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**T H E**

A JOURNEY FROM PAST REALITY

**T H I R D**

TO FUTURE IDEOLOGY

**DIMENSION**

by Alona Rodeh



Bird's eye view of Salt Lake City, Utah Territory  
Map drawn by Augustus Koch, Chicago Lithographing Co, 1870  
Image downloaded from Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division

*“The time has come for someone to make use of the third dimension and, by taking advantage of both materials and reflections, to create actual structures of light in space. As a vision of the future we can imagine the play of light in community festivals of coming generations. From airplanes and airships they will be able to enjoy the spectacle of gigantic expansions of illumination, movement and transformation of lighted areas, which will provide new experiences and open up new joy in life.”*

László Moholy-Nagy

## THE THIRD DIMENSION

Alona Rodeh

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# WORTAUF WORTAUF?

Introduction by / Vorwort von  
Amely Deiss

Oftentimes, the fine arts present themselves as a great show: A stage. Light. Love. Death. Curtain up.

This was also the case at the 2018 edition of the Art Cologne fair, which, as always, was far too crowded. I went to see the stand of Christine König Galerie and came upon a huge reflective curtain that covered almost the entire wall of the stand. The curtain began to move to the right, driven by a quietly rattling mechanism. But there was no stage setting waiting behind the curtain. No Hamlet. No Lars Eidinger. Instead, there were three wall pieces by the artist Alona Rodeh—three canvases in the shape of a circle, a square and a triangle, covered with the same reflective fabric, which one otherwise only associates with safety vests, sportswear or outfits for raves.

Then there was the abstract sculpture of a runner, kneeling as if just approaching the starting blocks, and next to it a crouching version, with a board of checkered pattern on his back. Next to these was a large-format photograph of an athlete in functional sportswear and a slightly smaller photograph of the back of a head wearing a neon-colored cap.

**Bildende Kunst ist häufig ja auch ganz großes Theater: Bühne. Licht. Liebe. Tod. Und Vorhang auf. So war es auch im Jahr 2018 auf der Kunstmesse Art Cologne, die wie immer viel zu voll war. Ich ging zum Stand der Christine König Galerie und traf auf einen riesigen reflektierenden Vorhang, der fast die gesamte Wand des Standes verdeckte.**

**Der Vorhang bewegte sich, von einem leise ratternden Mechanismus angetrieben, nach rechts. Aber hinter dem Vorhang war kein Bühnenbild. Kein Hamlet. Kein Lars Eidinger. Da waren drei Wandarbeiten von Alona Rodeh—Leinwände in Form von Kreis, Quadrat und Dreieck, ebenfalls mit diesem irritierend reflektierenden Textil bezogen, das man sonst nur von Warnwesten, Sportkleidung oder Raves kennt.**

**Dann war da noch die abstrahierte Skulptur eines Läufers, kniend wie kurz vor dem Start, und daneben eine kauernde Version davon, die auf dem Rücken eine Platte im Schachbrettmuster trug. Daneben die großformatige Fotografie eines Sportlers in Funktionskleidung und eine etwas kleinere Fotografie eines Hinterkopfes mit neonfarbener Cap.**

As diverse as these works were—in terms of form, material and aesthetic appeal—they fit together perfectly as an ensemble. That's what made them so perplexing. And fascinating. This seemingly impenetrable erratic style, where in the end everything belonged together in perfect unison.

I was so enthusiastic about that work that I felt compelled to meet Rodeh shortly afterwards in Berlin. It was June, we ate watermelon in her studio full of neon colors. When we said goodbye, it was clear that there would be a joint project. And soon after, with our particular premises in mind, Alona Rodeh developed the first ideas for *Architecture of the Nights*, the exhibition at the Kunstpalais.

Malte Kröger, who shared my enthusiasm right from the start, was as zealous as he was prudent in attending to the project as curator. This included not only planning the content-related and technical aspects together with the artist, or researching texts on night architecture, but also purchasing balcony doors and a range of different stage elements.

**So unterschiedlich diese Arbeiten waren—in Form, Material und ästhetischer Anmutung—so perfekt passten sie zusammen. Das war das Irritierende. Und das Faszinierende. Diese scheinbar undurchdringlich Erratik, bei der am Ende doch alles perfekt zusammengehörte.**

**Ich war so begeistert davon, dass ich Rodeh schon kurz darauf in Berlin treffen musste. Das war im Juni, wir aßen Wassermelone in ihrem Atelier voller Neonfarben. Als wir uns verabschiedeten, war klar, dass es ein gemeinsames Projekt geben würde. Und schon bald entwickelte Alona Rodeh, unsere besonderen Räume im Kopf, die ersten Ideen zu *Architecture of the Nights*, der Ausstellung im Kunstpalais.**

**Malte Kröger, der meine Begeisterung von Beginn an teilte, hat sich dem Projekt als Kurator so enthusiastisch wie umsichtig angenommen—und dazu gehörten neben inhaltlichen und technischen Planungen mit der Künstlerin oder Recherchen von Texten zur Nacharchitektur auch der Einkauf von Balkontüren und Bühnenelementen.**

**Ganz entsprechend ihrer künstlerischen Herangehensweise haben wir uns gemeinsam**

Entirely in keeping with her artistic approach to date, we decided together with Rodeh against a classical exhibition catalog and instead elected to continue her already existing publication series. Even more than its two predecessors, *Safe & Sound Deluxe Edition* (2015) and *FIRE: Safe & Sound* (2017), this volume, *Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension*, is an almost ingenious hybrid, a shimmering hermaphrodite that sits somewhere between a classical exhibition catalog and an experimental artist's book infused with a scientific ambition.

*Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension* combines images of works, exhibition views and art historical texts written by the respective curators of the shows: Séamus Kealy, director of the Salzburger Kunstverein, writes about Rodeh's exhibition *DARK AGES 2020*, which opened there in February of this year. Malte Kröger, who curated *Architecture of the Nights* at the Kunstpalais, devotes himself to considering the role of objects in the artist's work.

In addition, there are texts whose subjects and, above all, authors, Rodeh has carefully

**mit Rodeh gegen einen klassischen Ausstellungskatalog und für eine Fortsetzung ihrer Publikationsreihe entschieden.**

**Mehr noch als die beiden Vorgänger *Safe & Sound Deluxe Edition* (2015) und *FIRE: Safe and Sound* (2017) ist dieser Band, *Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension*, ein geradezu genialischer Hybrid, ein flirrendes Zwitterwesen zwischen klassischem Ausstellungskatalog und experimentellem Künstlerbuch mit wissenschaftlichem Anspruch.**

***Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension* vereint Werkabbildungen, Ausstellungsansichten und kunsthistorische Texte, verfasst von den jeweiligen Kuratoren der Shows: Séamus Kealy, der Direktor des Salzburger Kunstvereins schrieb für diese Publikation über Alona Rodehs Ausstellung *DARK AGES 2020*, die im Februar diesen Jahres in seinem Haus eröffnete. Und Malte Kröger, der *Architecture of the Nights* im Kunstpalais kuratiert hat, beschäftigt sich vertieft mit der Rolle der Objekte im Werk der Künstlerin.**

**Hinzu kommen Texte, deren Themen und vor allem Autoren Alona Rodeh im Zuge ihrer**

selected during the course of her research on the exhibitions and this publication: In his text *Life without Light: The Wartime Blackout*, the British historian Marc Wiggam paints a short history of the blackout in the context of wartime, paying particular attention to its psychological effects upon the civilian population. Pol Esteve, a Spanish architect and writer, has written *The Modern Discotheque: Re-coding Technology for Techno-emancipation*, an essay on the connection between light and sound technology and drugs and the interface of the nightclub.

These texts are joined by a rich visual essay by Alona Rodeh on the evolution of the street bollard, while historical pictures from the American megacorporation General Electric are woven into the choreography of the book, as is the depiction of an iconic tapestry by Anni Albers. All of this appears, very deliberately, in predominantly black, silver and white color palette.

*Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension* was designed by Rachel Kinrot in close collaboration with Alona Rodeh. My most sincere thanks go to her and all authors of this book.

**Recherchen zu Ausstellungen und Publikation sorgsam ausgewählt hat: Der britische Historiker Marc Wiggam zeichnet in seinem Text *Life without Light: The Wartime Blackout* eine kurze Geschichte der Verdunkelung zu Kriegzeiten mit besonderem Augenmerk auf deren psychische Auswirkung auf die Bevölkerung. Pol Esteve, spanischer Architekt und Schriftsteller, hat mit *The Modern Discotheque: Re-coding Technology für Techno-emancipation* einen Essay über den Zusammenhang von Licht- und Soundtechnik mit Drogen in Nachtclubs verfasst.**

**Auf diese Inhalte trifft ein Visual Essay von Alona Rodeh über die Entwicklung des Pollers; historisches Bildmaterial des amerikanischen Megakonzerns General Electric wird in die Choreografie des Buches ebenso eingewoben wie die Abbildung eines ikonischen Wandteppichs von Anni Albers. Das Ganze: überwiegend in Schwarz, Silber und Weiß gehalten.**

**Gestaltet hat *Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension* die Grafikerin Rachel Kinrot in enger Zusammenarbeit mit Alona Rodeh. Ihr und allen Autoren dieses Buches danke ich von Herzen.**

Without the generous support of Stiftung Kunstfonds, the project would not have been conceivable on this scale. We are very pleased and grateful for the honor, which the granting of this award implies.

In addition to the aforementioned, other important persons have made a significant contribution to the success of this project, both with regards to the exhibition and catalog. Rachid Moro, for example, whom Rodeh describes on her homepage as a “master of technology”—and who undoubtedly proved himself to be one during the setting-up of the exhibition here at the Kunstpalais. It is thanks to him and Ian Genocchi, the best exhibition technician imaginable and fortunately employed here with us, as well as to the entire highly committed team at the Kunstpalais, that *Architecture of the Nights* now radiates its light throughout the venue’s completely blacked out rooms.

And of course, first and foremost to the truly marvelous Alona Rodeh!

Many thanks—and curtain up for *Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension!*

**Ohne die großzügige Unterstützung durch die Stiftung Kunstfonds wäre das Projekt in diesem Umfang nicht denkbar gewesen. Wir freuen und bedanken uns sehr über und für die Auszeichnung, die die Gewährung dieser Förderung bedeutet.**

**Neben den Genannten haben aber noch weitere wichtige Personen maßgeblich zum Gelingen dieses Projekts aus Ausstellung und Katalog beigetragen—so Rachid Moro, den Alona Rodeh auf Ihrer Homepage als „Master of technology“ bezeichnet und der sich beim Ausstellungsaufbau bei uns im Kunstpalais zweifelsohne als solcher bewiesen hat. Ihm, Ian Genocchi, dem besten Ausstellungstechniker, den man sich vorstellen kann und der zum Glück bei uns am Haus angestellt ist, sowie dem gesamten hoch engagierten Team des Kunstpalais ist es zu verdanken, dass *Architecture of the Nights* bei uns in komplett schwarzen Räumen leuchtet und strahlt.**

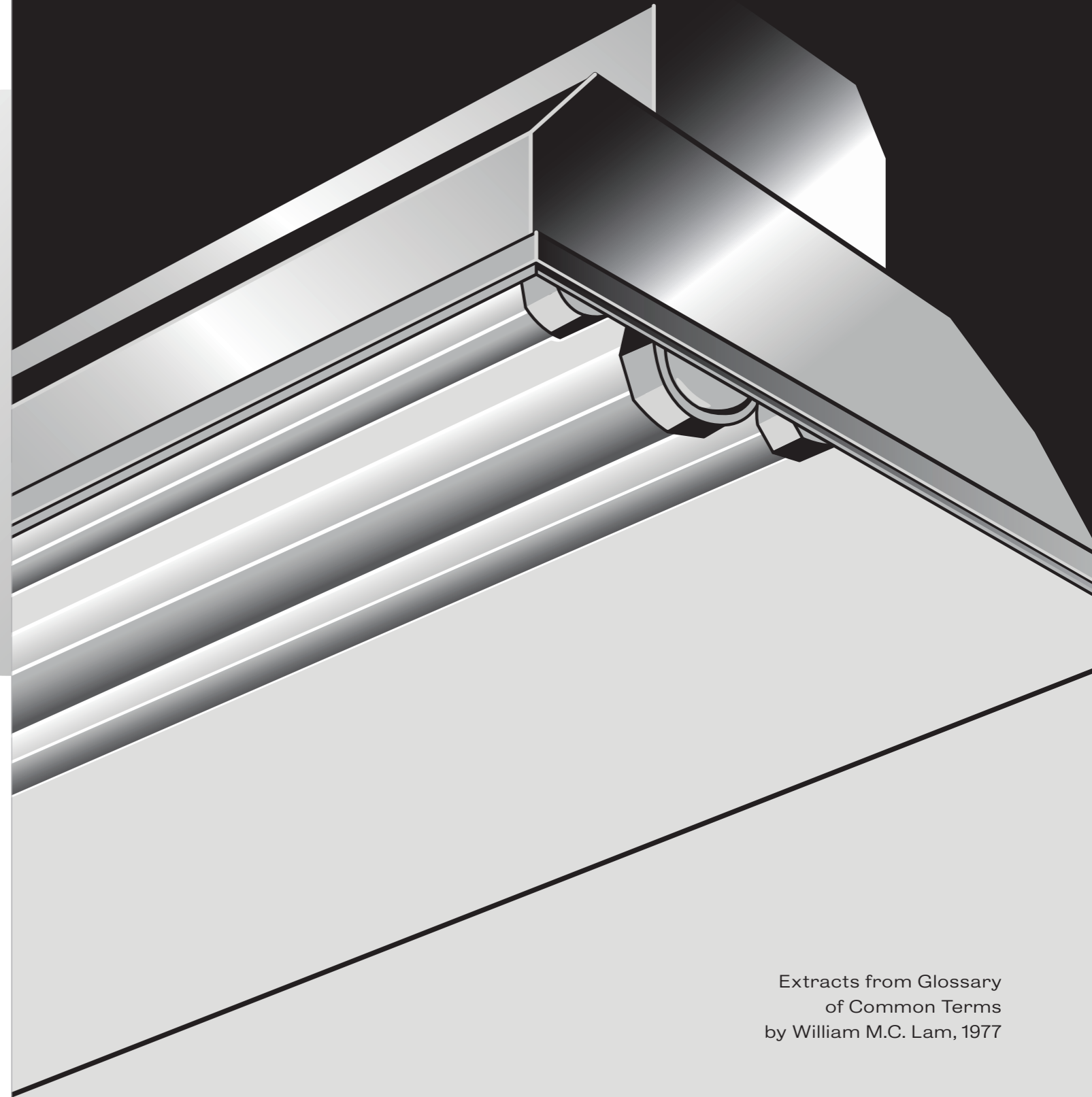
**Und natürlich und zuallererst der großartigen Alona Rodeh!**

**Vielen Dank—und Vorhang auf für *Safe & Sound: The Third Dimension!***

Amely Deiss is director of the Kunstpalais in Erlangen. From 2009 to 2013 she was curator at the Foundation of the Museum für Konkrete Kunst und Design in Ingolstadt and from 2013 to 2015 acting director of the Museum für Konkrete Kunst. She studied art history and German philology in Berlin, Heidelberg, and Rome.

Amely Deiss ist Leiterin des Kunstpalais in Erlangen. Von 2009 bis 2013 war sie Kuratorin der Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst und Design in Ingolstadt und von 2013 bis 2015 stellvertretende Direktorin des Museums für Konkrete Kunst. Sie studierte Kunstgeschichte und Germanistik in Berlin, Heidelberg und Rom.

## Perception & Lighting as Formgivers for Architecture



Extracts from Glossary  
of Common Terms  
by William M.C. Lam, 1977



**MANY COMMON TERMS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED HERE BECAUSE THE CONVENTIONAL DEFINITION IS IMPRECISE FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCUSSING THE LUMINOUS ENVIRONMENT.**

**Activity Needs for Visual Information**

Needs for visual information related to specific conscious activities.

**Affective**

Having to do with the evaluation of, or emotional response to, a STIMULUS.

**Biological Needs for Visual Information**

Unceasing needs for visual information; not related to specific conscious activities, but rather related to the more fundamental aspects of the human relation to the environment: orientation, defense, stimulation, sustenance, and survival.

**Bright**

Perceived as being relatively high on the scale of BRIGHTNESS.

**Brightness**

The subjective description of LUMINANCE; a perceived characteristic of objects which does not vary directly in a simple mathematical relationship with their physical or measured brightness, which is correctly termed their LUMINANCE.

Brightness is often misused to mean LUMINANCE; if so, it should be qualified as “measured” brightness, to distinguish between the absolute attributes (“measured” brightness) and the perceived attributes (“apparent” or “subjective” brightness) of the object in question.

**Brilliance**

Extreme BRIGHTNESS; frequently, too strong to be agreeable.

**Contrast**

The relationship between the LUMINANCE of an object or area of interest and that of its immediate background. Mathematically, the difference between the LUMINANCES divided by the LUMINANCE of the background.

**Dark**

Perceived as being relatively low on the scale of BRIGHTNESS; with reference specifically to color, one with a low REFLECTANCE.

**Dazzle**

To overpower or reduce vision by intense LIGHT; also, a perceptual ambiguity caused by a high-contrast pattern in which figure and background shapes are identical.

**Dim**

Appearing subdued, faintly illuminated.

**Disability Glare**

GLARE which reduces the ability to perceive the visual information needed for a particular activity.

**Discomfort Glare**

GLARE which is distracting or uncomfortable, which interferes with the perception of visual information required to satisfy BIOLOGICAL NEEDS, but which does not significantly reduce the ability to see information needed for activities.

**Dull**

Uninteresting.

**Gestalt**

An environment, situation, group of objects, or combination of these elements which is perceived as an integrated whole rather than as an assemblage of unrelated parts.

**Glare**

An interference with visual perception caused by an uncomfortably bright LIGHT source or reflection; a form of VISUAL NOISE.

**Gloomy**

A condition in which desirable and expected visual information is absent, producing a sense of depression or disappointment; not necessarily DARK or DIM.

**Illumination**

Quantity of LIGHT per unit of surface area; the intensity or “density” of light falling on a surface. (English unit: FOOTCANDLE. Metric unit: Lux = Lumens per square meter.)

**Noise**

Undesirable or disagreeable stimuli which confuse, obscure, or compete with desirable STIMULI (SIGNALS).

**Perception**

A meaningful impression obtained through the senses and apprehended by the mind (see SENSATION for further clarification).

**Phototropic**

Attracted toward or responding to a source of LIGHT.



**See**

To perceive with the eyes; to construct a visual image in the mind.

**Sensation**

The immediate result of the stimulation of the sense organs; as distinguished from PERCEPTION which involves the combination of incoming sensations with the contextual information and past experience so that the objects or events from which the STIMULI arise are recognized and assigned meaning.

**Signals**

Relevant, desirable, or needed sensory information or STIMULI.

**Simultaneous contrast**

Intensification of perceived attributes of one object, especially its color or BRIGHTNESS, by the simultaneous perception of related attributes of other objects in the visual field.

**Sparkle**

An attractive BRILLIANCE.

**Specular**

Having the reflective properties of a mirror.

**Stimulus**

Anything which excites a sensory receptor, causing or regarded as causing a response or SENSATION.

**Value**

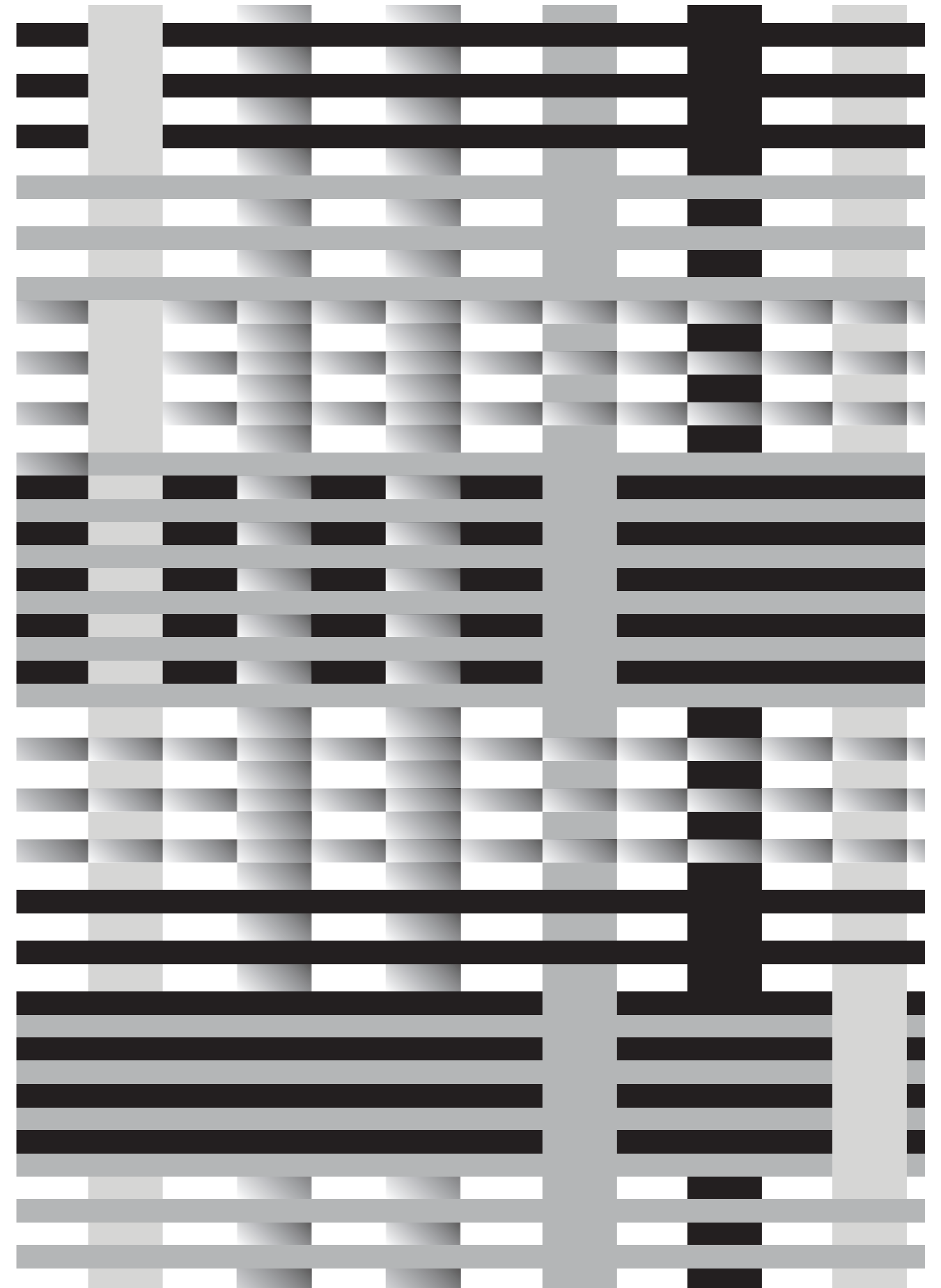
An index of the lightness or darkness of a color, measured on a scale from white (high) to black (low).

**Viewing Angle**

The angle formed between the viewer's line of sight and the plane of the surface under observation.

**Visual Noise**

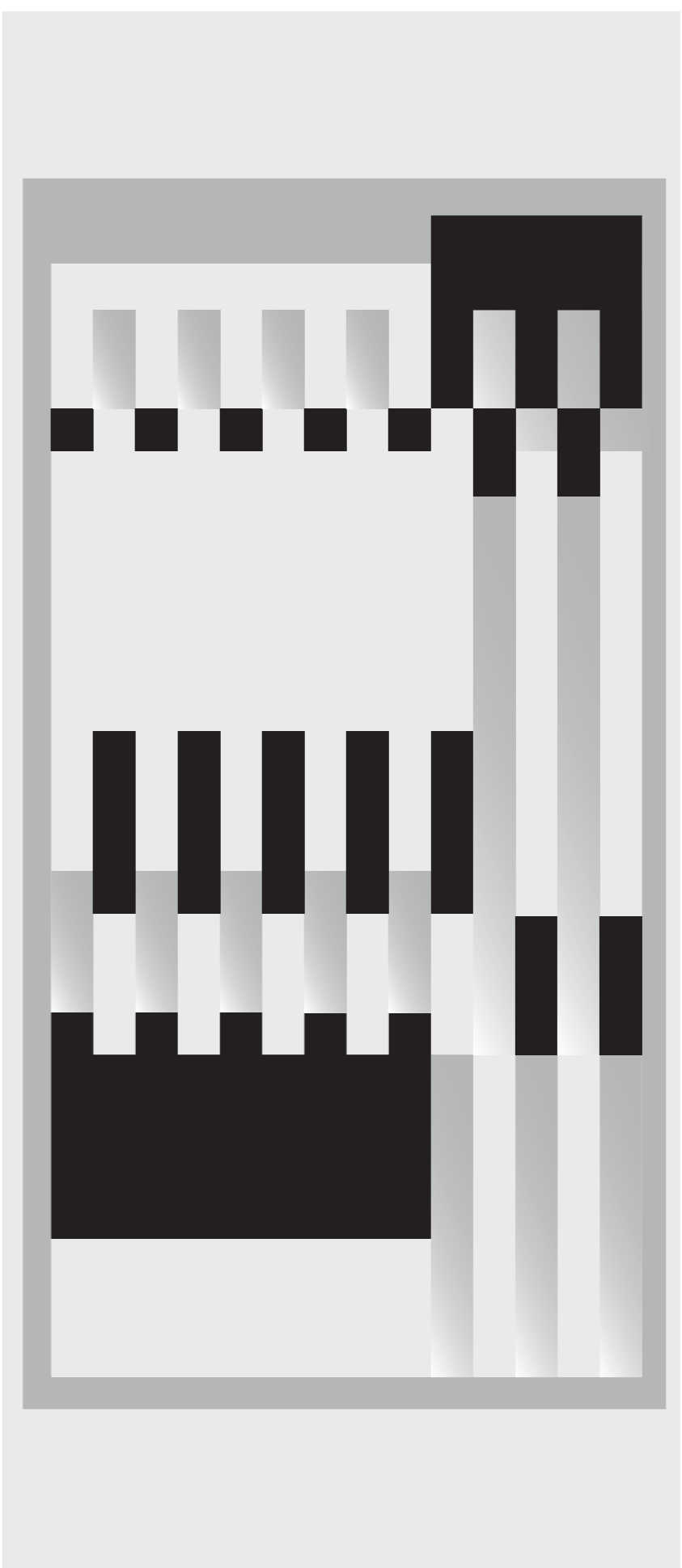
Undesirable or disagreeable STIMULI from the LUMINOUS ENVIRONMENT which confuse, obscure, or compete with a SIGNAL.



