

INTERNATIONAL GLOW CONFERENCE 2017

November 11-13

AGENDA 2017 _ THE FUTURE OF FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

Vector to the Future _ Festivals of Light

Since the 1990s, festivals of light have been established as a decentral exhibition format in public space referring to light as a material, medium, and metaphor. From religious to cultural, from seasonal to life-style driven concepts, the growing number of all kinds of festivals respond to a need to accommodate the arts, technological advances, urban development and public entertainment - apart from institutional conventions. Despite the worldwide success, most of the settings and frameworks of festivals of light are based on temporary co-operation, changing funds and shifting networks of communication and documentation. Part of the roundtable was dedicated to innovative ideas of how to generate continuity, professional working conditions and sustainable developments for future festivals of light.

The specific characteristics of each festival are engendered in a mix of guiding interests of co-working institutions and communities, leading personalities and funding partners. Intertwining aesthetic approaches, conceptual agreements, economic and technical abilities, spatial options as well as communication and publishing qualities, each festival provides a unique framework for participating artists, curators and visitors. Part of the debate was focused on wide array of qualities that are all labeled "festival of light". Especially the fine art-based formats suffer from missing recognition in the art context due to the missing distinction in wording and communication. Regardless their differentiation in outline, concept and approach, all discussions were backed by an atmosphere of sharing, friendly co-existence and the idea of long-term co-operation.

LUX Helsinki (1995), FETE DE LUMIERES Lyon (1998) and LICHTROUTEN Luedenscheid (2002) were among the first festivals that were internationally recognized and over the last twenty years a multitude of festivals has been established. The Eindhoven-based GLOW has been founded in 2006 as a yearly event. From November 11 to 13, 2017, during its 12th iteration, GLOW hosted an international roundtable to debate the future of festivals of light. Twenty-eight festivals mainly from Europe, but as well from Africa, Canada, New Zealand and the USA followed the invitation. In addition, there were artists, curators and producers taking part and over all, the conference had 69 participants. The keynotes of the conference were dedicated to light as material of the future and to public value of festivals of light.

This semi-public meeting was part of a variety of activities of the International Network of Festivals of Light. What started with an email-list in 2002 has become a multitude of activities and projects with variable focusses and fluctuating set of partners. Topics of the Eindhoven meeting were how to enhance the flow of information, knowledge and experience and to reflect on ongoing shared projects. Part of the conference was dedicated to upcoming cooperation and funding opportunities to improve documentation and research, to provide training and coaching for artists working on mixed media realities and to develop an international educational setting for future curators. Several festivals agreed to work on light in the arts of indigenous cultures and provides access to information and artists, possible partners and further resources.

The three-day conference allowed all participants to visit the GLOW public trail including the dedicated exhibition in the Vanabbe-Museum with works of Christian Boltanski, Tracey Emin, Akinori

Goto, Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, Olga Kisseleva, Kari Kola, Laurent Mareschal, Daniel Margraf, Charles Vreuls and emerging artists like Nikolai Gillissen, Almar Sinte Maartensdijk and Ricky van Broekhoven. The shared walk and discussion profited from the mix of participants and generated further ideas of what could be done together while improving the diversity of profiles.

For any information about the conference please contact Marianne Kiemeney, Stichting GLOW Eindhoven, Secretary of the Board & Managing Director, E marianne@gloweindhoven.nl

The conference is partly initiated by founder [Philips Lighting](#).