have been called "consummate" and "transformative" by [Art Daily](#) after their debut this month at [Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery](#). It goes without saying that the mastery of his specific genre of low resolution re-imagings, communicated through programmed bulbs and LEDs, is a practice thirty years in the making.

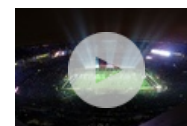
Good thing he's got a retrospective show coming up. *Rhythms of Perception*, the artist's first major exhibition in a New York museum, brings a survey spanning his career in contemporary art to the [Museum of the Moving Image](#) on March 20, from his earliest pieces to his [project in Madison Square Park](#) and his new work, showcased in our documentary on the luminary (above!).

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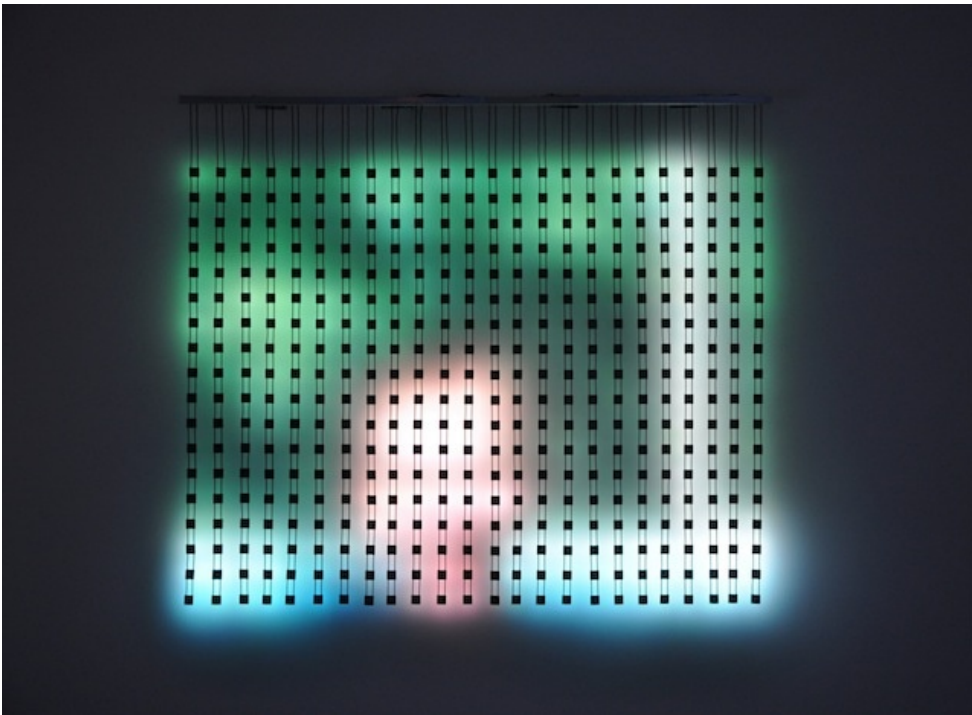



Campbell's installation at San Diego Airport. Images courtesy of the artist.

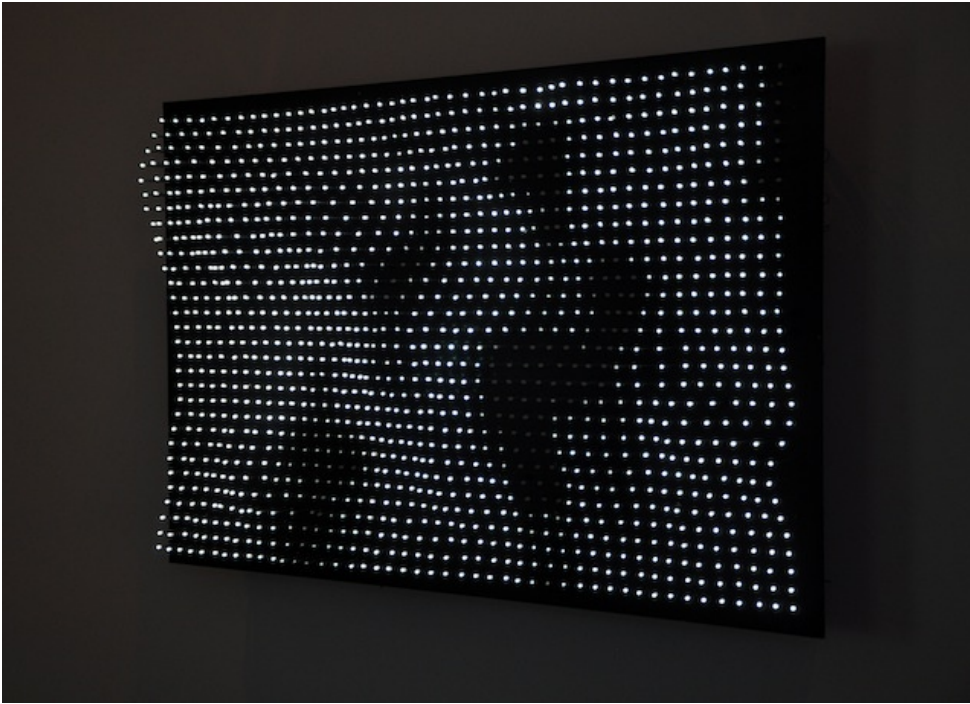
Campbell's career began at the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#), when, after garnering a BS in electrical engineering and mathematics in 1978, Campbell decided to focus his efforts on generating the technology that would allow him to turn 2D videos into 3D light sculptures.

