



LUMINATO 2007 » LIGHTING UP THE NIGHT SKY – AND TORONTO'S ART SCENE



Downtown is seen from Toronto Island this week during a test for *Pulse Front: Relational Architecture 12* by Montreal's Rafael Lozano-Hemmer. PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL
IN NEWS Leah McLaren reports from the festival's gala opening. PAGE A3 »

Luminato brings balance to city life

Festival brightens the urban evening with installations of light, aerobics and sex



LEAH McLAREN

lmclaren@globeandmail.com

TORONTO

umiwhat? I confess, this was my reaction the first time I saw the ad campaign for Toronto's festival of arts and creativity, which launches today and runs through June 10. You've seen

the billboards: big blue eye ball, black background, baffling slogan – "See the world in a new light."

What some Torontonians may have first assumed was a new brand of contact lens solution is in fact an extraordinary extravaganza of visual and performing arts taking place around the city. Frankly, it's the kind of thing native Queen Westers like myself generally ignore in favour of drinks on a local patio (chalk it up to summer festival fatigue), but in this case we shouldn't. If Luminato

doesn't change the way we see the world, it should at least change the way we see Toronto.

I came to this conclusion last night as I stood on the boardwalk outside the Power Plant art gallery with 100-odd other guests including MPP Greg Sorbara and Luminato founder David Pecaut watching the premiere of *Pulse Front*, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's epic light show (billed as the world's largest light-installation piece), which happens every night of the festival at Harbourfront. Cost of admission: Free.

The interactive art piece allows people to place their hands on outdoor sculptures and watch their pulse projected into the night sky via 20 beacons of light.

First to activate the project was 11-year-old Jackson Church, a former neo-natal-unit cardiac patient at Sunnybrook hospital. Watching this little boy's big heart beat excitedly displayed against the darkness, Toronto seems like pretty good place to be. We might not be the city of lights, but we're getting brighter. [...]