

STAM

Stadsmuseum Gent

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enlightened city

exhibition

from October 9th 2010 to May 1st 2011

information for public, trade and press



Campaign photo 'In the shadow of St Bavo's Cathedral', 1934,
Charles Buyle © PhotoMuseum Antwerp



Drawing 'Negotiations at Moonlight' May 27th 1806, from: 'Christiaan Andriessen's sketched diary', 1805-1808 © Amsterdam City Archive

1. the exhibition
2. technical data
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Painting 'The Distributors' 1895, Jules De Bleye © Amsab - ISG

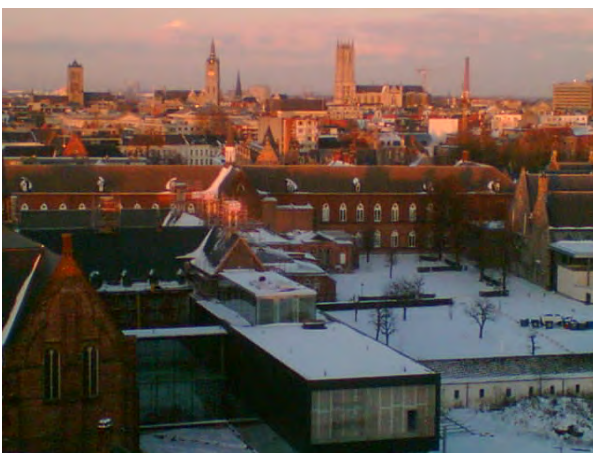
1. the exhibition

Whereas Ghent City Museum's permanent exhibition will show what it is that makes Ghent Ghent, its temporary exhibitions will show what makes a city a city. Ghent has a thing about light (award-winning lighting plan, light festival 2011) and so for its grand opening STAM has decided to put the spotlight on the city - not just figuratively but also literally.



Ambulatory of the C14 Bijloke Abbey © Phile Deprez

STAM occupies historically important buildings on the Bijloke site, a green oasis close to the centre and a haven of culture on the banks of the River Leie (Lys). The temporary exhibition 'Enlightened City' will be mounted in the seventeenth-century monastery building which is an integral part of the fourteenth-century Bijloke Abbey. It links up seamlessly with STAM's twenty-first-century extension. The monastery building certainly does not leave the visitor unmoved: the light that filters through the monastery windows plays on walls and ambulatory and in the evenings the whole of Bijloke Abbey is lit by Ghent's lighting plan.



Construction site winter 2010 © Bart Rondas

enlightened city

October 9th 2010 – May 1st 2011



In the shadow of St Bavo's Cathedral, 1934, Charles Buyle © PhotoMuseum Antwerp



Printing plant of the popular newspaper 'Het Licht' (façade) 1931, Edgar Barbaix © The House of Alijn

A city is a permanent 'chiaroscuro show': squares bathe in sunlight, tower blocks cast their shifting shadows, town houses reach for the light, a cheerful cacophony of light banishes the night, artificial light attacks our biorhythm, dark sides of the city spurn the bright lights... Life in the city is conditioned by light and darkness. This is the usually underexposed starting-point of the fascinating exhibition with which the new STAM opens its series of temporary exhibitions about urbanity: Enlightened City.

light and life

How does a blind person experience the city? That question, so intriguing for sighted people, opens the first STAM exhibition. We set about examining how light and the lack of light affect a city's development and life in the city. Take the pre-industrial age, when the rhythm of life followed the natural day-night pattern. Was it really so? How did light and darkness dictate what people did? The introduction of artificial light in the nineteenth century triggered a revolution: night became day, as people said at the time. It had a dramatic effect on all aspects of life: on working life and the economy, but also on social life and on the hours we slept.



www.cityoneminutes.org

The exhibition uses documents and diaries, maquettes, paintings, photographs and installations to tell this story. And it does so in an extraordinary location: the old Bijloke Abbey. We also link Ghent with the world: for a twenty-four-hour period a video installation connects the contemporary city with the world through the 'City One-Minutes' project: one-minute films of cities in different time-zones.

twin maquettes and stained-glass windows

Are we seeing an evolution towards more light in urban development and in the architecture of our homes? Did modernism invent 'light living'? The exhibition sheds light on several carefully chosen places and buildings. Using twin maquettes and a solar simulator we examine the incidence of light in the life of striking buildings at two different times.



