

Art Night London 2017

Prepare for an all-nighter: Art Night London is back for round two with another one-night-only extravaganza of creativity trailing from Tower Bridge to Shoreditch.

Missed the launch last year? Here's the gist: It's the city's own nuit blanche, inspired by the Paris event running since 1984 and similar "white nights" around the world. Each year, Art Night will take over a different area of London, partnering with a cultural institution and curator. For 2017, it's the Whitechapel Gallery with Fatoş Üstek whose vision is to "celebrate the multiplicity that the East End holds with its diverse architectural, societal, psychological and linguistic profile."

So through visual arts, participatory dance performances, virtual reality, immersive installations and live music, we're heading out until the early hours of the morning to take a look at the culture and identity of the east.

A mix of historic buildings, very contemporary venues and others rarely accessible to the public will host a curated set of 13 projects. With 60 additional fringe screenings, exhibitions and performances along the way, it will be a busy night. And it's free.

"You don't need to plan much, just find a starting point and follow the trail," Art Night Co-Founder Philippine Nguyen says. All sites will have maps and guides on hand to answer questions.



On our agenda (if we can fit it all in)?



The prospect of descending into the innards of Victorian engineering has us geeking out, so we'll be joining Ian Whittlesea's guided meditation in the Bascule Chamber of Tower Bridge (pre-registration only).



St. Katharine Docks should be a fascinating stop where there are elements of Charles Avery's fictional island to enjoy. Maybe it's lingering memories of university dares we would rather not remember, but we have to admit we *are* slightly sceptical about the mysterious egg cocktails on offer at "The Egg Eating Egret", his imaginary bar that will take over White Mulberries café. We double dog dare you to try them along with us, if only for bravado's sake. And who knows, maybe eggs and alcohol actually can be friends in a grown-up world?

A visit to a listed warehouse at London Dock to see Jake and Dinos Chapman's video installation "The Misshapeness of Things to Come" is a priority. Jake Chapman's band Funhole will be playing live music too. The brothers also feature in Dennis Severs' House – the 18th Century candlelit Huguenot abode – where their defaced prints will be displayed. A must see.



Speaking of fascinating buildings, we'll be poking our noses into the Grade-II listed Masonic Temple at Andaz London to watch Lindsay Seers' video installation and take a peek at the incredible ceiling inside this cultural gem. Her film is "inspired by freemason imagery and the life of Aleister Crowley, an English occultist, ceremonial magician, poet, painter, novelist and mountaineer of the early 20th Century."

Let's see if sanitised Crowley gets the spotlight or if we'll see the twisted side of this dark and controversial character whom the British press named the "wickedest man in the world", who lost his virginity at age 14 to a family maid, performed experiments with recreational drugs and died a heroin addict. Our curiosity is piqued.



Heading into the future, the White Chapel Building – newly re-invented for creative companies and start-ups – is calling our name. It's hosting ongoing multimedia installation "The Trickle-Down Syndrome" by Benedict Drew, which reflects on materiality and the intersection of the digital and physical across five rooms of sensory stimulation. Experimental musicians will play throughout the night.



Also here is Lawrence Lek's "Play Station", a virtual reality video game set in 2037 in a science fiction version of the White Chapel Building. His rendition transforms it into the London headquarters of a technology start-up known as Farsight where work is disguised as play (don't we wish!). It's a reflection on growing tech companies and overseas investment in the UK's creative economy.



Toward the end of the evening, we'll look forward to Philippine's top recommendation: Melanie Manchot's "Dance (All Night, London)" in Exchange Square. "It is an extraordinary collective performance in collaboration with 10 dance schools from the East End, each representing a different style of movement from Cuban Rueda to Argentine Tango, Flamenco or Irish Dance," Philippine explains. "Via a silent disco system, audiences will be able to join in and the square will transform into an open dance floor until 4am."

Philippine also suggests Anne Hardy's sound, sculpture and light installation at the stunning former headquarters of the Nicholls & Clarke showrooms. She mentioned that many of the commissions have a legacy beyond the one night festival. Ann Hardy's is one of them. It will be donated Leeds Art Gallery.

Undoubtedly, curiosity will lead us astray from this ambitious wish list along our trail up to Shoreditch, so we will leave room to embrace spontaneity. But one thing is for sure: our night will culminate at The Village Underground. Boiler Room hosting artist Carsten Nicolai (aka Alva Noto), along with other DJs, will send us home satisfied with not only having indulged in the East End's artistic culture but also its notorious nightlife. An egg cocktail cheers to that.

Art Night 2017 is in collaboration with Whitechapel Gallery and curated by Fatos Üstek. The festival is supported by international auction house Phillips, and receives public funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Details:

Date: July 1, 2017

Time: 6pm – 4am

Location: Various, see website for map

Website: <http://www.artnight.london/>

Instagram and Twitter: @ARTNIGHTLDN

Hashtag: #artnightldn