



# ENCOUNTERS

WITH THE

conference

# URBAN NIGHT

18.06-19.06.2022

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# ÖISE LINNAGA



Visual Research Network  
Estonian National Museum

Conference  
Encounters with the Urban Night  
18.06-19.06.2022  
in Estonian National Museum, Tartu

Programme and abstracts



EESTI RAHVA  
MUUSEUM

VISUAL  
RESEARCH  
NETWORK



The University of Manchester



Granada Centre for  
Visual Anthropology

conference

# **ENCOUNTERS with the URBAN NIGHT**

in Estonian National Museum, Tartu

**June 18 / Day 1 / Jakob Hurt's hall**

**9.00-9.30** Registration and coffee

**9.30-10.30** Conference opening and Panel 1: Explorations cultural

**Karin Leivategija**

Dancing through the night in urbanizing Estonia

**Jiawei Zhao**

Night Markets, Senses, Atmosphere

**10.35-12.15** Film screening 1: Boundary crossings

**Casey Hayward**

Life in the Vague | 12 min

**Clara Kleininger, Sofia Kowalewska, Gala Lavrinets, Emmanuel Levy, Dorota Mazur, Julia Pełka, Dorota Proba, Monika Proba**  
Warsaw at Night | 25 min

**Alex Martin**

Tepehuitzco | 25 min

**12.15-13.00** Lunch

**13.00-14.30** Film screening 2: Passages of practice

**Noemi Didu**

Le Temple | 19 min

**Eduard Vasile**

Chod: The Journey Into Cutting the Self | 43 min

**14.40-16.00** Panel 2: Rendering darkness for all

**Abdallah Zouhairi, Sana Benbelli**

Living closely together: the human non-human urban night

**Samyak Jain**

The Nocturnal Urban Nature: Reimagining artificial lighting in eco-sensitive urban areas of Salford UK and its impacts on biodiversity

**Chantal Meng**

Night Drawing: Re-writing Darkness in the Nocturnal Land/City-scape

**16.00-16.30** Coffee break

**16.30-17.30** Keynote 1

**Carlo Cubero**

Sounding Space-Time

**17.40-19.20** Film screening 3: Nighttime negotiations

**Annemarije Rus**

Lloret '18 | 28 min

**Anna Benner, Eluned Zoe Aiano**

Dark Streets Aren't for Girls | 40 min



conference

# **ENCOUNTERS with the URBAN NIGHT**

in Estonian National Museum, Tartu

**June 19 / Day 2 / Jakob Hurt's hall**

**9.30-10.00** Morning coffee

**10.00-10.30** Keynote 2

**Jeff Silva**

Incongruous Voyages: Experiments in anthropological knowledge using audio-visual methods of sensory ethnography

**10.30-11.30** Tartu nights - VRN residency showcase

**11.40-13.10** Film screening 4: Inaccessible domains

**Louise Beer, John Hooper**

Under the Fading Light I 3 min

**Pavel Borecký**

Solaris I 25min

Presentation: Tuning Solaris: From the darkness of a shopping mall towards post-humanist cinema

**Tõnis Jürgens**

A Practice for Surrender I 12 min

**13.10-14.00** Lunch

**14.00-15.00** Panel 3: Sensory investigations

**Nolwen Vouiller**

Animal's night: what darkness allows to wildlife and costs to humans in Bardiya National Park, Nepal

**Elisabeth de Bezenac**

A visual atlas of darkness for urban night designers

**15.00-16.05** Film screening 5: Dark matters

**Eleonora Diamanti, Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier**

Guardians of the Night I 16 min

**Chrystel Oloukoi**

Nocturnal Lagos: In the searchlight of a police cruiser

**16.05-16.30** Coffee break

**16.30-17.30** Panel 4: Writing the night

**Mihai Andrei Leaha**

Senses and Rhythms of the Night. A Dive into the São Paulo Electronic Music Scene

**Elena Adasheva**

A Night on the Town: Walking with Light in the Far North

**17.30-19.00** Film screening 6: Sunrise to sunset

**Amaya Sumpsi, Carlos Lima, Catarina Alves Costa, Joana Lucas, Raquel Carnevalheira and Teresa Costa**

A Ramadan in Lisbon I 68 min



# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

## Keynote 1

### Sounding Space-Time

Carlo Cubero

#### Biography

Carlo Cubero holds a PhD in Social Anthropology using Visual Media from the University of Manchester, where he specialised in the contemporary Caribbean and Visual Anthropology. He is currently Associate Professor of Anthropology at Tallinn University where he lectures and coordinates the Audiovisual Ethnography track in Social Anthropology. One strand of his research has focused on developing audiovisual methods for anthropological research. He currently serves in the curating team of the Riga Pasaules Film Festival, an annual documentary film festival held in Riga. Another strand of his research concerns itself with the complexities of Caribbean island life in a para-colonial and global context. His book *Caribbean Island Movements: Culebra's Trans-insularities* (Rowman and Littlefield 2017) makes a case for the concept of "transinsularism" as a means to engage productively with the contradictions that characterise Caribbean island identities. The book describes transinsular relationships within the context of anti-military grassroots activism, tourism and development policies, maritime geography, and music.

#### Abstract

This lecture will address the spatial and temporal qualities of audiovisual ethnographies, with an emphasis on sound-works. I am interested in the ways in which sonic approaches to ethnography offer ways to side-step binaries associated with categorical thinking such as rural/urban, past/future, barbarism/civilisation, youth/adulthood. I would suggest that a focus on the spatio-temporal qualities of human relations brings the focus back to the corporeal and material conditions that constitute the human experience.