Stained-glass window 'Jesus in the Garden of Olives' C16 STAM



Painting 'The Distributors' 1895, Jules De Bleye © Amsab - ISG

We end in the old abbey church, the perfect place to take a look at how light is deployed symbolically: STAM's magnificent collection of stained-glass windows will glint and gleam, we will show how light and propaganda, and faith and light coexist harmoniously, how a light-filled city makes itself the leading light and sets about celebrating light...

*Can you see those lights, said a to b.
It's the big city. There's everything there.
I can live there if I choose.
Yes, said b. Yes. Me too, a.
(Esther Jansma)*

2. technische fiche

title

Enlightened City

where

STAM – Ghent City Museum, Bijloke site, Godshuizenlaan 2, 9000 Ghent

when

October 9th 2010 to May1st 2011

floor area

1,000 m²

media

1. paintings
2. photographs
3. documents
4. objects
5. posters
6. diaries
7. drawings, prints
8. video installation City One-Minutes
9. 'twin' maquettes, solar simulator, finger cameras
10. artefacts
11. stained-glass windows
12. excerpts from literature and films
13. soundscape
14. lamps, candles

loans

main lenders:

1. AMSAB Institute for Social History, Ghent
2. Ghent University Library
3. Ghent City Archive

4. Amsterdam City Archive
5. Archive of the Provincial PhotoMuseum Antwerp
6. MSK Ghent
7. Royal Library of Belgium

the *pièces de résistance*

see 5. the *pièces de résistance*

concept and execution

STAM – Ghent City Museum
Curator/Set designer Terenja van Dijk

promotion

STAM – Ghent City Museum

3. Information for the public

(There may still be a few changes)

where

STAM, Bijloke site, Godshuizenlaan 2, 9000 Ghent

when

- October 9th 2010 to May 1st 2011
- from 10 to 18.00 hrs
- closed on Mondays
- closed on December 24th, 25th, 31st and January 1st

to combine with the light festival

- city trail enhanced with light, lighting and light art
- from January 27th to 30th 2011

to combine with light walks in the city

- unique lighting of streets, squares and buildings – the Ghent lighting plan won an international award in 2004

to combine with the permanent exhibition at stam - ghent city museum and a city visit

- chronological trail as an introduction to a visit to the city
- opening times are the same as for 'Enlightened City'

toegangsprijzen

- normal price:
 - ◆ €6 for adults
- concessions:
 - ◆ groups (min.15 people), senior citizens 55+ and others entitled to a discount: €4.50
 - ◆ ages 19 - 26: €1
 - ◆ ages 0 -18: free
 - ◆ Ghent citizens: always entitled to a discount and on Sundays(10 to 13.00 hrs) admission is free
- With the same ticket you can also visit STAM's permanent exhibition

facilities

- full access for wheelchair-users
- texts in Dutch in each gallery
- café-restaurant
- cultural-tourist information desk

publication

- international publication comprising essays on various themes
- edited by Patrick De Rynck
- designed by Gert Dooreman
- published by Lannoo
- aimed at the general public and beautifully illustrated
- available from the museum shop during the exhibition and from bookshops
- languages: Dutch with English summary

groups

- choice:
 - ◆ tour of the exhibition in the company of a guide
 - ◆ light festival, light walks and STAM permanent exhibition packages
 - ◆ combine your STAM visit with a boat trip
- booking essential – minimum 2 weeks in advance
- museum guides
- languages: Dutch, French, German, English, Spanish (interpreter for the deaf on request)
- maximum 20 people
- duration: ca. 1 ½ hours
- guided tour: €75

reservations and information

- group bookings via BOEKjeBEZOEK:
 - ◆ info@boekjebezoek.be
 - ◆ tel. +32 (0)9 269 60 04

