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# Traveling Light

by CITYARTS on Oct 26, 2011 • 10:14 am

## Curious Matter in Jersey City

By [Melissa Stern](#)

Should we all move to Jersey City? That's all I could think after an efficient 15 minute PATH train ride to a place that I confess I had never ventured before. A short walk through a street teeming with shops out of a time warp, and I found myself on a tree-lined avenue of Victorian brownstones so beautiful that they would make a Brooklynite weep.

It's a perfect setting for Curious Matter, an artist-run gallery dedicated to the exploration of ideas and visual art. This eccentric and rarified little gallery is home to some of the most intellectually rigorous shows in the area. Co-founders Arthur Bruso and Raymond E. Mingst consistently curate shows that address their deep interest in science, nature, beauty and consciousness. Related to the "cabinets of wonder" from other centuries, these shows span the artistic landscape showing work of any and all materials that attempt to address these big questions.

The current exhibit, *Dividing the Light Measuring Darkness*, is an investigation into the properties of light and dark. According to the exhibition catalog, "from ancient myth to modern science light comes out of darkness. Light and darkness are separate entities, but dependent upon one another." Heady stuff coming from the ancestral home of Nathan Lane and Shaquille O'Neal. Not every piece in the show is successful—the very nature of art addressing these kinds of questions ensures that not every piece will hit the mark. But the pieces that do strike the theme are true winners.

A cardboard and drawn sculpture made by Hyun-Joon Yoon is a standout. The piece in two sections consists of layers and layers of board cut to form the silhouettes of several men receding into what seems to be infinity. Intricate tiny white writing swirls around the cutouts, like miniature galaxies. The overall effect is astounding, especially for a piece that is all of 9 by 20 inches in size.

Another bright light in the show is a luscious black and white photograph by Ken Collins. A slightly fuzzy round object sits quietly on what looks like a tabletop. A brilliant band of light delineating the horizon highlights the questions, "Is the light approaching or receding?" and "Are we about to be plunged into darkness or bathed in the light?" This fascinating exhibition sheds light on New York's outskirts and illuminates the trek to Jersey City.

### Dividing Light Measuring Darkness

Through Nov. 6, Curious Matter, 272 5th St., Jersey City, N.J., [www.curiosmatter.blogspot.com](http://www.curiosmatter.blogspot.com).

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