



Nuit Blanche Toronto 2012 Provides Fun and Solutions for the Future

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By: Curtis Sindrey -

Nuit Blanche is an experience like no other. You can witness art in the making and often, onlookers become apart of the exhibition. This year was no different, where there was tons of musicians out in full swing, some playing original songs and others playing covers, including a jazzy version of “Come Together” by The Beatles, and many, many art exhibitions from one corner of the city to the other.

As soon as the clock struck 7:03pm, my first stop was in the Front St area to check out the Toronto-based [Turbo Street Funk](#) who just began a spirited cover of The Beatles’ hit “Come Together” from their 1969 album *Abbey Road*. This was the first time I heard the Beatles covered in this fashion and it was a refreshing change from the original Fab Four.



King St was one of the hot spots at Nuit Blanche. Throughout nearly the entire stretch of it was plastered in art, which served as an inspiring change instead of the often statuesque buildings that usually occupies this strip of road.

One such installation was called “Lifecycles,” by Phoenix, AZ-based artist [Matthew Moore](#), who, with a video installation, documented the core processes of agricultural growth as it happens in a field. It combined vibrant visual imagery of microscopic growth with original musical arrangements to transform the downtown core into a place where nature can grow out of concrete.



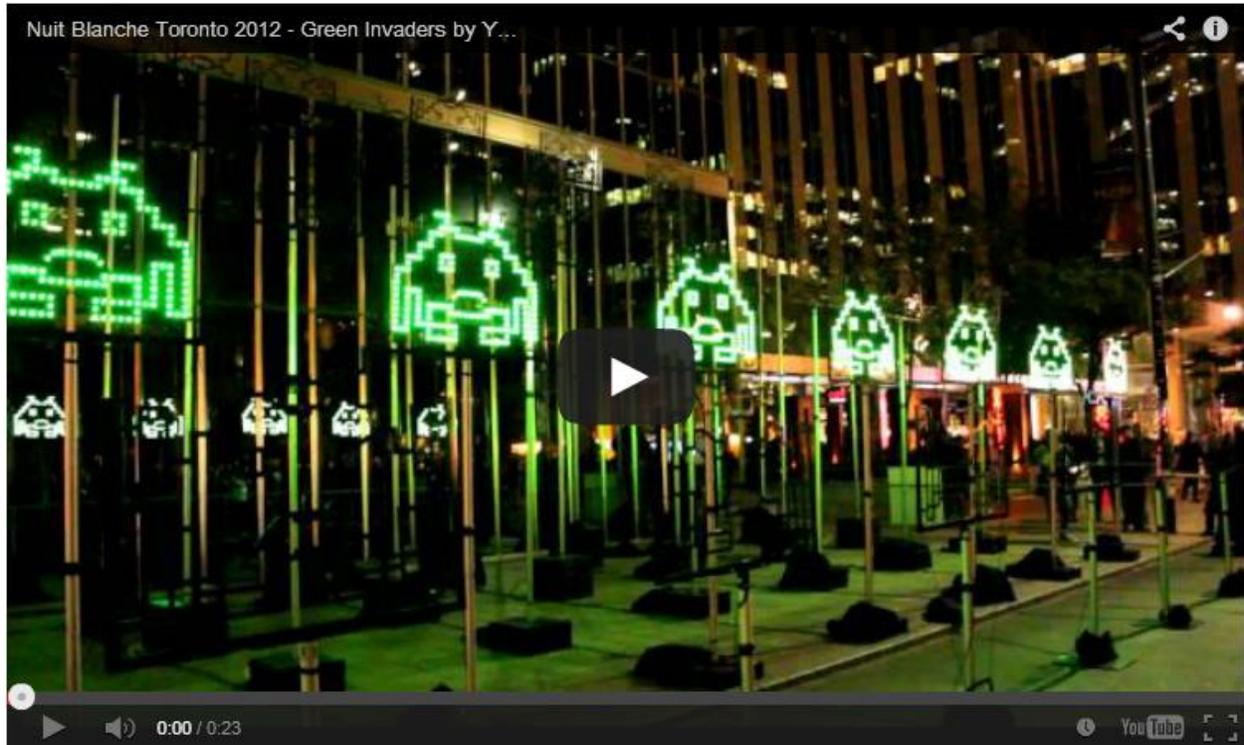
In street art vocabulary, a large graffiti tag that is created quickly is called “throw-up.” Created by Montreal-based artist [Shelley Miller](#), the title card cheekily advises the crowd to “look, don’t eat,” and features four separate works, all of which resemble some form of vomit. What was most interesting was that the artist and/or her assistants were still in the process of putting the final touches on each piece, either because they wanted to demonstrate the process of creating the work in real-time or because they were tardy in setting up. The work features an “excessive” use of sugar, which “gives the work a whole new meaning.” Miller’s goal from this was to create a decorative explosion, and I think she succeeded.