Twelve patents later, Campbell's work is not only synonymous with the contemporary art world, but with the world of public art as well—an aspect of altruism made even more apparent with the fact that Campbell considers his newest artworks at Bryce Wolkowitz as just *prototypes* for the public artworks he plans in San Diego.

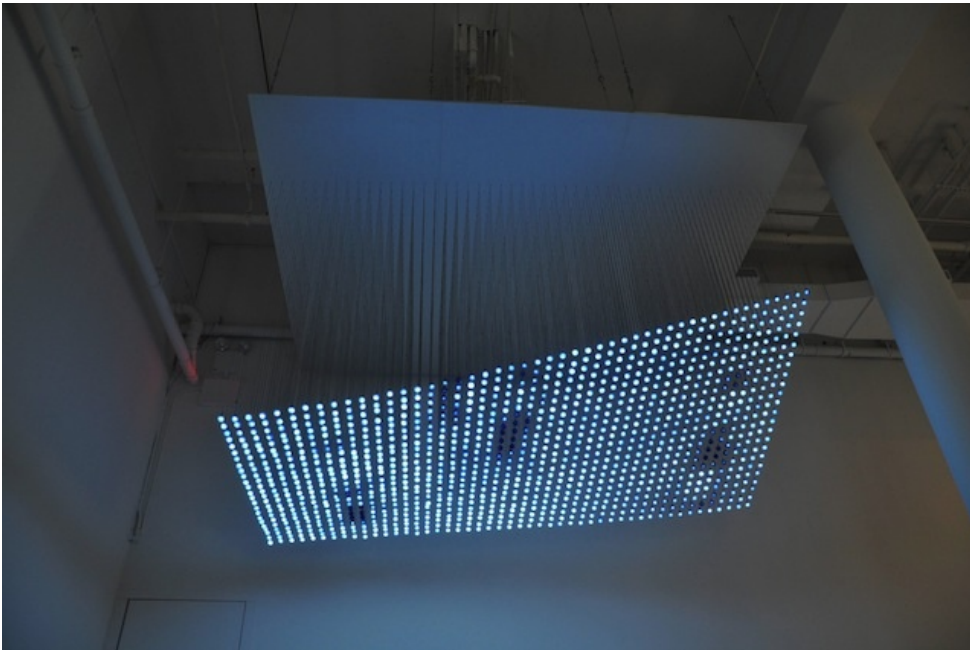
Says Campbell, "Light is a meta-thing. There's something magical about working with it; people have almost a meditative response." Below, some of the haunting works on display at Bryce Wolkowitz, and in our documentary:



