

**Amanda Means**  
**Artist's Statement 2014**  
**Flinn Gallery Exhibition: *in focus***  
**Greenwich, CT**

**Background:**

I was raised on a farm in Upstate New York and spent much of my childhood outdoors, close to the natural world. I have stirring memories of the constantly shifting sensations of light, space and color that surrounded me during those years. Everyday was different. There were the crisp, bright greens of new spring snowdrops pushing up through the last of the late winter snow. There were the bright, hot summer days of clear blue skies and yellow sun and the deep blue night sky bursting with flashes of lightening. Autumn was filled with rich, rusty oranges and browns, sometimes deep salmon colors, sometimes yellow and red. Cold, dim winter afternoons had their own luxurious heavy greys. Midnight to high noon, dusk to dawn, spring, summer, fall, winter, and spring again.....no two days were ever the same.

**Fast forward to 1998:**

I am a photographer now. (Keep in mind that photography is all about light. Early photographs were called sun prints. ) I've just completed my first exhibition of enormous flower images in New York City. I'm searching around for a new idea. It comes to me that light bulbs are related to flowers – they both have filaments. They both have their own sort of glow. They have a similar presence. Flowers and light bulbs both feel “awake.” They are filled with their own energy. Each one is different. I try putting a light bulb inside my big enlarger and turning it on so its image is projected onto photo paper on the opposite wall. A magnificent black and white light bulb photograph emerges in the developer tray.

**Forward again to 2000:**

I've completed a series of black and white light bulb images. I wonder what it would be like to make light bulbs in color. I gather up a box of bulbs, and some Rosco color filters and head to the Polaroid 20x24 Studio on Broadway. I get some wonderful results – glistening, glowing color bulbs – spring greens, blues and yellows of hot summer days, those deep salmons and glowing greens of fall, and dark blue night skies bursting with lightening flashes. I remember my earlier interest in James Turrell, Larry Bell and others from the Light and Space movement in California in the 1960's. I remember Carlton Watkins light suffused photographs in Yosemite. I think about the sublime in art. I think about the paint charged vistas of surface, light and color of Rothko, Newman, Pollock and deKooning.

**Forward once again to 2001:**

I have an exhibition in New York City of black and white and color light bulbs. I find it remarkable that the sensations of light and color from my early childhood are now on the walls of a gallery in the form of greatly enlarged light bulbs. I wonder how it is that these mass-produced, seemingly soulless little bulbs can be transformed onto photographic paper and how it is that they feel so awake and so alive.

**2014:**

I have continued to work with color Polaroid light bulbs creating another series in 2004 and another in 2007. The results still fascinate me.

