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## REVIEWS & PRESS

Lenore Malen. *The New Society for Universal Harmony*. Granary Books, 2005.

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**Indiana, Gary. "Mesmer as Metaphor: Lenore Malen's Fictions of Utopia." *Art in America*, (February 2006).**

Lenore Malen's multi-media project "The New Society for Universal Harmony," documented in a recent book and in several gallery and museum presentations, simulates the spell of utopian yearning (and its familiar decay into authoritarianism ideology) in a slyly deflationary paradigm of illness and healing, expanded outward from individual malaise and cure to an idealized therapeutic communitarianism. Malen's model utopia is an elaborately woven fiction—a restaging in photographs, videos and texts of the "magnetic healing practices" in the years leading up to the French Revolution by Franz Anton Mesmer...

Malen's book is a fascinating artifact, darkly funny and troubling that taps into the restive spirit and far-ranging anxieties of the protracted millenarian moment we seem to inhabit.

In the photos... the viewer is meant to notice that the arrested activity is pictured to be seen, that something is being simulated, reenacted, offered up for scrutiny. The picture is the memory of something else, a gestural pentimento of something hidden.

In installations, Malen presents archival and manufactured documents in vitrines, while her photographs, mixed with pictures of long-ago hypnotherapy sessions, experiments in levitation, and magnetization, are attached to mesh screens project a few centimeters from the wall... Even the most casual-looking photographs convey a spectral remove from quotidian reality, an involvement with things unseen.

Original URL: <http://www.lenoremalen.com/biblio.html>