

Media information

## LIGHTEN UP! IN THE RHYTHM OF DAY AND NIGHT

Exhibition at the Gewerbemuseum Winterthur / Switzerland  
22 November 2024 to 11 May 2025

Media briefing  
Wednesday, 20 November 2024, 11:00

Exhibition preview  
Thursday, 21 November 2024, 18:30

**The biological clocks of living organisms and the impact of daylight are truly remarkable. 17 international art and design professionals transform our daily and seasonal rhythms into atmospheric landscapes of light and sound. They probe the mysteries of sleep and dreams, create alternative images of time and conjure up the power and beauty of daylight. Let's regain the night and lighten up the day!**

What with jet lag, night shifts, the switch-over from summer to winter time, not to mention urban lifestyles and light pollution, when and how do we actually sleep and when do we need to be active? From bats to plants, insects to human beings – living creatures have internalized the 24-hour day/night cycle, optimally adapting their behaviour and bodily functions to suit it.

In "Lighten Up!", well-known artists, designers and architects explore the link between living organisms and the circadian (*circa diem* = approximately one day) cycle of light and darkness. The show celebrates the power and beauty of daylight, introduces us to the mysteries of biological clocks and probes the secrets of sleep and dreams. In so doing, it reminds us not only of the passage of the sun across the sky, but also of the need for regular exposure to natural light for a healthy life.

At the same time, the exhibition shows how artificial light is making the nights ever brighter, with negative consequences for all living beings. Let's regain the night and lighten up the day!

*This exhibition is based on "Lighten Up! On Biology and Time" (24.3–30.7.2023) at EPFL Pavilions Lausanne, curated by Prof. Em. Anna Wirz-Justice, Prof. Marilyne Andersen, Prof. Sarah Kenderdine and Dr. Giulia Bini.*

## **ESSENCE OF LIGHT**

Two installations invite the viewer to reflect on the nature of light. The fascinating optical devices used in **"Embodied Light"** by US artist **James Carpenter** enable visitors to immerse themselves interactively in the world of light and see how it changes in the course of the day. In **"Light-Oriented Ontologies – The Beginnings"**, Swiss artist **Alan Bogana** turns light into matter as he looks back at the earliest origins of vision in a work he developed while Artist in Residence at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL).

## **DAYLIGHT DYNAMICS**

Daylight and its function in our lives and living spaces is the main focus of **"Circadian House"**. In this installation, Franco-British architect **Colin Fournier** presents a virtual version of a small house designed to receive as much natural light as possible and documents the daily lives of its two occupants.

## **BIOLOGICAL CLOCKS**

Five installations convey the principles of the biological clock – the subtle mechanism which controls not only our behaviour but also that of all living organisms. **"10,000 Waking Bees"** by New Zealand artist **Anne Noble** is dedicated to bees' sense of time: anaesthetizing the insects stops their biological clocks, which disrupts the way they navigate back to the hive on waking. In **"Circadian Bloom"**, British artist **Anna Ridler** creates a kind of natural digital clock using various flower species that open and close their petals at predictable times of day. **"The Clocks Around and Within Us"** elucidates the history and findings of chronobiology – the science which explains the link between living organisms and the light-dark cycle and thus forms the thread running through all the works in the exhibition. Its content has been put together by Professor Emerita **Anna Wirz-Justice**, Co-Curator of "Lighten Up!", with the assistance of a large team of chronobiologists.

## **NOCTURNAL AND ARTIFICIAL LIGHT**

The artificial illumination of the night sky is increasing by 6.5 percent a year in Europe and becoming more and more widespread, particularly in urban areas. There are numerous reasons for outdoor lighting, which may be functional or technical, create security (or at least a feeling of security), or be for decorative purposes or identity signalling. However, nocturnal lighting interrupts normal circadian rhythms and has significant impacts, including on the health of human beings, animals and plants.

One section of the exhibition therefore examines the theme of light pollution and its wide-ranging effects on our world. In two installations with the same name, **"Synchronicity"** (16mm) and **"Synchronicity"**, Swiss artist **Robin Meier Wiratunga** shows how the natural bioluminescent rhythm of glow worms is affected by external light signals.

## NATURE OF TIME

Two installations question our very relationship with time and recommend paying greater attention to our in-built temporal sensitivity. **“Circa Solar”** by British designer **Ted Hunt** is an app-linked digital clock that frees time from its traditional representation. Instead, it portrays the seasonal changes in the dark-light cycle that take place over the course of the year. Meanwhile, the immersive installation **“Circadian Dreams”** by German artist **Helga Schmid** experiments with an alternative time system based on the various circadian behavioural phases of the human body.

## REST-ACTIVITY CYCLES

All organisms have circadian rhythms. In human beings, they are most evident in the cycle of activity and rest. While the installation **“Circadian Rhythms”** by French artist **Kirell Benzi** visualizes the data collected from three people with different occupations in order to reveal their distinctive daily patterns, two other installations trace people’s rest-activity cycles and light exposure over several years. The series **“SunDial: NightWatch”** by British artist **Susan Morris** is composed of Jacquard tapestries whose patterns are determined by the artist’s sleep-wake data as continuously recorded over a period of five years. They illustrate how seasonal changes in day length affect our lives. **“Cyclus”** and **“Panorama”** are two monumental installations by the late German artist **Andreas Horlitz** (d. 2016) featuring patterns of rest-activity data.