“Throw-Up” 2012 by Shelley Miller. (Photo: Curtis Sindrey – All Rights Reserved)

Throughout the night there was many food trucks on site, but if you wanted to avoid the line-ups and you had too-much pride eating from a truck, there was the Toronto-based Manual Labour Coffee who provided freshly ground coffee from the back of a trailer in a process known as a “mobile barista.”

If you’re a fan of 80s video games, than you’ll love the exhibit called “Green Invaders,” from Lyon, France-based artist [Yves Caizergues](#), who said that “they’re green, they’re angry, they’re happy, they’re from the 80s and the whole city is their playground.” When low technology and high technology mix together, a light experience emerges for an emotional and entertaining reconnection. It was a reconnection to the roots of video games and for some people a recollection of their childhood.



Using only hand-blown neon tubes, Toronto-based artist [Alfred Engerer](#) created a sculpture called "Invisible Streams: As Above. So Below," which found neon letters, logos and symbols, which move in a whirlwind of activity through the canopies of trees evoking the normally invisible energies of air currents, underground streams and "streams of consciousness."



“Invisible Streams: As Above. So Below” by Alfred Engerer. (Photo: Curtis Sindrey – All Rights Reserved)

Last night there were more impromptu dance parties than I could count. The first of which involved a group of about six 20-somethings that danced wildly in front of a BMO bank branch. Only a few feet away from that party was a large group of people all forming an open circle, much like a mosh pit at a rock concert. A couple of brave souls, first a pair of men, then a pair of young women all took part in showing their dance moves to the city.