Homage to Annie Albers's design  
for an unexecuted wall hanging, 1926



Homage to Annie Albers's design for *With Verticals*, 1946



Homage to a letter card from Anni and Josef Albers to Charlotte Hesse, c. 1949



# LIGHT IN SOUND THROUGH MOVEMENT

## FORM AND AGENCY OF OBJECTS IN ALONA RODEH'S WORKS

Malte Kröger

“ARC LAMP, sparks splattering.  
Street smooth as a mirror.  
Pools of light. From above and

oblique

with cars whooshing past.”<sup>1</sup>

Assuming that we are living in the age of the illuminated screen, a flat surface that increasingly governs our field of vision and behind which the very physical objects—those that are plastically given and tangibly *there* instead of being visually represented—tend to disappear, one might think that we are witnessing a momentary victory of the second over the third dimension. At least that is the impression one might get while

gazing at the ever-larger LED video billboards sending their bright and colorful flickering imagery out into major cities after nightfall. The facade of One Times Square, for example, the building that until 1913 used to house *The New York Times* (which lend its name to both the building and to the square in New York City where it is located), is currently composed entirely of billboards. Its famous North side in

particular, which itself has been photographed and televised countless times, consists mostly of lit screens. They completely cover up the renovated, once historicist facade of the skyscraper, which today stands almost empty.<sup>2</sup> The reason for this is simple. Being located at the crossroads of Times Square, a place frequented by more than one hundred million people every year, the building is far more profitable serving as a signboard than it would be accommodating tenants. Since its rededication to this purpose—and almost as an ironic inversion of Louis Sullivan’s famous dictum “form follows function”—the skyscraper’s current function now obscures its original form.

When looking at Alona Rodeh’s latest artworks, combined with her extensive research into the history of urban illumination in particular and artificial lighting in general, this transformation suddenly seems significant—especially seen through the lens of an aesthetics of form. Viewed as such, it can hint at a core mechanism or a guiding principle of her work, perhaps even helping to develop an idea of the

# LIGHT IN KLANG DURCH BEWEGUNG

## FORM UND HANDLUNGSMACHT VON OBJEKTEN IN ALONA RODEHS WERKEN

Malte Kröger

“BOGENLAMPE, Funken spritzen.  
Autostraße spiegelglatt.  
Lichtpfützen. Von oben und

schräg

mit weghuschenden Autos.”<sup>1</sup>

Geht man davon aus, dass wir im Zeitalter des beleuchteten Bildschirms leben, einer planen Oberfläche, die unser Blickfeld immer mehr beherrscht und hinter der die eigentlich realen Objekte—die plastisch vorhanden und greifbar *da* sind, anstatt visuell dargestellt zu sein—tendenziell verschwinden, könnte man

meinen, dass wir einen momentanen Sieg der zweiten über die dritte Dimension erleben. Zumindest ist das der Eindruck, den man bekommen könnte, wenn man die immer größer werdenden LED-Video-Werbetafeln bestaunt, die nach Einbruch der Dunkelheit ihre leuchtenden und bunt flackernden Bilder in die Großstädte hinaussenden. Die Fassade des One Times Square zum Beispiel, jenes Gebäudes, in dem bis 1913 die *New York Times* untergebracht war (die sowohl dem Gebäude als auch dem Platz in New York City, an dem es sich befindet, seinen Namen gab), ist gegenwärtig nahezu ausschließlich aus Werbetafeln zusammengesetzt. Vor allem die berühmte Nordseite,

die ihrerseits unzählige Male fotografiert und im Fernsehen gezeigt wurde, besteht größtenteils aus beleuchteten Bildschirmen. Sie verdecken vollständig die renovierte, einst historische Fassade des Wolkenkratzers, der heute beinahe leer steht.<sup>2</sup> Der Grund dafür ist einfach. An der Kreuzung des Times Square gelegen, einem Ort, der jedes Jahr von mehr als einhundert Millionen Menschen frequentiert wird, ist das Gebäude als Werbetafel dienend weitaus profitabler denn als Unterkunft für Mieter. Seit seiner Umwidmung zu diesem Zweck—und fast als ironische Umkehrung von Louis Sullivans berühmtem Diktum „form follows function“—verdeckt die derzeitige Funktion des Wolkenkratzers nun seine ursprüngliche Form.

Betrachtet man Alona Rodehs neueste künstlerische Arbeiten in Kombination mit ihren umfangreichen Recherchen zur Geschichte der künstlichen Beleuchtung im Allgemeinen und der Stadtbeleuchtung im Besonderen, so erscheint diese Transformation plötzlich bedeutsam—vor allem durch die Linse einer Ästhetik der Form gesehen. So betrachtet, kann

sie auf einen Kernmechanismus oder ein Leitprinzip ihrer Arbeit hinweisen und vielleicht sogar dazu beitragen, eine Vorstellung von der Kraft zu entwickeln, die von innen heraus ihre Installationen mit Leben erfüllt. Aber bevor wir zu diesem Punkt kommen können, müssen wir zuerst einen imaginären, unverkleideten One Times Square in unserer Vorstellung erschaffen, indem wir etwa neunzig Jahre in der Zeit zurückgehen und in den Big Apple zurückkehren, um das Hochhaus seine gen Himmel gerichteten Züge aus Granit und Terrakotta wieder in ungehinderter Form zur Schau stellend vorzufinden. Ungefähr zu jener Zeit, 1930, veröffentlichte die General Electric Company eine Sonderausgabe ihres *Bulletins*, die sich unter dem Titel *Architecture of the Night* ausschließlich dem Thema Stadtbeleuchtung widmete und die selbst einen Hauptbezugspunkt für Rodehs Einzelausstellung im Kunstpalais bildet und einen Text darstellt, der in dieser Publikation enthalten ist. Darin wurden Experten aus den Bereichen Technik, Design und Architektur—darunter Raymond M. Hood, dem der titelgebende Begriff „Architecture of the



very force that from within breathes life into her installations. But before we can get to this point, we first need to create an imaginary uncovered One Times Square in our mind by going roughly ninety years back in time and returning to the Big Apple to find the tower again displaying its skywards pointing features made from granite and terracotta in unhindered form. It was about then, in 1930, that the General Electric Company published a special issue of its bulletin solely devoted to the topic of city illumination titled *Architecture of the Night*, itself a key reference for Rodeh's solo exhibition at the Kunstpalais and a text that is featured in this publication. In it, experts from the fields of engineering, design, and architecture—one of them being Raymond M. Hood, to whom the title-giving term "Architecture of the Night" is attributed—were interviewed about the latest developments in lighting technology and asked to give predictions for the future use of urban lighting. Back in those days, as Dietrich Neumann points out, architects in the United States were seeking new ways of illuminating buildings

that moved beyond the until then predominant use of artificial light in connection with architecture: commercial signs and flashing billboards.<sup>3</sup> The light architecture they had in mind presented an alternative approach that took account of the actual shape of buildings, their three-dimensional forms, and proportions. The act of illuminating them was discussed on a par with art forms such as painting, theater, and film.<sup>4</sup> A general openness towards, if not an embrace of a modernist vocabulary of forms can be observed here. Hood himself refers to "the illumination of today" as "only the start of an art that may develop as our modern music developed from the simple beating of a tom-tom."<sup>5</sup> Apart from the emphasis that is put on the creation of patterns and movement in his text, the neglect to address advertising is remarkable in this context as it means a shift away from the transmission of content in the shape of imagery and in favor of a display of purely geometric forms. The "theaters in the air," created through light and color alone, were thus no commercial display but were instead meant to turn the solid

Night" zugeschrieben wird—zu den neuesten Entwicklungen der Lichttechnik interviewt und um Prognosen über den zukünftigen Gebrauch von Stadtbeleuchtung gebeten. In jener Zeit, betont Dietrich Neumann, suchten Architekten in den Vereinigten Staaten nach neuen Wegen, Gebäude zu beleuchten, die über den bis dahin vorherrschenden Gebrauch von Kunstlicht im Zusammenhang mit Architektur hinausgingen: Geschäftsschilder und blinkende Werbetafeln.<sup>3</sup> Die von ihnen angestrebte Lichtarchitektur präsentierte einen alternativen Ansatz, der die jeweilige Form der Gebäude, ihre dreidimensionalen Formen und Proportionen berücksichtigte. Der Akt, sie zu beleuchten, wurde auf einer Ebene mit Kunstformen wie Malerei, Theater und Film diskutiert.<sup>4</sup> Eine allgemeine Offenheit gegenüber, wenn nicht gar eine Vorliebe für ein modernistisches Formenvokabular ist hier zu beobachten. Hood selbst bezeichnet „die Illumination von heute“ als „lediglich den Beginn einer Kunst, die sich so entwickeln könnte, wie sich unsere moderne Musik aus dem einfachen Rhythmus eines Tomtoms entwickelte“.<sup>5</sup> Abgesehen von der Betonung, die in seinem Text

auf die Hervorbringung von Mustern und Bewegung gelegt wird, ist die Vernachlässigung, Werbung in diesem Zusammenhang zu thematisieren, bemerkenswert, da dies eine Verschiebung weg von der Inhaltsübermittlung in Form von Bildern und hin zu einer Darstellung rein geometrischer Formen bedeutet. Die „Theater in der Luft,“ die allein durch Licht und Farbe geschaffen wurden, waren also keine kommerzielle Zurschaustellung, sondern sollten die soliden und massiven Körper von Wolkenkratzern in mysteriöse und flüchtige nächtliche Wesen verwandeln.<sup>6</sup>

In Kombination mit Klang sind die drei Komponenten Licht, Farbe und Bewegung auch die Hauptakteure in Rodeh's Installationen. Sie bewohnen die raumgreifenden Environments, die die Künstlerin aus Elementen wie MDF, Plexiglas und Aluminium, aber auch aus Materialien wie reflektierendem Gewebe, fluoreszierendem Vinyl und Straßenmarkierungsfarbe komponiert. Unter der Oberfläche vieler dieser einzelnen Teile befindet sich ein ausgeklügeltes Nervensystem aus elektronischen Teilen, das die Installationen in Bewegung setzt und ansonsten



Aliona Rodeh, Untitled (To The Moon And Back), 2017



and massive bodies of skyscrapers into mysterious, ephemeral nighttime entities.<sup>6</sup>

In combination with sound, the three components of light, color, and movement are also the main actors in Rodeh's installations. They inhabit the room-spanning environments that the artist composes from elements made of, for example MDF, plexiglass, and aluminum but also materials such as reflective fabric, fluorescent vinyl, and road marking paint. Beneath the surface of many of these individual pieces lies a sophisticated nervous system of electronic parts that set the installations in motion and connect otherwise isolated media with each other. A repetitive sound may find its visual counterpart in the carefully programmed choreography of a LED-pattern; a photograph mounted onto a light box can flash up unexpectedly—all of which happens in synchronization with the screening of a video loop. If for one moment we imagine Rodeh's installations to be stages, then the act we observe playing out on them is certainly not a narrative. No story is unfolded before our eyes and ears but rather an audio-visual

rhythm that may well include the steady sound of a tom-tom drum. This description already implies that Rodeh works in a variety of media that encompasses installation and sculpture just like photography, video, and painting but given the fact of their connectivity and entanglement, it does not seem justified to regard these media as separate forms of expression. Often enough they "reflect" each other in the literal sense of the word, for example when mirrored tiles on the floor repeat the movement of an illuminated curtain or when objects from the video works make a reappearance in the exhibition space. And sometimes these media are literally translated into each other when an audio-file becomes a light display. Consequently, when approaching the artist's work from the aspect of an aesthetics of form it seems fruitful to rather look out for a unifying principle that can be derived from this variety. If that means determining the form of life itself that is led by Rodeh's "performances without performers," as the artist refers to them, then this analysis has to be about more than just the sum of its parts.

voneinander getrennte Medien miteinander verbindet. Ein sich wiederholender Ton kann in der sorgfältig programmierten Choreographie eines LED-Musters sein visuelles Gegenstück finden; ein auf einen Leuchtkasten montiertes Foto kann unerwartet aufblitzen—und das alles synchron zum Screening eines Videoloops. Wenn wir uns für einen Moment vorstellen, dass Rodehs Installationen Bühnen wären, dann wäre die auf ihnen gespielte Darbietung, die wir beobachten, sicherlich keine Erzählung. Keine Geschichte entfaltet sich vor unseren Augen und Ohren, sondern eher ein audio-visueller Rhythmus, der durchaus den gleichmäßigen Klang einer Tomtom-Trommel enthalten kann. Diese Beschreibung deutet bereits an, dass Rodeh in einer Vielzahl von Medien arbeitet, die Installation und Skulptur ebenso umfassen wie Fotografie, Video und Malerei, aber angesichts ihrer Vernetzung und Verflechtung erscheint es nicht gerechtfertigt, diese Medien als eigenständige Ausdrucksformen anzusehen. Oft genug „reflektieren“ sie sich im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes gegenseitig, z. B. wenn verspiegelte Fliesen auf dem Boden die Bewegung

eines angeleuchteten Vorhangs wiederholen oder wenn Objekte aus den Videoarbeiten im Ausstellungsraum wieder auftauchen. Und manchmal werden diese Medien buchstäblich ineinander übersetzt, wenn eine Audiodatei zu einer Lichtanzeige wird. Folglich erscheint es bei der Annäherung an das Werk der Künstlerin aus dem Blickwinkel einer Ästhetik der Form nutzbringend, eher nach einem verbindenden Prinzip zu suchen, das sich aus dieser Vielfalt ableiten lässt. Wenn dies bedeutet, die Form von Leben an sich zu bestimmen, wie es Rodehs „Performances ohne Performer“ führen—wie die Künstlerin diese bezeichnet—dann muss es bei dieser Analyse um mehr als nur die Summe ihrer Teile gehen.

Als der ehemalige Bauhauslehrer und Pionier der kinetischen Lichtkunst László Moholy-Nagy 1930—im selben Jahr, in dem Raymond M. Hood seine Gedanken über Lichtarchitektur entwickelte—seinen berühmten *Licht-Raum-Modulator* konstruierte, konzipierte er ihn als „Lichtrequisit einer elektrischen Bühne,“ ein Gerät, das für die Projektion von farbigen Kompositionen aus bewegtem Licht in

When the former Bauhaus teacher and pioneer of kinetic light art László Moholy-Nagy constructed his famous *Light-Space-Modulator* in 1930—the same year that Raymond Hood developed his thoughts around light architecture—he conceptualized it as a “Light Prop for an Electric Stage,” an apparatus that could be used for the projection of colorful compositions of moving light into open space.<sup>7</sup> As a matter of fact, the *Light-Space-Modulator* was not designed to be the main actor in a performance but rather as a projection device for a theater stage on which human actors would appear.<sup>8</sup> But nevertheless the use of light as an important formative medium is a prevalent topic in Moholy-Nagy's work. In a letter from June 1934 addressed to Franz Kalivoda he writes: “I wished for a bare room with twelve projection devices, so that the white emptiness could be activated by intersecting bursts of colored light.”<sup>9</sup> In regard to his efforts to derive his ideas from the insights of modern science, Simone Schimpf underscored the fact that Moholy-Nagy “was one of the first to see light as an artistic material that he exploited

den offenen Raum verwendet werden konnte.<sup>7</sup> Tatsächlich war der *Licht-Raum-Modulator* nicht als Hauptakteur einer Performance konzipiert, sondern als Projektionsgerät für eine Theaterbühne, auf der Menschen als Akteure auftreten sollten.<sup>8</sup> Dennoch ist die Verwendung von Licht als bedeutendes Gestaltungsmittel ein oft wiederkehrendes Thema in Moholy-Nagys Werk. In einem Brief an Franz Kalivoda vom Juni 1934 schreibt er: „Ich wünschte mir einen kahlen Raum mit zwölf Projektionsapparaten, damit die weiße Leere unter dem Kreuzen farbiger Lichtfarben aktiviert werden sollte.“<sup>9</sup> Angesichts seiner Bemühungen, seine Ideen aus den Erkenntnissen der modernen Wissenschaft abzuleiten, betont Simone Schimpf, dass Moholy-Nagy „als einer der ersten das Licht als künstlerisches Material sah, das er direkt nutzte, und nicht als Symbol für unsichtbare Phänomene oder kosmologische Energieströme.“<sup>10</sup> Im Kontext der Lichtarchitektur lässt sich sein Vorstoß in die dritte Dimension—ein weiterer wichtiger Bezugspunkt für Rodehs aktuelles Werk—im Rahmen eines Konzepts verorten, das er und der Kunstkritiker Alfred Kemény 1922

directly and not as a symbol representing invisible phenomena or cosmological streams of energy.”<sup>10</sup> In the context of light architecture, his advance into the third dimension, another important reference point for Rodeh's current work, can be located in the framework of a concept that he and the art critic Alfred Kemény published in 1922 in the journal *Sturm*. Titled *Dynamic Constructive Energy System (Dynamisch-konstruktives Kraftsystem)*, the short manifesto summarizes their vision of the “activation of space”<sup>11</sup> through which the principle of classic art, deemed static, should be replaced by “the dynamic principle of universal life” and the “static material constructions” should become “dynamic constructions [...] in which the material is employed only as the carrier of forces.”<sup>12</sup>

Rodeh's environments undoubtedly unfold active spaces as well. Their dynamic is thus not unlike that of the tensing forces of Moholy-Nagy's *Kraftsystem* but the materials used in them are, if not carriers of forces, bearers of qualities that make them capable of performing—an

in der Zeitschrift *Sturm* veröffentlichten. Unter dem Titel *Dynamisch-konstruktives Kraftsystem* fasst das kurze Manifest ihre Vision von der „Aktivmachung des Raumes“ zusammen,<sup>11</sup> durch die das als statisch geltende Prinzip der klassischen Kunst durch „das Dynamische des universellen Lebens“ ersetzt werden sollte und die „statischen Material-Konstruktionen“ zu „dynamischen Konstruktionen“ werden sollten, in denen „das Material nur als Kraftträger verwendet wird“.<sup>12</sup>

Rodehs Environments entfalten zweifellos auch aktive Räume. Ihre Dynamik ist somit nicht unähnlich denen der Spannkräfte des Kraftsystems von Moholy-Nagy, aber die in ihnen verwendeten Materialien sind, wenn nicht Träger von Kräften, so doch Träger von Eigenschaften, die sie zur Performance befähigen—ein Aspekt, auf den im Folgenden näher eingegangen werden soll. Wie bereits aufgezeigt, bestehen ihre Installationen aus heterogenen Elementen inkonsistenter Intensitäten (Elemente können in einem Moment aufblitzen und sich im nächsten zurückziehen), aber aufgrund ihrer inneren Beziehungen ist es möglich und sogar notwendig,



aspect which shall be elaborated upon further below. As already evidenced, her installations consist of heterogeneous elements of inconsistent intensities (elements may flash up in one moment and withdraw themselves in the next) but given their internal relations it is possible and even necessary to grasp them as a coherent, systemic whole. This coherence, though, requires the consideration of a fourth dimension that comes along with the experience of any work of art: time. According to the philosopher Armen Avanessian, “every theorization of art that takes an interest in the temporal mode of how an artwork is experienced anticipates a dynamic disposition of the artwork particular to even the most strictly formal pieces. Even if only through the experiential dimension instigated by them, singular artworks are therefore always also dynamic.”<sup>13</sup> The nature of this inherent dynamic is maybe best explained using the example of the perception of music, a purely time-based form of art: Within the conceptual brackets that define the start and end points of a piece of music, a dynamic between otherwise

unrelated sounds unfolds which we then perceive as a melody or a beat. In a similar sense, Rodeh structures an exhibition space by intervention: A series of neon lights ever decreasing in intensity, for example, acts in unison to produce a singular form, the visual equivalent of a *decrescendo*. Besides the already mentioned rhythmicity in Rodeh’s works, yet another musical analogy should not go unmentioned, one that becomes evident when taking a closer look at the production processes the works emerge from. In the artist’s careful examination of the material qualities of a certain paint or a reflective fabric, as well as in the re-programming of ready-made electronic parts, a specific form of attentive hearing of these materials can be observed. In this sense, is the breaking of an LED-turn signal’s default something other than a liberation of the full range of its voice? Is the hacking of its built-in software the realization of a smart device’s true potential?

Instead of being extras in a play with assigned roles, in Rodeh’s art the objects in their material identity take center stage. Here lies

sie als ein kohärentes, systemisches Ganzes zu begreifen. Diese Kohärenz erfordert jedoch die Erwägung einer vierten Dimension, die mit der Erfahrung eines jeden Kunstwerks einhergeht: der Zeit. Laut dem Philosophen Armen Avanessian „gewärtigt jede Theoretisierung von Kunst, die sich für den temporalen Vollzugsmodus ihrer rezeptiven Erfahrung interessiert, noch in den am strengsten formalisierten Kunstwerken eine diesen eigene dynamische Disposition. Schon allein die durch sie ausgelöste Erfahrungsdimension macht singuläre Kunstwerke immer auch zu dynamischen.“<sup>13</sup> Die Wesensart dieser inhärenten Dynamik lässt sich vielleicht am besten am Beispiel der Wahrnehmung von Musik erklären, einer rein zeitbasierten Kunstform: Innerhalb der konzeptuellen Klammern, die den Anfangs- und Endpunkt eines Musikstücks definieren, entfaltet sich eine Dynamik zwischen sonst unzusammenhängenden Tönen, die wir dann als Melodie oder Rhythmus wahrnehmen. In ähnlichem Sinne strukturiert Rodeh einen Ausstellungsraum durch Intervention: Eine Reihe von an Intensität nachlassenden Neonlichtern beispielsweise agiert gemeinsam,

um eine singuläre Form zu erzeugen, das visuelle Äquivalent eines *Decrescendo*. Neben der bereits erwähnten Rhythmik in Rodehs Werken sollte auch eine weitere musikalische Analogie nicht unerwähnt bleiben, die sich bei genauer Betrachtung der Produktionsprozesse, aus denen die Werke hervorgehen, zeigt. In der Art wie sich die Künstlerin achtsam mit den Materialeigenschaften einer bestimmten Farbe oder eines reflektierenden Gewebes auseinandersetzt, aber auch wie sie vorgefertigte elektronische Bauteile umprogrammiert, ist eine spezifische Form des aufmerksamen Hörens dieser Materialien zu beobachten. Ist in diesem Sinne das Aufbrechen des Standard-Blinkmodus eines LED-Blinklichts etwas anderes als eine Befreiung seines vollen Stimmumfangs? Ist das Hacking der eingebauten Software eines Smart Devices die Verwirklichung seines wahren Potenzials?

Anstatt Statisten in einem Schauspiel mit zugewiesenen Rollen zu sein, stehen in Rodehs Kunst die Objekte in ihrer materiellen Identität im Mittelpunkt. Hierin liegt eine mögliche Perspektive, aus der Rodehs Hinwendung zu den

one possible perspective from which her turn towards the things themselves, her approach to object-oriented ontology (OOO) can be conceived. It takes us back to the beginning of this text and the aforementioned One Times Square tower clad in a wall of screens. Each of these screens consists of millions of tiny LEDs that render as pixels the never-ending stream of images they emit by the changing of their lights. Yet in order to function, these transmitted images require the oblivion of their pixelated origin—much unlike the LEDs that are fitted into the wide-spanning checkered surface of a work such as *Smooth Operator* (2018), imbuing its dark, monolithic presence with lively sparkles of light. These small individual lamps do not disappear in a sheer mass of illumination; on the contrary, they are all the more visible against their black backdrop as they in turn enhance the effect of their carrier’s shape instead of disguising it. They represent nothing but themselves and their ability to perform the most delicate choreographies which, within the frame of their positioning, sound out a multitude of

Dingen selbst, ihr Zugang zur objektorientierten Ontologie (OOO) gedacht werden kann. Dies führt uns zurück zum Anfang dieses Textes und zum bereits erwähnten One Times Square Tower, der mit einer Wand aus Bildschirmen verkleidet ist. Jeder dieser Bildschirme besteht aus Millionen winziger LEDs, die als Pixel den endlosen Strom von Bildern wiedergeben, die sie durch das Verändern ihrer Lichter aussenden. Doch um zu funktionieren, verlangen die übertragenen Bilder die Nichtbeachtung ihres pixeligen Ursprungs—ganz im Gegensatz zu den LEDs, die in die weitgespannte, schachbrettartige Oberfläche eines Werkes wie *Smooth Operator* (2018) eingesetzt sind und dessen dunkle, monolithische Präsenz mit lebhaftem Funkeln erfüllen. Diese kleinen einzelnen Lämpchen verschwinden nicht in einer schieren Lichtmasse, sondern sind vor ihrem schwarzen Hintergrund umso sichtbarer, und verstärken so ihrerseits die Wirkung der Form ihres Trägers, anstatt diese zu verbergen. Sie stellen nichts anderes als sich selbst dar und ihre Fähigkeit, filigranste Choreographien aufzuführen, die innerhalb des Rahmens ihrer Positionierung eine Vielzahl von

constellations. But *Smooth Operator* does not limit itself to the confines of classical modern art’s legacy and the drive to reject illusionistic representations of reality in favor of self-referring formal solutions. If *Smooth Operator* is to be examined under the heading of form, it is suitable to follow Avanessian’s advice and not think of form “in terms of sensually perceptible categories (contour, outline or shape)” alone.<sup>14</sup> Not everything that is form meets the eye at once. *Smooth Operator*’s temporal form, like a ghost within the machine that brings its light and sound patterns to life, is an immaterial form that unfolds itself from inside, out of a digital code just like a tree would evolve out of a grain of seed. All the while, the material parts of the work function as a vehicle with the capacity to display this ephemeral, lively interior form.

