

APRIL -84

## Now you see it ...

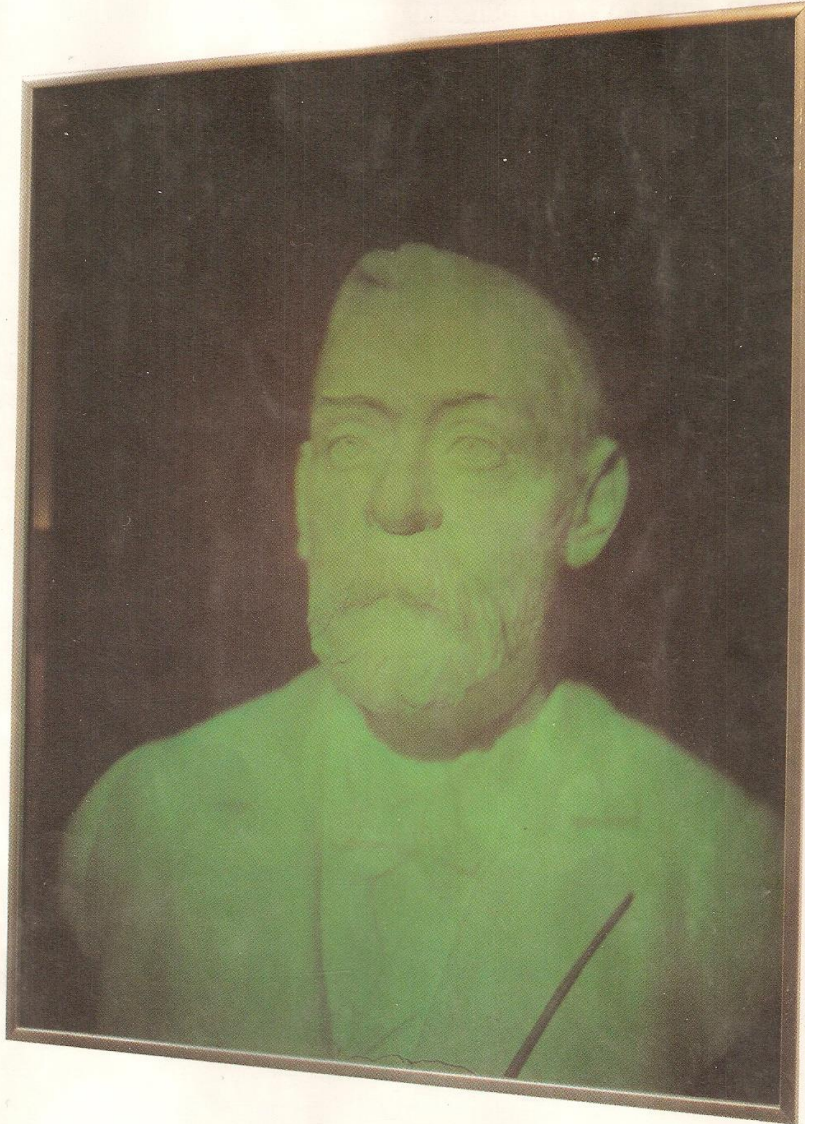
There is a small gallery on Drottninggatan in the centre of Stockholm that has a disproportionately large effect on visitors from all over the world.

One of these, an American, paid the following tribute in the gallery's guest book: "It plays with the mind and senses in a most devious way; makes one wonder where reality ends and imagination begins." Another wrote simply: "Far out!"

Both descriptions are accurate in their different ways. Hologram Gallery is one of the few permanent exhibitions in the world devoted to holography, the creation of three-dimensional pictures using laser technology.