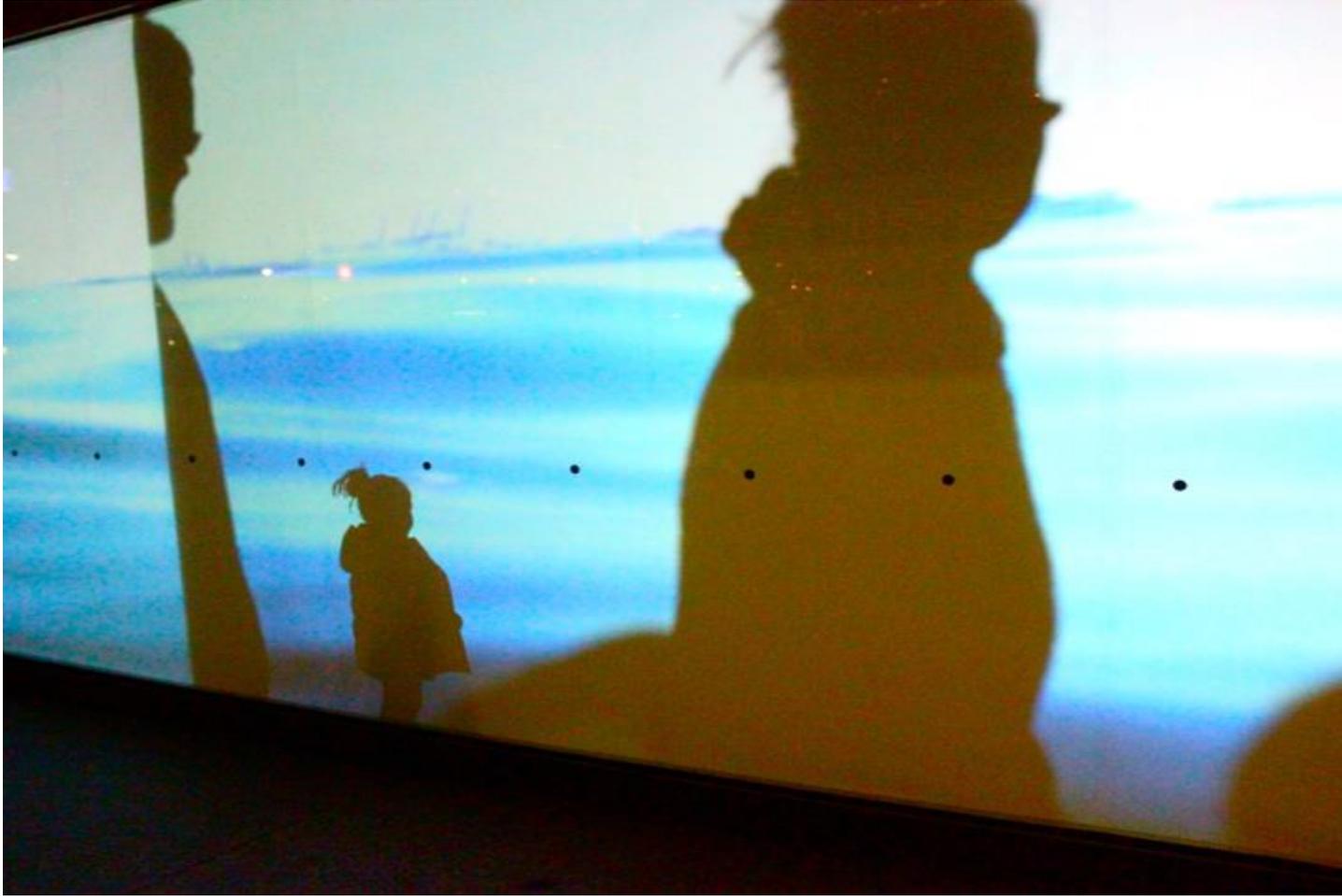
One of the hubs of Nuit Blanche was Yonge and Dundas Square where Langley, Canada-based artist [Aaron Moran](#) created a multimedia installation where onlookers could become a part of the art. By using a 20' x 20' interactive video crystal, Moran created a truly interactive piece of art where people were encouraged to approach and interact with the 360° sculpture.

As often as there were dance parties, there was one of the professional sort, as a Toronto-based duo called [Concrete Stylez](#) invited onlookers to donate cash where \$5 or more would have the dancers perform “power moves” like inverts and airdares. Flips and \$100 or more would have the dancers perform in “B-Boy style” with moves like footwork and freezes/stalls. They perform many moves that often people only see in 80s-era rap music videos.