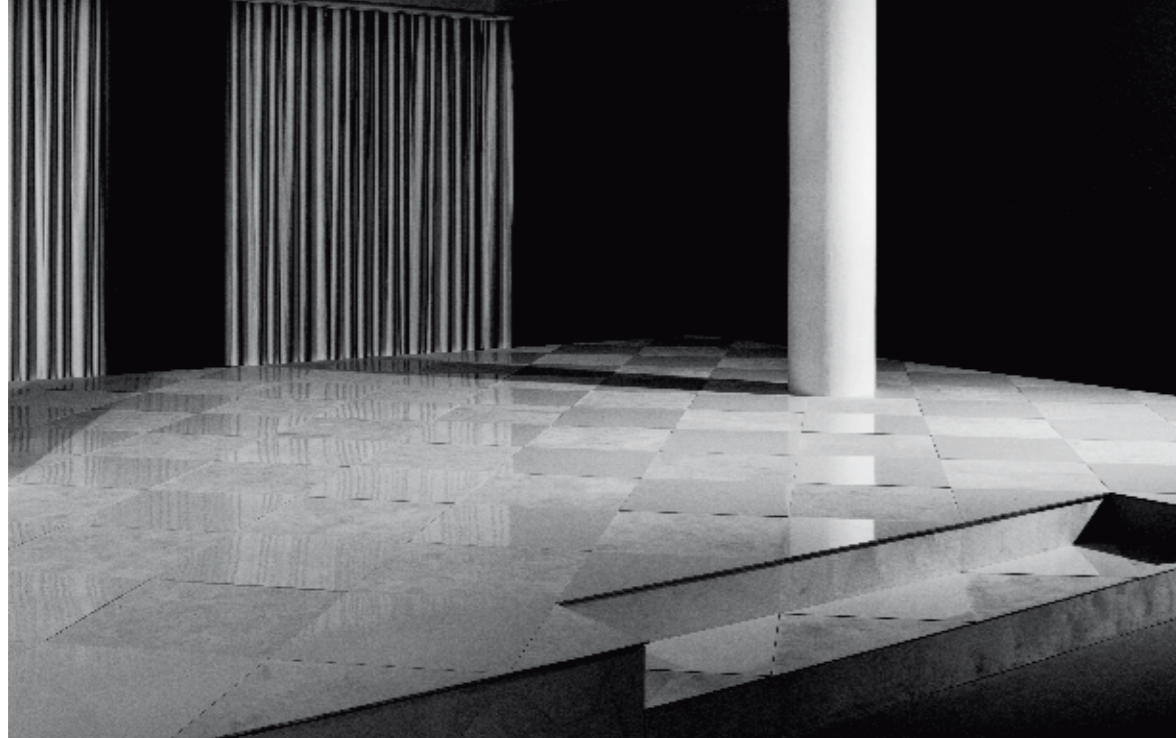
Much of the aesthetic of liveliness that manifests itself in Rodeh’s works draws from the fact that her artworks openly exhibit the material conditions of their vibrant aesthetic language. They do so through a manifold interplay of functional materials and intelligent objects that

Konstellationen ausloten. *Smooth Operator* beschränkt sich jedoch nicht auf die Grenzen des Erbes der klassischen Moderne und den Drang, illusionistische Repräsentationen der Realität zugunsten selbstbezogener formaler Lösungen abzulehnen. Wenn *Smooth Operator* unter dem Überbegriff der Form betrachtet werden soll, ist es sinnvoll, dem Rat Avanessians zu folgen und Form nicht allein „als sinnlich wahrnehmbare Kategorien (Kontur, Umriss oder Gestalt)“ zu denken.<sup>14</sup> Nicht alles, was Form ist, fällt sofort ins Auge. Die zeitliche Form von *Smooth Operator*—wie ein Geist in der Maschine, der seine Licht- und Klangmuster verlebendigt—ist eine immaterielle Form, die sich von innen heraus aus einem digitalen Code entfaltet, so wie sich ein Baum aus einem Samenkorn herausbilden würde. Dabei fungieren die materiellen Teile der Arbeit als Vehikel, das die Fähigkeit hat, diese flüchtige, lebendige innere Form darzustellen.

Ein Großteil der Ästhetik der Lebendigkeit, die sich in Rodehs Werken manifestiert, ergibt sich aus der Tatsache, dass ihre Kunstwerke die materiellen Voraussetzungen ihrer lebhaften



Alona Rodeh, *Neither Day Nor Night*, 2013  
 Plywood, formica, reflective fabric, lights.  
 Dimensions variable; Sound: 5 minutes  
 looped including break



themselves have been informed by processes outside the artist's immediate reach, but are chosen precisely for those qualities, such as their specific textures, colors, and structures. If one were to formulate this on an even more abstract level, then it seems adequate to resort to the idea of a *mere form*. Avanesian, tracing

the term back to Immanuel Kant, writes: "Kant's mere form refers to a form-giving capacity, to the transformation of the formless into form. Such a singularizing understanding of form does not predetermine the shape of things, but starts at the level of possibly shaping them in the first place [...]"<sup>15</sup> A firefighter's fire-proof gear,

ästhetischen Sprache offen zur Schau stellen. Sie tun dies durch ein vielfältiges Zusammenspiel von funktionalen Materialien und intelligenten Objekten, die selbst von Prozessen außerhalb der unmittelbaren Reichweite der Künstlerin geprägt wurden, aber gerade wegen dieser Eigenschaften, wie ihrer spezifischen Texturen, Farben und Strukturen, ausgewählt wurden. Wollte man dies auf einer noch abstrakteren Ebene formulieren, dann erscheint es angemessen, auf die Idee einer *bloßen* Form zurückzugreifen. Avanesian, der den Begriff auf Immanuel Kant zurückführt, schreibt: „Kants *bloße* Form verweist auf eine formgebende Kapazität, auf die Transformation von Formlosem in Form. Ein solcher singularisierender Formbegriff gibt nicht die Gestalt von Dingen vor, sondern setzt ein auf der Ebene ihrer Gestaltbarkeit überhaupt [...]"<sup>15</sup> Die feuerfeste Montur eines Feuerwehrmanns zum Beispiel besteht aus einer Art von Gewebe, in das viele Jahrzehnte moderner Forschung und Vervollkommnung durch menschliche Anstrengung eingeschrieben sind. Aber ist es nicht das Feuer selbst, das ebenso seinen Fingerabdruck

in das Gewebe eingepägt hat? Ohne Feuer gibt es keinen Rauch und schon gar keine feuerfeste Kleidung. Gleiches gilt für reflektierende Stoffe in Signalkleidung, die in ihren Strukturen an die Anforderungen des Lichts und des menschlichen Auges erinnern. Um ihre Aufgaben zu erfüllen, mussten sich diese Stoffe aus dem Nichtvorhandensein zu genau ihren letztendlichen Formen entwickeln und zu keinen anderen. Poller hingegen, wie man sie heute in Fußgängerzonen kennt, halten Fahrzeuge von bestimmten Orten fern, gehen aber ursprünglich auf ausgediente Kanonen zurück, die vor etwa 400 Jahren vertikal in den Boden eingesetzt wurden, um Schiffe in Häfen festzumachen. Die Form ihrer jüngsten Generation jedoch—automatisch aufsteigende Poller, die dem Aufprall von LKWs wie jenen standhalten können, die in jüngster Zeit für Terroranschläge eingesetzt wurden—erinnert strukturell eher an Eisberge. Der sichtbare Teil dieser Poller ist nur ein winziger Bruchteil des gesamten Objekts, da ihre um ein Vielfaches größeren Fundamente tief unter der Erde vergraben sind. Der Poller, ein singuläres Objekt unserer Alltagswelt, weist daher eine

for example, is made from a type of fabric in which many decades of advanced research and improvement by human effort are inscribed. But is it not fire itself that imprinted its fingerprint on the fabric as well? Without fire there is no smoke and certainly no fire-proof garment. The same goes for reflective materials used in high-visibility clothing that in their structures recall the demands of light and the human eye. In order to fulfill their tasks these materials had to develop from non-existence into precisely their eventual forms and not any other. Bollards on the other hand, a familiar sight in today's pedestrian areas, keep vehicles out of certain places but they originally stem from disused cannons that were first vertically inserted into the ground for mooring ships in harbors around 400 years ago. The shape of their youngest generation though—automatically rising bollards that are capable of withstanding the impact of trucks—such as those that have been used for terror attacks in the recent past—are more structurally reminiscent of icebergs. The visible part of these bollards is just a tiny fraction of

faszinierende Formentwicklung auf, in der sich Überlegungen hinsichtlich seiner Gestaltung widerspiegeln, aber auch Reaktionen auf seine Funktionen.

Auch wenn Flachbildschirme, gemeinsam mit virtueller Realität, nicht nur in unserem Alltag, sondern auch im Bereich der Kunst an Bedeutung gewinnen, sind wir weiterhin auf unsere physisch anwesenden Körper angewiesen, die ihre Umwelt mit einer Vielzahl von Objekten teilen. Wenn Künstler wie Moholy-Nagy im Allgemeinen dazu neigten, diesen materiellen Objekten zu misstrauen, zeigt Rodeh hingegen, dass Objekte nicht als unvermeidbare, aber nebensächliche Hilfsmittel bei der Verwirklichung künstlerischer Visionen erachtet werden sollten. Anstatt Kräfte aus ihnen zu gewinnen, als ob man sie zur Arbeit zwingen würde, achtet sie aufmerksam auf ihre individuellen Eigenschaften, ihre Handlungsmacht. Anstatt Systeme von Spannkräften zu schaffen, erschließt sie Erfahrungsfelder. Derzeit erforscht das Feld die nächtliche Gestaltung unserer Städte. 1922 komponierte Moholy-Nagy einen visuellen Essay mit dem Titel *Dynamik der Grossstadt*,

the whole object as their several-times-bigger foundations are buried deep underground. The bollard, a singular object of our everyday realm, therefore exhibits a fascinating evolution of forms that represents deliberations in its design as well as responses to its functions.

Though flat screens, along with virtual reality, are gaining ground not only in our daily life but also in the realm of art, we still have to rely on our physically present bodies that share their environment with a plethora of objects. If artists like Moholy-Nagy generally tended to mistrust those material objects, Rodeh, on the contrary, shows that objects should not be deemed inevitable yet negligible assistants for materializing artistic visions. Instead of extracting forces from them, as if forcing them into labor, she pays observant attention to their individual qualities, their agency. Instead of creating systems of tensing forces she opens up fields of experience. For now, the field probes into the nocturnal design of our cities. In 1922, Moholy-Nagy composed a visual essay entitled *Dynamic of the Metropolis* (*Dynamik der*

ein Drehbuch für einen Film, den er nie wirklich realisierte. Darin wollte der Künstler den Zuschauer auf eine rasante visuelle Reise durch die vielen Facetten einer modernen Metropole mitnehmen: In rascher Folge formen sich Bilder von, zum Beispiel, Autos, Zügen, Baustellen, einem Schornstein, einem Taucher und den wiederkehrenden Bildern von Löwen und Tigern zu einer allumfassenden Pathosformel des Lebens in einer modernen Großstadt. Alle einzelnen Objekte dieses Films finden sich in einer Geste vereint, die eine bestimmte historische Erfahrung zum Ausdruck bringt: die des einzelnen Menschen, der von der Beschleunigung der Moderne hingerissen ist. „Tempo, Tempo, Tempo“ steht auf fast jeder Seite von Moholy-Nagys Filmskript gedruckt. Im Vergleich dazu gibt die scharfsichtige Kunst von Rodeh—dies umfasst sowohl ihre Installationen als auch ihre Kunstpublikationen—dem in jener Zeit angestoßenen katalysierenden Impuls in der Kunst eine neue Richtung, wechselt zur Video-Zeitlupenwiedergabe und zieht das Vergrößerungsglas hervor. Ihre kontinuierliche Erforschung der



*Gross-stadt*), a screenplay for a film that he never actually realized. In it, the artist intended to take the viewer onto a high-speed visual trip through the many facets of a modern metropolis: in rapid succession, images of, among other things, cars, trains, construction work, a chimney, a diver, and the recurring pictures of lions and tigers mold themselves into one all-encompassing *pathos formula* of life in a modern city. All the singular objects in this film find themselves united in one gesture expressing a certain historic experience: that of the individual

human being enraptured by modernity's acceleration. "Tempo, tempo, tempo" is printed onto almost every page of Moholy-Nagy's script. By comparison, the discerning art of Rodeh—encompassing her installations as well as her art publications—redirects the catalyzing momentum in art that had been launched in those days, switches to slow-motion video replay, and pulls out the magnifying glass. Her ongoing research into the material prerequisites that produce the experience of our urban environment suggests—to conclude in line with Armen

Avanessian—that "[to] judge objects, situations or relations in their very singular form, means at the same time having to deal with their varying historical, cultural and contextual contents."<sup>16</sup> It is exactly that which happens on the pages of this publication.

Malte Kröger is an independent curator and cultural scholar. He has been working at the Kunstpalais in Erlangen since 2016. He studied art history and media studies in Erlangen and religious and cultural studies in Munich and Istanbul.

#### Notes

- 1 László Moholy-Nagy, "Dynamik der Grossstadt," in id. *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1927), p. 127.
- 2 Louis M. Brill, *One Times Square. (THE TIMES TOWER)*, <http://www.nyc-architecture.com/MID/MID104.htm> [20.01.2019]
- 3 Dietrich Neumann, "Luminous Buildings—Architectures of the Night," in *Luminous Buildings: Architecture of the Night*, ed. id. and Marion Ackermann, exh. cat. Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (Ostfildern 2006), p. 26.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 *Architecture of the Night: A Series of Articles published by the General Electric Company to Suggest the Possibilities of Architectural Illumination* (Schenectady, NY, 1930).
- 6 Neumann, p. 26.
- 7 Andreas Haus, "Dynamisch-konstruktives Kraftsystem'. Eine Pathosformel des gestalteten Raums," in *Raum in den Künsten. Konstruktion—Bewegung—Politik*, ed. Armen Avanessian and Franck Hofmann (Munich, 2010), p. 53.
- 8 Ibid., p. 63.
- 9 Ibid., p. 53.

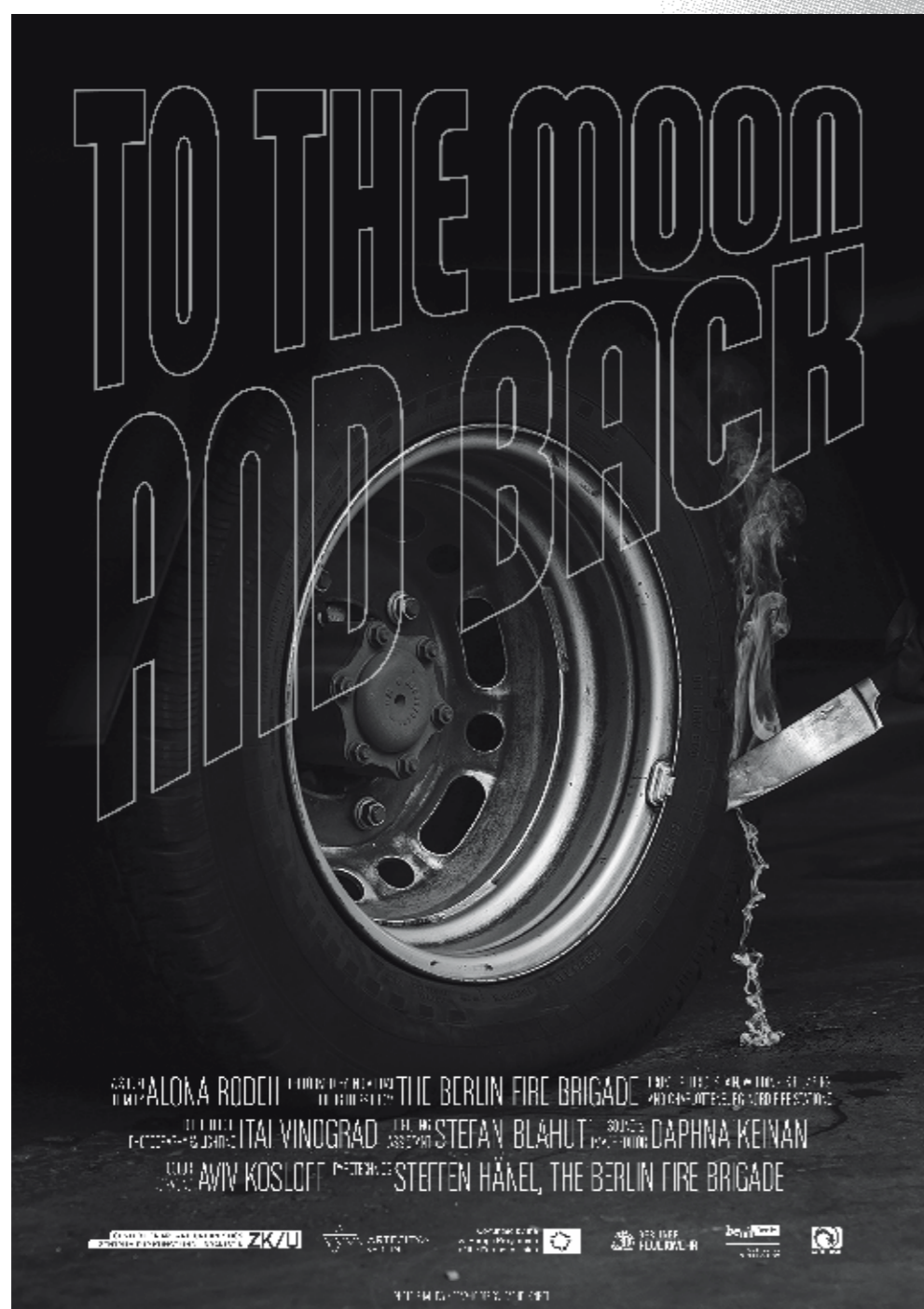
#### Literatur und Anmerkungen

- 1 László Moholy-Nagy, „Dynamik der Grossstadt," in *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, hrsg. id., 2. Aufl. (München, 1927), S. 127.
- 2 Louis M. Brill, *One Times Square. (THE TIMES TOWER)*, <http://www.nyc-architecture.com/MID/MID104.htm> [20.01.2019].
- 3 Dietrich Neumann, „Luminous Buildings—Architectures of the Night," in *Luminous Buildings Architecture of the Night*, hrsg. id. und Marion Ackermann, Ausst.Kat. Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (Ostfildern, 2006), S. 26.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 *Architecture of the Night: A Series of Articles Published by the General Electric Company to Suggest the Possibilities of Architectural Illumination* (Schenectady, NY, 1930).
- 6 Neumann, S. 26.
- 7 Andreas Haus, „Dynamisch-konstruktives Kraftsystem'. Eine Pathosformel des gestalteten Raums," in *Raum in den Künsten. Konstruktion—Bewegung—Politik*, hrsg. Armen Avanessian und Franck Hofmann (München, 2010), S. 53.
- 8 Ibid., S. 63.
- 9 Ibid., S. 53.

materiellen Voraussetzungen, die das Erfahren unserer urbanen Umwelt bedingen, legt nahe—um in Übereinstimmung mit Armen Avanessian zu schließen—, dass „Objekte, Situationen oder Beziehungen in ihrer ganz eigenen Form zu beurteilen, bedeutet, sich zugleich mit ihren unterschiedlichen historischen, kulturellen und kontextuellen Inhalten auseinandersetzen zu müssen“.<sup>16</sup> Genau dies geschieht auf den Seiten dieser Publikation.

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Alona Rodeh, *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
Poster design: Rachel Kinrot





**Alona Rodeh, *Architecture of the Nights*, 2019**

P. 33 *Architecture of the Nights* (detail), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, LED panels, electric curtain;  
dimensions variable

*Reading Bollards*, 2019  
MDF; 60x60x45 cm each

P. 34 *Architecture of the Nights* (curtain closed), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, LED panels, electric curtain;  
dimensions variable

P. 36 *Architecture of the Nights*, 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, LED panels, electric curtain;  
dimensions variable

*Reading Bollards*, 2019  
MDF; 60x60x45 cm each

P. 38 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
HD video, sound, DE approx. 13 min, IL approx. 3 min

P. 40 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
HD video, sound, DE approx. 13 min, IL approx. 3 min

P. 42 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
HD video, sound, DE approx. 13 min, IL approx. 3 min

P. 45 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
HD video, sound, DE approx. 13 min, IL approx. 3 min

P. 47 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
Production stills: Itai Vinograd

P.48 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
Production stills: Shai Levy

P. 49 *To The Moon And Back*, 2017  
Production stills: Shai Levy

P. 50 *Feuerteufel*, 2017  
C-print, plexiglass, LEDs, wooden frame; 50x70x5 cm

*Smooth Operator*, 2018  
MDF, plywood, LEDs, speakers; 373x212x10 cm

P. 53 *Feuerteufel*, 2017  
C-print, plexiglass, LEDs, wooden frame; 50x70x5 cm

P. 54 *Smooth Operator*, 2018  
MDF, plywood, LEDs, speakers; 373x212x10 cm

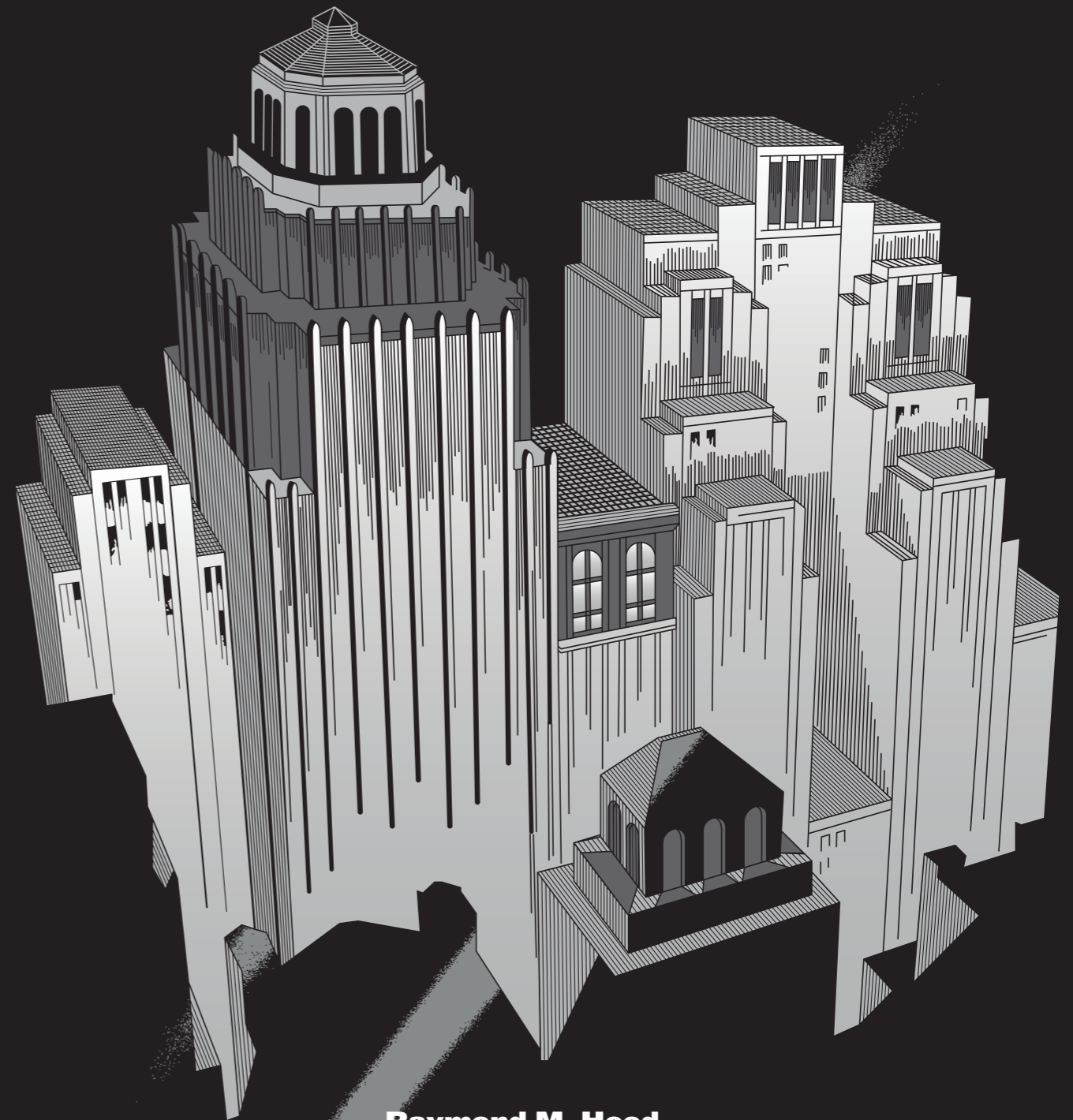
P. 56 *The Dragon Teeth of Jerusalem* (detail), 2019  
OSB floor panels, LED blitzers, MDF, aluminum  
reflectors; dimensions variable

P. 58 *The Dragon Teeth of Jerusalem*, 2019  
OSB floor panels, LED blitzers, MDF, aluminum  
reflectors; dimensions variable

P. 61 *The Resurrection of Dead Masters* (detail), 2012  
Glass door, metal door, lights, chains and locks,  
sound shakers, sound; dimensions variable  
Courtesy of Haaretz Art Collection, Tel Aviv

P. 62 *The Resurrection of Dead Masters*, 2012  
Glass door, metal door, lights, chains and locks,  
sound shakers, sound; dimensions variable  
Courtesy of Haaretz Art Collection, Tel Aviv

All photos unless mentioned otherwise: Ludger Paffrath



**Raymond M. Hood**

# ARCHITECTURE OF THE NIGHT



*Architecture of the Night*, trade catalog cover,  
General Electric company, 1930, used under  
CC BY / Desaturated from original"