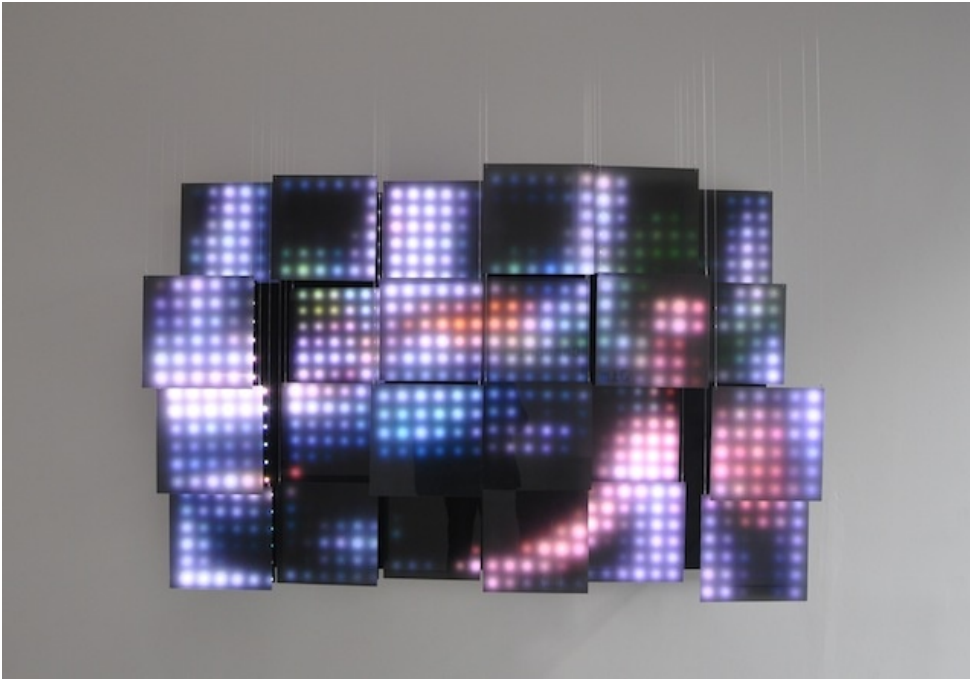
A Still of 'Home Movies' (2014).



Light Topography Wave



Untitled (Study for The Journey)



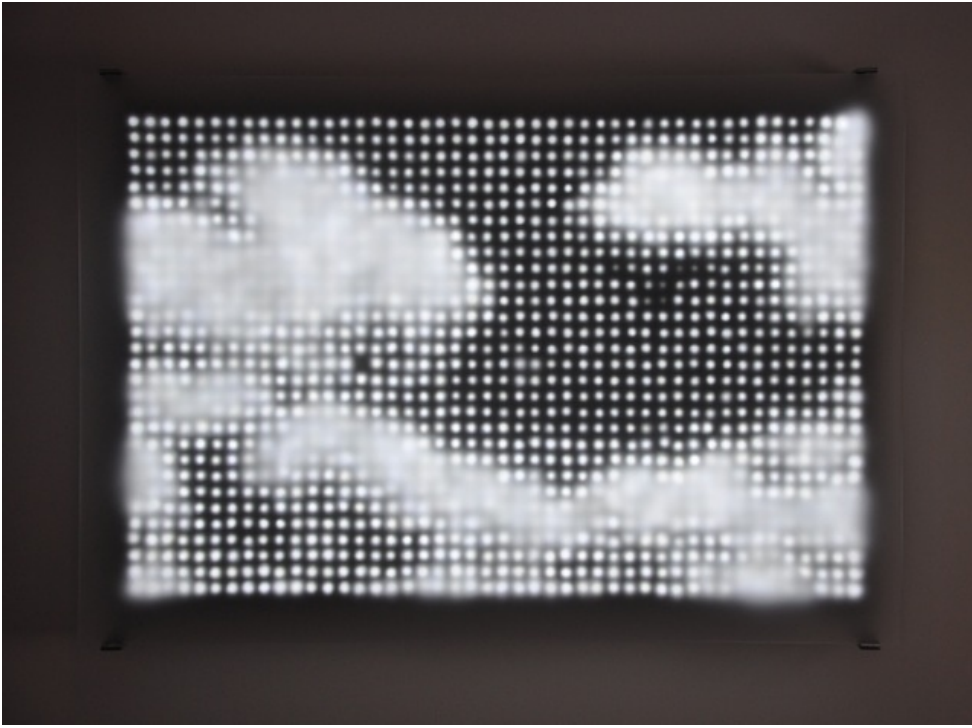
Untitled (multi-panel commuters)



Topography Reconstruction Wave

While the rest of the filmic world already seems contented to be moving even beyond HD, Campbell enjoys the limitations that working in low resolution provide his artwork:

"Yes, the content of these works is partially generated by the limitation of working in low resolution; I can't just go photograph something and put it on one of these low resolution displays because most images are too complicated. For example, if I'm looking for people moving, walking, & swimming, I'll look for very simple backgrounds. I'll find locations where not a lot is going on behind these people, so they are kind of silhouetted. They're very simple forms."