I will be offering a review of different ways in which anthropologists have approached space and time through the sonic medium. I will propose the notion of 'sono-truth', an analogy taken from ethnographic film-maker Jean Rouch, as a means to articulate the peculiar effect of engaging with sound to conduct research. I take sono-truth as the peculiar kind of truth that emerges in the crux between technology and the intersubjective encounter. Sono-truth acknowledges the reciprocal relationship between the agency of the listener and sonic structures and brings attention to the spatio-temporal dimensions of the human experience.

I would also suggest that the approaches that have been developed and exhibited at this residency represent a path forward in developing a kind of anthropology that focuses on understanding the human experience, rather than fielding moral judgements. In doing so, these works articulate the nocturnal experience as a physical event, rather than as a metaphor or instantiation of a moral project.

## Keynote 2

### Incongruous Voyages: Experiments in anthropological knowledge using audio-visual methods of sensory ethnography

Jeff Silva

#### Biography

Jeff Silva is an American filmmaker, artist and anthropologist whose works have been exhibited at festivals and museums, including: Visions du Réel, MoMA's Documentary Fortnight, The Viennale, BAFICI, Valdivia, Flahertiana, Open City Documentary Festival, and RAI among others. Titles include *Balkan Rhapsodies: 78 Measures of War* (2008), *Ivan and Ivana* (2011), *Linefork* (2016), *From the Land* (2018), *The Order of Things* (2022). From 2006–2010, Silva developed sensory ethnography methods and curriculum with Lucien Castaing-Taylor at the inception of Harvard University's Sensory Ethnography Lab (SEL). He is currently in charge of the documentary cinema research branch at La fabrique des expérimentation ethnographique (CNRS/EHESS) in Marseille, France.

#### Abstract

A central dimension of my creative research is to explore the complexity of relationships and interactions of living and non-living worlds and to promote a deeper and more attuned reflection on the corporeal, temporal, spatial, and emotional dimensions that resist straightforward explanations. How can we address and convey the amplitude of the complexity, contradictions and conflicts we experience when doing ethnographic fieldwork without oversimplifying? I will show and discuss strategies in my work that integrate incongruous audio-visual elements in my creative research as a method for opening up and reflecting on these epistemological dilemmas.



# PANELS

## Tartu nights VRN residency showcase

Spending one week (12.06–18.06) in Tartu, twelve residents working with residency moderator filmmaker/anthropologist Jeff Silva, explored the intersection of urban night, alterity and identity. The residents, as experienced filmmakers, researchers and artists, took up the VRN's challenge to work collaboratively in a previously unknown environment in search of the sensorial dimensions of the Tartu night. Their group work was guided by common principles and obstructions, as curated by Jeff, and sought to include aspects of darkness and shadow visual and aural, more than human subjects and the material world while looking for a common form within a diversity of topics and situations. The resulting four films will be screened for the duration of the conference in front of Jakob Hurt Hall in the Estonian National Museum. This panel invites the participants to discuss these films and their experiences of the residency.

### Panel 1: Explorations cultural

#### Dancing through the night in urbanising Estonia

Karin Leivategija

#### Biography

Karin Leivategija is a researcher and exhibition curator in the Estonian National Museum and an ethnology PhD student in the University of Tartu. She explores historical and contemporary Estonian nocturnal life and is interested in the cultural value and perceived transgressions of the urban night.

#### Abstract

This paper aims to explore historical rationale behind official regulations and the perceptions of moral transgression related to the urban night in Estonia. In order to understand why certain restrictive measures and moral attitudes related to various nighttime activities are still frequent in contemporary times, I aim to look at how the industrial revolution and growing urbanisation in the later decades of the nineteenth century led to the diversification and branching out of the urban night, resulting in new conceptions and restrictions concerning this time-space. Through analysing Estonian media texts about nighttime that were published between 1880–1918, I specifically explore the restrictions and attitudes surrounding nocturnal dance and music culture. I claim that music and dancing at night has been and is still one of the central scenes for the moral struggles of the night.

## Night Markets, Senses, Atmosphere

Jiawei Zhao

### Biography

Jiawei Zhao is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries, King's College London. Over the past few years, she has been exploring the urban night from cultural, sociological and ethnographic standpoints.

### Abstract

The project investigates night markets in London and Shanghai. Night markets are a type of nocturnal space that has existed since the 8th century and which continuously shapes how we interact with the night. As part of the nightlife economy, night markets are increasingly involved in the contemporary formation of cities in relation to culture, leisure, and entertainment (Scott, 2000). At the same time, cities are producing themselves as cultural spaces intensively through regeneration and gentrification (Zukin, 1995). Night markets start to occupy disused land where local governments see potentialities for pleasure and cultural activities. Yet, despite their significance, little is known as to how night markets change nightlife, and in what way they shape social spaces. Every culture has its markets (Salter and Tonkiss, 2001) and every market is also embedded fully in local culture. Night markets, which emphasize more on culture exchange and consumption, are more intertwined with culture. In order to investigate how night markets are embedded in and intertwined with cultural life of nocturnal cities, this study attempts to use ethnographic approaches to unpack these issues.

## Panel 2: Rendering darkness for all

### Living closely together: the human non-human urban night

Abdallah Zouhairi, Sana Benbelli

### Biographies

Abdallah Zouhairi (Dr. in sociology) is an associate researcher in the Research Unit on Socioanthropological Differentiations and Social Identities (LADSIS) – University Hassan II Casablanca. Sana Benbelli (Dr. Prof. in sociology) is a permanent researcher in the Research Unit on Socioanthropological Differentiations and Social Identities (LADSIS) – University Hassan II Casablanca.