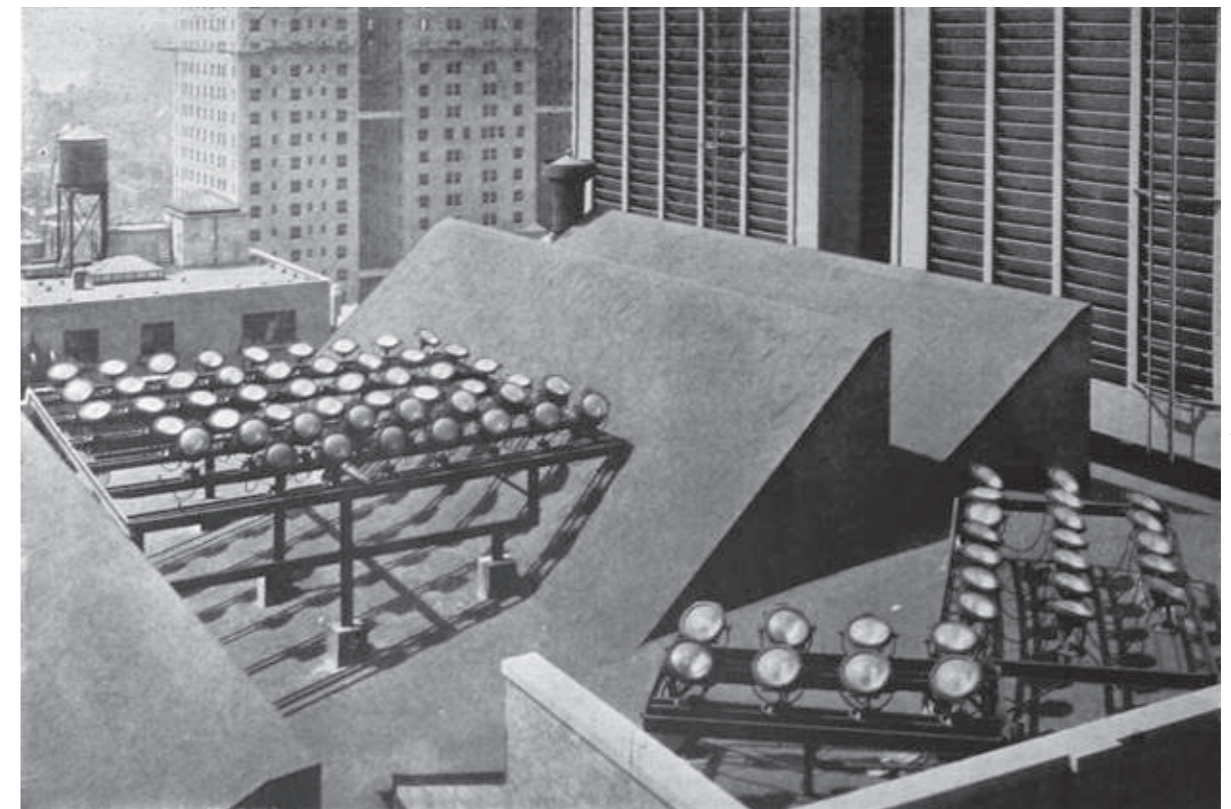
**RAYMOND M. HOOD PREDICTS:  
ARCHITECTURE OF THE NIGHT.  
FASCINATING POSSIBILITIES IN  
NIGHT ILLUMINATION. COLOR,  
PATTERN AND EVEN “MOVEMENT”  
MAY BE ATTEMPTED**

It is the privilege of the General Electric Company to present this significant interview with Mr. Raymond M. Hood. Night illumination—the “Architecture of the Night”—is a subject of immediate interest to all architects of important buildings and one to which Mr. Hood has devoted thoughtful attention. It is a new branch of the art and fully deserves the open-minded consideration that is being given to it by acknowledged authorities. While many of the ideas here presented for the first time are of far-reaching import to professional practice of the future, it may be that even the present year will see the brilliant fulfillment of some of Mr. Hood’s glowing predictions.

“The possibilities of night illumination have barely been touched,” said Mr. Hood. “There lies in the future a development even more fantastic than anything that has ever been accomplished on the stage. Up to the present, we have contented ourselves mainly with direct

and floodlighting of varying intensity. There is still to be studied the whole realm of color of the reflecting surfaces, pattern studies in light, shade and color, and last of all, movement.

“When I was studying the lighting of the Radiator Building, I tried, with the help of Mr. Kliegel, a few experiments that opened my eyes to what might be done. We tried multi-colored revolving lights and produced at one time the effect of the building’s being on fire. We threw spots of light on jets of steam rising out of the smoke-stack. Then again, with moving lights, we had the whole top of the building waving like a tree in a strong wind. With cross-lighting, that is to say, lighting from different sources and different directions across the same forms, the most unusual cubistic patterns were developed. All of this, however, was experimental, as we did not feel that either our knowledge of the art or the perception of the public was at a point where it would be wise to attempt extravagant and exotic effects. It was not a lack of courage or nerve that held us back, merely the question of taste, on account of the building’s being in such a prominent location.



Banks of GE floodlights, on their sturdy support, are set at various angles to produce striking effects on the Paramount Theater

“At present the art is new, our knowledge very scant, and we all play safe. For example, daylight—sunlight—is constant from a single source and in a single direction. That is what brings out the modeling and massing of a building, as in everything else, as we understand it. So at night we follow the same rule, merely reversing the direction of light, turning it up instead of down, although in Classic architecture we frequently use long, horizontal bands lighting down or outlining our architecture with line of light. The general tendency of all of this lighting is to flatten out modeling and relief, unless it is thrown across a projecting band as in the

case of a building with strong projecting cornices lighted from below. Such a condition reverses the daylight effect and usually upsets and otherwise disconcerts the composition of the architectural forms. For that reason, with vertical lighting from below, unless a horizontal member can be so studied that it composes either right side up or upside down—an extremely difficult thing to do—it is safer to suppress it or, to put it another way, to illuminate only buildings where these horizontal members do not exist.

“Vertical lighting from below adds the element of mystery, as the fading out of lights from the bottom to the top exaggerates



Berlin Im Licht, Osram's light tower for Lichtwoche, Berlin 1928 / Staatsarchiv Freiburg W 134 Nr. 000608 / Photo: Willy Prager / The Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg



the perspective, and seeing the building disappearing up into the night gives it an increased height. It follows, therefore, that the type of architecture that is the most easy to illuminate successfully is what can be called our American perpendicular, as the lights can be arranged to stream up the vertical forms of the buildings, gradually disappearing into the night, and the set-backs and terraces provide ideal places for the operation of the lights.

“I have spoken of the possibilities of cross-lighting. I recently saw an extraordinary photograph by Steichen where

cross-lighting on a regular arrangement of lumps of sugar on a flat surface produced the most astonishing effect of a Scotch plaid. The same principles can be applied to the forms in a building, but it must always be remembered that the intensity of light and possibility of effect are increased if the shadows are not completely destroyed, as it is the combination of light, shade and shadow that gives the pattern.

“One of the first criticism that can be brought against the ordinary methods of floodlighting is that they merely produce glaring, unbroken surfaces in

which all texture in form and pattern is lost and the only effect produced is that of the light against the surrounding darkness. All of this is well and good, but it does not attempt to realize or make the most out of the limitless possibilities in the art.

“There is also the question of the character, texture and color of the surface to be lighted. To take again the case of the Radiator Building, the richness, depth and quality of color (I can say this modestly as it was almost accidental) are produced by an amber light thrown on a metallic pure gold surface. Certainly, among the other buildings, this color has a distinction and quality that is very mysterious. The study of details of a building in night lighting is relatively unimportant. Almost the only effect seen is the contrast of light and darkness, and this effect is always so vivid and striking that masses are all that count in the picture.

“Eventually, the night lighting of buildings is going to be studied exactly as Gordon Craig and Norman Bel Geddes have studied stage lighting. Every possible means to obtain an effect will be tried—color, varying sources and direction of light, pattern and movement. In this last case, I cannot even see

any logical reason why a building should not be made to move and flutter. There is nothing more shocking or astonishing in the idea than there is in hearing over the radio the voice of a man in England, who by the accepted standards of one hundred years ago was completely out of sight, range and mind.

“At present we are in the A, B, C stage of illumination. If we want to see something, we turn a light on. Anyone who want to see something, we turn a light on. Anyone who has seen the color organ that has been played in some of our concert halls can realize that the illumination of today is only the start of an art that may develop as our modern music developed from the simple beating of tom-tom.”

Raymond M. Hood's essay was included in a commercial leaflet published by General Electric company to suggest the possibilities of architectural illumination, 1930



# THE MODERN DISCOTHEQUE

## RE-CODING TECHNOLOGY FOR TECHNO-EMANCIPATION

Pol Esteve

In 1979, The Greater London Council passed a code to regulate a new architectural genre: the discotheque. This code is the first known text describing a discotheque for legal purposes. The resulting GLC-published booklet, titled *Disco Rules Ok*, explained the legal dispositions of the code and gave recommendations on how to run a discotheque. At the beginning of the booklet, a definition of the discotheque in legal language appeared:

“For the purposes of this Code, discos are defined as events characterized by loudly amplified music, dancing, flashing lights, and mostly attracting people under the age of 30.”

Beyond the anecdotal age range of the concurrence, the legal text described both the activity and the materials that constituted the discotheque. Firstly, it linked the discotheque with the act of “dancing”. Secondly, it stated the discotheque was built with “amplified music” and “flashing lights”. It is worth noting how it defined the venue not in terms of its spatial dimensions and geometrical form, but through its activity and its relationship with and the use of specific technologies. Concretely, it identified two kinds of electronic technologies: those producing sound and those producing light. The code regulated their working parameters, controlling the frequencies for strobe and UV lights, specifying the kind of laser lights that could be used and establishing the appropriate levels of sound intensity.

Despite the legal dispositions of the code that exclusively legislated these two families of technologies, a warning appeared in the in the divulgation booklet regarding a third kind of technology. In order to avoid eventual trouble, it was advised that proprietors be especially careful when it came to people who were under the effects of psychotropic technologies, or, in other words, drugs. The text doesn’t explicitly acknowledge or seek to regulate drugs as a constituent part of the discotheque, but they are nevertheless mentioned, albeit tangentially, and it is thus rendered evident the need to consider psychoactive substances when addressing the discotheque phenomenon. It is not surprising that the psychotropics were not included in the directives that regulated the use of electronic technologies. By the early 1970s, separate legislative bodies had assumed authority for different kinds of technologies; the administrative control of drugs was in fact subsidiary of a series of international treaties, rather than monitored by local building regulations. In fact, in 1971, a few years before the legal regulation of discotheques in London, the UN had held a convention on Psychotropic Substances in Vienna. In this meeting an agreement was made to internationally ban the commercialization and consumption of dozens of drugs, particularly for recreational use.

As is customary, the GLC’s regulating law only came in after the use of advanced spatial technologies had already been deployed. In effect, the legal text officially certificated the existence

of this architectural genre; the discotheque as a new form of spatial practice that introduced a novel use for a series of technologies that had already existed for a long time. It was only at the turn of the 1980s that the code was passed, yet the discotheque phenomenon had been already present for almost two decades. Furthermore, the lighting, sound and psychotropic applications that produced the experience of the discotheque were invented many decades before the 1971 Convention and the 1979 Code. By the end of the 19th Century, electricity, the fueling energy for most of the technical devices composing the discotheque started to be spread. In 1881, the International Exhibition of Electricity was held in Paris, while Thomas Edison built the first public electricity distribution system in London one year later. This widespread expansion of electricity uses propelled experimentation with electronic devices at the same time that pharmacological industry was beginning to test synthetically produced chemical substances and their effects on the body. Between the end of 19th Century and the first decades of the 20th, most of the electric devices and drugs that were to define the discotheque had already been invented. Later, the investment in research during

**This widespread expansion of electricity uses propelled experimentation with electronic devices at the same time that pharmacological industry was beginning to test synthetically produced chemical substances and their effects on the body**

the World Wars fostered further technical refinement and testing. Initially, such devices were invented for completely different purposes than making one dance; it was only in the post-war period that these technologies acquired a new significance and were introduced into a spatial design context.

Meanwhile, technologies to create new forms of light had long-been historically sought,



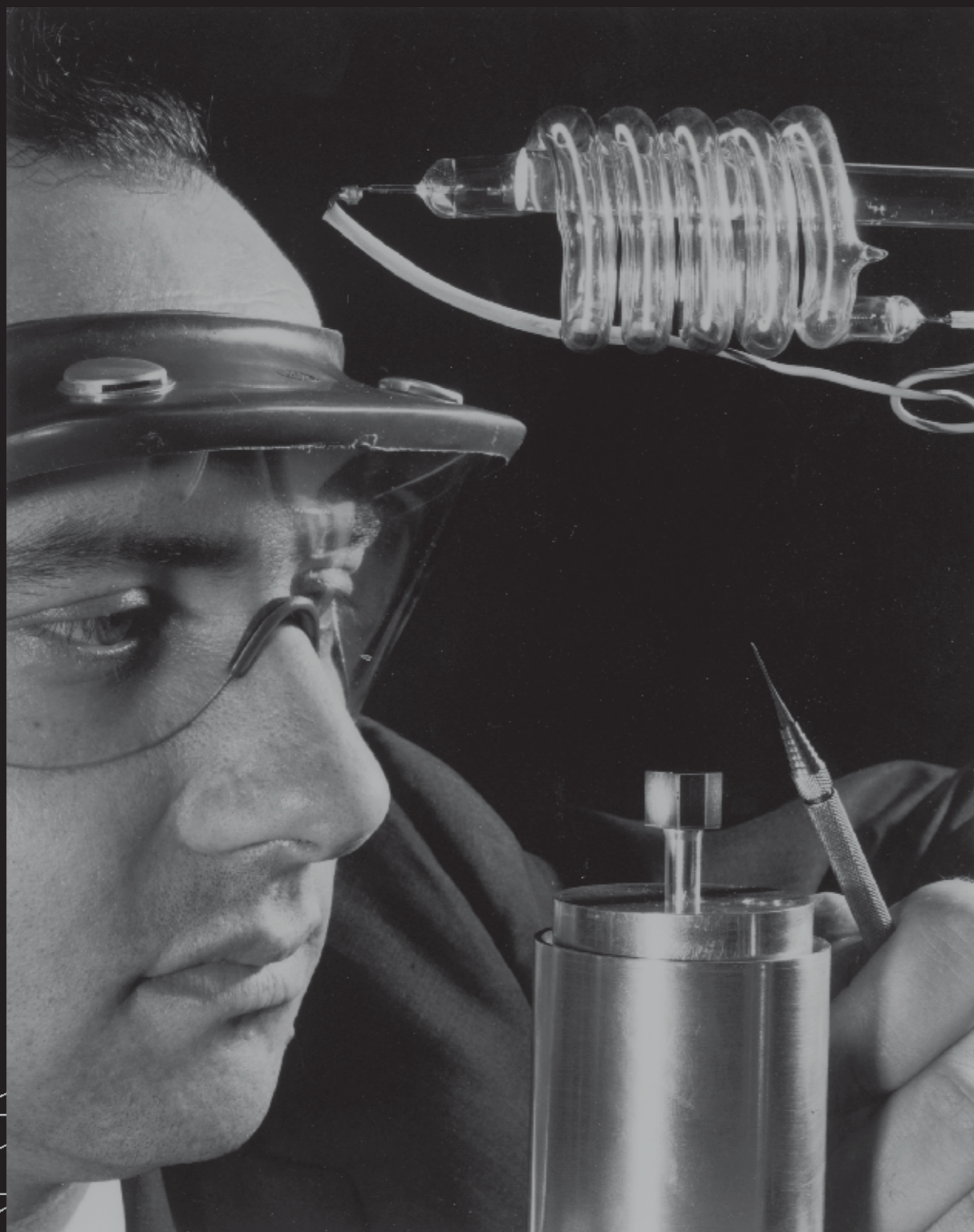
Thomas Edison with his second phonograph, 1878  
Photo: Levin Corbin Handy, Washington

yet were similarly boosted when, during the 19th Century, discoveries relating to the material sources of light exponentially increased. Initially, these inventions were largely tied to the aesthetic expression of light, such as when breakthroughs in chemistry made it possible to widen the color range of fireworks—before the 1830s, only orange and white firecrackers existed. Later though, following the first incandescent bulb patent by Frederick Moleyns in 1841, most developments in the field of lighting were driven by purposes other than illuminating a space or creating a pleasing aesthetic effect. Most of the forms of lighting that would become common in discotheque design were invented between 1890s and the 1930s in laboratories, with the exception of the laser, which would not become a reality until later on.

At the turn of the century, in 1898, William Ramsay and Morris Travers discovered how to light up rarefied neon gas. Neon light, which was produced by one of the earliest forms of cold cathode lamps, was initially used for wireless telegraphy. A few years later, in 1906, ultraviolet light was produced for the first time. This form of light, achieved in a lamp that emits long-wave and therefore very little visible light—hence why it is sometimes referred to as “black light”—was initially used in medicine, particularly in the field of dermatology and also more generally as a means of sterilizing medical equipment. In the 1920s, another form of cold cathode lamp was conceived when Osram, a lighting company



Dr. Theodore Maiman's laser light at Hughes Research Laboratories, Malibu California  
 Courtesy of HRL Laboratories, Malibu California



that is still operational today, designed the fluorescent tube in 1926. This creation would soon become a ubiquitous and popular form of white lighting for industrial spaces, yet with the use of filters or a tube with colored glass it also later become a playful element in the discotheque. Then, in 1930, Johannes Ostermeyer invented the flash bulb. Until then, a flash powder was used to create a flash effect for photography linked to physics research on moving bodies. The bulb permitted the reutilization of the device and the concatenation of flashes, thus facilitating the production of a flashing light burst—initially still used to study moving bodies for engineering purposes.

With this last invention, by 1930, most of the types of light that would be later integrated in the discotheque were already technically available. The last form of light belonging to the realm of the discotheque would become a reality three decades later, around the same time that the first discotheque designs began to be built in Europe. Although theoretical speculations on how to produce a laser light had been formulated since the early 20th Century, the translation into a working physical device would only meet success in 1960 at Hughes Research Laboratories in California. By then, the sum of available lasers, strobes, blacklights, neons and colorful spots, would become the visual vocabulary of the discotheque. When used in combination, these elements produced a set of visual effects that created an artificial, mystifying visual experience. Rather than the tectonic structure of a building, it was the ephemeral and mutating streams of light that become a new architectural material.

In the space of the discotheque, the visual sense was intrinsically linked to the auditory. In combination with the lights, and marking the rhythm of the audiovisual experience, there was the music produced by sound technologies. There, unlike in the ballroom, music was not performed live but was electronically reproduced. The technologies required to produce sound on the audible spectrum had been developed over the preceding century, originating in the primitive desire to capture and reproduce speech. The first indispensable components to reproduce sound aloud were developed in the second half of the 19th Century out of efforts to advance telecommunication systems. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell patented what has been

considered the first loudspeaker as part of his telephone mechanism. One year later, Thomas Edison's phonograph became commercially available, a device that allowed the recording and playback of sound. Almost half a century later, around 1925, a series of devices for sound recording and reproduction developed by Western Electric in New York included electronic solutions for sound amplification linked to their telephone industry. In addition, Western Electric commercialized horn speakers for cinema spaces that reproduced sound using a 3-watt amplifier. The 1920s also saw the emergence of the first mechanisms that not only al-

**Although theoretical speculations on how to produce a laser light had been formulated since the early 20th Century, the translation into a working physical device would only meet success in 1960 at Hughes Research Laboratories in California. By then, the sum of available lasers, strobes, blacklights, neons and colorful spots, would become the visual vocabulary of the discotheque.**

lowed the reproduction of sound, but also the possibility to play a combination of different musical pieces in an automated manner: one of the world's first jukeboxes was commercialized by AMI, the Automated Musical Instrument Company, in 1927.

During the following decades, audio technologies would evolve to include other elements for enhanced sound recording and achieve better sound quality. Alan Blumlein patented a stereophonic sound protocol in 1933 under the name of "Improvements in and relating to Sound-transmission, Sound-recording and Sound-reproducing Systems," which included



**The music created by the combination of machinery for producing sound (like synthesizers), the systems for recording and reproducing sound (like vinyl and turntables), and the devices for amplifying recorded sound to audible and tangible frequencies (like amplifiers and subwoofers) also became an architectural material**

recording with two microphones and a stereo disc cutting head among a long list of other technical ideas. Meanwhile, sound recording on magnetic tape became a standard medium with AEG's invention of the K1 recorder in 1935. Although, the main components of the system to produce music electronically—including recording devices, reproduction mechanisms and loudspeakers—were invented before the mid-20th Century, it only was after the 1950s that crucial refinements in regulating sound texture and frequency were achieved, including the possibility to extend the range of audible frequencies that could be mechanically reproduced and finding electronic forms of sound production—as opposed to simply reproducing.

A notable example of the commercial interest for electronically produced sounds was the foundation of R. A. Moog Co in 1953. In the years that followed, the company would pioneer the development and commercialization of analog synthesizers. These were the first commercially distributed instruments for electronically producing sound, a series of instruments that would have a strong impact upon the emergence of dance-related musical genres. Just over a decade later, in 1964, Raymond Dones, was granted the patent for an invention that radically transformed the experience of dancing to electronically reproduced sounds. Dones registered in California a patent for the first subwoofer specially designed to augment the low-frequency range of modern stereo. This represented a very specific, yet significant,

improvement of the standard loudspeaker in order to reproduce the lower frequencies of the audible spectrum, achieving distortion-free sound for frequencies down to 15 cycles per second. These frequencies have a longer wavelength, which causes them to resonate in the largest voids in the human body, particularly inside the abdomen. It was this invention that enabled the phenomena of feeling the rhythmic percussive bass of dance music through the haptic sense. Over the course of the following decades, other technological adaptations would precipitate the emergence of the figure of the DJ, like specialized turntables or musical compositions that allowed the sequencing of musical pieces. The combination of these technologies together with the refinement of DJ techniques would ultimately create the continuous soundscape that came to characterize the uninterrupted musical atmosphere of the discotheque. The music created by the combination of machinery for producing sound (like synthesizers), the systems for recording and reproducing sound (like vinyl and turntables), and the devices for amplifying recorded sound to audible and tangible frequencies (like amplifiers and subwoofers) also became an architectural material. Along with light, music created a sensory landscape of audiovisual pleasures.

The third family of technologies associated with the space of the discotheque is of a different nature. Psychotropic technologies, or drugs, are a form of chemical rather than electronic technology. Instead of affecting the user externally through the senses, such as via the use of light and sound, they influence the body from its interior, changing its chemical structures and thus transforming perception itself. Drugs, as they could be found in nature, have been used by humanity since time immemorial, yet in the 20th Century experiments in chemistry, pharmacology and psychiatry brought forth a series of new psychoactive substances synthesized in the laboratory. Of the hundreds of natural and new artificial drugs available, many of them have been linked to the experience of the discotheque, such as amphetamines, speed, mescaline, ketamine and so on. But it is LSD and MDMA in particular that have acquired a special relevance in relation to the audiovisual experience of the discotheque due to their psychotropic properties affecting perception. In 1912, the German pharmaceutical company Merck

patented the structure of MDMA (3,4-Methylenedioxymethamphetamine), which would be later commonly known as “ecstasy” or “E”. This chemical substance was originally developed for medical purposes, according to the hypothesis that it would have the properties necessary to stop abnormal bleeding. In 1938, Dr. Albert Hoffman synthesized LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), also known as “acid,” at the Sandoz Laboratories in Basel and, in 1943, he discovered its hallucinogenic and synesthetic properties.

These two substances would become central to experimental psychiatry and counterculture movements in the US and Europe and, in turn, inform the spatial experience of the discotheque. But before reaching this popular notoriety, both private and public institutions experimented with them. For instance, following the declassification of secret files in 2001, it is known that the US army had tested the applications of MDMA as a chemical weapon in the 1950s. By the end of the same decade, in autumn 1959, the actor Cary Grand revealed in an interview that he had gone through more than 60 therapeutic sessions using LSD. His disclosure boosted the

consumption of the drug, a habit that was rapidly gaining adepts both in psychiatric circles and, increasingly, as the 1960s wore on, outside them. In 1965, the same year that the results of psychedelic therapies were presented in the Second International Conference on Application of LSD in Psychotherapy in Long Island, the American chemist and pharmacist Alexander Shulgin, re-synthesized MDMA independently in California. Shulgin would play a crucial role in the divulgation of MDMA's properties in the following decade, mainly promoting the consumption of the substance for therapeutic purposes. In a conference in 1976 in Maryland, Shulgin presented the results of his extensive experiments, including the discovery of the empathetic properties of the drug that evidenced good results in therapies ranging from those focused on relationship problems to autism. In the 1970s, both LSD and MDMA would become central elements of the experience of the discotheque, not only because these substances were part of its experiential ritual, but also because their effects were intended to be reproduced through the use of electronic technologies. Light and sound imitated the synesthetic experience of LSD with

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streams of colors, flashes and rhythmic drums and the sensual properties of MDMA via vibrating lower frequencies and by caressing lights over the body. There was symbiosis in between the three kinds of technologies, each one reinforcing the effects of the others to create a multisensory cathartic experience.

The evolution of these three types of technologies and particularly the evolution of the techniques that allowed their incorporation into the design of the discotheque, are not the result of purely autonomous historical development but rather a counterpart to wider cultural transformations. Since their invention, these technologies acquired completely different uses depending on the historical period. After the Second World War, Siegfried Giedion, a pioneer in the study of the impact of technology on architecture and space, published the book *Mechanization Takes Command: A contribution to Anonymous History* (1948) where he explored the historical evolution of technologies of inhabitation in relationship to cultural trends. There, he immediately claimed “it may well be that there (are) [were] no people left, however remote, who have not lost their faith in progress.” After the war, the cultural climate was that of concern towards the negative repercussions of technology and in the words of Giedion, a fear of the advent of the era of “mechanized barbarism”. It was from this scenario of skepticism towards technological innovation that light, sound and psychotropic technologies acquired a renewed functional status. What had initially been designed for scientific purposes and used as part of military experiments was re-coded as an instrument of pleasure. After the war, a traumatized Western society shifted focus from the technological object towards the affected subject or, as Giedion claimed, towards the intersection of the mechanic and the organic: “The evolution away from merely materialistic and mechanistic conceptions must start from the new insight into the nature of matter and organisms”. In this context, a renovated interest in bodily experience and the instruments and techniques that allowed alternative perception regimes emerged in philosophy, but also in popular culture.

