

The LIGHT PLAN of Ghent

Gent: Illuminated

Haute couture design

From the very beginning, the Ghent Light Plan was a made-to-measure project which was completely geared to the introvert, austere personality of the city. To this effect, it is integrated into an overall vision on urban planning, while simultaneously dealing with the functional and architectural lighting.

The entire municipal landscape is analysed and mapped. Subsequently, light accents are implanted on the most important stepping stones of the City: monuments, buildings, rivers, gateways, traffic axes, shopping streets, parks and squares, quays, the skyline ...

Light artists

The Light Plan comes from the light designer Atelier Roland Jéol from Lyon, in co-operation with the urban planning bureau WVI (Light Plan I) and study office 'Omgeving' (Light Plan II). The Department of Urban Planning, Mobility and Public Domain directs the whole project. Atelier Roland Jéol earned international fame for its light plans in Lyon, Turin, Paris, Zurich and Pisa.

Designed for and developed with Ghent residents

Dozens of experts and persons are involved in the implementation of the Light Plan in a very critical way, refining it to the point of perfection: light engineers, people responsible for monument care, financial experts, urban planners, shop keepers, but also Ghent residents... They all work together in an advisory committee. Hence, the Light Plan has the support of many people, and is largely appreciated.

Subtle approach

Accents which remain unnoticed in day light will be literally put in the nocturnal limelight, with skimming façade illumination or targeted projectors. Vague contours are highlighted, architectural volumes have more depth. Last but not least, the water surface creates an incredibly enchanting reflection.

The Ghent Light Plan boasts a specific feature: the use of restrained white light, in contrast with the rather exuberant illumination in southern countries.

More attractive, sustainable and comforting

Owing to the Ghent Light Plan, our city looks even more attractive, while enhancing the social feeling of security. The shopping streets, which used to have an inanimate aspect, are now transformed into inviting nocturnal promenades. The intensity of light in residential areas is limited to what is strictly necessary, without jeopardizing essential safety. Façade illumination only extends to the roof gutter, greatly improving the perspective.

New Light Plan

As from 2010 there will be a new Light Plan for the entire city. Next to lighting the city centre, Ghent will start to illuminate such defining landmarks as buildings, streets and squares in the suburbs as well. This new light plan has to reinforce the nightly landscape of Ghent and give it an own identity, it has to diminish the light pollution and decrease at the same time the energy use of public lighting with at least 20% by 2020.

Read the book about the Light Plan!

'Ghent Illuminated' tells the captivating story of the Ghent Light Plan: clearly and intelligently explained, in an elegant layout, with splendid poetic nocturnal pictures, touching city poems and mysterious illumination concepts ... This book contains 96 pages and was written for both professional and recreational readers, willing to learn and enjoy.

International awards!

2004

The City of Ghent wins the International City-People-Light Award. This competition is annually organised by Philips Lighting and the worldwide network of light cities, LUCI, the Lighting Urban Community International Association. Other winners are Cergy 2003, Cologne 2005, Vienna 2006, Heinsberg 2007, Seoul 2008, Jyväskylä 2009.

In the prestigious Michelin travel guide, Ghent is awarded with 3*** stars, in other words: the lighting alone quite definitely makes Ghent worth visiting!

2005

The Flemish government proclaims Ghent as 'Cosiest city of Flanders'.

2008

'National Geographic Traveler' magazine proclaims Ghent as the third most authentic destination in the world.

Place of sale/order?

Books, posters and postcards of *Ghent Illuminated, the Light Plan: stepping stones to an enchanting city* are for sale in the City of Ghent municipal shop (Administratief Centrum Zuid, Woodrow Wilsonplein 1), the Tourist Office information counter (Sint-Baafsplein). Price: 24,50 euro.

The book can also be ordered by transfer on the IBAN number 830910 1121 1815 (BIC code GKCCBEBB). Please do not forget to mention 'book Ghent Illuminated'. The book costs 24,50 euro (postage costs not included). For (national or international) postage costs please contact the 'Stadswinkel' (Municipal Shop).

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Management

For more than 10 years, the Ghent Light Plan has been implemented with an annual investment flow of 500.000 euro/year. The rational use of energy is a key element in achieving this plan.

The objective is twofold: to achieve a substantial ecological profit as well as significant energy savings. Since 1999, various actions with respect to the Rational Use of Energy (RUE) as regards public lighting have been started. These have led to a cumulated saving of more than 18,700,000 KWh. This means a saving of 11% on the total consumption in comparison with the reference year 1999.

The City of Ghent has set a new target objective to carry out an additional RUE action, starting in 2010 and spread over a period of 4 years. This should yield an additional saving of 20% and help us to achieve the RUE-objectives in the field of public lighting in good time. The Light Plan provides the guidelines for this further implementation

Funding - Budget

The Ghent Light Plan came into existence and was achieved in the scope of the Mercurius project of the Flemish Community, which supports initiatives aimed at furthering commercial life in city centres. The purpose is to enhance the urban vitality and prestige of our city, while simultaneously maintaining the typical Ghent identity.

Information about the Light Plan

www.gent.be/gentverlicht (in Dutch)

Project management and communication of the Light Plan

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