### Abstract

The city is a living space for both humans and non-humans. Non-humans animals are present in the city in various species and forms. This presence includes close or sometimes invisible and

distant social relations with humans. If the so-called domesticated animals are the most visible in this animal presence, other less noble or even marginal species are imposing themselves as unavoidable inhabitants of cities. At night, the relationship between humans and non-humans becomes more complex and even problematic. In the case of domestic animals, while the presence of a cat or a dog can be tolerated inside the house for other animals, finding a place for the night that is protected and if possible in proximity becomes a problem, such as for the equids used for work and transport in the city.

Other less noble or even marginal species are imposing themselves as unavoidable inhabitants of cities. Rats, mosquitoes, lice, fleas and flies invite themselves inside the houses and impose themselves on their inhabitants at night. Parasitism is understood as a form of one-sided opportunism of non-humans at the expense of human goods, substances or even blood while with domesticated animals there is always the idea of profit for humans and non-humans. Parasitism questions the «troubled» relationship of being with the «other» species in the city and the relational materialities between humans and non-humans. This relationship provides spatial materialities of the city to the body as the host of some of these parasites. Insecticides, pesticides or artifacts constitute ways of doing and being to deal with the risk, damage or disease, and with the fear, anxiety or shame caused by parasites. Based on an ethnographic fieldwork and from the perspective of phenomenological philosophy this paper shows how living the urban night with non-humans, domesticated animals, insects and other parasites lead humans to deploy registers of being and collective and individual, physical and emotional materialities at the cost of maintaining a status quo that reduces this coexistence to the degree of a natural contract that binds humans and non-humans in the space of the city.

## The Nocturnal Urban Nature: Reimagining artificial lighting in eco-sensitive urban areas of Salford UK and its impacts on biodiversity

Samyak Jain

### Biography

Samyak Jain is currently a Masters student at the Manchester School of Architecture. Prior to this, he worked professionally with lighting designers in New Delhi, India and Los Angeles, USA. Although his primary interest lies in architecture, he believes that lighting design plays a fundamental role in how users perceive spaces and nonetheless is often overlooked.

### Abstract

The light bulb is perhaps the most revolutionary invention and has extended human activity, thus enabling greater possibilities. This has always come with a risk however of over lighting our cities to the extent that we disrupt the natural patterns and cycles of the biodiversity around us. Increasingly rapid urbanization and easy accessibility to LEDs leads us to the potential of exacerbating this even further. This dissertation aims to reimagine the urban nights of our cities in a way that might lessen the impact to biodiversity. The study focuses on Peel Park and

Crescent Meadows in Salford UK, an eco-sensitive urban area and the biodiversity associated with it. An investigation of the lighting infrastructure and biodiversity of the area was conducted through diagramming, mapping, interviews, fieldwork and data collection. Existing precedents of good lighting designs are explored and used as a basis for a final proposal recommendation. Additionally, the study seeks to understand a historical perspective of our urban nights and how it has evolved to impact humans and biodiversity and investigates how artificial light acts as an anthropogenic pollutant disrupting the natural patterns of biodiversity that co-exist with humans in an urban environment. The dissertation proposes a series of better lighting strategies to consider that do not compromise human needs as well as a number of creative drawing/visualisation techniques that envision how these strategies would be rendered holistically over the entire area. It closes by speculating on these steps as potentially a preparatory stage towards an actual experimental study – what this might offer and the possible impacts towards the biodiversity of the area.

## Night Drawing: Re-writing Darkness in the Nocturnal Land Cityscape

Chantal Meng

### Biography

Chantal Meng is a visual artist and researcher undertaking a PhD at Goldsmiths, University of London, supported by the Stuart Hall Foundation. She received a Doc.Mobility Fellowship from the Swiss National Science Foundation (2020), a Fulbright grant (2015) and holds an MA with distinction from Goldsmiths where she studied Photography + Urban Cultures (2013). Chantal is currently a visiting scholar in the Department of Anthropology at the New School for Social Research (NSSR) in New York.

### Abstract

Night Drawing is an action that challenges perceptual habits—an embodied experience at the limits of the visible. Dealing with light at night is an urgent issue for a variety of social and cultural reasons and concerns the wider context of anthropogenic climate change. This paper deals with lighting conditions in the urban night on one hand and forms of cognition through drawing on the other. When it comes to artificial light at night, the foremost concerns include safety, light pollution, and the loss of darkness. However, the fact that darkness is also caused by and understood through artificial light is rarely discussed. Night Drawing aims to renegotiate long-standing assumptions about the benefits of urban nighttime lighting. This approach offers a challenge to the brighter the better idea and re-writes the appearance of nocturnal land/cityscapes. Night Drawing is a critical, innovative approach, a practice as a method to pay further attention to the representational power of the light at night. It aims at a technique of seeing in a new way—a re-examination and a new conception of urban darkness.



## **Panel 3: Sensory investigations**

### **Animal's night: what darkness allows to wildlife and costs to humans in Bardiya National Park, Nepal**

**Nolwen Vouiller**

#### **Biography**

Nolwen Vouiller has a Psychomotrician State Diploma (Medicine Sorbonne University, Paris, France) as well as an Anthropology Master degree (UCLouvain, Belgium). She is currently doing research in Bardiya for a PhD degree in anthropology (EHESS-Paris, France and University of Liège, Belgium). She is a member of the association Rés-EAUx (Paris Nanterre), the Nepalese Researchers Network (RCN, Paris), the Psychomotricity and Psychotrauma Association (APP, Paris) and is affiliated with the Center for Himalayan Studies (CEH, Paris). Nolwen is also a singer and musician.