Between 1954 and 1957, three internationally influential texts were published addressing the role of the sensory and perception in relationship to knowledge, the individual and society.

Aldous Huxley, the prominent English writer and philosopher, published *The Doors of Perception* (1954), a text reflecting on the experiential and philosophical implications of a psychotropic trip with mescaline. Herbert Marcuse, the German-American sociologist and political theorist, published *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (1955). Marcuse’s book, which had a wide circulation, called for the re-erotization of the body in order to overcome the constraints of the industrial era; a non-genital redistribution of bodily pleasures would aid, in his view, a transition into a non-repressive society benefiting from technology. Finally, George Bataille, the French philosopher and anthropologist published *Erotism* (1957). The book related eroticism with transgression, an act of trespassing cognitive boundaries after dissolving the rational world. These three works exemplify the global intellectual trend that fueled counterculture movements in the subsequent decades and promoted the notion that the uses

**In the 1970s, both LSD and MDMA would become central elements of the experience of the discotheque, not only because these substances were part of its experiential ritual, but also because their effects were intended to be reproduced through the use of electronic technologies.**

and functions of lighting, sound and psychotropic technologies could be reinscribed for emancipatory purposes. If during the French revolution artificial lighting had become a form and symbol of urban control and, later, loudspeakers a warning system for the proximity of bombs during the World Wars, then the post-war cultural wave cast artificial light and sound as the tools for a new social ecology based on the chemo-sensual exaltation.

Post-war cultural movements catalyzed an interest in sensory experiences, fomenting the exploration of expanded consciousness. Since the 1940s, experiments had been conducted in this area, resurfacing a perennial interest in synesthetic experiences that had up to that point been relatively marginalized. Historically, exploration of synesthetic phenomena happened in a range of different contexts—from academic research to commercial spaces—building up a collective technical knowledge that served as a foundation for the conceptualization of the modern discotheque. Leaving behind ancestral rituals and historical festivals, in which different types of synesthetic experiences were cultivated, the first technologically advanced experiments, initially merging visual and auditory senses, began in the 18th Century. As early as 1725, the French mathematician Louis Bertrand Castel imagined a *Clavecin pour les yeux* (ocular harpsichord), that synchronized colored light and sound in one single instrument. Similar ideas were developed afterwards, like Bainbridge Bishop’s color organ of 1877, or Alexander László’s *Color-Light Music* performances that he showed on tour in 1925. In a non-artistic context, commercial spaces also tested the possibilities of audiovisual technologies to enhance the experience of the user. For example, in 1930, the Hotel Sherman in Chicago installed a series of projectors in a ballroom to cast light decorations on the wall, thus implementing the compositional possibilities of light into an architectural space.

The following decade, in 1942, The Guggenheim Foundation awarded Charles Dockum a ten-year fellowship to develop the MobilColor system: a projector that was able to create different patterns of color and light. Around the same time, the effects of stroboscopic lighting were scientifically tested on humans: Dr. W. Grey Walter conducted psycho-physiological experimentation with flashing lights and discovered that exposure to a rate of eight to thirteen flashes per second stimulates alpha waves in the brain—these are neural oscillations related to the visual imagination and experiences of transcendental beauty. By the mid 1950s, the first laboratory experiments on the effects of exposure to stroboscopic light in conjunction with a drug had taken place. At the Department of Neurological Research of the University of British Columbia, John R. Smythies looked at

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the physiological reaction to flashing light under the effects of TMA (Trimethoxyamphetamine). Many other experiments would follow, involving other kinds of drugs and forms of light. It is well known how prominent members of the Beat generation, like Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs, tested the joint effects of LSD and stroboscopic light stimulation for the first time in Californian laboratories.

In parallel, during the decade following the last World War, an interest in the expressive possibilities of combined lighting and sound technologies spread among artists and designers. In the fall of 1946, the *Manifiesto Blanco* (White Manifesto), calling for the integration of art and science to explore the possibilities of new technologies, was signed in Buenos Aires by a collective of artists named Color, Sound, Movement, who had formerly studied with Lucio Fontana. Eight years later, in 1954, Nicolas Schöffer, who has been considered the first cybernetic artist, gave a lecture in La Sorbonne, hosted by the Société Française d’Esthétique, in which he presented the concept of *spatiodynamism*, thereby defining an art practice incorporating time-based performing elements like light and sound. Through these and other occurrences, the path was paved for the forthcoming post-war leisure society to incorporate electro-chemical technical advances into the production of space, and particularly the space of the discotheque.





Robert (Bob) Moog and his iconic electronic instruments, date and source unknown

**An army of anonymous designers edified an uncountable number of high-tech spaces that initially spread in industrialized countries and were later replicated throughout the world. They were not built with bricks and beams, but with waves and molecules. These electronic and chemical instruments produced a form of spatial practice beyond the conventions of architectural discipline and transformed the experiential parameters of space**

The precise moment that the first discotheque appeared is not clear. There seems to be a general consensus that it initially emerged in Europe in the late 1960s, before then traveling to North America. Nevertheless, spaces in both continents have been regarded as pioneer designs; some would claim the first was Whisky à Gogo in Paris—others Continental Baths in New York, the Piper in Rome, or the Fillmore in San Francisco, to name just a few. In fact, the multiplicity of the possible “seminal” origins of this architectural genre neatly evidences the ubiquity of the phenomenon: an army of anonymous designers edified an uncountable number of high-tech spaces that initially spread in industrialized countries and were later replicated throughout the world. They were not built with bricks and beams, but with waves and

molecules. These electronic and chemical instruments produced a form of spatial practice beyond the conventions of architectural discipline and transformed the experiential parameters of space.

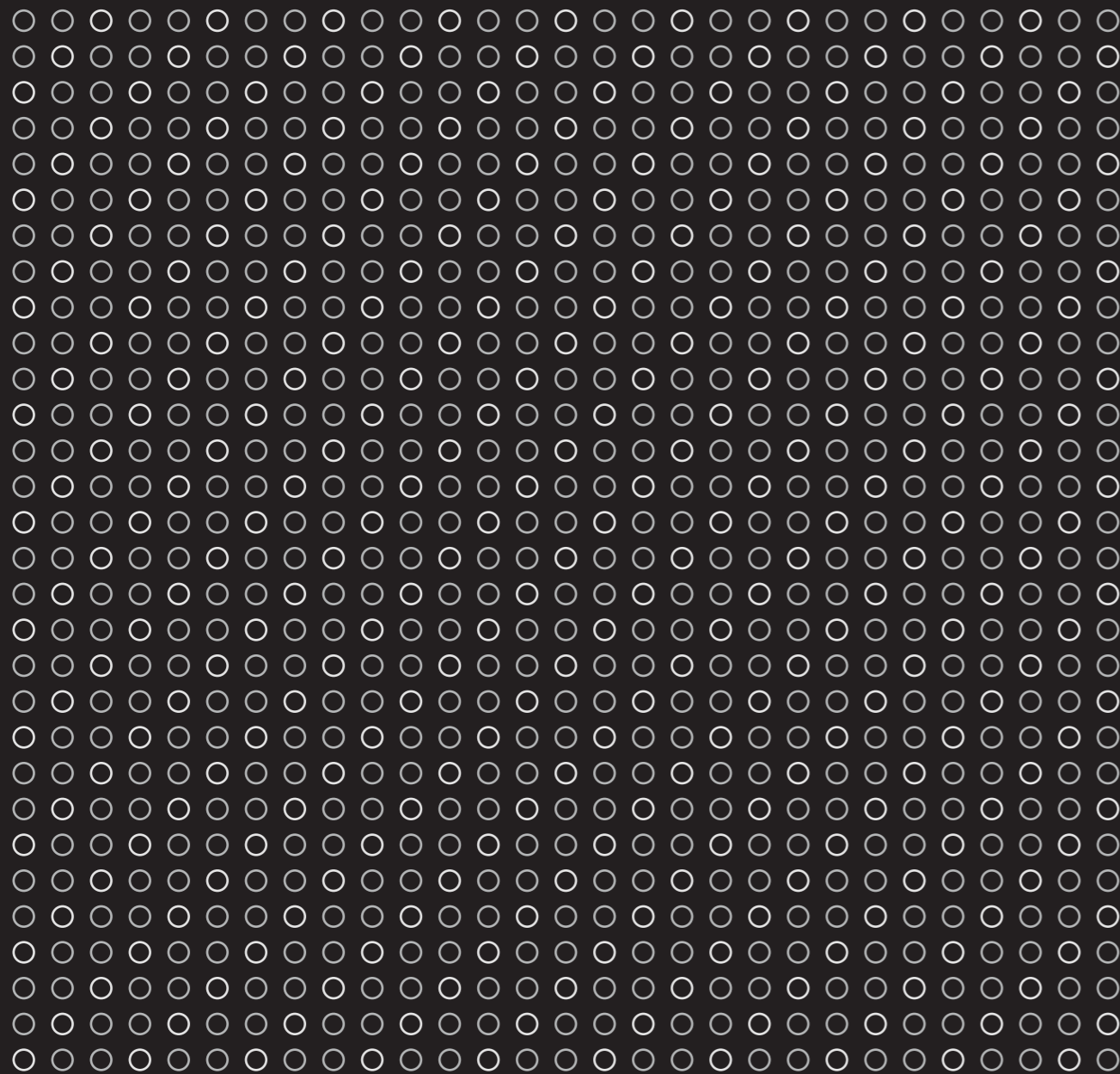
This collective endeavor crated an international network of spaces for techno-pleasures. Together, they gave form to one of the most characteristic architectures of the post-modern society: Ephemeral, multisensory and directed to the body. Following Giedion’s call to control mechanization, the discotheque subordinated technology to the social need for bodily exploration and collective emancipation. When looking back at the phenomenon, rather than individual names of designers or venues, we find the laws regulating the use of lighting, sound and psychotropic technologies to be the most

have been created, rendering evident not only the material nature of the discotheque, but the scale and impact it had in the definition of collective spaces in the second half of the 20th Century.

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# 4/6 LED INSTRUCTIONS PATTERN



17 Functions  
With Memory

- 1 *Random*
- 2 *Single—Split*
- 3 *Double—Split*
- 4 *Quad—Split*
- 5 *Pulse—Split*
- 6 *Accelerator—Split*
- 7 *Quad Burst—Split*
- 8 *Double|Accelerator—Split*
- 9 *Quad|Accelerator—Split*
- 10 *Single—All*
- 11 *Double—All*
- 12 *Quad—All*
- 13 *Accelerator—All*
- 14 *Quad|Single—All*
- 15 *Pulse|Single—All*
- 16 *Half Steady -1*
- 17 *Half Steady -2*



# LIFE WITHOUT LIGHT THE WARTIME BLACKOUT

Marc Wiggam

The connection between light and civilization is a very old one indeed, so much so that we feel it instinctively. Light is reason, knowledge, truth. It is our control of fire and light that separates us from nature. Once humans learned to control fire, and to divide it among different tasks—cooking, heating, smelting, and lighting—the connection between fire and light, and the progress of humanity, was made. The invention of artificial light furthered it, and the expansion of gas and electric lighting during the 19th Century became a signal of a city's progress. The brighter it was lit, the more modern it was. So when most of Europe was blacked out after September 1, 1939, it was as though civilization had taken a step backwards. If light meant progress, then surely this enforced darkness was a sign that Western civilization was in trouble? It was perhaps ironic that progress had created this problem. The near miracle of powered flight in 1903 had quickly been weaponized, and by the start of the First World War just over ten years later, aircraft were being used to extend the frontiers of war. The increasing range of newer aircraft meant that air forces now had the ability to deliver bombs far beyond the confines of battlefields. Aircraft opened the interior of a country to the devastation of war. Where wars had once been generally distant affairs for much of the home population, aircraft now placed the civilian on the front line. The blackout was a defense against this. But though it was a practical solution, it was also symbolic of the failure of politics, of imagination, and of humanity. Few things represented the end of peace more than the now darkened streets and houses of wartime Europe.

It is nighttime in the skies of Iraq, 1925. A pilot drops a bomb onto a tribal camp, and as the

bomb strikes a lamp flies up and sparks, illuminating the ground. With the target now set, more aircraft pivot towards the light, and begin to drop their bombs in its glow and smoke. The camp will be devastated. The people there will have learned a lesson.

This was the Royal Air Force's policy of Air Control. It was how the British policed the vast spaces of its colonial territories in the Middle East, and checked insurrection amongst the tribes and native populations using aerial bom-

**Orientalist ideas of the peoples of the Middle East were already central to how the British Government and its agents conducted their business there. Forged in the Edwardian mindset of Imperial Britain, Air Control became a tool of violence and intimidation for the greater purpose of civilizing the peoples of the Empire**

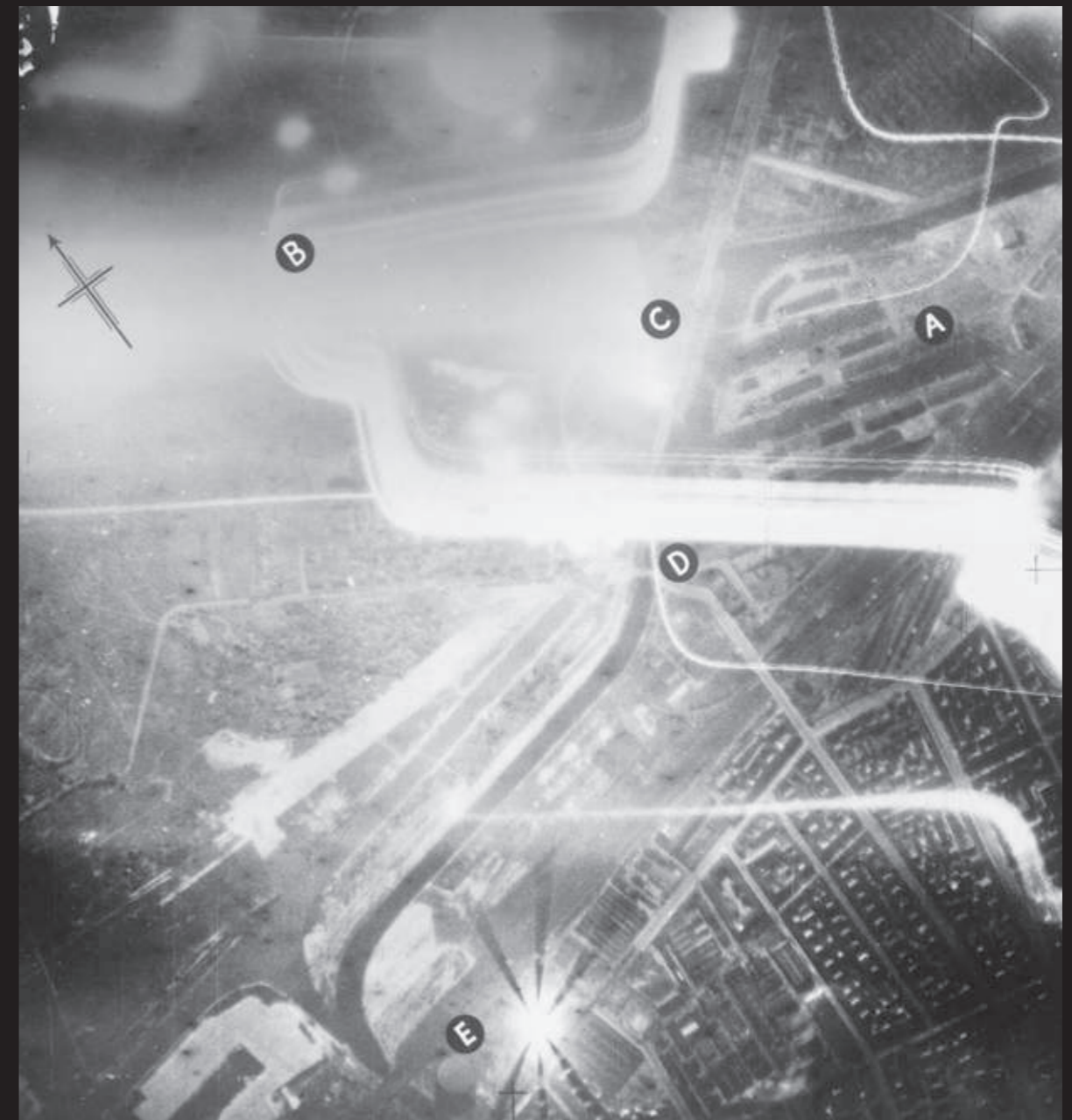
bardment. It was a way to project power with the still new technology of powered flight, and it reached the highest expression of this power at night time. Orientalist ideas of the peoples of the Middle East were already central to how the British Government and its agents conducted their business there. Forged in the Edwardian mindset of Imperial Britain, Air Control became

a tool of violence and intimidation for the greater purpose of civilizing the peoples of the Empire. Arthur Harris, who would later direct the RAF's firebombing of German cities with these same principles of target marking with light, remembered with satisfaction the impact these night raids had on the population.

"You can just imagine what they would think if they had heard us over them in the darkness—you know, 'By Allah they can ruddy well see us in the dark too.'"<sup>1</sup>

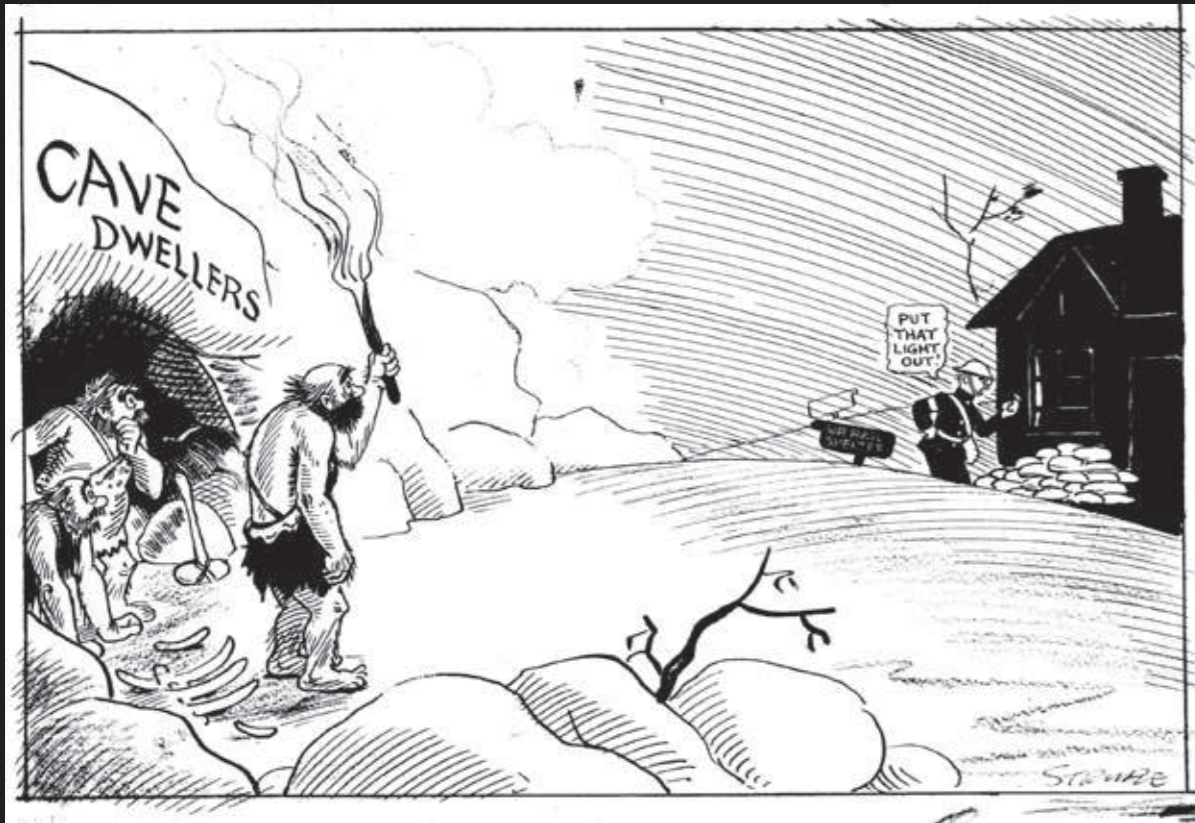
It was a view he felt would translate to Germans too. The roots of the RAF's night-time bombing over Germany were therefore deep, and they would become a doctrine that distinguished the RAF from the American air force's preference for daylight raids. "Morale bombing," the attempt to dissolve the ability of people to carry on the fight through the indiscriminate targeting of civilian areas, was a policy that had its roots in the skies of Iraq.

But despite the devastation of the raids later in the war, morale bombing was not the first choice of air forces at the start of it. In fact, it was a policy that evolved as a response to the



The RAF Air Raids Against Germany, 1940  
© IWM (C 1828)





Time Marches On, cartoon by Sidney 'George' Strube, 1939  
Strube/Daily Express/Express Syndication Ltd

blackout, and the difficulties of finding targets at night. It wasn't the intention of air forces to deliberately bomb civilian populations in 1939. Though the nightmarish scenarios of interwar fiction had imagined devastating raids knocking out a country in one swift strike, the truth was that the abilities of air forces at the time were far more limited. Instead, bombers at the start of the war were used to support military objectives, or else generally hunt for strategic targets—ports, factories, the kinds of places that kept a country in the fight. If these could be knocked out then it would break the ability of a country to build for war and resist. And if people were killed or else terrified as a result of the bombing then that was simply a consequence of it.

With aircraft now able to fly further and deliver far greater damage, the industry of all belligerent nations needed to be hidden. And since many if not most bombing raids were expected to come at night, the best way to do this was to black them out. A lot of wayfinding at the start of the war was still visual, and pilots often navigated at night by the constellations of stars in the sky, and the constellations of lights on the ground. A pilot would pick up a moonlit river, or dense patches of artificial light, and use them to confirm their path to a target. These lights were

tell-tale markers for enemy aircraft, and the biggest targets were often the ones that emitted the most light. But if these were blacked out, then everything else had to be blacked out as well, since a dark well in a sea of light would also be a marker. And so the civilian population had to black out too, so that a blanket of darkness could be drawn over the country and protect it from the enemy. To reduce the risk to industry, the risk had to be spread to civilians.

As the war developed, it became increasingly clear that the distinctions between what was a legitimate target and what was not were largely academic, since the accuracy of bombing was so poor. It is only in recent times that air forces can claim any real precision in their targeting of ordnance. During the Second World War it really was a case of dropping bombs from the sky as close to a target as possible and hoping most would strike their target, particularly when they'd been screened from view under a blackout. And the consequence was that when the bombers couldn't find their target, they would bomb civilian areas instead, either by accident, or else to get rid of the bombs they were carrying and save fuel for the journey home. The blackout was in a way both the cause and the solution to a problem. As the civilian

deaths mounted, what was deliberate and what was accidental didn't appear to matter anymore—every death was an outrage. The gradual drift towards the targeting of civilian areas by the RAF and Luftwaffe was a consequence of poor accuracy in the blackout compounded by public outrage, and the subsequent loosening of political objections to deliberately bombing civilians. The RAF was now able to practice in Europe what it had begun in its colonies.

In a British cartoon published at the start of the war, a cavewoman wielding a flaming torch stands confused as he looks at his modern neighbors in their blacked-out house. The caption, "Time Marches On," tells us how the war had turned the idea of progress on its head, and with it society's relationship to light. The dark was a reminder of our past, of a place to which we could return if we were not careful. This was how many people felt as they began to draw up the shutters and curtains on September 1, 1939. The outside world as they had hoped it to be, progressing towards more light, was now robbed of it entirely. Light no longer meant security and freedom, but was now instead a danger. But if light meant danger from the skies, then the dark

### **In Germany, the opportunity for trial blackouts ran to the very heart of the Nazi Volksgemeinschaft's veneration of the community over the individual, and the trial blackouts were seized on as opportunities to promote this ethic**

meant danger from the streets. Concessions to these dangers had to be made, and while most of these related to industry and the movement of goods around the country, some limited forms of public lighting were allowed. In many spaces, painted bulbs now cast a ghostly blue light over people. Kerbs and other street furniture were given zebra patterns, with stripes of white paint

running along them. Ribbons of luminous paint ran along the walls of air raid shelters. People wore white buttons, scarves, coats, anything to stand out in the gloom and avoid being bumped into, or knocked over by traffic. These were faint lights, kept close and personal, a compromise for individual security within a war that favored the great mass of people over the individual.

Yet living without light needed individual discipline. The blackout was meant to protect the community, and it achieved this at the expense of the individual—the safety of the few could not compromise the safety of the many, or the abilities of the war-fighting state. In a total war, whether in democratic Britain or totalitarian Germany, the blackout was one of its most totalizing restrictions. Before the war it was clear that any kind of preparation for bombing would require some kind of militarization of peacetime society. This explains the stark difference between Britain and Germany in effort and publicity for civil defence before 1939. In Britain there was little appetite for making people live without light for a war no one wanted, however short a trial might be. In Germany, the opportunity for trial blackouts ran to the very heart of the Nazi Volksgemeinschaft's veneration of the community over the individual, and the trial blackouts were seized on as opportunities to promote this ethic. Peacetime civil defence propaganda had stressed this in preparations for bombing, and were a way to promote a militarized mindset amongst the population in the absence of an actual war. The trial blackouts were great theater, and tested this ethic. The idea for these great public trials was simple. People would familiarize themselves with the technical obligations of the blackout—stopping light from leaking through windows, driving cars with reduced lighting, and so on. But they would also become acquainted with the moral obligations of the blackout. An individual failure to secure the darkness placed the wider community in danger—what better way to remind individuals of their place within it?