information

- stam@gent.be
- tel. +32 (0)9 269 87 90
- website: www.stamgent.be

4. information for trade and press

trade

- admission trade: -15%
- contact trade:
 - ◆ Sarah Maréchal
 - ◆ sarah.marechal@gent.be
 - ◆ tel. +32 (0)9 269 87 90
- groups: see 3. information for the public
- group bookings via BOEKjeBEZOEK:
 - ◆ info@boekjebezoek.be
 - ◆ tel. +32 (0)9 269 60 04
- information:
 - ◆ stam@gent.be
 - ◆ tel. +32 (0)9 269 87 90

press

- documentation (text and photographs) available to the press
- high-resolution photographs will be available via a download link
- contact press:
 - ◆ Frederik Verstraete
 - ◆ frederik.verstraete@gent.be
 - ◆ tel. +32 (0)9 269 87 90

promotion

- promotional material (posters and flyers) available

illustrations

- 5 illustrations are available (see download link)
- the illustrations are copyright free
- the illustrations may only be used to promote the exhibition 'Enlightened City' from October 9th to May 1st 2011
- captions:
 - ◆ BS1
 - Campaign photo 'In the shadow of St Bavo's Cathedral', Charles Buyle (1934)
 - Archive of the Provincial PhotoMuseum Antwerp

- credit: Archive of the Provincial PhotoMuseum Antwerp
- ◆ BS2
 - Fragment of the painting ‘The Distributors at work’, 1895, Jules De Bleye
 - AMSAB Institute for Social History
 - credit: AMSAB Institute for Social History
- ◆ BS3
 - Photograph Hans Aarsman
 - STAM, Ghent City Museum collection
 - credit: STAM, Ghent City Museum
- ◆ BS4
 - Nepera Factory
 - Baekeland’s leaflet, 1899
 - credit: Ghent University Library
- ◆ BS5
 - ‘Catholic saint with aura’ stained-glass
 - STAM, Ghent City Museum collection
 - credit: STAM, Ghent City Museum
- ◆ BS6
 - Abbey Church
 - STAM, Ghent City Museum
 - credit: Phile Deprez

5. the best pictures

- these pictures are not available for further distribution
- for high-resolution images see 4. Information for trade and press

5.1 light and the rhythm of life

The rhythm of day and night dictates people's lives. The exhibition shows how over the centuries the invention and introduction of artificial light has changed that rhythm. It looks at the role played by sunlight and daylight in daily life: from the history of the bleaching fields on the outskirts of the city to dark, narrow alleyways in the centre, from parasol to sunglasses. In the pre-industrial age, the length of the working day was inexorably determined by the position of the sun. The development of artificial light brought a change that was nothing short of revolutionary. That invention gradually enabled us to subjugate the evening, night and darkness.



Bleaching field in a painting by Joos de Momper and Jan Brueghel II. The history of the bleaching fields on the outskirts of the city illustrates the use of sunlight and daylight in daily life.



Baekeland's Nepera Factory 1899, Leaflets collection, Ghent University Library



Engraving, celebrations in the city for the Joyful Entry of Charles Emperor of Austria in 1717, SAG



Photograph Hans Aarsman, STAM City Museum collection



In the C18 women wore a mask to protect themselves against the sun and preserve their pale complexion. STAM, Ghent City Museum collection



Engraving W. Hollar, 1643, Royal Library of Belgium



Photograph Rudy Châtelet

diaries

Diaries from different periods illustrate 24 hours in the life of people in different periods.



February 23rd 1807
Keep a flame and a candle to hand



Drawing 'Negotiations at Moonlight', May 27th 1806, from: 'Christiaan Andriessen's sketched diary' 1805-1808 © Amsterdam City Archive

The drawings tell us about the quality of life in relation of light.