#### **Abstract**

This presentation seeks to shed light on the challenges of the night on human-animal relations in the Bardiya National Park (Nepal). Indeed, there, everything happens as if the territory, especially the forest, became the animal's territory (elephants, tigers, leopards, rhinos, snakes) at night-fall. This led to a number of adaptations (prohibitions on going out, fear, use of flaming torches and lamps) and certain consequences of this change were observed (attacks, destruction of crops or houses). Numerous more or less effective strategies, whether preventive, defensive or compensatory, have been devised for decades with this purpose in mind: to make the animal visible, to protect oneself, to frighten it and then to potentially repair the damage financially.

If night is a time of awakening for some, it is supposed to be a time of rest for others. I would like to talk about the emotional states of the people I studied, but also about the sensory changes that take place during this passage to night and to compare them between humans and animals. I address on a more methodological level the way I work (sound recordings, visual recordings, observations) and present the project as a multisensory restitution: an exhibition which consists of a reconstruction of a specific place where humans and animals meet, in collaboration with geographers, ethologists, anthropologists and artists (illustrators, photographers, videographers).

# A visual atlas of darkness for urban night designers

Elisabeth de Bezenac

## Biography

Elisabeth de Bezenac is a French architect, photographer, researcher and traveler, presently based in the UK. She has worked internationally as both an architect and photo-documentarian in a wide range of projects, collaborating with journalists, scientists, artists and architects. She is currently completing a PhD in urban night design, within the emerging Dark Design Lab, at Lancaster University.

## Abstract

Because imaginaries and realities are so tightly woven together when it comes to darkness, the emerging field of Night Studies struggle with classical methods of investigation. Human living patterns are so deeply conditioned by the dynamics of light and dark, yet, city planners mostly think under a homogeneous light distribution, therefore are unable to account for the places after dark. Nocturnal fieldwork remains marginal in human sciences and design practice. This is largely because, as most people, researchers and urban designers sleep at night, forsaking the urban night to the zones of misconception, reductive stereotypes and economic agendas that tend to implement industrial, universal, lighting "solutions" that threaten vital contrasts of light and dark. Night and day are not equivalent spaces. Light and dark are powerful spatial factors, responsible for defining how places are felt and used. Each place has its own types of darkness and these are subject to relentless change. Every nightfall and sunrise are different. They vary with latitudes, climates, seasons, cultures, rituals... During this time, micro and macro alterations occur in the environment, shifts in human and non-human activity, in social orders, in colours, in sounds... It is a time marked by instability and imagination, with a darkness that is always only partial.

I am building an Atlas of Darkness that examines multiple darkness (both real and imagined). It brings together various forms of knowledge, cultural descriptions and visual representation of darkness, combined to a photographic practice of capturing idiosyncrasies of dark places around the world. The aim of the Atlas is to propose a set of lenses/angles through which we can learn to identify and enhance the qualities of darkness in the urban night. It creates a visual taxonomy and language to describe places after dark, and a framework to guide the journey from nocturnal fieldwork to night design.

## Panel 4: Writing the night

### Senses and Rhythms of the Night: A Dive into the São Paulo Electronic Music Scene

Mihai Andrei Leaha

#### Biography

Mihai Andrei Leaha is an audiovisual researcher that has been active in the fields of visual and multimodal anthropology. He has a long-term involvement with curating, promoting, and programming ethnographic films at conferences and festival events. The Romanian researcher has taught visual anthropology in Cluj and São Paulo, and organized conferences and workshops on visual and multimodal anthropology in Romania, Brazil and Peru. His recent work includes the creation of a multimodal book and a film series about the DIY, electronic music scene of São Paulo, Brazil. Currently, Mihai is doing a postdoctoral project at the University of Barcelona.

#### Abstract

This paper aims at describing the multimodal character and experimental collaborations that stay at the basis of the website [www.sensorhythms.com](http://www.sensorhythms.com). The website is a result of a postdoctoral research at the University of São Paulo (USP) about the DIY electronic music scene of São Paulo and focuses on the embodiment of experiences in local music participation. By creatively engaging with digital, audiovisual and multimodal methods, the website takes film as a pivoting element in the construction of the web content while engaging with other media and experimenting with multiple ways of anthropological writing.

The seven episodes film series, that represent the spinal cord of the website, consider a variety of subjects that seek to understand the complex nature of nightlife participation. The mini-series depicts and reflects on the nature of "emotional atmospheres" by delving into corporeal and sensorial aspects of human and non-human interactions. For instance, by collaborating with local light artists (Modular Dreams; Paulinho Fluxus etc.) the series describe the creative insights of forging an interactive and performative light and laser scenography that involve the physical space as well as human performances. These episodes also strive at depicting the transformation of a place through DIY practices. Other episodes are character lead, but they converge towards individual artistic practices that introduce unique personages: Nubia, an original photographer that depicts human faces at parties; and Pedro/TV Bilu that performs at electronic music parties with a TV case on his head. The spectacle of the electronic music scene, as well as the integration of the drag and trance scene are presented in an episode that features a Drag Race competition that takes place at a CapsLock party. The subject of electronic music education and its specificities composes another episode that portrays Erica, a DJ, producer and musical educator from Rio de Janeiro. The virtual scene, which gained more influence after the pandemic, is present in the series with a focus on the online radios of electronic music, and their role in maintaining and cultivating the scene outside the places of music gatherings. Autoethnographic audio-visual accounts are featured in an episode about the participation at a Blum party, where the authors, both audio-visual anthropologists, reflect about the creation

of a sensorially rich environment that aims at connecting participants and creating feelings of belonging to the scene. This episode also brings into discussion the DIY production of space and the metamorphosis of an industrial place, from an abandoned factory to a hall of musical and sensorial experiences. The website is meant to appeal to a greater audience by moving beyond a strict academic pattern of writing or the restricted field of ethnographic filmmaking.