But when the war did come, the blackout was by no means an advantage for the German authorities. Light had played an important role for National Socialists. At political rallies searchlights had been directed to a point in the sky, creating a roof of light in the dark. Used like this, light had a transcendent and immense quality; control of it signaled the power of the party. Light



Safe and stylish: people ensure their safety during a wartime blackout by attaching white paper to their clothes. Photo: Fox Photos/Hulton Archive/Getty Images



in the dark was order from chaos. The blackout was in a way an extension of this, because a good blackout signaled the discipline of the people, and the strength of the state and the party to maintain it. But it was here that the power of both also started to fray. Every light in the blackout was a transgression—one that some people would later claim as deliberate resistance. In truth, many blackout infractions were the result of carelessness and idleness, human traits that even the Party could not eradicate.

The party also found the limits of its ability to reshape Germany's relationship to light, best seen in the failed attempt to rid Christmas of its Christian imagery and return it to a more elemental "*lichtglaub*". Party literature and propaganda did its best to promote *lichtglaub* as the true German meaning of Christmas, but some traditions could not be undone. As the lights grew dimmer and the candles were fewer every Christmas, tying Party authority to light became far more complex. How can a nation venerate light if it is forced to live in the dark? More to the point, who put them in that position? Attempts to frame Christmas as a reason for fighting the war began to seem forced. A newspaper editorial in 1943 argued that

"We understand now far more clearly and soberly, that the true spirit of Christmas and *Lichtglaub* in times of huge and fundamental decisions between light and dark, between life and death, requires a belief in the fight!"<sup>2</sup>

Another editorial drafted Christmas trees into the war, claiming them as symbols of a "constant fight against the darkness." But such attempts to channel the meaning of light and Christmas into the service of the war failed in the face of the very real difficulties of wartime. When the RAF began its unrestricted campaign and dropped marker flares at the start of their bombing runs, the Germans began to call them *Christbäume*, the lights slowly drifting down reminiscent of what was once a symbol of comfort and home. This cynical, ironic response to light was beyond party control.

Yet the prospect of entire nations now huddled in their houses, fearful of bombing raids or stepping out into the dark, was a troubling one for the authorities. In Germany the instruction was to go out as often as possible, and to ignore

**Every light in the blackout was a transgression – one that some people would later claim as deliberate resistance. In truth, many blackout infractions were the result of carelessness and idleness, human traits that even the Party could not eradicate**

the difficulties of the blackout. Privacy, that transgressive quality of the dark, caused the German state real problems. Life was meant to be lived outside of the house. If the natural impulse for people was to stay inside after dark instead of chancing the streets, then how could the state and its agents know and control what people talked about, how they thought and felt? Goebbels knew that if left as a vacuum the blackout could cause problems for the "mind" of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, and that filling it with the right content was important:

"We must work from the belief that the darker the streets are, the brighter our theatres and cinemas must shine. The darker the times, the brighter art must shine over it, as consoler of the human soul."<sup>3</sup>

Morale, that ambiguous but important measure of a population's willingness to carry on fighting, would be dangerously compromised if life were to be so restricted that people would not leave their house after dark. After all, what might people do or think if the state couldn't see them? This gradual retreat from the blackout to the home meant that private radio listening became increasingly important during the war. In an attempt to control this shift in power from public to private space, the state clipped the range of radio receivers to limit the chance of foreign broadcasts reaching German ears, and filled the airwaves with content designed to distract and entertain. If the blackout meant driving people into their homes, then the ideas and songs filling them should not make people dwell on their circumstances in the wrong way.





No More Blackout: After nearly six years of war, the blackout was lifted and London lit up for all to see, 26th May 1945  
photo: Keystone, Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Outside the home, the blackout provided a space for mischief and crime. People's fears of being attacked or robbed in the dark were not unfounded, and those who did rob or snatch bags faced the severest penalties, and sometimes execution. There was almost a moral equivalence between the enemy that exploited the dark to attack from the sky, and the enemies within the Volksgemeinschaft who exploited it for their own gain. For a system of civil defense that explicitly placed the community above the individual, these sorts of crimes were deeply troubling. So too was the exceptional rise in

### **Juvenile street gangs roamed the darkened streets and set themselves against the Nazi state, some dressing in the fashions of the enemy, and listening to their music**

juvenile crime, a phenomenon that seemed to affect all blacked-out societies. Juvenile street gangs roamed the darkened streets and set themselves against the Nazi state, some dressing in the fashions of the enemy, and listening to their music. These chinks of resistance were as troubling to the authorities as any light in the blackout, since they showed the limits of state authority and the ability of the blackout to destabilize wartime life. If living with the blackout meant discipline, then it also meant freedom to challenge and undermine it.

Learning to deal with the dark was mainly an urban problem, and people who lived in the countryside were sometimes bemused by the fuss urban dwellers made of it. In rural areas darkness was part of the everyday, and the only real problems were of the needs of the urban population and infrastructure now extending into the countryside. In a way the tables were turned. Even now, urban visitors to the countryside are often struck by the strange and transporting character that the rural dark can have. If we really manage to escape the distant orange glow of urban life, then it can seem as we are in another time and place entirely. The blackout brought that quality to the heart of the city. It

was a kind of dark that hadn't been seen or felt in urban European cities since before the middle ages. In the absence of light was a new kind of urban space. Some were able to explore this. The German-British photographer Bill Brandt captured this new strangeness in his moonlit photos of blacked out Britain—at once mysterious, timeless, always pushing at the edge of what was being "seen". His images are eerie, probing: gravestones lit by dimmed headlights of a car, a couple caught as the beams sweep over them, moonlit cobbled streets with dark houses standing over them like monoliths. It was as though the dark in these spaces allowed for a kind of revelation, a way of looking into the past, or an imagined present, that was free of ordinary ways of seeing. This was darkness as a liberation from society, from ordinariness, from present troubles. If light stood for order and reason, then for many the dark stood for freedom.

When the war ended and the lights were switched on again, it was mostly a time for celebration. Few things symbolized the return of peace better than the freedom to show a light in the dark again. It represented the end of the wartime order, and the return of the faint light of progress that had been extinguished six years ago. Yet some people found the return of this freedom a little overwhelming, and resistance to the light was not uncommon. It was difficult to give up the belief in the dark as protection. People would struggle with rationing, damaged infrastructure, and intermittent electricity for several years after the war. But the space outside their homes gradually returned to its normal state. The lights were free to glow again.

Marc Wiggam is a researcher and the author of *The Blackout in Britain and Germany, 1939-1945* (Palgrave, 2018). He lives in Oslo.

#### Notes


- 1 Douglas Saward, 'Bomber' Harris, (London: Cassell, 1984), p. 31.
- 2 Stadtarchiv Dortmund, Signatur 424-1, newspaper report, 23 December 1943.
- 3 Hans-Joerg Koch, Wunschkonzert: Unterhaltungsmusik und Propaganda im Rundfunk des Dritten Reiches (Graz: Ares Verlag, 2006), p. 68.





Searchlights pierce the night sky during an air-raid practice on Gibraltar, 20 November 1942. Photo: George W. Dailison (Captain), War Office official photographer © IWM (GM 1852)





**MORPHOLOGY OF  
BOLLARDS**

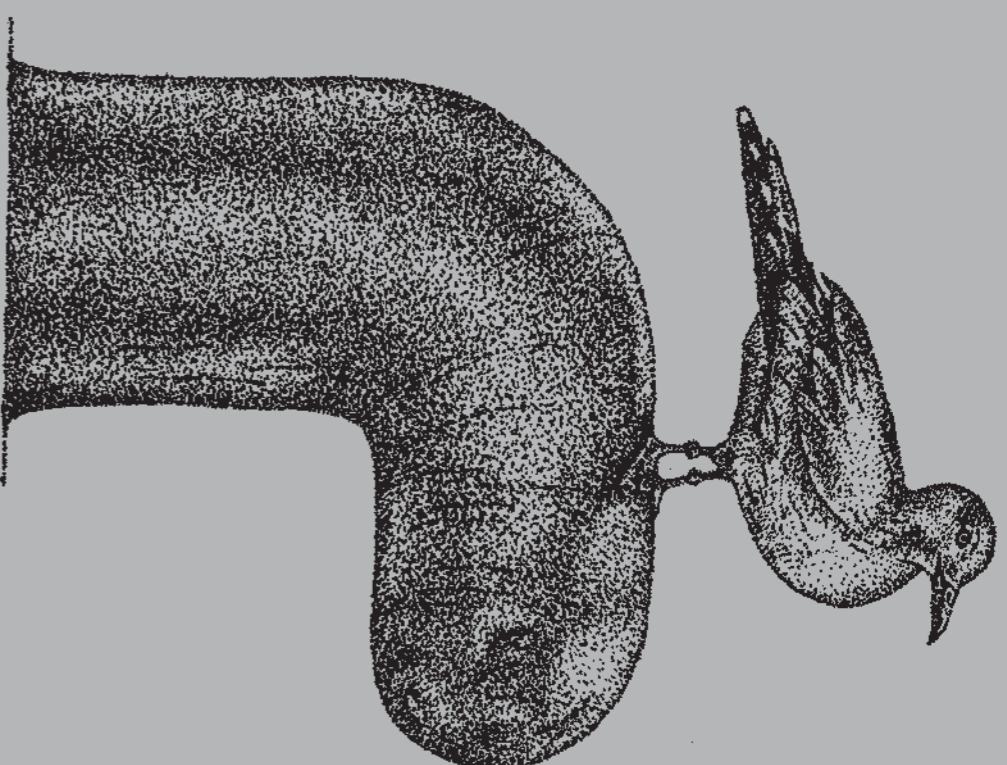
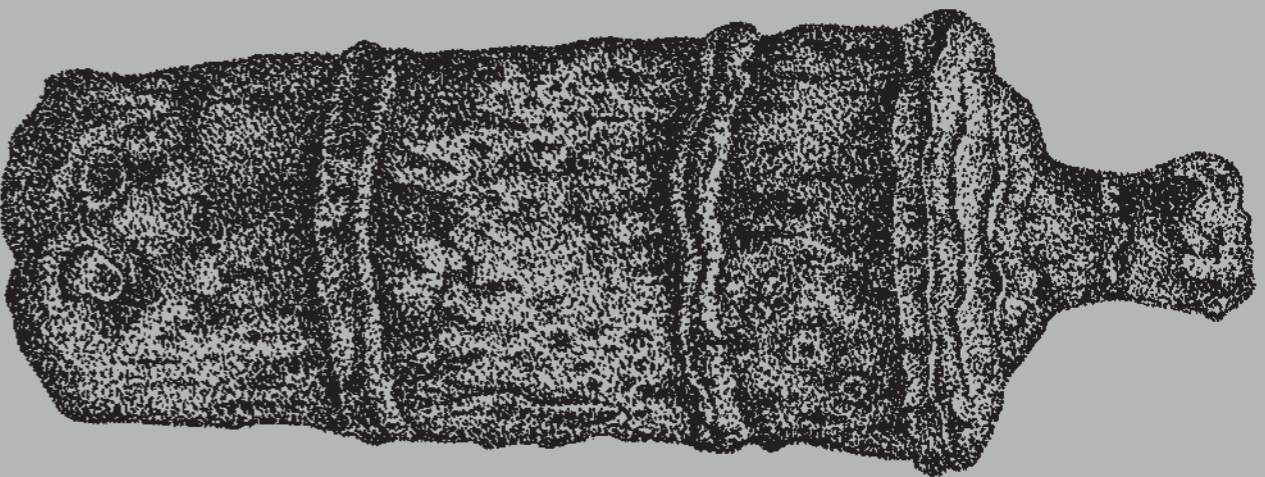
**17<sup>th</sup> Century-21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Alona Rodeh

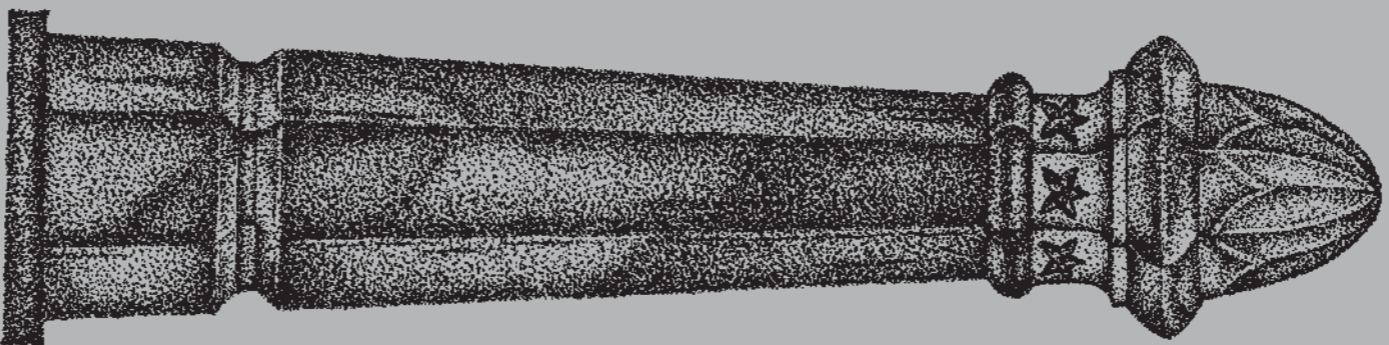


### **Cannon Reused as Mooring Bollard, 17th-18th Century**

Old cannons were often used on quaysides for mooring ships alongside. Between half and two-thirds of the cannon length would be buried, leaving the rear end above ground for securing mooring ropes around.

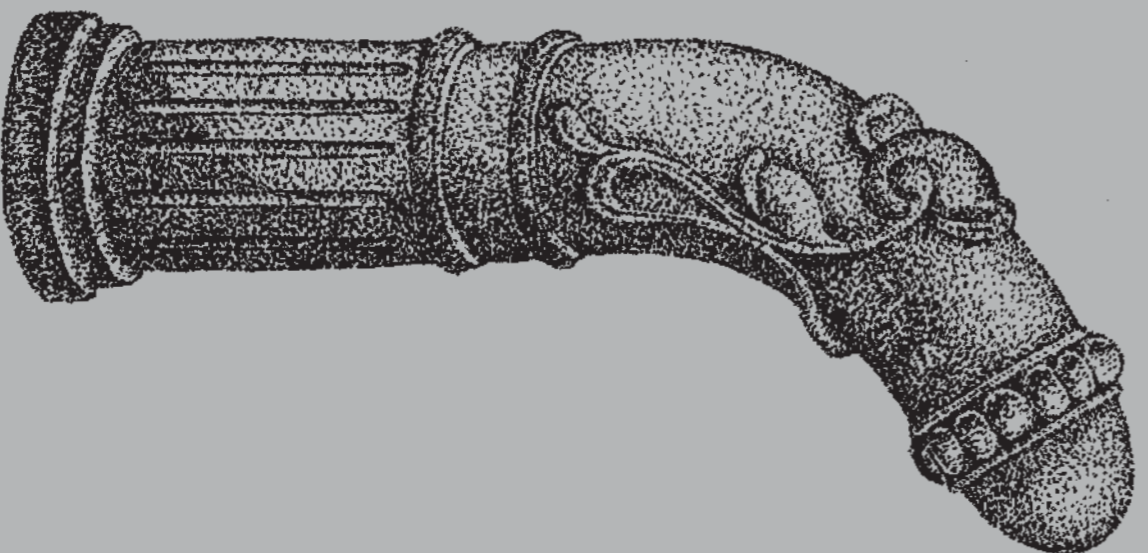


**Maritime Bollard, 19th Century-onwards**  
To this day, purpose-built mooring bollards can be found in maritime contexts for securing ropes for towing, mooring and other purposes. They take a range of shapes, but are typically thick and chubby in form.



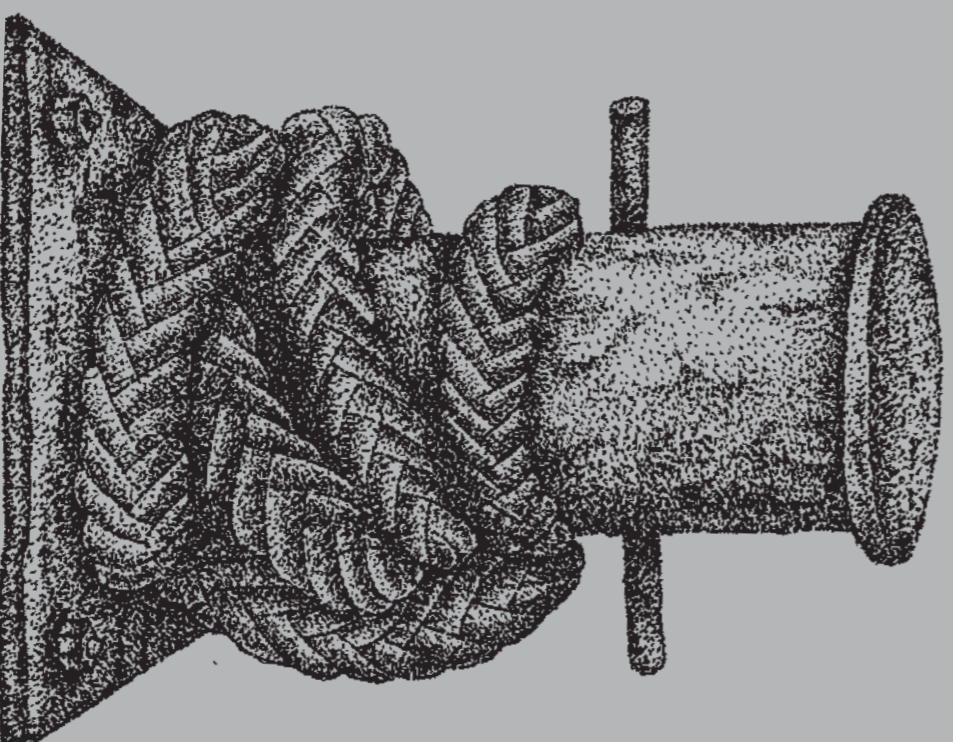
### **Viennese Bollards, Date Unknown**

These bollards, found on the streets of Vienna, are lower in height compared to some of their counterparts, perhaps to prevent overspill parking onto the sidewalk.



### **City of London Bollard, 19th Century-Onwards**

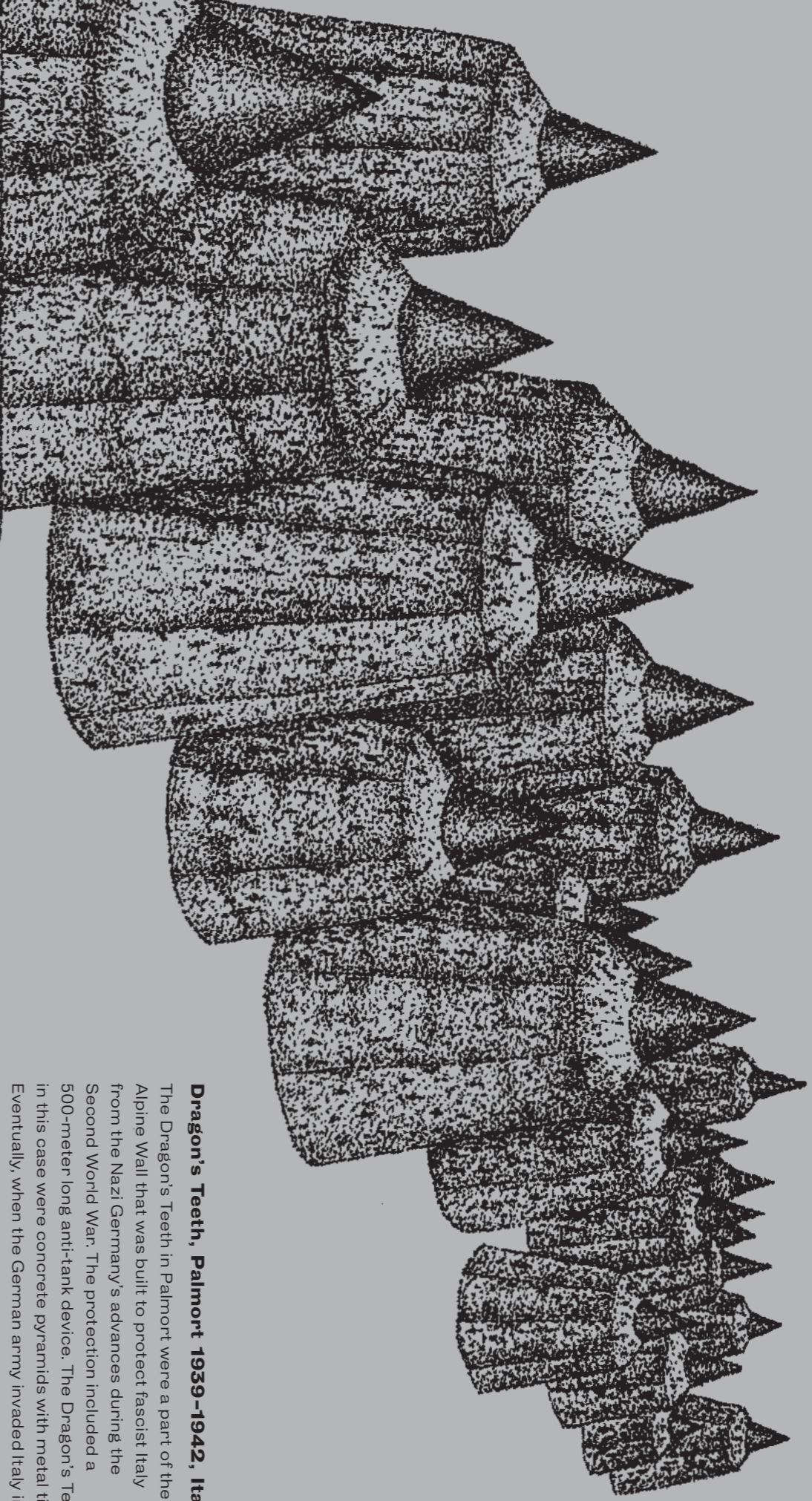
Painted black, red and white, these traditional bollards follow the general visual decorative identity of the city of London. They are mounted near enough to each other that they block cars, but spaced widely enough to permit pedestrians and bicycles to pass through.



### **Maritime bollard, 19th-21st Century**

Another type of mooring bollard, originally made of steel. Today these are made of shiny stainless steel.



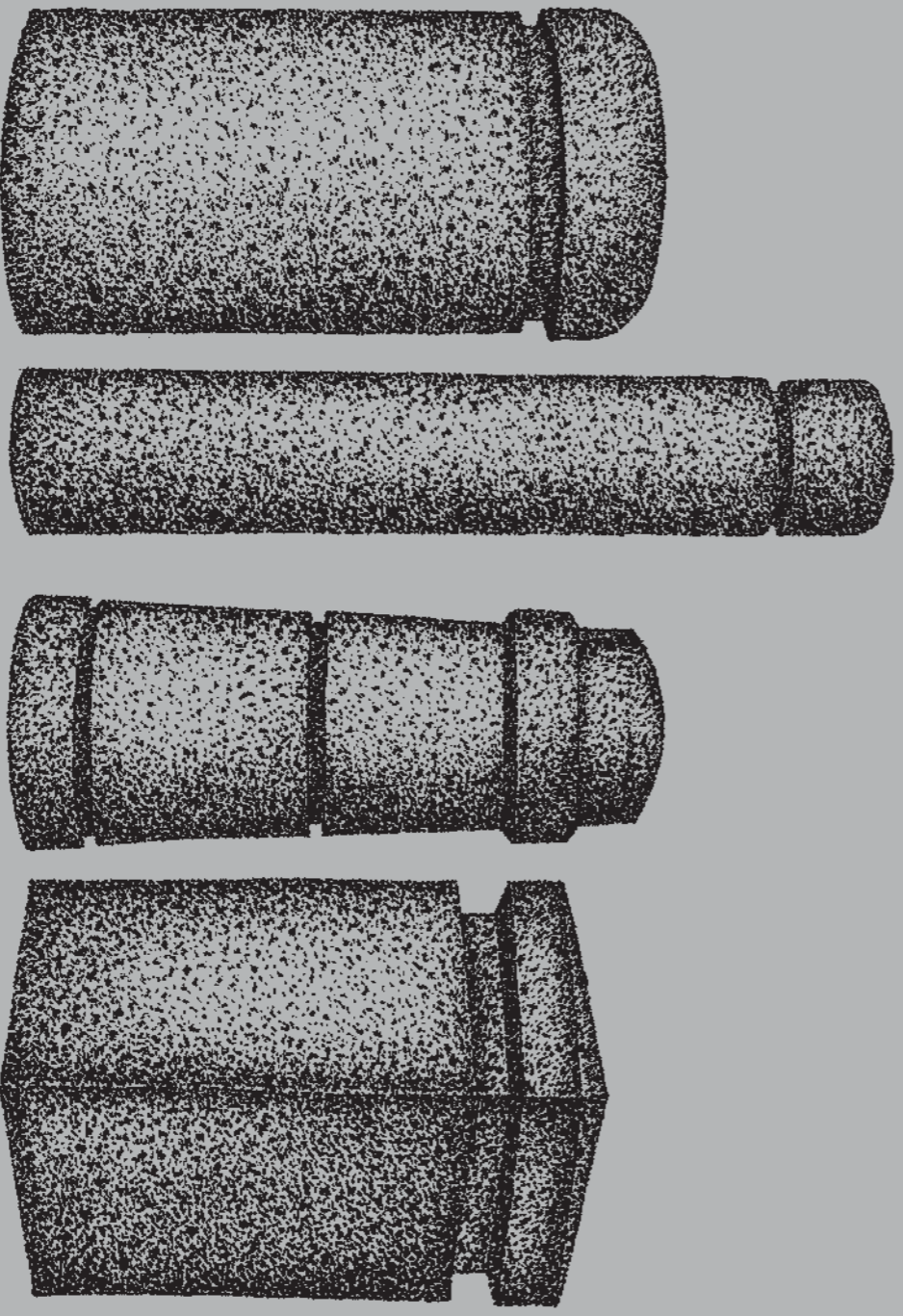
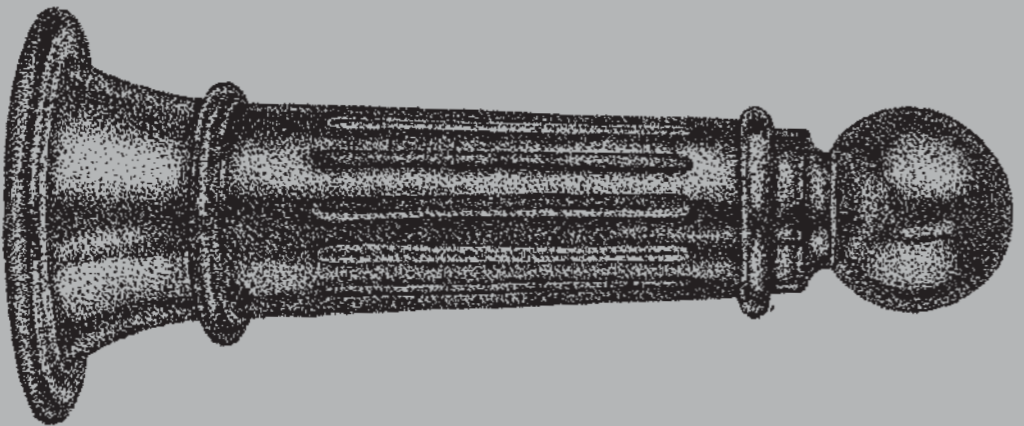


**Dragon's Teeth, Palmort 1939-1942, Italy**

The Dragon's Teeth in Palmort were a part of the Alpine Wall that was built to protect fascist Italy from the Nazi Germany's advances during the Second World War. The protection included a 500-meter long anti-tank device. The Dragon's Teeth in this case were concrete pyramids with metal tips. Eventually, when the German army invaded Italy in 1943, the device was fully functional, but was handed over without a fight.