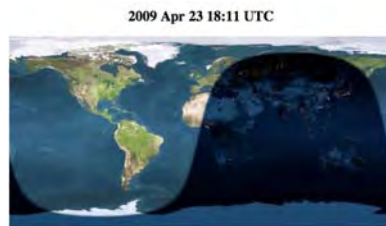
Frans Masereel, *Mon livre d'heures*, 1919, MSK Ghent



Photographic diary of the Ghent “facteur charmeur” Rudy Châtelet

city one minutes

A video installation illustrates the connection between different places in the world in the same 24-hour period. Twenty monitors, twenty meeting-places in the world show how the rhythm of day and night differs in each place at a given moment and also how different life is in each place.



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Video installation showing one-minute films of twenty metropolises from different time zones (personal artistic impressions of the city consisting of 24 one-minute portraits each of which illustrates one hour in the day)

5.2 light and architecture

Light plays an important role in urban development and architecture. Indeed, light is a dominant factor in the modern city and its buildings. Over the centuries more and more daylight has been brought into buildings. For example, the development of new technologies, materials and construction methods meant windows could become larger and larger. Walls with openings in them evolved into façades consisting of one large expanse of glass, rooms which were once dark internal spaces became contemporary interiors bathed in light.

As the fabric of the city is restructured and redeveloped, more light is brought into urban spaces during the daytime.

twin maquettes and solar simulator

We show parts of the city, houses and buildings which were transformed in such a way that the incidence of light (day) and lighting (night) changed dramatically. Two maquettes were made of the same place for the two different periods: before and after the transformation. A solar simulator lights the maquettes.

As well as installations, amazing illustrations show light and shadow on buildings and places down the centuries.



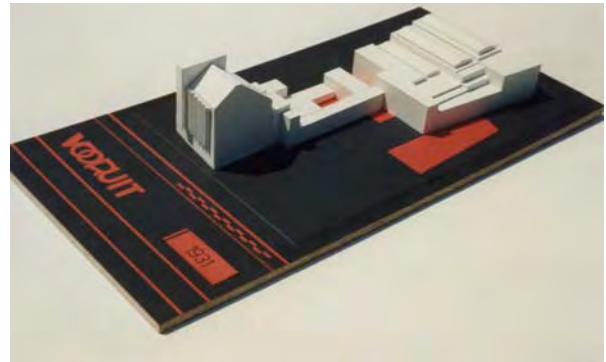
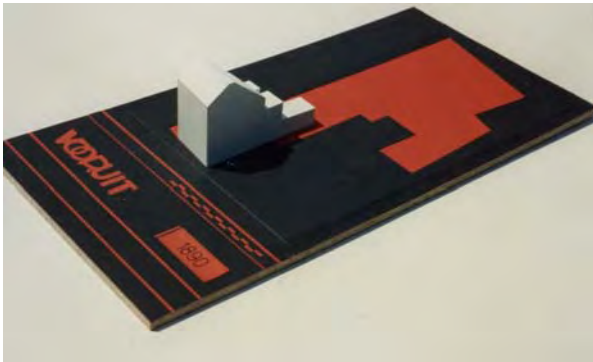
In the shadow of St Bavo's Cathedral, 1934, Charles Buyle © PhotoMuseum



'Het Licht' printing plant - Vooruit (façade) 1931, Edgar Barbaix © The House of Alijn

twin maquettes

A single space contains five twin maquettes you can walk round. A solar simulator lights up the maquettes and completes a 24-hour period in 20 minutes so that you can see how light evolves at different times of day, shedding light and casting shadows. For example, in the case of the Groenebriel, one maquette shows what the district looked like before the 1950s when it was still a maze of little alleyways, while the other maquette shows what it looks like today with blocks of flats on pylons surrounded by greenery. Where relevant, as in Het Licht printing plant, the lights go on after sunset.



Het Licht printing plant - Vooruit

The conversion and expansion of a comfortable nineteenth-century house into a modernist printing plant (designed by the architect Brunfaut). During the daytime the workshops are bathed in light and in the evenings the façade acts as a beacon.