## A Night on the Town: Walking with Light in the Far North

Elena Adasheva

### Biography

Elena Adasheva is a PhD candidate in Sociocultural Anthropology at Yale University. Her doctoral research explores human-environment relations and urban infrastructure in the Arctic. Elena holds an MPhil in Sociocultural Anthropology from Yale University and a B.A. in Anthropology and Studio Art from Hunter College of the City University of New York.

### Abstract

The northern environment challenges common imaginaries of the day as bright and the night as dark. In the Far North, a day/night change does not signify a regular drastic alteration from light to dark. In a small town above the Arctic Circle, life depends on seasonal rhythms. In winter, the dark hours are long. We spend a lot of time indoors and rarely leave illuminated urban space. The first sun comes out in January, gradually changing the town's life. In April, the long hours of radiant sunlight shorten the night, preventing us from sleeping long. Despite the temperatures remaining low (-17°C to -25°C), we walk and drive to tundra and sea frequently while the workings of streetlights noticeably decrease. Experiencing light conditions in the North led me to questions about human relations to the place we inhabit, both the town and surrounding landscape, and the ways in which light and dark shape these relations. To explore these questions, I develop a practice of experiencing space by intentionally focusing on light and dark and recording these experiences, either simultaneously or retrospectively. This practice draws from multidisciplinary literature on phenomenology, sensory ethnography, ethnographic writing, and artmaking. For this paper, I inquire what the northern night is, and how light conditions in the North affect human experiences of urban space at night. I walk around town, intentionally experiencing the nighttime atmosphere through light and dark, including street illumination. I notate my sensations with images and writing, concurrently probing the (im)possibilities of ethnographic description. This work is an experiment in sensory research, walking methodologies, and ethnographic writing that offers an exploratory approach to the human-environment relations in the North.



# FILM SCREENINGS

## Film screening 1: Boundary crossings

### Life in the Vague

Casey Hayward

#### Biography

Emmy award-winning documentary filmmaker and professor Casey Hayward has a knack for finding beauty and passion in life. His films explore what it means to be human, spanning topics in the arts, healthcare, and social justice. Casey enjoys finding small stories that speak to larger concerns in our society.

#### Synopsis

An examination of human displacement comprised of still images, fleeting video, and voiceover observations from the visual ethnographer in the field. The video weaves together encounters with people addicted to opioids and those with migrants on the coast of France. Both groups seek refuge and escape. Some find it in temporary fentanyl reverie, others in dreams of snatching a ride on a canvas-sided truck under the Channel to the UK – a better life. The similarities of these experiences are brought into stark relief through haunting images and observations of souls in transit.

These two stories are snapshots of life in the urban night. Sunup or sundown the lives depicted in this essay exist in society's shadow. They are constantly in the liminal space of alterity and transgression of which Lovett and O'Connor (1995) write in "Cities and the Night-time Economy." There is indeed a shadow economy trading in dashed hopes and desperation that somehow still evinces the beauty and resilience of humanity. This is the embodiment of the Janus-faced Urban Night and it is the essence of *Life in the Vague*.

### Warsaw at Night

Clara Kleininger, Sofia Kowalewska, Gala Lavrinets, Emmanuel Levy, Dorota Mazur, Julia Pełka, Dorota Proba, Monika Proba

#### Biography

The film was made as part of the Wajda School's Dok Pro program. Presenting the project is Clara Kleininger, filmmaker and anthropologist, born and raised in Bucharest, graduated Visual Anthropology at the Granada Centre in Manchester and documentary film in the Dok Pro

program in the Wajda Film School in Warsaw. Several of her short documentaries have been shown in international festivals, Clara is IDFA Summer School and Sarajevo Talents alumni and is lecturing documentary film and anthropology at the University of Opole, Poland.

## Synopsis

*Warsaw at Night* is a collective film made up of shorts, each portraying a different instance of inhabiting Warsaw on a cold winter night. If not sleeping, what do the inhabitants of the city do in the dark? They look for love, solace, their futures, they procure money, they walk the streets or lock their doors. Endless variations of human activity and communication are bound together by their situation in the dark or in the shadows, often occurring in silence or whispers, showing a decidedly different state of mind than daylight allows for. The film takes us from sundown to sunrise, all against the backdrop of this specific urban environment.

## Tepehuitzco

Alex Martin

## Biography

Alex Martin is a freelance film-maker and visual anthropologist. A graduate of the Granada Centre's Ethnographic Documentary with Sensory Media Master's program, his recent focuses are the promotion of culture and human rights in Mexico, with completed works and works-in-progress portraying with the social impact of disappearances, wrongful incarceration and natural disaster through the unique personal posture of Mexico's citizens.