**Chess Type Bollard  
20th Century-Onwards**

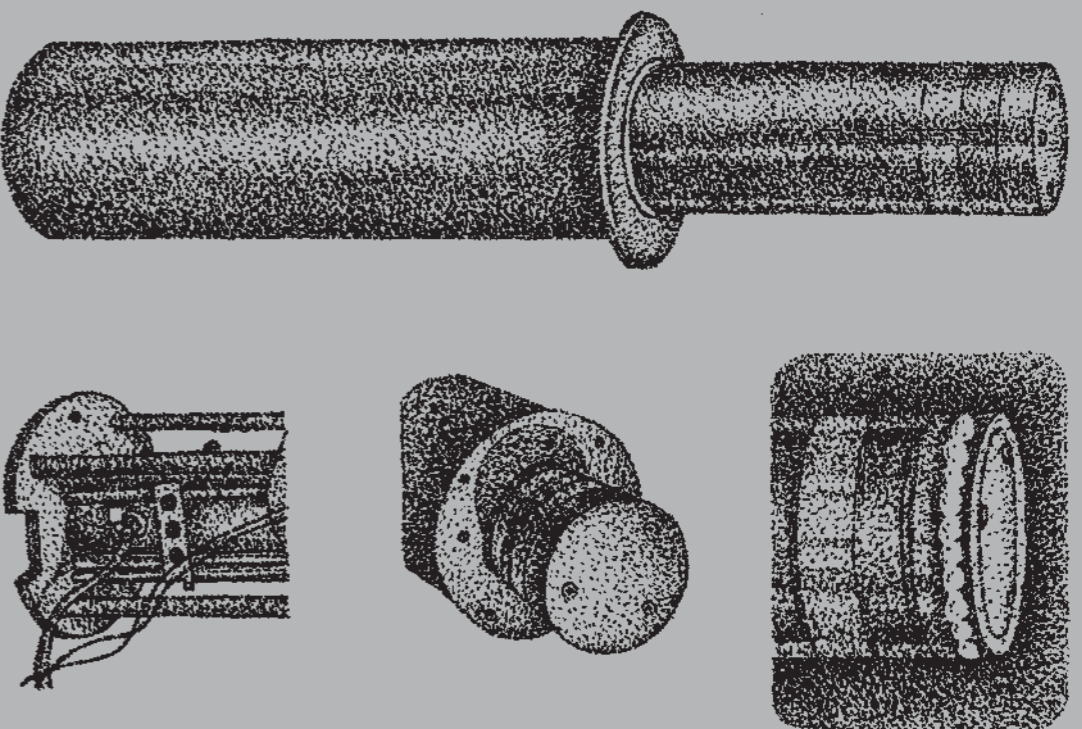
This generic type of bollard resembles the shape of a pawn chess piece. Their foundations are not deep, meaning they can often be seen lying horizontally, having been knocked down by vehicles.



**Granolit Concrete Bollards,  
Late 20th Century**

Precast concrete bollards are a common budget solution for pedestrian protection, described by manufacturers as having a "subtle aesthetic," easily dissolving into the urban landscape. The concrete is often reinforced with steel for exceptional strength and is available in many shapes and sizes, or covered with small stones, as seen here.

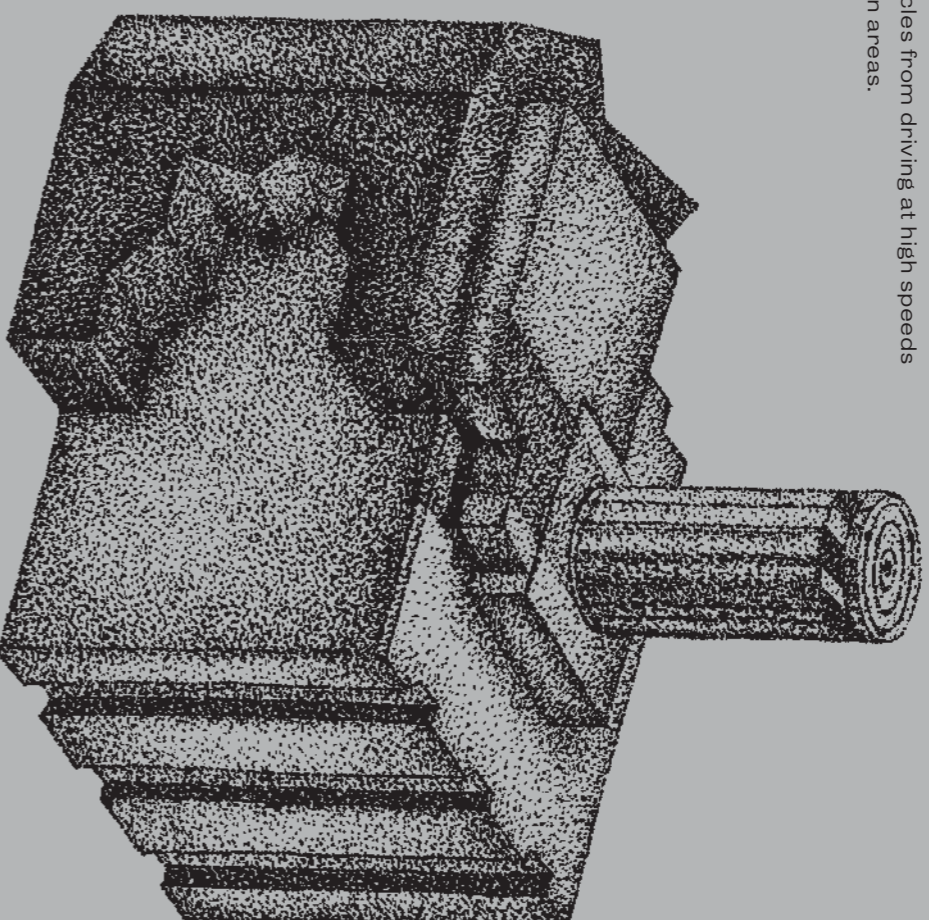




#### Rising Bollard, Early 21st Century

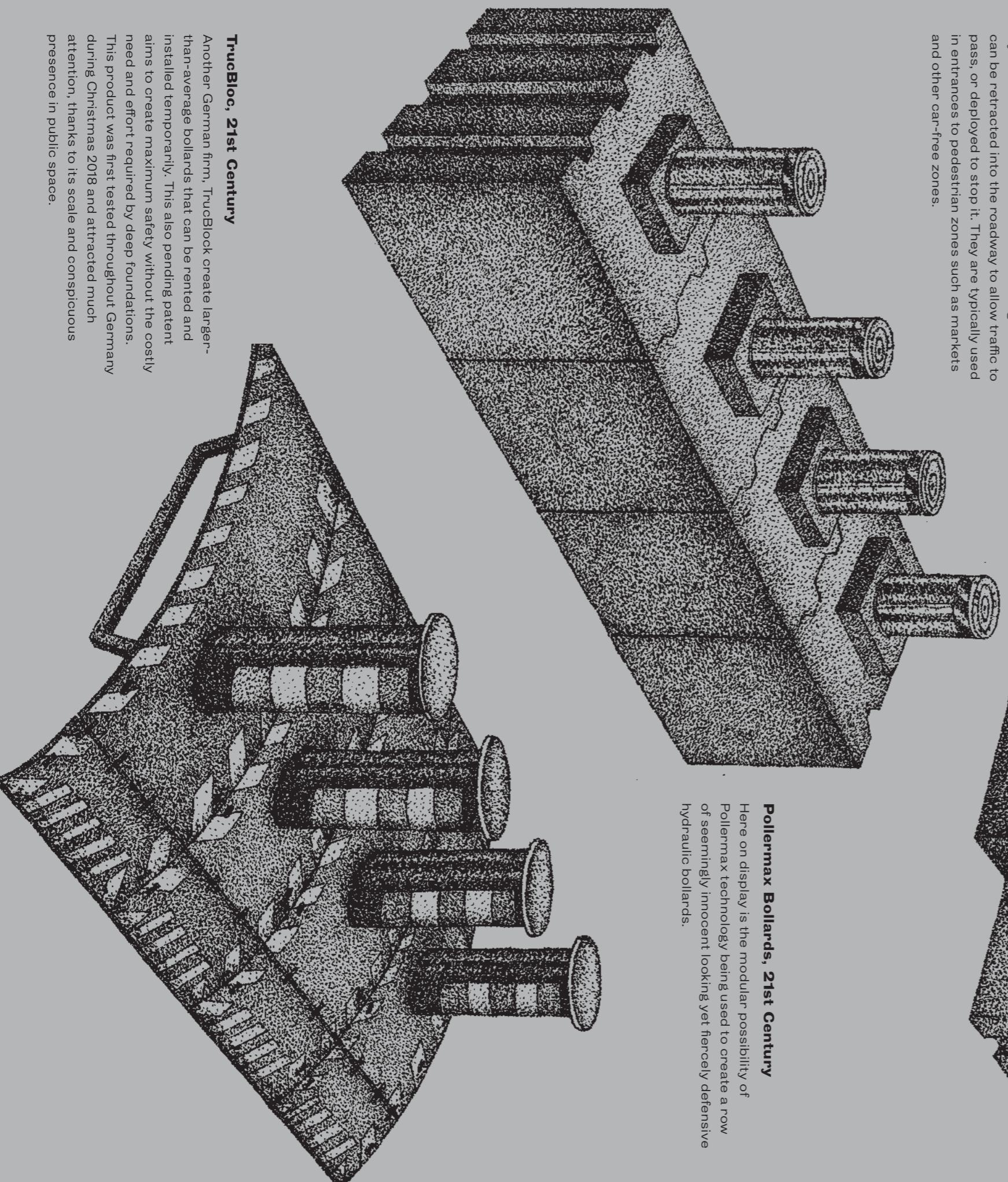
Hydraulic and/or electromechanical rising bollards can be retracted into the roadway to allow traffic to pass, or deployed to stop it. They are typically used in entrances to pedestrian zones such as markets and other car-free zones.

**Pollernmax Bollard, 21st Century**  
Following a wave of terror attacks in European cities involving trucks driving into crowded public spaces, German company Pollernmax is just one example of the expanding industry of anti-terror instruments. Pollernmax manufactures protective bollards with massive foundations below ground topped by a rather generic-looking bollard above ground. A pending patent, the design attempts to prevent large vehicles from driving at high speeds into crowded urban areas.



#### Pollernmax Bollards, 21st Century

Here on display is the modular possibility of Pollernmax technology being used to create a row of seemingly innocent looking yet fiercely defensive hydraulic bollards.



#### TrucBloc, 21st Century

Another German firm, TrucBloc create larger-than-average bollards that can be rented and installed temporarily. This also pending patent aims to create maximum safety without the costly need and effort required by deep foundations.

This product was first tested throughout Germany during Christmas 2018 and attracted much attention, thanks to its scale and conspicuous presence in public space.



# ASKANCE AT THE PAST, ASKANCE AT THE FUTURE

## Alona Rodeh at Salzburger Kunstverein

Séamus Kealy

*Dark Ages 2020* ist eine neue Licht-und-Ton-Installation von Alona Rodeh—ein Teil ihres laufenden Projekts „Safe and Sound“—im Salzburger Kunstverein. Im mit schwarzen Wänden und schwarzem Boden abgedunkelten Ausstellungsraum begegnen dem Besucher acht Skulpturen, die in einer Art Raster installiert sind. Sie erinnern an Hybride von

*DARK AGES 2020* at Salzburger Kunstverein is a new sound and light installation by Alona Rodeh, a part of her ongoing “Safe and Sound” meta-titled project. With black walls and flooring throughout the gallery space, the visitor encounters eight sculptural figures installed in a grid formation. These objects resemble hybrids of street lamps, oversized bollards, life-sized columns, chess pieces, or even futuristic totems. A variety of LED lights—themselves products of the booming industry producing vehicular lighting—are embedded in these vertical architectonic sculptures.

The entire installation has deliberate associations with clubbing, fashion, theatre, and architecture. Nocturnal architecture or “architecture of the night” (*Lichtarchitektur* in German) is a key reference. Rodeh has paid particularly close attention to early modern civic and architectural designs that utilized light—from light festivals and commercial usages in France, Germany, and the US, to the dramatic floodlighting employed by the Nazis, such as that Albert Speer created for rallies at Nuremberg using rows of searchlights.

Straßenlaternen, übergroßen Pollern, lebensgroßen Säulen, Schachfiguren oder sogar futuristischen Totems. In diese vertikalen, architektonischen Skulpturen sind eine Vielzahl von LED-Leuchten und Reflektoren eingearbeitet—Produkte der boomenden Fahrzeugbeleuchtungsindustrie.

Die gesamte Installation hat direkte Bezüge zur Clubszene, zu Mode, Theater und Architektur. Insbesondere bezieht sie sich auf die „nocturnal architecture“ (im Deutschen: *Lichtarchitektur*). Rodeh hat sich besonders mit früher ziviler Lichtarchitektur auseinandergesetzt—von Lichtfestivals und kommerzieller Nutzung in Frankreich, Deutschland und den USA bis hin zu den dramatischen Einsätzen von Flutlichtern durch die Nazis, wie etwa Albert Speer, der für die Kundgebungen in Nürnberg Spaliere aus Suchscheinwerfern installierte.

Designmäßig verbinden sich diese Bezüge in den pollerartigen Skulpturen, die selbst nicht nur mit Verkehrskontrollen, öffentlicher Sicherheit und Stadtplanung assoziierbar sind, sondern auch mit „homeland security“ (gemäß der Definition der amerikanischen

Design-wise, these references merge in the bollard-like sculptures, themselves associable not only with traffic control, public safety, and urban design but also with homeland security (as per the American Bar Association’s definition) and contemporary counter-terrorism strategies. Overall, we can sense several emergent themes on the relationship between architecture, humanity, behavior and greater socio-political topics; architecture and its effects on sex, for example, also serves a backdrop, albeit a more subdued one, to the exhibition.

Rodeh configures the gallery space into a set of technological and material performances without performers, programmed with original soundtracks, bringing life to objects in their own newly oriented ontology. These objects—as programmed participants within an overall orchestrated, electronic performance—illuminate intermittently, along with LED roadworks lights placed in an orderly arrangement across the grid. Seen together, they appear to behave as coded signals communicating with one another. The different forms of lighting blink together in a

Anwaltskammer) und heutigen Anti-Terrorismus-Strategien. Insgesamt tauchen hier mehrere Themen hinsichtlich der Beziehung zwischen Architektur, Menschheit, Verhalten und größeren soziopolitischen Fragen auf; Architektur und ihre Auswirkungen auf Sex sind zum Beispiel ebenso, wenn auch weniger offensichtlich, Hintergrund der Ausstellung.

Insgesamt verwandelt Rodeh den Ausstellungsraum in eine Folge technologischer und materieller Performances ohne Performer, programmiert mit originären Soundtracks, um die Objekte in ihrer eigenen Ontologie zu beleben. Als Teilnehmer in einer orchestrierten, elektronischen Gesamtperformance leuchten sie periodisch, zusammen mit LED-Baustellenleuchten, die systematisch auf dem Raster angeordnet sind. Gemeinsam verhalten sie sich wie kodierte Signale, die miteinander kommunizieren. Die verschiedenen Lichter blinken in einer choreografierten Kettenreaktion, während ein eigens gestalteter Raumklang den gesamten Ausstellungsraum erfüllt. Auf diese Momente folgen völlige Dunkelheit und Stille, die die Besucher\*innen unmittelbar zu einem

choreographed chain reaction, a seven-minute sequence of lights flashing through different, sometimes alarming patterns, backdropped by a sculpted sound filling the entire space. These moments are followed by brief periods of complete darkness and stillness, which immediately return the visitors to ground zero: a kind of spatial and liminal blindness.

The title of the installation itself speaks pessimistically of an approaching future, one perhaps already discernible. It also immediately, if unintentionally, beckons forth Jane Jacobs’ final book, *Dark Age Ahead*.<sup>1</sup> In it, Jacobs warned of the dissolution of civilization through the loss of a mindful relationship with culture and history. Although bleak in tone, the book, written few years before her death in 2006, is nonetheless a powerful call to future generations to take up the responsibility of preserving larger swaths of human dignity and humanity itself. This, she argues, is necessary through actively protecting five central pillars: community and family, higher education, science and technology, taxes and government responsiveness to citizen’s

„Ground Zero“ bringen: einer Art räumlicher und begrenzter Blindheit.

Der Titel der Installation selbst weist pessimistisch auf eine bereits erkennbare heranahende Zukunft. Er bezieht sich, wenn auch unabsichtlich, auf das letzte Buch von Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead*.<sup>1</sup> Darin warnte Jacobs vor der Auflösung der Zivilisation durch den Verlust einer besonnenen Beziehung zu Kultur und Geschichte. Trotz seines düsteren Tonfalls—Jacobs schrieb es wenige Jahre vor ihrem Tod 2006—ist das Buch ein deutlicher Appell an kommende Generationen, Verantwortung für die Bewahrung der Menschenwürde und der Menschlichkeit zu übernehmen. Dies sei notwendig, so argumentiert sie, da fünf zentrale Säulen aktiv geschützt werden sollten: Gemeinschaft und Familie, höhere Bildung, Wissenschaft und Technologie, Steuern und die Umsetzung der Bedürfnisse der Bürger durch die Regierung und die Selbstregulierung erlernter Berufszweige. Sie betont, dass diese Säulen durch einen allgemeinen Verfall der Erinnerung und des Wissens gefährdet sind, und ein weiteres dunkles Zeitalter droht,



needs, and self-regulation by the learned professions. According to Jacobs, these pillars are all under threat due to an overall decay of memory and knowledge that threatens to bring on another dark age unless such trends are reversed. Jacobs characterizes this dark age as a “mass amnesia,” where even the memory of what was lost is *itself* lost.<sup>2</sup> Jacob’s points are all the more relevant today given the hyper-escalation of international capital and the related human-caused trends towards global environmental catastrophe.

This gloomy, already tangible—although not necessarily irreversible—future for humanity is certainly a central backdrop to Rodeh’s installation. On the other hand, though, the title also contains within it a reference (again, perhaps unintentionally) to the English expression “hindsight is twenty-twenty”. This saying effectively means that it is easy enough to know or understand the right thing to do *after* something has happened, but, on the other hand, it always remains difficult to predict the future. Here a prognosis of the future is presented within the

space of the exhibition and within its actual title. With the entire space dominated by inter-connected machinery and jarring electronic buzzing—that is, lacking much in the way of a human frame of reference—a human-less, future world is depicted.

But the references in the exhibition do not simply end here in a murky sense of despair with regards to possible futures. Notions and realities of blackouts are also clearly present. As a term “blackout” can refer to a cultural wipeout as much it can as a large-scale power outage. Both these points of reference also converge in the exhibition. The artist herself has researched various histories of blackouts, including parallel six-year-long civic blackouts in German and British cities during the Second World War.<sup>3</sup> Not unrelated to these examples is the unspeakable cultural and ethical blackout wrought during the Nazi period, itself an interregnum of cultural amnesia of the worst kind and which is also enunciated in the installation. To be modern, indeed to be German, as author Marc Wiggam reminds us, is a Janus-faced

wenn diese Trends sich nicht umkehren lassen. Jacobs charakterisiert dieses dunkle Zeitalter als „Massenamnesie,“ bei der sogar die Erinnerung an das, was verloren gegangen ist, verloren geht.<sup>2</sup> Heute, in Zeiten der Hyperescalation des internationalen Kapitals und der besorgniserregenden Entwicklung hin zu einer globalen Umweltkatastrophe, sind Jacobs Argumente umso relevanter.

Diese düstere und bereits greifbare—wenn auch nicht irreversible—Zukunft der Menschheit bildet sicherlich den zentralen Hintergrund für Alona Rodehs Installation. Andererseits enthält der Titel auch einen—vielleicht unabsichtlichen—Bezug zum englischen Ausdruck „Hindsight is twenty-twenty“ (im übertragenen Sinne: „Hinterher ist man immer klüger“). Dieses Sprichwort bedeutet, dass es zwar einfach ist, *nachdem* etwas geschehen ist, ganz genau zu wissen oder zu verstehen, was zu tun gewesen wäre, aber schwer, die Zukunft vorauszusagen. Hier wird im Ausstellungsraum und im aktuellen Ausstellungstitel eine Zukunftsprognose präsentiert. Der gesamte Raum wird von miteinander verbundenen maschinenartigen

Objekten und elektronischer Musik dominiert und ohne einen menschlichen Bezugsrahmen eine menschenleere zukünftige Welt dargestellt.

Die Bezüge der Ausstellung enden jedoch hier nicht einfach in diesem düsteren Gefühl der Verzweiflung in der Vorahnung einer möglichen Zukunft. Vorstellungen und Realitäten von Blackouts sind ebenfalls eindeutig vorhanden. Der Begriff „Blackout“ kann sich auf die Auslöschung einer Kultur ebenso wie auf einen großflächigen Stromausfall beziehen. Diese beiden Referenzpunkte treffen in dieser Ausstellung aufeinander. Die Künstlerin selbst hat diverse Geschichten von Stromausfällen recherchiert, einschließlich der zeitgleichen sechsjährigen Blackouts in deutschen und britischen Städten während des Zweiten Weltkriegs.<sup>3</sup> Der mit diesen Beispielen verbundene unaussprechliche kulturelle und ethische Blackout der Nazizeit ist selbst ein Interregnum kultureller Amnesie der schlimmsten Art und wird auch im Kontext der Ausstellung angesprochen. Modern zu sein, oder vielmehr: deutsch zu sein, ist, wie der Autor Marc Patrick Wiggam uns erklärt, ein janusköpfiges Dilemma: Man muss sich über

dilemma: one must always aware of the profound consequences of the modern and industrial era,<sup>4</sup> while at the same time remain mindful of today’s burgeoning political climate that may indeed lead to another dark age. This is as true today as ever.

These sentiments and the various associations that resonate with the term “blackout” are a constant presence throughout this exhibition. During the WWII blackouts in Germany, for example, it was not uncommon for the authorities to display bombs on plinths as a warning to compel citizens to remain vigilant, thus ensuring a total blackout. The eight sculptures and the space they occupy in this exhibition, while clearly conveying the aforementioned references to bollards, raves and nocturnal architecture, are also reminiscent of these other historical anecdotes.

In the exhibition we can also ascertain clear elements of a fading counter-culture: the rave scene. First starting in the 1980s during (and perhaps even as a partial reaction to) a more conservative and global trend of accelerated

die tiefgreifenden Konsequenzen der modernen und industriellen Ära<sup>4</sup> bewusst sein und zugleich achtsam bleiben gegenüber eines möglicherweise entstehenden politischen Klimas, das zu einem weiteren dunklen Zeitalter führen könnte. Das ist heute so wahr wie eh und je.

Diese Gefühle und die verschiedenen Assoziationen, die in dem Begriff „Blackout“ mitschwingen, sind in der Ausstellung ständig präsent. Zum Beispiel war es während der Blackouts im Zweiten Weltkrieg in Deutschland nicht ungewöhnlich, Bomben auf Sockeln auszustellen—als Warnung, um die Bevölkerung zu zwingen, wachsam zu bleiben, und so die totale Verdunkelung zu gewährleisten. Die acht Skulpturen und der Raum, den sie in dieser Ausstellung einnehmen, erinnern an solche historische Anekdoten, während sie natürlich auch die bereits erwähnten Bezüge zu Pollern, Raves und Lichtarchitektur vermitteln.