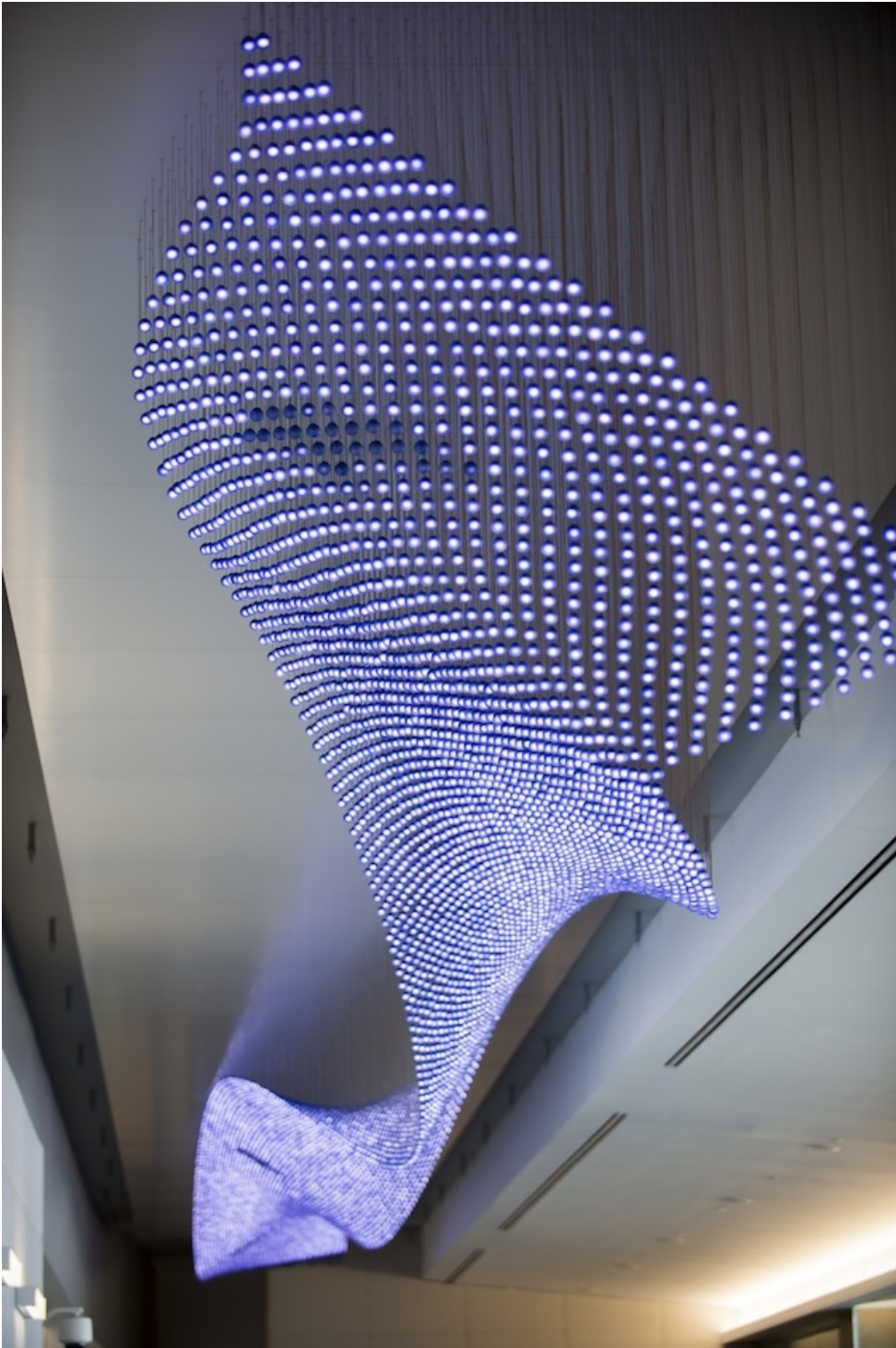
Light Topography Clouds

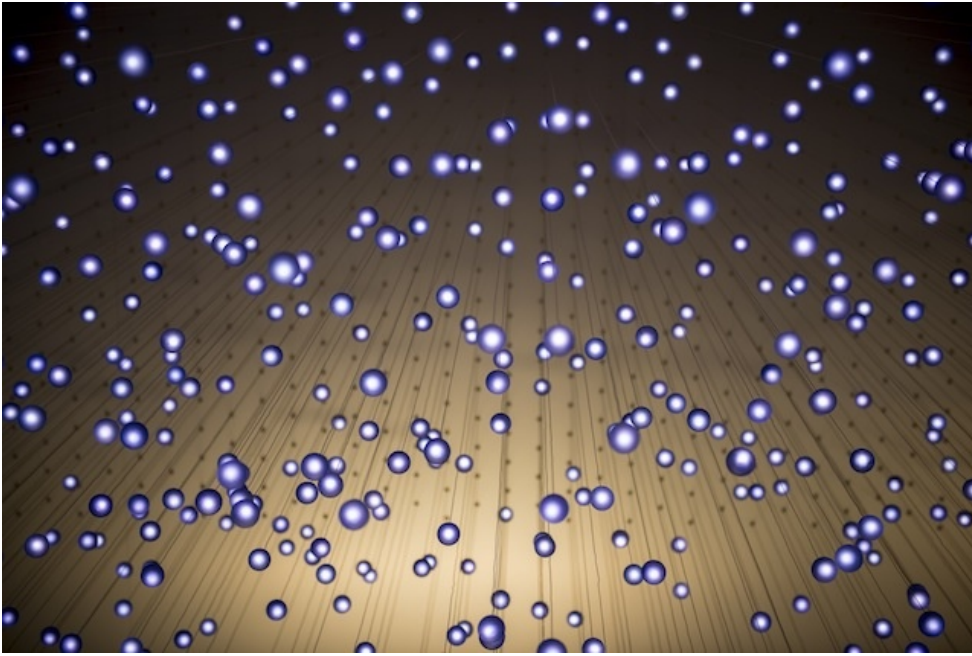
Even those *in transit* have the opportunity to be immersed in Campbell's work. Like his works at Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery, the bulb-based *The Journey* guides lucky travelers through San Diego Airport by sending videos other travelers through its flowing, purple, prismatic display. Below, selected documentation of *The Journey*, in all of its glory:



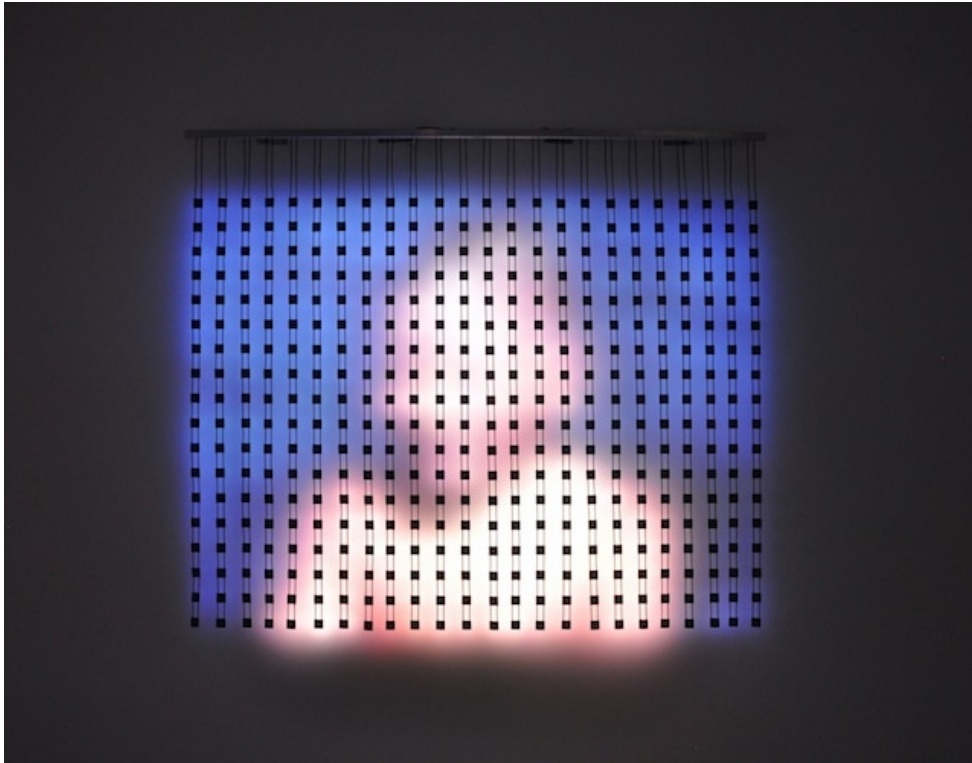








Campbell breathes the universal enchantment of light into the unlikeliest of places. The Creators Project is proud to salute Campbell's visionary artistry, his thirty-year body of work, and his efforts in bringing his LED monuments to the public.



Home Movies (David)

"Rhythms of Perception" is currently on view at Museum of the Moving Image through June 15, made possible by Steve Dietz and [Northern Lights](#). His exhibition of new work at Bryce Wolkowitz is on view through April 19.

Images courtesy of [Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery](#) and Jim Campbell

By [Emerson Rosenthal](#)

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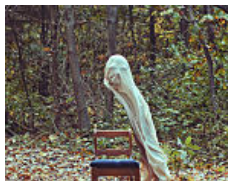
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