## Synopsis

This short film documents a tradition of the Nahua townspeople of San Francisco Ozomatlán, Guerrero, southern Mexico. Typifying the religious syncretism that broadly characterises the beliefs of Mexico's indigenous population, female catholic elders lead prayer and song at their altar of the cross on the summit of the town's ancestral sacred hill, Tepehuitzco, while young men and boys from the village perform their "danza de los tigres", accompanied by an endangered form of solo-performed music and wearing jaguar masks rooted in prehispanic tradition. The ceremony must last all night, with none who have ascended returning to the village until dawn. The dance, an act of rain solicitation, is rehearsed various times before villagers make the climb on May 1st every year, with a preference for rehearsing at night to avoid the sweltering heat of the late dry season. The images evoke the notion of night as the appropriate realm for ritual, a course of time for showing dedication, an echo of the common prehispanic belief that the continued regular movement of the firmament was in some way contingent upon the faith and sacrifice of the people.

## Film screening 2: Passages of practice

### Le Temple

Noemi Didu

#### Biography

Noemi Didu is a doctoral researcher in Social and Visual anthropology at the University of Aix-Marseille as well as a self-taught photographer. Her background is multidisciplinary. First trained as an art historian with a specialization in visual arts and cultural policies, she also holds a MA in Visual Anthropology and has worked for several years in the fields of visual arts, mediation, and contemporary theatre. Committed to the rights of migrants, she has also led some workshops with young migrants. Her current research focuses on the Cambodian diaspora in the South of France.

#### Synopsis

Shot as a part of a Master's fieldwork in a Khmer Buddhist temple in the South of France, *Le Temple* documents the preparation for the Kathina ceremony as well as the daily routine of both monks and volunteers. Founded in the late 1980s by Khmer refugees, the temple is still in the making: a very large new vihara has been under construction for nearly a decade, financed little by little by the community.

### Chod: The Journey Into Cutting the Self

Eduard Vasile

#### Biography

Eduard Claudiu Vasile is a Doctoral Researcher at the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, Manchester University and works at the interference between neuroscience, visual anthropology and art. His main area of interest is how visual elements, such as images and visualisations, used in Tibetan Buddhist meditation practices affect the consciousness and the brain. Eduard specialises in experimental filmmaking as a means of exploring the link between consciousness and the visual in anthropology.

#### Synopsis

*Chod: The Journey of Cutting the Self* – Based on 13 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Boudhanath Nepal, the film explores the realms of experience beyond representation, a space of in-betweens. Chod, as a tantric practice, seeks to guide the chopa on an inside journey to cut attachments from the self through acts of hearing and seeing. Currently a work in progress, *Chod: The Journey of Cutting the Self*, follows the experience of five chod practitioners and two craftsmen that build chod musical instruments.

## Film screening 3: Nighttime negotiations

### Lloret '18

#### Annemarije Rus

##### Biography

Annemarije Rus obtained her masters' in visual anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. Her research interests are identity enactments and notions of freedom, especially in relation to gender and sexuality. In her ethnographic filmmaking Annemarije combines digital and physical lifeworlds to represent how technology is incorporated in modern-day life.

##### Synopsis

In the summer Catalan town Lloret de Mar transforms into a party holiday destination. While the local government struggles with their notoriety Dutch youth keep arriving to let loose. But to let loose, you need to hold on: to friends, a holiday lover, to gender and nationality identifications, and to your phone. This ethnographic film invites you to question the freedom implied in nightlife, to tag along with youths' adventures and reflections, and to consider the way digital media shape our realities – including the anthropologist's. *Lloret '18* is the result of a master's in Visual Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam.

### Dark Streets Aren't for Girls (work in progress)

#### Anna Benner, Eluned Zoe Aiano

##### Biographies

Anna Benner is a Berlin based artist and filmmaker. Her work deals with the psychology of the everyday, often using hand-drawn rotoscope animation. Her artworks have been exhibited in Germany, UK, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands; her animated short films have screened worldwide and won prizes at film festivals like Annecy, Encounters and Stuttgart Trickfilmfestival.

Eluned Zoe Aiano is a filmmaker, editor and translator with a background in Visual Anthropology whose work is generally centred on Central/Eastern Europe. She is currently working on her first feature documentary in Serbia as part of the Balkan-based Wild Pear Arts group. She also writes about film and is a regular contributor to the East European Film Bulletin.



## Synopsis

Running, watching, exploring, evading: *Dark Streets Aren't for Girls* is a documentary film that asks the question of how it really is to experience the city space at night as a female-presenting person, with the intention of dispelling myths while also fostering a dialogue on strategies for enjoying walking after dark.

Our initial premise assumed that no two womxn share the exact same impressions, and that everyone exists on a spectrum between fear and boldness, curiosity and indifference. As such, our intention was to involve a variety of participants in a variety of contexts, leaving them total freedom to present their city environments however they felt best reflected their ideas, which could also be contradictory and did not need to adhere to one fixed stance.

The first part of this took place during two online workshops held in January 2021, bringing together 20 participants based in cities such as Berlin, Frankfurt and Vienna to discuss the limitations and possibilities of night walking. We then gave the participants a list of instructions for going out into their respective cities and filming what they observed. There were no specific requirements for how much or how little they needed to walk, only that they did not force themselves into any situations that felt unsafe. We then met again the next day to discuss how the walk went and whether it conformed to people's expectations or not.

For the second stage, we turned the material shot by the participants into a partially animated video piece. The film interweaves the individual perspectives to create a kind of single conceptual city composed of all the cities combined, while still allowing space for differences in attitudes and observations, ranging from humour to anger, beauty to playfulness.