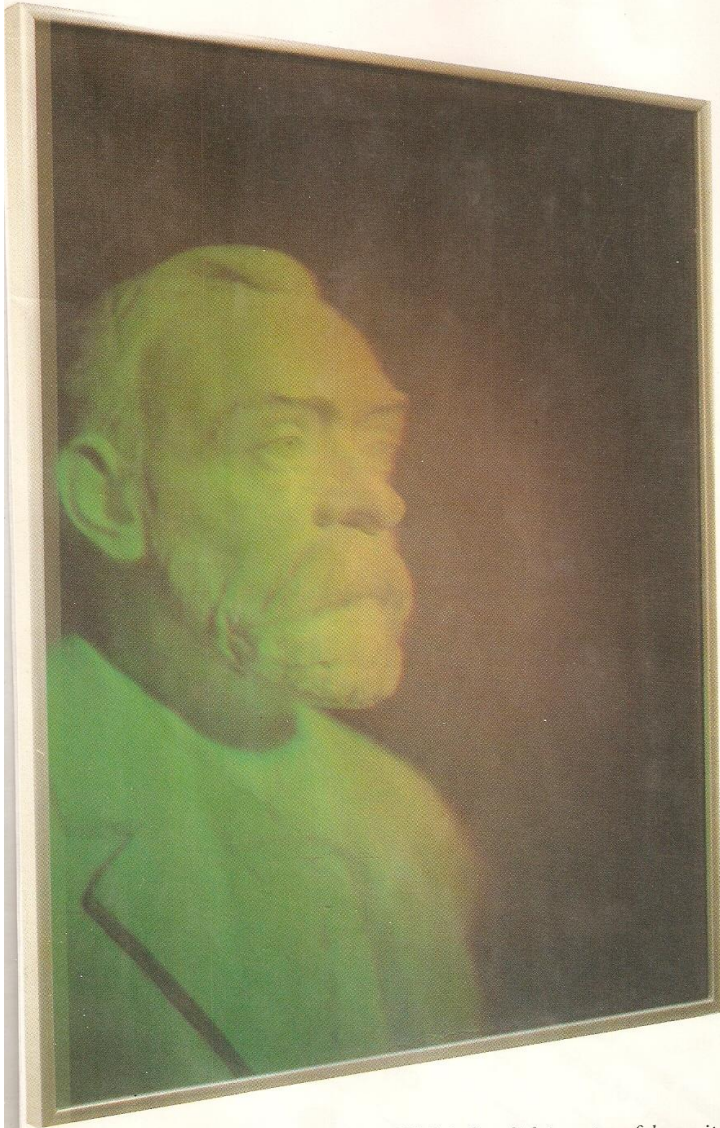
After establishing an early lead in the new science (or perhaps it should be called an art form), Sweden is now being overtaken by the United States and Britain but remains the only place in the world where you have your hologram taken, as it were. It takes only 15 minutes but the cost is, as yet, a little astronomical and unlikely to put conventional photographers out of business: Around SEK 23,000. However at least one American millionaire and a wealthy west German businessman have themselves made the trip to Stockholm to preserve themselves for posterity in 3D.

Mona Forsberg, former air hostess with a degree in marketing economics, who became fascinated with holography during the mid-seventies, now runs Hologram Gallery, which acts as a showroom and marketing place but is also open to visitors at weekends and during the summer. More than 10,000 people from all over the world visited the little gallery in Drottning-





# ... now you don't



*Alfred Nobel, Swedish inventor of dynamite and founder of the Nobel Prizes. This hologram was created by Per Skande in 1981. Jan Almerén's first picture is taken facing the hologram, the second from the side to capture the three dimensional effect.*

gatan last year, making it a new tourist attraction.

"There are only 30 hologram artists in the real sense of the word," Mona explained. These include Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd who splits his time between Sweden and Switzerland. American scientist and holographer Stephen Benton has played a crucial role in educating in the new medium.

The hologram also has an obvious application in advertising and many of the 3D pictures on display at Mona's gallery feature brand names that, almost literally, leap out and hit you. "I don't think the advertising world has yet taken full advantage of the hologram," said Mona, "But no matter what, it will be years and years before you see holograms taking the place of conventional posters."

Holographic jewellery, hologram stickers... →

*Below: A Viking necklace from the sixth century recreated as a hologram. The gold original is now locked in the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm.*





A British pop group recently came out with the world's first-ever holographic album sleeve; ID and credit card manufacturers are making use of the new techniques to prevent forgery and a German scientist has invented a technique that prints a holographic number on a passport picture – the passport number literally floats over the picture. “Don't ask me how, or even why,” said Mona, “But I've seen it and it is amazing.”

She refers to holography as “light sculpture” and says comparisons with previous, more gimmicky, 3D experiments such as films are not valid. “You had to wear glasses and the effect was contrived and very artificial.”

One of the more poetic impressions recorded in the gallery's visitors' book put it thus: “Hologram: The cosmos in a grain of sand.” Another, obviously British ex-public school, said ecstatically, “Absolutely spiffing!” While my favourite put it thus: “One hell of a way to bend your brain.” Although personally I still prefer a one-malt whisky. *Chris Mosey*

*Two holograms by British artist Nick Philips. In the first the tap is holographic, the plastic beaker real. The second is titled simply Apple.*

