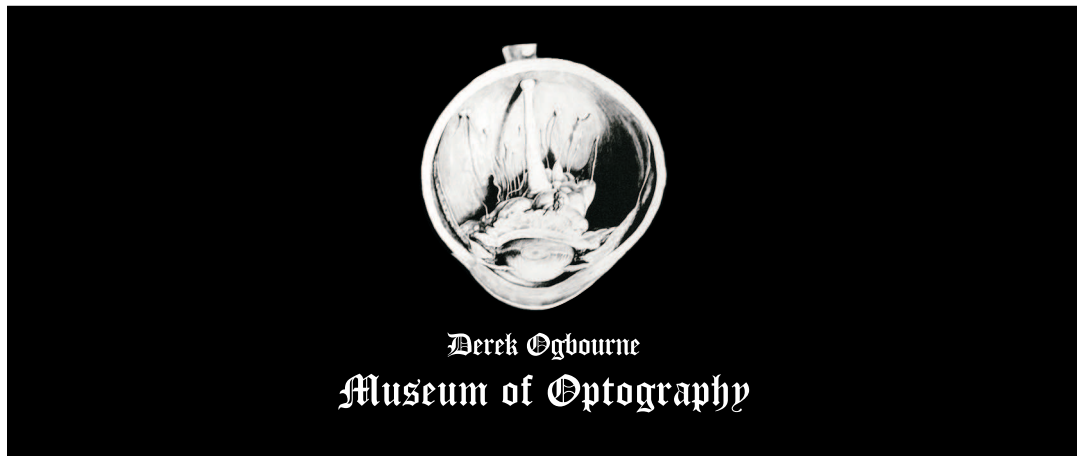


**DEREK OGBOURNE**  
Museum of Optography

PRESS RELEASE



A hundred and forty delicate retinal drawings arranged as a disk that echoes the retina; video, photography, archival material and yet more drawings, conspire to create a tantalising world of pseudo-imaginary science in Derek Ogbourne's MUSEUM OF OPTOGRAPHY. Part science, part detective story, part history lesson, part 'psychogeography', but always already, simultaneously, 'art'; in this exhibition Ogbourne explores his fascination with the curious myth of the process called optography:

In the mid 17th Century, a Jesuit Friar called Christopher Schiener observed an image laid bare on the retina of a frog: A faint, fleeting record of what the eye had been fixed on at the moment of death. The fixing on the retina of the last image seen before death came to be known as an optogram. In Heidelberg, Germany, the physiologist Wilhelm Kühne made the first and most successful visually identifiable optograms recorded as drawings in the late 1870's. He also had obtained the only known human optogram, in Bruchsal. Optography was believed to be a new criminologist tool that would help to solve murders, akin to early DNA testing.

A condemned young man, two scientists, Jack the Ripper, Salvador Dalí and the only known human optogram are leads extrapolated within Derek Ogbourne's MUSEUM OF OPTOGRAPHY in the quest to uncover the truth and constant fascination behind this myth.

The exhibition is part invention and part archive and investigates the human preoccupation with what exists within the very fine line between being and not being. Within every gaze that contemplates death. This MUSEUM OF OPTOGRAPHY is about the imagination of death. As a poetic metaphor, optography suggests a series of associations: the eye as camera, the eyelid, its shutter and the moment of retreat into the internal, the quest of

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the virtual and eventually, a real death moment and also the hope of life after death after the physical death.

Derek Ogbourne's MUSEUM OF OPTOGRAPHY has an accompanying book - THE SHUTTER OF DEATH - with contributions of scientists, historians, artists and writers who are engaged with the phenomena of optography in a different manner. Special thanks to: Dr Alexandridis, Professor Richard Kremer, Dr. Ali Hossaini, Paul Sakoilsky, Thom Kubli, Richard Niman and Susana Medina.

Opening:

March 29, 2007 7 PM-9.30 PM

Duration of the Exhibition:

March 30-Mai 4, 2007

Opening hours:

Tuesday-Friday 11 AM - 1 PM and 3 PM-6 PM

Saturday 11 AM-1 PM

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