On the visual level, the film shows the experiential/auto-ethnographic documentation of the city as encountered by our nocturnal flaneuses, first person, whereas when they themselves as the subject of the compositions their bodies are at times animated as they move through the space. The audio is composed of a combination of reflections on what we see and also quotes taken from the workshop itself that provide a broader discussion of the topic. Finally, these points of reflection are underpinned by quotes from feminist writers.

We hope the film will serve as a testament of the extent to which women need to be fully aware of their own surroundings at all times (even when they are purposely trying to act as if they aren't for the sake of not engaging with potential aggressors). More broadly, we also hope to use the film to start dialogues, both among womxn who want to share their own experiences and anyone who is interested in working together to change this status quo and help relieve women of this burden of attention in any way. Finally we hope the film might also inspire womxn to become nocturnal flaneuses themselves and go on a night walk without a purpose, to see the city with fresh eyes and to perhaps find inspiration and joy within the night and reclaim it in a very personal way.

## Film screening 4: Inaccessible domains

### Under the Fading Light

Pale Dot Collective (Louise Beer + John Hopper)

### Biography

Pale Blue Dot Collective – Louise Beer + John Hooper are an artist duo based in Margate, UK who explore the cosmic significance of the climate crisis through sound, photography, installation and moving image. Presented by Louise Beer, an artist and curator whose practice focuses on our evolving understanding of Earth's environments and the universe.

### Synopsis

This film was made in collaboration with John Hooper, under our Collective name, Pale Blue Dot Collective. It incorporates my two long term views of the night sky. Firstly from Aotearoa New Zealand where I lived until the age of 16 and secondly from London where I lived for 16 years. The first image is from the Mackenzie Country in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the second image was taken in Elephant and Castle, in London.

It's hard to imagine not knowing that Earth isn't the centre of the universe, or that there aren't other galaxies. It has taken thousands of years of knowledge building to begin to understand the size of our universe, or the amount of stars, galaxies and planets that we share it with.

I grew up under an immensely starry night sky. Every time I saw the Milky Way, I was electrified inside with the ideas of the vastness of the universe, and the infinite possibilities that might exist. Under that starlight, I really felt like we were collectively looking outwards, trying to unpick the mysteries of the universe and basking in its magnificence. It was clear that I was standing on an oasis of life, looking into the uninhabitable darkness. I was part of something bigger than my immediate environment. I have felt the change in my view as a significant loss.

When most people talk about seeing the Milky Way they are referring to the 'core' of the Milky Way. It is not only down to air and light pollution that the view from the Northern and Southern Hemispheres are different. The central band of the Milky Way is directly overhead in the Southern Hemisphere, but in the Northern hemisphere it stays lower down towards the horizon, which makes the stars less visible. It will take roughly 125,000 years for our solar system to rotate around the centre of the Milky Way to begin to see a similar sky in the Northern Hemisphere.

I am interested in how we lose our cosmic perspective of the incomprehensible value of nature, when we lose our cosmic view. Based on observations from the Suomi NPP satellite, a third of humankind cannot see the Milky Way. We are creating ever more light pollution that disguises our view each year.

It has been suggested that the biological world is organised largely by light. The way that the Earth rotates creates a regular cycle of day and night, and its orbital motion and tilt of its axis causes seasonal changes. Along with local weather systems and the lunar cycle, these light

conditions have been consistent for immense periods of geological time. Flora and fauna have relied on these environmental cues for ecological processes and our artificial lighting is having a devastating impact.

It is impacting migration patterns, wake-sleep habits, and habitat formation. The same light attracts and kills huge swathes of insects and disorients birds. It is not only land based life forms that are being affected; coastal and ship lights are altering marine eco systems.

I wanted to draw a meaningful connection between each person on Earth, and the destruction of our Environment. Living in light polluted cities, it is very easy to forget to look up. It is even easier to forget that we are on a planet, that is a single, fragile, eco system.

## Tuning Solaris: From the darkness of a shopping mall towards post-humanist cinema

Pavel Borecký

### Biography

Pavel Borecký (Prague, 1986) is a social anthropologist, audiovisual ethnographer and development specialist, active at the intersection of arts, sciences, activism and sustainability. In his community practice, Pavel runs the research organisation Anthropic Pictures and curates the film programme *EthnoKino* in Bern. His latest films *Solaris* (2015) and *In the Devil's Garden* (2018) focused on the consumption culture in Estonia and the question of decolonisation in the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. In 2020, he finished the first feature documentary on the unfolding water crisis in Jordan entitled *Living Water*, which traveled to Ji.hlava, Visions du Réel, CPH:DOX, Movies that Matter, DokuFest and Seminci, among others. Currently, he is involved in two new feature documentary projects.

### Abstract/Synopsis

Building upon the audiovisual project *Solaris* (2015) made inside a Tallinn shopping mall, the In this combined presentation, I will screen a dialogue-free sensory ethnography *Solaris* (Estonia, 2015, 25 min). *Solaris* exposes the closing hours and night-time heartbeat of Tallinn shopping mall – a place built to entertain and mirror the world. Second, I will outline some conceptual resources vital to the agenda of sensory ethnography and link them with the ambitions of an emerging post-humanist cinema. I will argue that by provoking the experience of disorientation and closeness, this approach may stimulate a new type of cinema for the post-Anthropocene era.

## A Practice for Surrender

Tõnis Jürgens

### Biography

Tõnis Jürgens is a projectionist, writer, and void enthusiast. He holds a bachelor's degree in culture theory from Tallinn University and a master's in new media from the Estonian Academy of Arts, where Jürgens is currently a doctoral candidate of Art & Design. The central themes of his artistic research entail self-care, surveillance culture, and digital trash. At the moment he's undergoing exchange studies at the Academy of Arts, Architecture & Design in Prague.