In der Ausstellung können wir zudem auch klare Elemente einer verblassenden Gegenkultur erkennen: der Rave-Szene. Raves begannen in den 1980er Jahren während des eher konservativen globalen Trends hin zum beschleunigten

capitalism, raves eventually morphed into a form of staid, commercial leisure and have now all but lost their once counter-cultural energy. Recently, rave culture has been retrospectively analyzed by cultural critics. One such notorious proponent is Timothy Morton, who in his most recent book, *Being Ecological*, references—among many others—science fiction, Tibetan Buddhism and German philosophy to propose a paradigm shift in our relationship to the world as a means of avoiding global annihilation.<sup>5</sup> In his 2016 book *Dark Ecology*, he theorizes an “ecology” of rave culture, expounding the idea of the rave as something that brings people together in the “symbiotic real”. According to Morton, we are always situated within this, even if not consciously so, and consequently ever ready to experience an “ontological shimmering.” The bringing together of bodies within an enclosed, shared ecstasy (irrespective of whether one decides to take an ecstasy pill or not) is an active form of “becoming,” one that emancipates those participating, Morton argues. This leads, he continues, to a greater and embodied

Kapitalismus—und vielleicht teilweise auch als eine Reaktion darauf—und entwickelten sich schließlich zu einer soliden kommerziellen Freizeitaktivität, die ihre einstige gegenkulturelle Energie inzwischen vollständig verloren hat. In den letzten Jahren wurde die Entwicklung der Rave-Kultur rückblickend von Kulturkritikern analysiert. Ein notorischer Verfechter solcher Kulturkritik ist Timothy Morton, der sich in seinem neuesten Buch *Being Ecological* u.a. auf Science Fiction, tibetanischen Buddhismus und deutsche Philosophie bezieht und einen Paradigmenwechsel in unserer Beziehung zur Welt vorschlägt, um eine globale Auslöschung zu verhindern.<sup>5</sup> In seinem Buch *Dark Ecology* (2016) entwickelt er eine „Ökologie“ der Rave-Kultur, indem er das Konzept „Rave“ als etwas darstellt, das die Menschen in einer „symbiotischen Realität“ zusammenbringt. Laut Morton befinden wir uns permanent in einer solchen Realität—wenn auch nicht bewusst—und sind immer bereit, darin ein „ontologisches Schimmern“ zu erleben.

Das Zusammenbringen von Körpern in einer geschlossenen und geteilten Ekstase



awareness for a complete consciousness that asserts: "I'm ... part of an entity that is now a *geological force on a planetary scale*."<sup>6</sup> Ultimately Morton says that the rave is a space not only of performing revolutionary thinking, but indeed one for intensely embodying it in a pre-lingual, anti-ideological and actualizing manner. He makes comparisons with the radical ideas of "becoming" as courted by Deleuze and Guattari, who in various texts, call for new forms of revolutionary bodies to amass without the trappings of what they argue to be a number of failed radical, modernist notions. Essentially, what is at work in the rave, says Morton, is an anti-essentialization of individuals' identities as they amass together within ecstasy, trance and dance.

In a rave, you are not an ethnic particularity nor an individual with clear cultural boundaries; you are rather an active blend within a collective experience tending towards, as Deleuze and Guattari might say, something more schizophrenic. This is mystical rapture and simultaneously collective euphoria encased in a

(gleichgültig, ob man Ecstasy nimmt oder nicht) ist für ihn eine aktive Form des „Werdens,“ die die Teilnehmer\*innen emanzipiert. Dies führt zu einer größeren, verkörperten Wahrnehmung eines umfassenden Bewusstseins, das besagt: „Ich bin Teil einer Einheit, die jetzt eine geologische Kraft planetaren Ausmaßes ist.“<sup>6</sup> Letztlich sagt Morton, dass der Rave nicht nur ein Ort ist, an dem revolutionäres Denken stattfindet, sondern dass sich dieses dort zugleich intensiv in einer vorsprachlichen, antiideologischen und realistischen Weise verkörpert. Er zieht Vergleiche mit radikalen Vorstellungen des „Werdens,“ wie sie Deleuze und Guattari vertreten, die in mehreren Texten neue Formen von sich zu Massen verbindenden revolutionären Körpern fordern, ohne dabei jedoch den ihrer Meinung nach verfehlten modernistischen Implikationen aufzusitzen. Im Wesentlichen ist das, was während eines Raves geschieht, so Morton, eine Anti-Essentialisierung individueller Identitäten, die in Ekstase, Trance und Tanz zur Masse verschmelzen.

Bei einem Rave ist man weder eine ethnische Besonderheit noch eine Person mit klaren

morphic kind of non-identity and spiritual awakening, even if temporary. Thus, it breaks one's normal perception of the world into something that is characterized by an enhanced sense of empathy and critical understanding. This is the revelation Morton refers to as "dark ecology," that paradigm shift that may happen collectively, in the same vein as that urged by the counsel of Jane Jacobs: to prevent an irreversible, global blackout of humanity. No *DARK AGES 2020* please and thank you. No regressive politics and no essentialist nationalism, not only because they are untrue, but because they lead only to catastrophe. A political dark age of this nature can be averted if this collective consciousness arises, argues Morton.

The fact that, at time of writing, 2020 is only a year away makes these notions (and realities) all the more urgent. It is not an exaggeration to assert that humanity has underestimated not only its own destructive impact but also how finite, fragile and inter-connected the greater, singular ecosystem that we are embedded within and responsible for is. There is no question

kulturellen Grenzen, sondern eine aktive Verschmelzung innerhalb kollektiver Erfahrung, die zu etwas eher Schizophrenem tendiert. Es ist eine mystische Ekstase und gleichzeitig eine kollektive Euphorie, umgeben von einer Art morphischen Nicht-Identität und spirituellem Erwachen, wenn auch nur vorübergehend. So wird also die eigene normale Wahrnehmung der Welt gebrochen und ersetzt durch einen geschärften Sinn für Empathie und kritischem Verständnis. Dies ist die Offenbarung, die Morton als *Dark Ecology* bezeichnet, ein Paradigmenwechsel, der kollektiv erfolgen könnte und dasselbe Ziel verfolgt wie Jane Jacobs Rat: einen irreversiblen, globalen Blackout der Menschheit zu verhindern. Keine *Dark Ages 2020* bitte—vielen Dank. Keine regressive Politik und kein essentialistischer Nationalismus, nicht nur weil sie unwahr sind, sondern weil sie uns auf jeden Fall in die Katastrophe führen. Ein politisches dunkles Zeitalter kann abgewendet werden, wenn ein solches kollektives Bewusstsein erwacht, so Morton.

Die Tatsache, dass zum Zeitpunkt der Entstehung dieses Beitrags das Jahr 2020 nur

that a global ecological shift is finally underway, but we can actively hope that it is not too late. Thus the shift must accelerate as swiftly as has our own destructive impact with the progress of modernity, to avoid a foreseeable but overall preventable blackout.

Séamus Kealy is director of the Salzburger Kunstverein. From 2008 to 2013, he was Director of The Model, Sligo, Ireland, which he took through a major redevelopment. From 2005 to 2008, he was curator at the Blackwood Gallery, University of Toronto. From 1996 to 2005, Séamus Kealy practiced as an artist and independent curator.

mehr ein Jahr entfernt ist, macht diese Vorstellungen (und Realitäten) umso dringlicher. Es ist keine Übertreibung zu behaupten, dass die Menschheit nicht nur ihre eigenen zerstörerischen Auswirkungen unterschätzt hat, sondern auch, wie begrenzt, fragil und ineinander verwoben das größere, einzigartige Ökosystem ist, in dem wir leben und für das wir verantwortlich sind. Ohne Frage bahnt sich eine Veränderung an und wir können nur hoffen, dass es nicht zu spät ist. Die Veränderung muss derart beschleunigt werden, dass sie unseren destruktiven Effekt durch die fortschreitende Modernisierung aushebelt—um einen vorhersehbaren und grundsätzlich verhinderbaren Blackout zu vermeiden.

Séamus Kealy ist der Leiter des Salzburger Kunstvereins. Von 2008 bis 2013 leitete er The Model in Sligo, Irland, welches er maßgeblich weiterentwickelte. Von 2005 bis 2008 war er Kurator der Blackwood Gallery, University of Toronto. Von 1996 bis 2005 arbeitete Séamus Kealy als Künstler und freier Kurator.

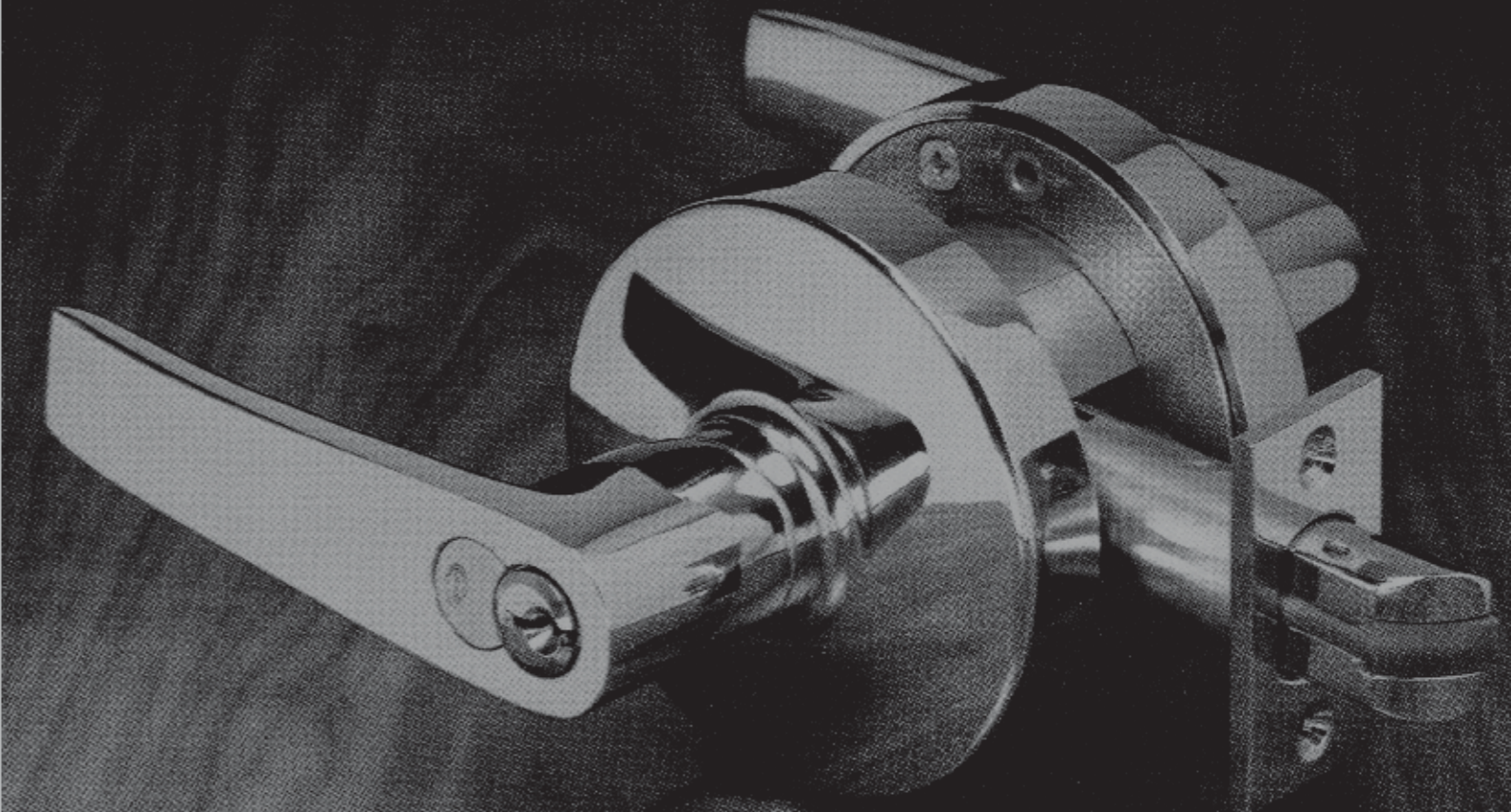
#### Notes:

- 1 Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead*, (Chicago: Vintage Books, 2005).
- 2 On this profound notion of cultural amnesia (forgetting what was even lost), Alona Rodeh points out that many early lighting technologies, for example, have been lost and then some re-constructed via other technologies. This technological amnesia naturally also applies to many software programs, for example for design and architecture, as well as to issues around storing and preserving technological artwork for example, where technologies become obsolete and then altogether forgotten.
- 3 For further reading, see: Marc Patrick Wiggam, *The Blackout in Britain and Germany during the Second World War*, (University of Exeter: Doctoral Thesis, 2011).
- 4 Ibid, pg 12. The artist, born in Israel and currently living in Berlin, would have a particular sensitivity to this history.
- 5 Timothy Morton, *Being Ecological*. (New York: Pelican, 2018).
- 6 Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology*. (New York: Columbia, 2016), pp75, 11.

#### Literatur und Anmerkungen:

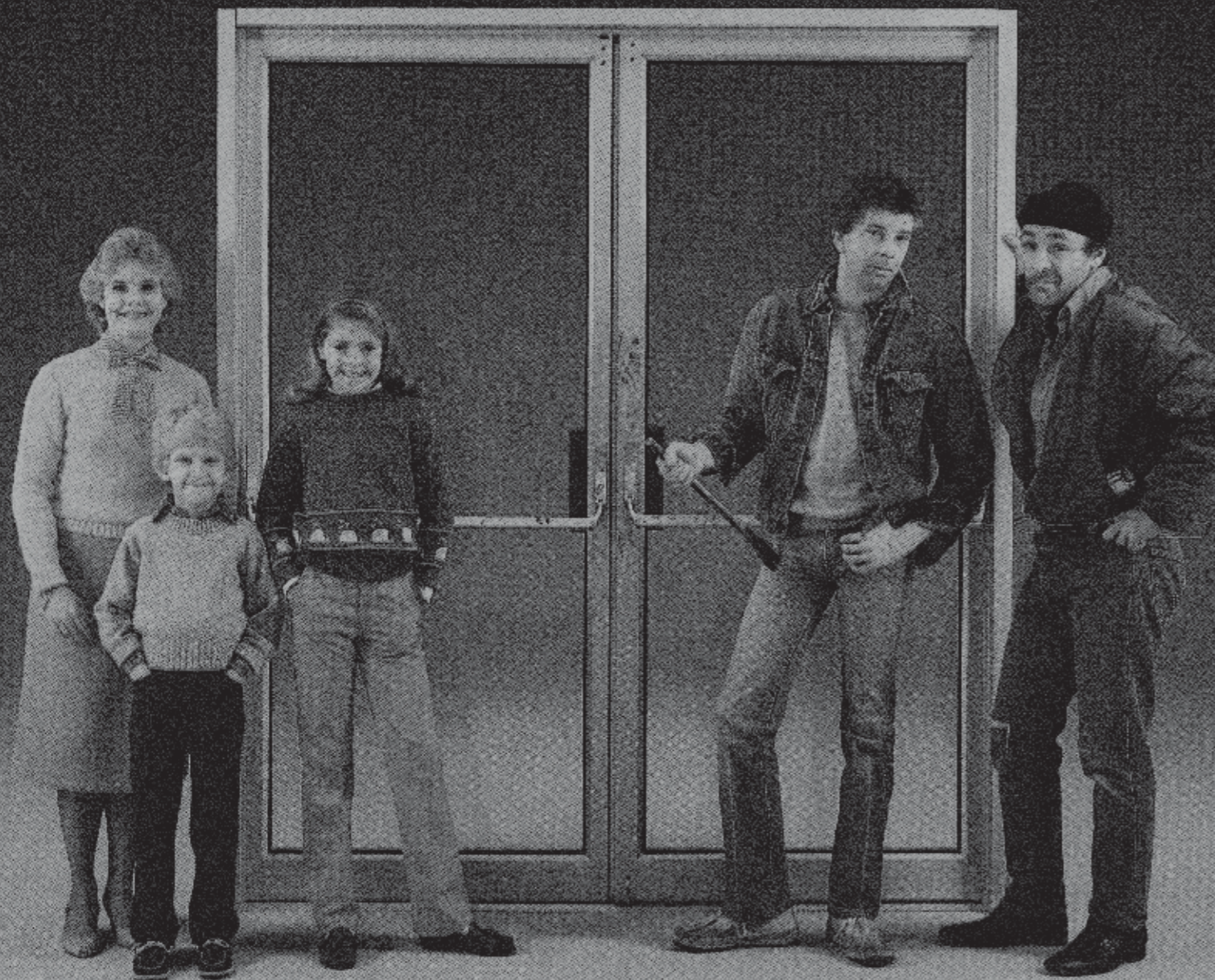
- 1 Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead*, (Chicago: Vintage Books, 2005).
- 2 Zu diesem profunden Begriff der kulturellen Amnesie (dem Vergessen sogar des Vergessenen) weist Alona Rodeh darauf hin, dass viele frühe Beleuchtungstechnologien verloren gegangen sind, um dann mithilfe anderer Technologien rekonstruiert zu werden. Natürlich lässt sich diese technologische Amnesie auch bei vielen Softwareprogrammen finden, z. B. im Bereich von Design und Architektur, und bei Fragen der Aufbewahrung und Konservierung von technologischen Kunstwerken, bei denen Technologien veraltet und dann schlussendlich vergessen werden.
- 3 Weitere Ausführungen bei Marc Patrick Wiggam, *The Blackout in Britain and Germany during the Second World War*, (University of Exeter: Doktorarbeit, 2011).
- 4 Ibid., S. 12. Die Künstlerin, die in Israel geboren wurde und gegenwärtig in Berlin lebt, hat für diese Geschichte sicherlich ein besonderes Gespür.
- 5 Timothy Morton, *Being Ecological*, (New York: Pelican, 2018).
- 6 Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology*, (New York: Columbia, 2016), S. 75, 11.





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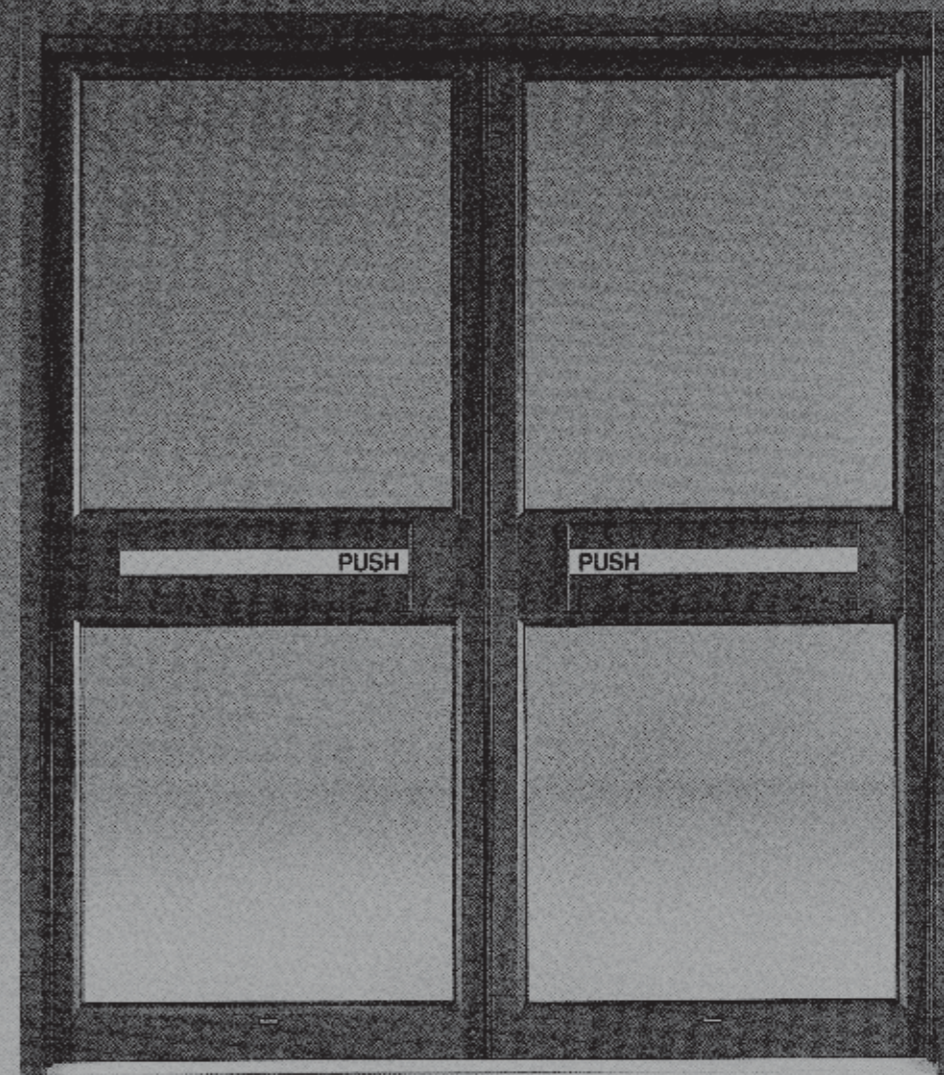
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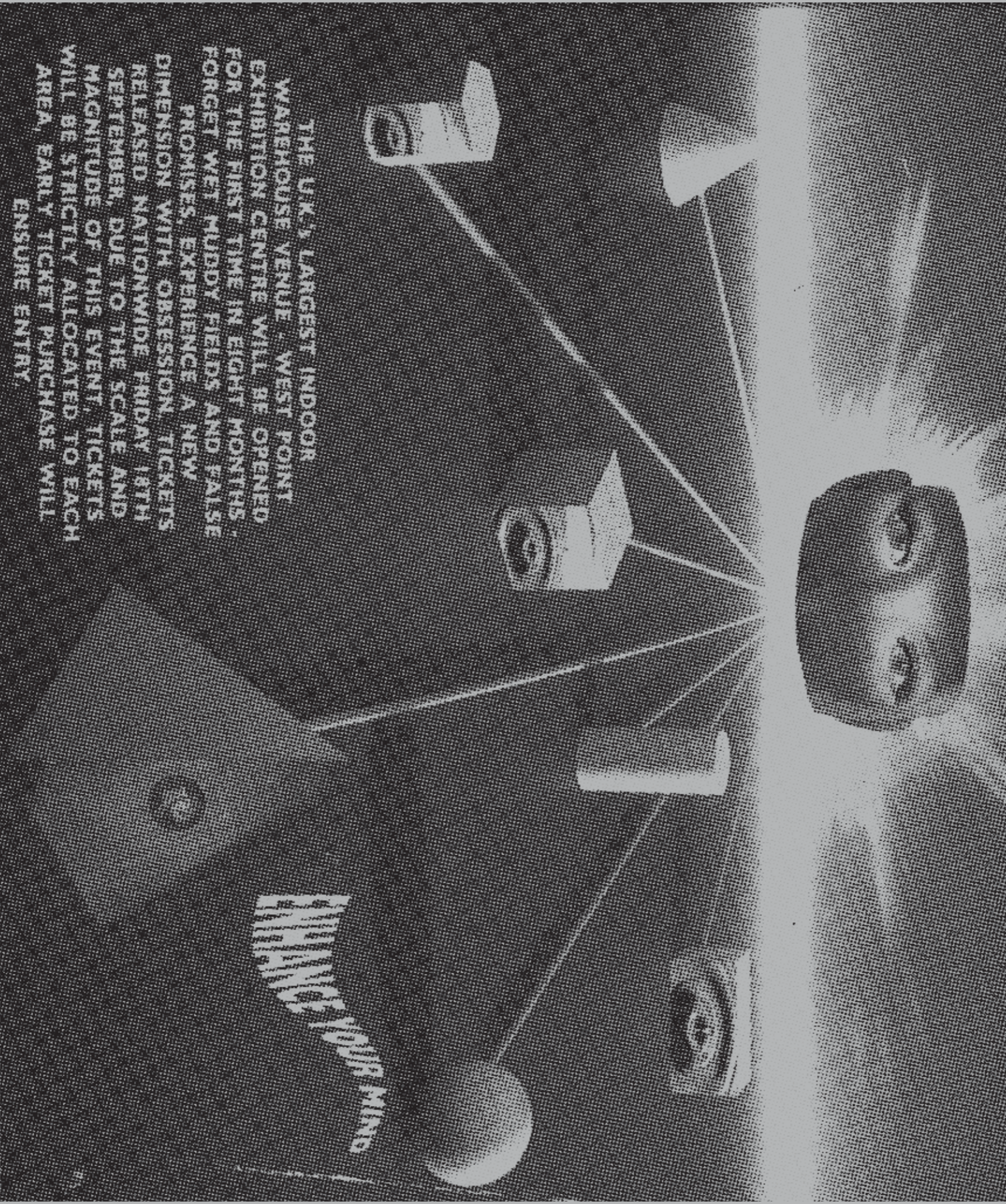
# OBSESSION-

P R O U D L Y P R E S E N T

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EXHIBITION CENTRE WILL BE OPENED  
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EIGHT MONTHS -  
FORGET WET MUDDY FIELDS AND FALSE  
PROMISES, EXPERIENCE A NEW  
DIMENSION WITH OBSESSION. TICKETS  
RELEASED NATIONWIDE FRIDAY 18TH  
SEPTEMBER, DUE TO THE SCALE AND  
MAGNITUDE OF THIS EVENT, TICKETS  
WILL BE STRICTLY ALLOCATED TO EACH  
AREA, EARLY TICKET PURCHASE WILL  
ENSURE ENTRY.

THE THIRD DIMENSION



**Alona Rodeh, DARK AGES 2020, 2019**

P. 113 *Dark Ages 2020* (Altar detail), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, LEDs, aluminum;  
80x80x130 cm

P. 114 *Dark Ages 2020* (general view), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, aluminum, OSB  
flooring, sound and LED lights; approx. 7 min loop

P. 117 *Dark Ages 2020* (Altar), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, LEDs, aluminum; 80x80x130 cm

P. 118 *Dark Ages 2020* (general view), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, aluminum, OSB  
flooring, sound and LED lights; approx. 7 min loop

P. 121 *Dark Ages 2020* (Eagle-Eye Bollard detail), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, LEDs, aluminum;  
60x60x200 cm

P. 122 *Dark Ages 2020* (Eagle-Eye Bollard), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, LEDs, aluminum;  
60x60x200 cm

P. 123 *Dark Ages 2020* (Berlin Im Licht detail), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, LEDs, aluminum;  
80x80x180 cm

P. 125 *Dark Ages 2020* (Berlin Im Licht), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, LEDs, aluminum;  
80x80x180 cm

P. 126 *Dark Ages 2020* (Berlin Im Licht detail), 2019  
MDF, plexiglass, polycarbonate, LEDs, aluminum;  
80x80x180 cm

All photos: Ludger Paffrath

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