## MYSTERIES OF SLEEP AND DREAMS

Finally, the installation by Swiss designer **Rafael Gil Cordeiro** delves into the invisible and unconscious nature of sleep and dreams. In **“print my sleep”**, he transforms the unique sleep data of various volunteers into 3D-printed sculptures.

## WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF

Kirell Benzi (CH), Alan Bogana (CH), James Carpenter (US), Rafael Gil Cordeiro (CH), Colin Fournier (GB), Andreas Horlitz (DE), Ted Hunt (GB), Robin Meier Wiratunga (CH) with André Gwerder (CH) and Guy Amichay (IL), Susan Morris (GB), Anne Noble with Guy Warman (NZ), Anna Ridler (GB), Helga Schmid (DE), Anna Wirz-Justice (CH) and others

## EVENTS

### EXHIBITION PREVIEW

Thursday, 21 November 2024, 18:30

Welcome and introduction

### OTHER EVENTS

A varied programme of events runs alongside the exhibition, including dialogue-based guided tours with contributions from sleep researchers, wildlife experts, lighting designers and representatives from DarkSky Switzerland. There are also shows by Planetarium Zürich, a concert at the museum and an outdoor design promenade, as well as moderated museum tours and cooperations with Kino Cameo cinema, Forum Architektur Winterthur and the Uhrenmuseum Winterthur clock and watch museum.

More information about the events will be available from the end of October 2024 at:

[Gewerbemuseum Winterthur Events Calendar](#)

## INFORMATION

### MEDIA BRIEFING

Wednesday, 20 November 2024, 11:00

Introduction: Susanna Kumschick, Director Gewerbemuseum Winterthur, and Anna Wirz-Justice, Exhibition Co-Curator, including a joint tour of the exhibition.

### MEDIA RELATIONS

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## MEDIA IMAGES

[gewerbemuseum.ch / Activities for the media](http://gewerbemuseum.ch/Activities_for_the_media)

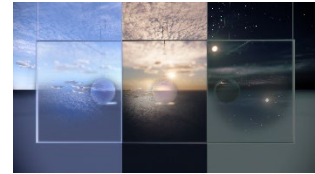
Please respect the copyrights and use the images only in connection with reporting on the exhibition “Lighten Up! In the Rhythm of Day and Night” at the Gewerbemuseum Winterthur. Thank you very much!



© Robin Meier Wiratunga:  
“Synchronicity”  
Photo: ADAGP



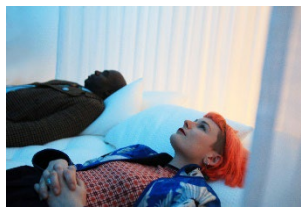
© Ted Hunt: “Circa Solar” on Apple  
Watch



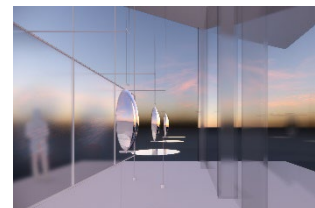
James Carpenter: “Embodied Light”  
© James Carpenter Design Associates



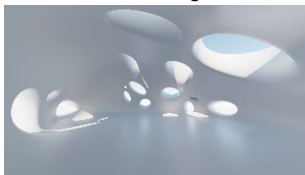
Alan Bogana: “Light-Oriented  
Ontologies – The Beginnings”  
© / Photo: Alan Bogana



© Helga Schmid: “Circadian Dreams”  
Photo: Francisco Ibanez



James Carpenter: “Embodied Light”  
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© Colin Fournier: “Circadian House”  
Courtesy of Dominique Piwnica



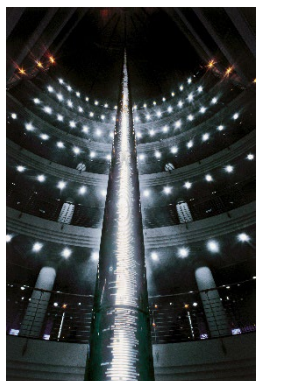
© Anne Noble: “10,000 Waking Bees”



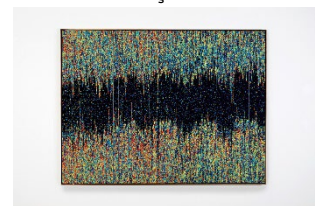
Anna Ridler: “Circadian Bloom”  
© Akbank Sanat, Anna Ridler & Nagel  
Draxler  
Photo: Görsel Çözüm



Rafael Gil Cordeiro: «print my sleep»  
© / Photo: Rafael Gil Cordeiro



© Andreas Horlitz: “Cyclus &  
Panorama”  
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© Susan Morris: “SunDial: NightWatch”  
Courtesy of Bartha Contemporary, London  
Photo: Stefan Rohner, Steve White & Co