### Synopsis

Sleep has become an ideological field of tension. In the face of digital optimisation, as our once romanticised realm of dreams is fragmented, clustered and sold off as so many units of data, it would seem as if surrender, and absence, provide the best form of resistance. In a brief paranoid scrutiny of self-surveillance and theories of digital humanities, this video essay is orbited by elements of distraction, adaption, and the inadvertent emergence of meaning.

## Film screening 5: Dark matters

### Guardians of the Night

Eleonora Diamanti, Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier

### Biography

Eleonora Diamanti is lecturer in Media Studies at John Cabot University, Rome. She works on visual media and the night, urban space, and everyday digital practices in Cuba and Canada with a special interest in creative feminist writing and research-creation projects. Her work has appeared in *Feminist Media Studies*, *Visual Anthropology Review*, and *Intérmédialités* and she is currently working on a manuscript titled: *Filmmaking on the dark side: Nocturnal ethnography in Cuba* (with Dr. Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier).

Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier is Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology, University of Victoria. She is a visual anthropologist interested in how sound – including music – connects with social life, and with media. Alexandrine's work explores the concepts of materiality, infrastructures, circulation, digital media, sonic design and the experiencing of social spaces through sound and vision.

## Synopsis

*Guardians of the Night* (2018) is an experimental film and sensorial short-length ethnographic film about the cyclical and spontaneous life activities that emerge at nighttime in Guantánamo, Cuba. The work is located as part of a movement to recognize the night as a spatio-temporal dimension that should be explored further from a sensorial perspective to reinvigorate discussion and promote an innovative approach around sensory visual ethnography.

## Nocturnal Lagos: In the searchlight of a police cruiser

Chrystel Oloukoi

### Biography

Chrystel Oloukoi is a researcher, freelance film critic and curator, as well as moving image artist, broadly interested in experimental cinema, queer cinema and Black continental and diasporic cinema. They are currently a PhD student in African and African American Studies and Critical Media Practice at Harvard University.

## Synopsis

Taking the night as metaphor and methodology, "black nocturnal" as a series of experimental shorts, explores epistemologies of the dark entangled with logics of surveillance and criminalization in the afterlives of slavery and colonialism in Lagos. Via an aesthetic of fragments, obliqueness and underexposure, this series refuses the violence of visualization, and asks what ways of seeing, knowing, and being might emerge from engagements with dark matters. This series is related to my dissertation research ("Night/life: fugitive Ecologies of the Night in Lagos"), which investigates nighttime in the afterlives of coloniality in Lagos. The slash or split between night and life problematizes the easiness with which these two words are usually attached, rupturing a sense of familiarity and asking to inhabit this breach as a space of disjuncture and possibility. By Night/life I do not refer to its regular meaning of entertainment taking place at night, as a legacy of industrial capitalist time and its demarcation between work and leisure. The kind of pause that enables capitalism to function as a well oiled machine. Yet, this meaning of nightlife is still relevant to my work, if only, by its failure to actually capture colonial experiences of the night. By night/life then, I mean an investigation of the historical and ongoing conditions that make nighttime one of the most embattled terrains of life in Lagos as well as the quotidian ways people reclaim and inhabit nighttime as a site of possibility in the shadow of the ongoing catastrophe of racial capitalism. I will present two (perhaps three) shorts from the series (composed of five shorts at the moment), which is envisioned as a continuously expanding archive of engagements with nighttime and surveillance through a diversity of formats – digital, 16mm, (fake) surveillance footage and smartphone images. The first short, *Night Litany* [digital camera, smartphone camera] explores the ubiquity of carceral forms in Lagos public spaces at night. I use repeated visual motifs and a repeated poem structure "night means" to allude to the genre of the "litany" – which historically used repetition to emphasize belief. In contrast, here, repetition becomes a device of estrangement,



drawing attention to all the ways in which the night eludes structures of confinement, and to an exhaustion of meaning. The second short, *Frenzies* [digital camera, 16mm film], currently in post production, draws attention to the proximity or intimacy between the scale of the body and the scale of the city at night through fragments of buildings, urban infrastructure, bodies, feet and hands filmed at night in Lagos, in ritual and profane contexts. It's also a reflection on the kinds of anxieties nocturnal adventurers often called "nightcrawlers" in Lagos, arouse in public discourse: what does agitation or even frenzy as affective structure reveal of nighttime?

## **Film screening 6: Sunrise to sunset**

### **A Ramadan in Lisbon**

**Amaya Sumpsi, Carlos Lima, Catarina Alves Costa, Joana Lucas, Raquel Carvalheira and Teresa Costa**

### **Biographies**

Amaya Sumpsi, Carlos Lima, Catarina Alves Costa, Joana Lucas, Raquel Carvalheira and Teresa Costa are researchers of AZIMUT – Studies in Arab and Islamic Contexts and NAVA – Visual Anthropology and Arts Laboratory, at the Center for Research in Anthropology

### **Synopsis**

*A Ramadan in Lisbon* is a collective film that reveals the atmosphere of the holy month of Ramadan, from its beginning, full of enthusiasm and excitement to the tiredness of the last days. In a context where fasting is not a common or majority practice, this documentary follows its characters through their streets, their landscapes and their worlds, revealing the contrast between the slow rhythm of the daytime and the rich liveness of the nights of Ramadan. *A Ramadan in Lisbon* results from a shared creative process where the spectator can identify Lisbon's diversity and richness, in a movement of human approach to cinema.