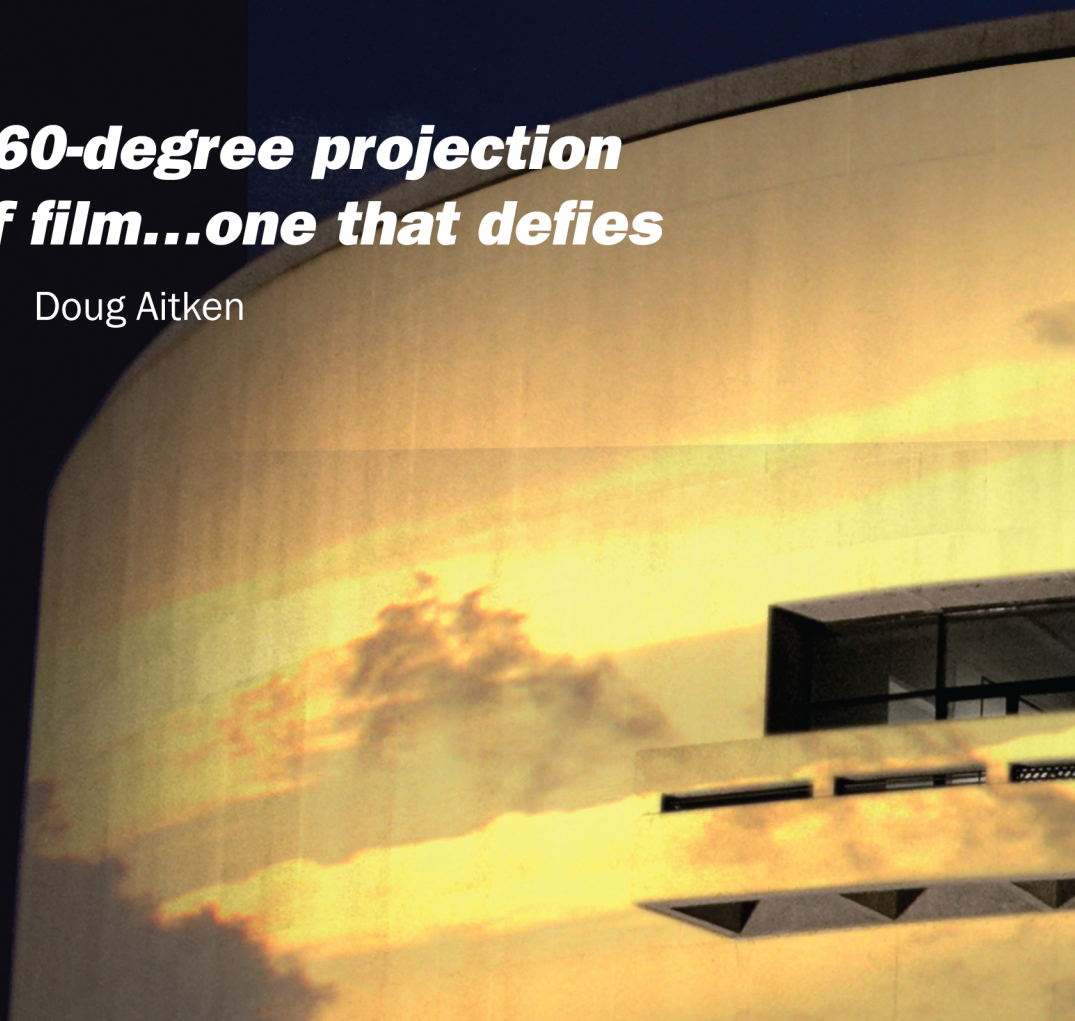


DOUG AITKEN

360-DEGREE PROJECTION

SPRING

The Hirshhorn 360-degree projection is a new form of film...one that defies categorization. Doug Aitken



Doug Aitken, conceptual renderings for 360-degree projection installation commissioned by the Hirshhorn. Photos: Doug Aitken Workshop

Project organized by deputy director and chief curator Kerry Brougher.

Stepping out of a taxi on Independence Avenue in 2009 on his first visit to the Hirshhorn, Doug Aitken was immediately struck by the unique “screen” in front of him. In March, this screen—the distinctive circular façade of the Hirshhorn—will come to life as Aitken’s commissioned film, a new addition to the permanent collection, will illuminate, animate, and transform the Museum’s iconic building into “liquid architecture.” Using approximately eleven high-definition projectors, the artist will seamlessly blend moving imagery to create a convex 360-degree panorama that will make the Hirshhorn’s structure recede into cinematic space, rotating, rising, and evolving into new forms.

Visitors to the National Mall between sunset and midnight from March 22 to May 13 will engage in a new kind of film experience. No longer passive recipients of images and sound, viewers will become active participants as they walk the perimeter of the building in an attempt to take in the work in its entirety. As no single vantage point will allow for a full sense of the whole, this goal may prove elusive. But engaging with the piece and its setting—a far cry from conventional theaters or galleries—will inspire questions about the future of new media art, architecture, and museums.

Deputy director and chief curator Kerry Brougher has discussed this work in these



broader terms, considering it not only an important addition to the Hirshhorn's ever-expanding collection of time-based media and a work that "calls for a new cinematic vocabulary," but also a metaphor for the museum itself in the twenty-first century: "Doug Aitken's 360-degree projection will harness the power of cinema and digital technology to break down and evaporate the conventional borders between building, object, and public space. This spring at twilight, the museum will vanish, and in its place will appear a multifaceted, living place that makes expanded cultural experiences possible."

