

Urban Lights

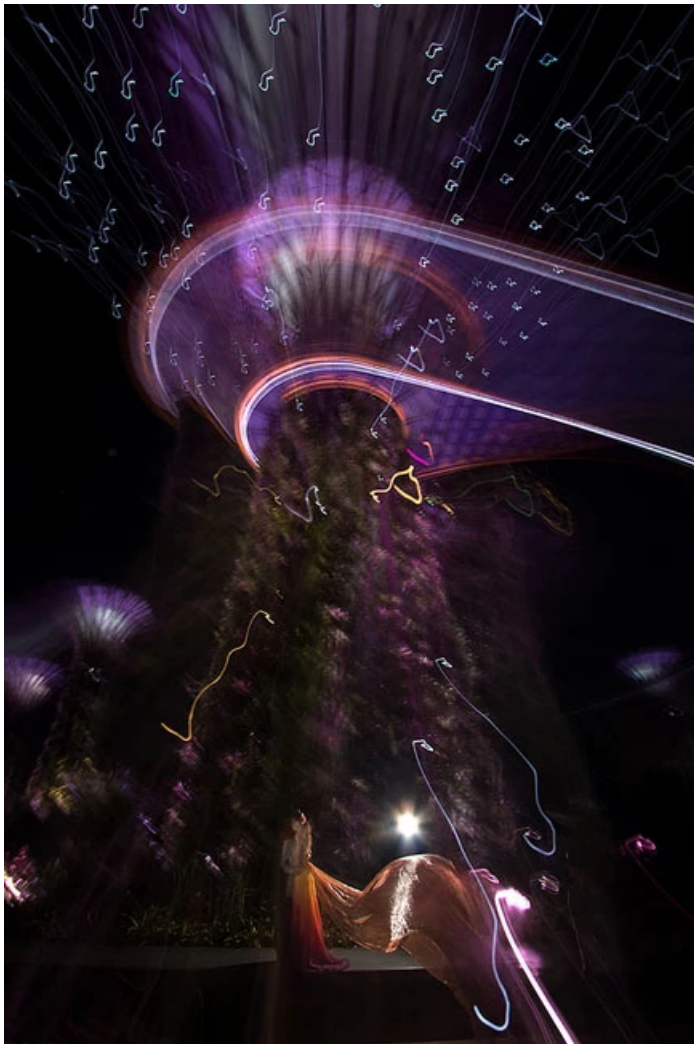
URBAN LIGHTS



Urban Lights | 7th June - 4th July 2019

The word pair 'city-light' speaks for itself, being one of the most suitable synonyms for 'modernity'. At the end of the 19th century, as soon as streets and monuments were brightened by – first gas and then electrical – lights, a revolution was about to begin. It was then that Paris was universally recognised as 'the City of Light' (and not just because of its primary role during the Enlightenment). And it is again at that time that lights gave the urban environment an unprecedented buzz: nightlife.

There are plenty of meanings, implications and consequences involved in this change – but surely, from that moment on, people’s way of living was consistently (and permanently) affected by that transition. Artificial lights were not just considered as something positive and comforting, in their eternal fight against darkness, but also as useful tools in everyone’s routine. Aesthetically, they also contributed to shape new and iconic landscapes that are now part of our collective imagination. Without the shining power of coloured light bulbs, places like the Moulin Rouge in Paris and Broadway in New York or cities such as Las Vegas (U.S.) and Macao (China) are impossible to imagine. Again, neon signs were so iconic in a city like Warsaw that the Neon museum (2005) opened in order to document and preserve “the last surviving remnants of the ‘great neonisation’ campaign” occurred during the Cold War.



Jon Hyde and Kimberly Sultze, Red Gold Blue, Singapore, 2014 | [Buy it](#)

The turning point generated by urban lights is shown by generations of artists, performers and writers who have been paying tribute to this. Literature is sprinkled by descriptions about urban lights and so it is art, from Umberto Boccioni (“Riot in the Galleria”, 1910) and René Magritte (“Empire of Light”, 1949) to Chris Burden’s “Urban light” (2008), an installation consisting of 202 historical street lamps that were restored and placed outside the LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art). This is the path leading to “Urban Lights”, a fascinating exhibition reflecting on modernity and post-modernity. Arranged at the Spazio Millepiani in Rome, it is open during the whole month of June (2019) and it is based on digital art and photography. As clearly suggested by the title, the focus here is the mutual influence between artificial lights and cities and on how the firsts has been contributing to reshape the identity of the seconds (and vice versa).

The artists, who were asked to give their version of events sharing their visual thoughts, let the public experience the urban context (mostly) at night, with all its nuances and peculiarities.



Jon Hyde and Kimberly Sultze, Beneath the Supertrees of Singapore, 2014 | [Buy it](#)

Overall, the works on display constitute a magnificent celebration of the contemporary city and, at the same time, a useful documentation mapping some of the most representative non-places around the world like petrol stations, fast-food chains and parking lots. In this sense, we understand that lights are essential to our lives. They illuminate the streets, indicate directions and places – restaurants as well as museums, roads as well as theatres. They are traffic lights in the ordinary chaos of every rush-hour-city and melancholic signs of every amusement (or non-amusement) park.