1890, façade before conversion into printing works



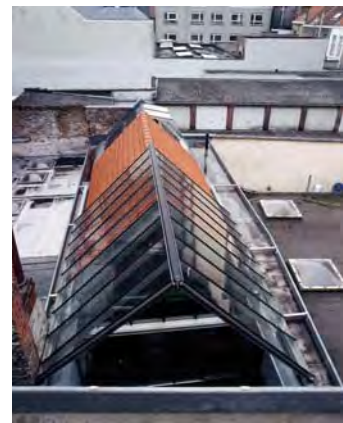
1950, façade of the printing works
© Amsab ISG



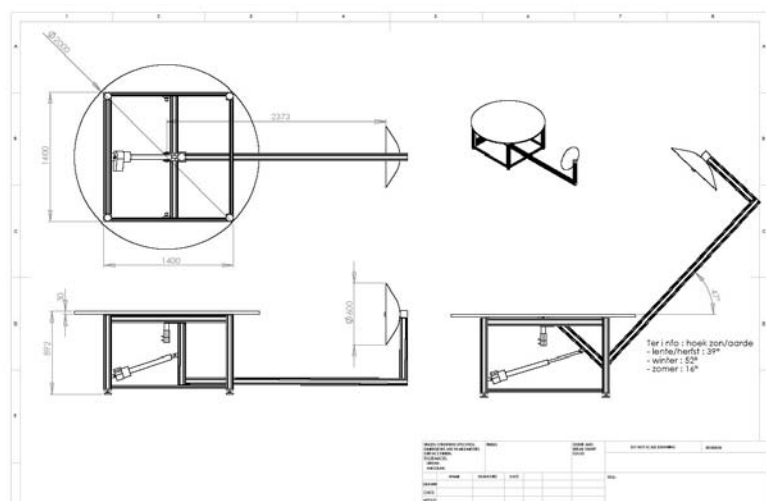
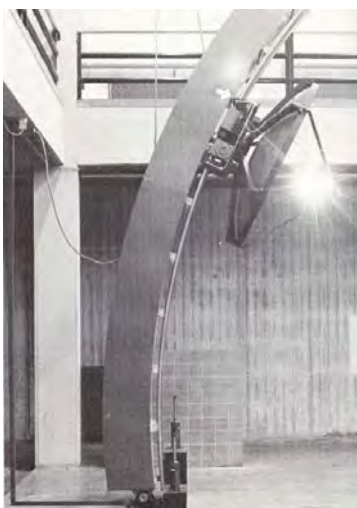
Chic department store with large glass domed atrium and narrow galleries around the void, 1921, André Verbeke collection



Interior of the Grand Bazar, 1967, a modern department store with built-in fluorescent lighting as a substitute for daylight.



Conversion of a terraced house with a building at the rear into a house with a free-standing workshop at the back (designed by architect Jan de Vylde)



Solar simulator

Design for a solar simulator for the 'Enlightened City' exhibition, Department of Mathematical Physics and Astronomy Ugent

5.3 Light as a symbol

Traditionally Darkness stood for dark perilous forces, for the devil, danger, fear of the invisible and furtiveness, but also for intimacy. Light has always been associated with good, the divine, optimism and truth. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Light also began to represent progress, rationality and modernity. More democratic forms of government and the emancipation of the masses were also associated with light.

Our cultural heritage illustrates the symbolic meaning of Darkness and Light for man and society. This meaning is apparent in our language, art, objects, religious and political 'propaganda', films and photographs.

The positive meaning of Light is also expressed in the great importance attached to festivity. In the old days for the Joyful Entries of sovereigns or their representatives oil burners or braziers were placed on important buildings. This meaning of Light lives on to this day in Christmas lights, light processions, light festivals, etc. and in fireworks. A firework display is a light spectacle which has retained its meaning and its appeal down the centuries.



Stained-glass window 'Jesus in the Garden of Olives' C16
© STAM



Fragment of the painting 'The Distributors at work',
c.1900, Jules De Bleye © AMSAB-ISG

from the stained-glass collection

STAM has a collection of stained-glass of the highest quality dating from the sixteenth century. The stained-glass shows not only religious symbolism but also more profane meanings of Light.



The exhibition culminates in STAM's baroque abbey church, the perfect setting to illustrate the symbolic meaning of light and dark. © Phile Deprez

