

LIGHT WORK

Even though women have contributed to the light art space, they are often overshadowed by their male counterparts. The Collected Light exhibition hopes to change that

Light
Peacock by Chloé
Fouquet Singh Barman



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SEARCHES for light art on the internet and a whole roster of predominantly male faces will pop up. And the few women to appear seem set to be an advanced print archive, such is the insouciance of algorithms. The *Collected Light* exhibition is therefore a significant artist-led step to redressing the gender balance. Last November, it marked the debut of a permanent collection of women light artists from the UK and Europe. Held at the SoShiro gallery in Marylebone, London, it will now move to Milan with the addition of several more artists, to be shown during EuroLuc, the international lighting exhibition, this April.

The exhibition was organised by Sharon Stammers and Martin Lupton, together Light Collective, a UK-based lighting consultancy that has worked all over the world with projects that include film-making, art, events, community events, light activism, architectural design and education. In 2018, Light Collective launched the global project 'Women in Lighting', creating a huge community of women around the world working with light within architecture, art and other sectors. This particular exhibition came about as an extension of their upcoming book of the same name as the exhibition, featuring more than 40 female light artists.

Each artwork in the SoShiro gallery, a Georgian townhouse, had its own dedicated room. The six artists featured have a widely varying range of light tools, from neon and film projections to LEDs and lenticular effects.



STARDUST: THE DEEP FIELD (LENTICULAR), 2018

Lauren Baker (UK)

A six-image lenticular artwork backed by an LED light box is described by Baker as depicting 'a galactic explosion of shooting stars and space matter'. Because of the way the lenticular lenses shift how the images are perceived, moving past the artwork brings it to life, 'suggesting a celestial dance of explosion and implosion, separation



Collected Light was held at the SoShiro Gallery in Marylebone, London, from 4-22 November 2022. It will be held with additional artists at EuroLuc in Milan from 18-22 April www.luce.it/en/exhibitions/collected-light

The *Collected Light* exhibition and the Women in Lighting platform is supported by Somalighting, a family-owned Italian architectural lighting designer and manufacturer.

HALO, 2019

Karina Halatek (Poland)

Halatek uses light as the central medium in her work to create experiential, site-specific installations. Seeing her work primarily as a catalyst for experience, Halatek's installations have considerable immersive characteristics which are often the result of collaborations with quantum physicists, founders of the operating theory (Leonard Susskind, Roger Penrose, Carlo Rovelli) and precision mechanical engineers.

The title *halo* refers to the natural optical phenomena seen around the sun or moon, produced by light interacting with ice crystals. The circular-shaped immersive installation is designed to draw out a very personal experience. The viewer stands at the centre in the position of a celestial body. Visitors interacting with the work have the possibility of discovering a new dimension of their own presence in the contemplative, pure and abstract environment.

Halatek has exhibited extensively around the world. Notable exhibitions and installations include *Cloud Squares*, Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis (2018), *Terminal, Aufstiege Light Art Festival*, Stuttgart (2016), and *Beacon*, Noor Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2021). karinahalatek.com



Above: Karina Halatek

Below: Halo, a circular-shaped immersive installation

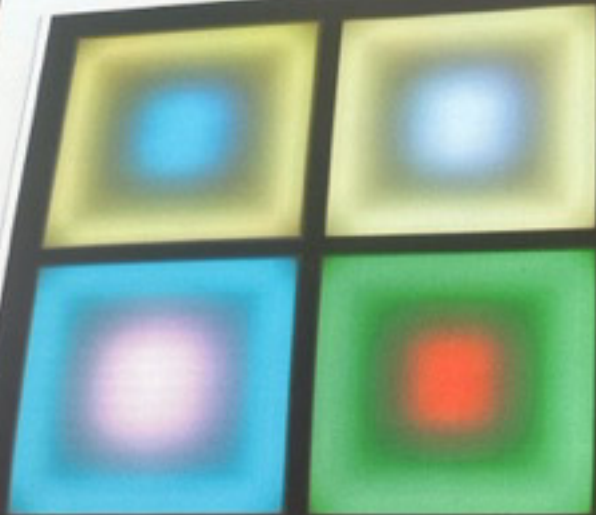


ZHENG FANG

and unison, change and repetition'. Baker is a British contemporary multidisciplinary artist who exhibits internationally. Passionate about environmental issues and sustainability, her work involves making the unseen seen and her visual style is often built around either emitting or reflecting light. Many of her pieces directly reference the frequencies emitted by astronomical bodies, as well as those attributed to plants, human organs and chakras. laurenbakerart.com

Meet the artist by Zoom Baker is invited to give a talk on her work.

Get Zoom Baker



When these panels glow in the exhibition, the juxtaposition of colours, and how they are seen by the eye and perceived by the brain, creates a central focus that invites the spectator to slow down and allow the light to draw the viewer in. The diffusion of the image does not allow the eye to focus. As a result, the image appears to pulsate and float.

IN LUXEM, 2019

Tamar Frank (The Netherlands)

In Luxem is a series of 20 small light panels, four of which were on display, illustrating a seemingly still image with a central focus that gradually blends into different colour compositions. The colour gradients are inspired by the changes in natural light over the course of one day and after so slowly that the transition is imperceptible.

The artwork plays on the relationship between the juxtaposition of colours, and how they are seen by the eye and perceived by the brain. The central focus invites the spectator to slow down and allow the light to draw the viewer in. The diffusion of the image does not allow the eye to focus. As a result, the image appears to pulsate and float.

Frank graduated in fine arts/monumental design in 1997 from the Fine Arts Academy in Maastricht. Using light as a medium began during her studies and she presented her first light installations at her graduation show.