All those meaningful objects, places and forms are thus portrayed by artists according to a wide range of shades. Some pictures intend to build stories, they are 'chronicles from nowhere' (as William Morris would have said), deserted by animals and humans like in a Hopper's painting. Some others play with twisted framings and blurry effects just to get and give the idea of movement, lively environment, time passing by. All those photographs have something in common though: as much as they revolve around commercial interests, cities or outskirts, together they compose an elegiac poem of our time.



Tahir Ün, Against the Night, 2017 | [Buy it](#)



Gavin Burnett, *Ice-cream Tuk-Tuk*, 2018 | [Buy it](#)



Gavin Burnett, Uncle John Ice-Cream, 2018 | [Buy it](#)



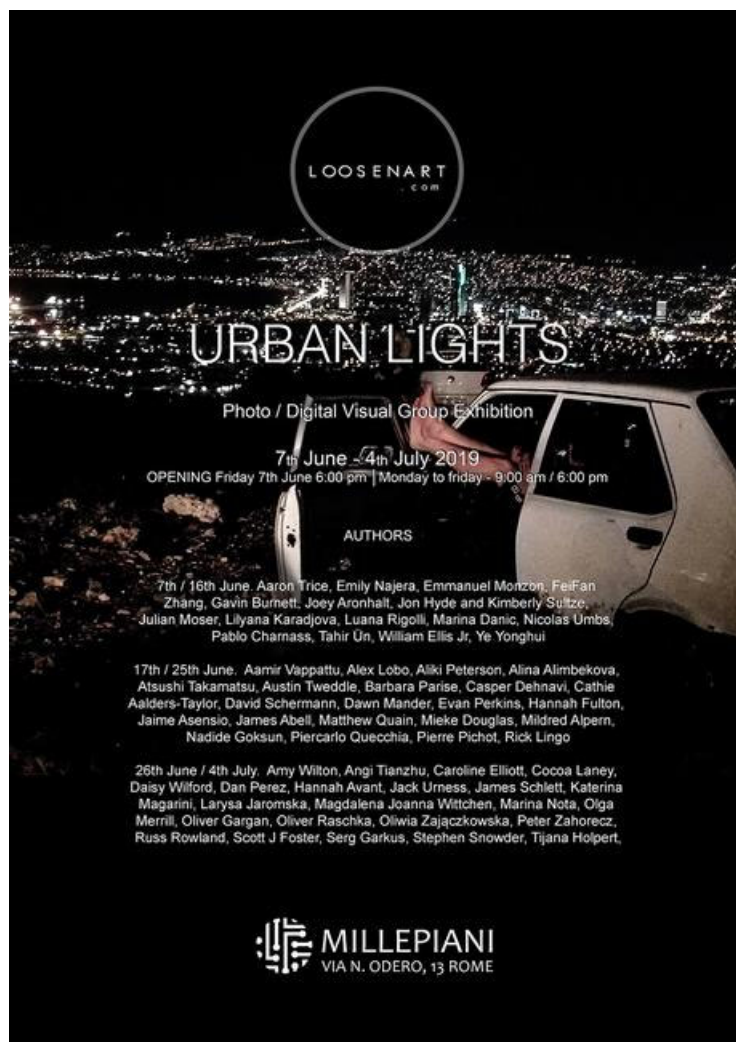
Emmanuel Monzon, Urban Sprawl Night #1, 2019 | [Buy it](#)

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Emmanuel Monzon, *Urban Sprawl Night #2*, 2019 | [Buy it](#)

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URBAN LIGHTS

Photo / Digital Visual Group Exhibition

7th June - 4th July 2019
OPENING Friday 7th June 6:00 pm | Monday to Friday - 9:00 am / 6:00 pm

AUTHORS

7th / 16th June: Aaron Trice, Emily Najera, Emmanuel Morzon, Feifan Zhang, Gavin Burnett, Joey Aronhall, Jon Hyde and Kimberly Sultze, Julian Moser, Liliyana Karadjova, Luana Rigoli, Marina Danic, Nicolas Umbos, Pablo Chamass, Tahir Un, William Ellis Jr, Ye Yonghui

17th / 25th June: Aamir Vappattu, Alex Lobo, Aiki Peterson, Alina Alimbekova, Atsushi Takamatsu, Austin Tweddle, Barbara Parise, Casper Dehnavi, Cathie Alders-Taylor, David Schermann, Dawn Mander, Evan Perkins, Hannah Fulton, Jaime Asensio, James Abell, Matthew Quain, Mieke Douglas, Mildred Alpern, Nadide Goksun, Piercarlo Quecchia, Pierre Pichot, Rick Lingo

26th June / 4th July: Amy Wilton, Angi Tianzhu, Caroline Elliott, Cocoa Laney, Daisy Wilford, Dan Perez, Hannah Avant, Jack Urness, James Schlett, Katerina Magarini, Larysa Jaromska, Magdalena Joanna Wittchen, Marina Nota, Olga Merrill, Oliver Gargan, Oliver Raschka, Oliwia Zajaczkowska, Peter Zahorecz, Russ Rowland, Scott J Foster, Serg Garkus, Stephen Snowden, Tijana Holpert,

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