After completing her studies, she established Lightspace. Within a year, she received her first public art commission to make a light artwork for a tunnel in Hooen in the north-west Netherlands. With a focus on public space and light, Frank has been commissioned nationally and internationally, and in 2019 published a retrospective of her work from 1997-2017, Lightspace 20 years Tamar Frank. lightspace.org

OFF GRID SERIES, 2022

Jacqueline Hen (Germany)

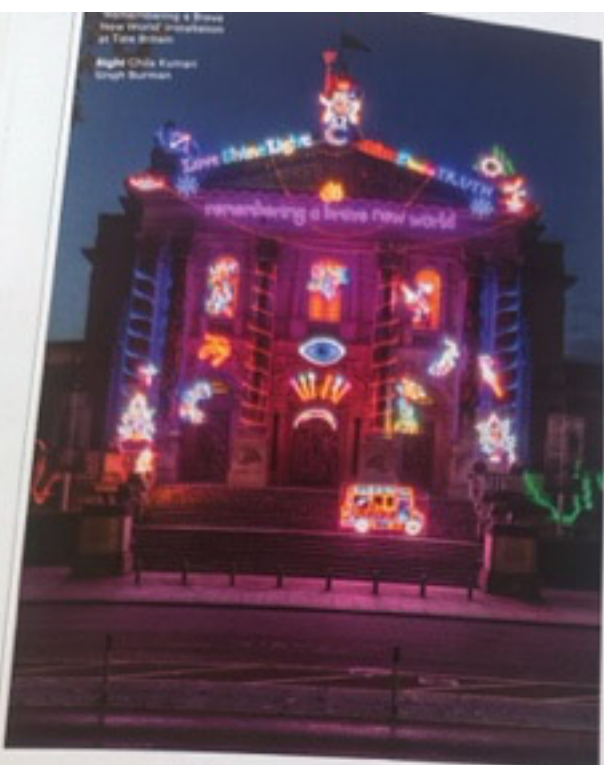


BRAND VISITING / DDB

Jacqueline Hen is an artist and spatial designer working on large-scale performative installations and environments. She examines how social media influences our perception and interaction with physical space. Her Off Grid installation investigates the perception of the body in digital space. Mirrors are combined with an arrangement of lights to create the illusion of an infinite space of luminosity and darkness. The perception of this space changes with the viewers' perspective, inviting them to investigate themselves within infinity. She was awarded the International Light Art Award 2019 for her work Light High. She is currently teaching design as an assistant professor at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne (KHM). jacquelinehen.de



Left: Jacqueline Hen
This image (Hen's work) creates infinity through the clever use of mirrors and lights



STACEY 2020

Remembering A Brave New World installation at Tate Britain
Right Chila Kumari Singh Burman



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PEACOCK, 2020

Chila Kumari Singh Burman (UK)

Peacock was part of the many-faced, highly colourful neon installation, *Remembering A Brave New World*, on the exterior of Tate Britain in 2020. Burman is celebrated for her radical feminist practice which examines representation, gender and cultural identity. 'My Peacock piece explores the bird's symbolism of re-growth, rejuvenation, beauty and love,' she says. 'The peacock is native to the Indian subcontinent, in this way it is also a reference to my Indian heritage.'

Burman works across a wide range of mediums including printmaking, drawing, painting, installation and film. She has gone on to complete high-profile light installation projects for Covent Garden's historic market stall building, Liverpool Town Hall and Blackpool's Grade II listed Grundy Art Gallery. She recently featured in Sky Arts' documentary special entitled 'Statues Redressed'.

Burman remains one of the first British Asian female artists to have a monograph written about her work, Lynda Reed's *Chila Kumari Burman: Beyond Two Cultures* (1995).

chila-kumari-burman.co.uk

THE LOST GIRL, 2020

Kate McMillan (UK)

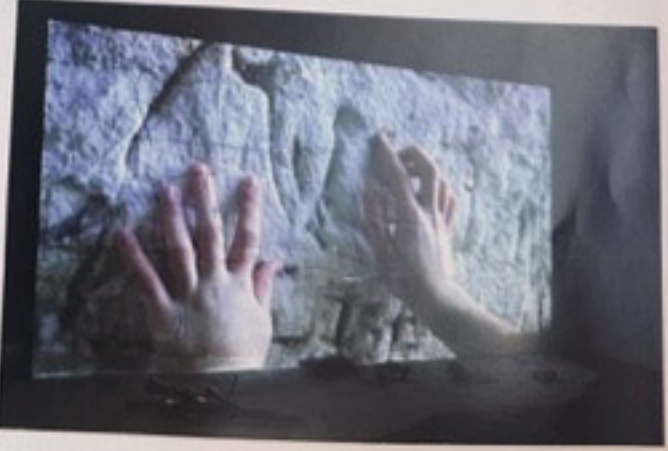
Below, from left: Kate McMillan. *The Lost Girl* is a film-based installation depicting the character of a cave-dwelling girl

The Lost Girl is an immersive film-based installation centred around the fictional character of a cave-dwelling girl on the east coast of England. Using DH Lawrence's book of the same name as a starting point, the film narrates the experiences of a young woman seemingly alone in a dystopian future, with only the debris washed up from the ocean to form meaning and language.

The film combines McMillan's various research interests including the

Anthropocene – the unofficial unit of geologic time that describes the most recent period in Earth's history when human activity started to have a significant impact – the role of creativity in forming memory and the consequences of neglecting female histories. Based in London, McMillan is the author of the annual report, *Representation of Female Artists in Britain*, commissioned by the Freeland Foundation.

katemcmillan.net



JO MIESZKOWSKI