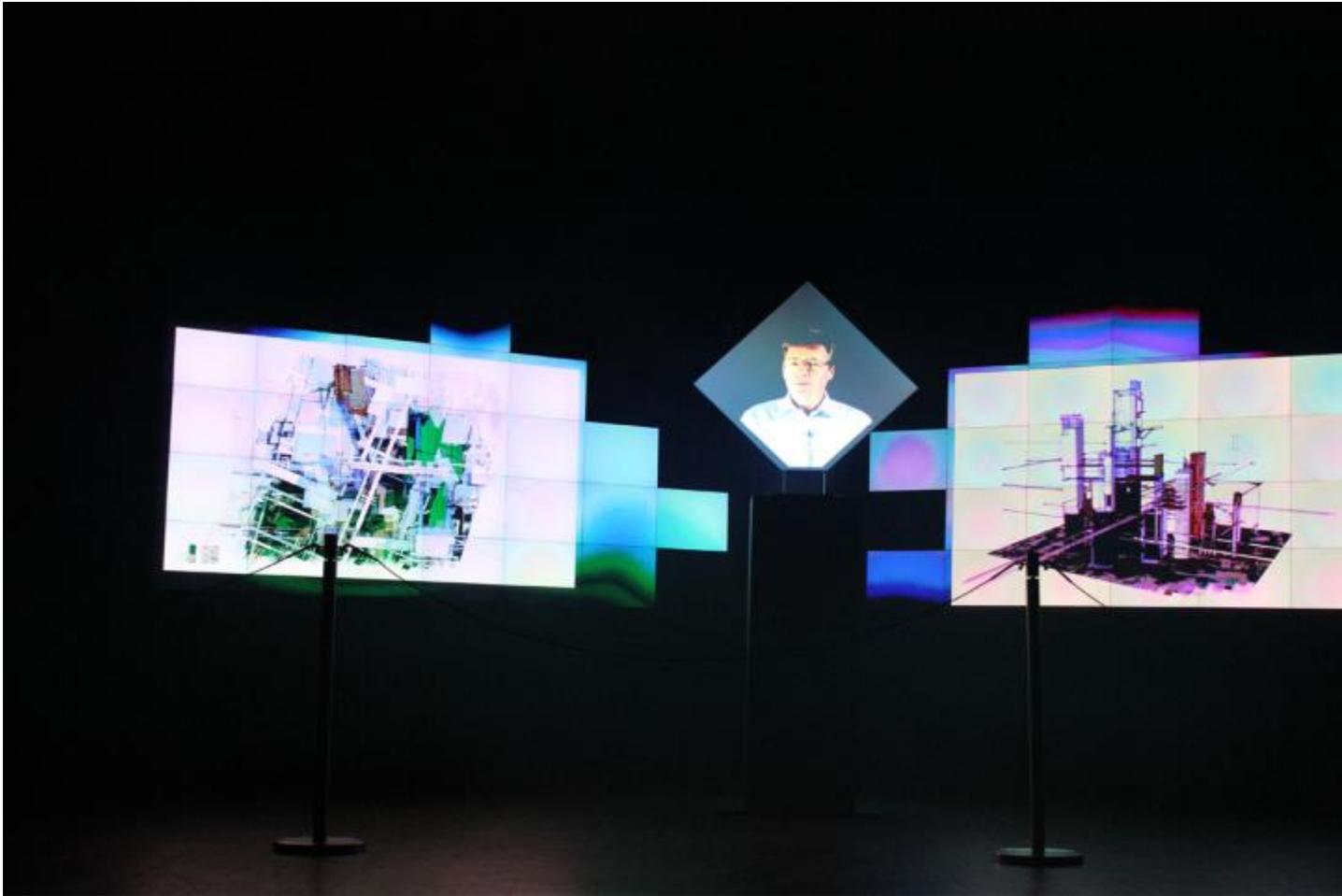
What would Toronto look like if sea levels rose to the point where major metropolises found themselves underwater? New York-based artist [Eric Corriel](#) tried to answer that question with his digital video installation called "Water Will Be Here." The installation, which has been showed in Brooklyn in 2010 and Atlanta in 2011, provided onlookers the chance to experience what it might feel like if Toronto experience extreme flooding, presumably due to global warming. With the ongoing dialogue about global warming, the film provided a much-needed epiphany to onlookers and hopefully this installation will not become our reality anytime soon.

In keeping with an apocalyptic theme, Toronto-based artist [Dave Dyment](#) created a similar video installation that illustrates that many natural, and often man-made disasters that have plagued Earth for centuries. "The Day After Tomorrow," provides a stark realization to the brutalities that weather and often man can bring to the table and it tries to the encourage its audience to try and do something about it, whether big or small.



“Water Will Be Here” by Eric Corriel. (Photo: Curtis Sindrey – All Rights Reserved)

What is the future of architecture? This question isn't something you typically think about, but it can have a huge impact on your future. Presented by the [Ontario Association of Architects](#), several Toronto-based architects re-imagined the Toronto skyline to make future buildings more flexible, adaptable and fun. The exhibition focused on the extensive use of cell phones and computers to connect with others, and buildings should provide the same opportunities. From cloud service libraries, and repositories of information, new buildings should evolve from places to obtain knowledge to places where knowledge is naturally created. Presenters also argued that there are too many overregulated and underdeveloped spaces in Toronto and that architects and the city at large should reclaim them and create something better.



" Future of Architecture" by the Ontario Association of Architects at the Design Exchange in Toronto. (Photo: Curtis Sindrey – All Rights Reserved)

As you would expect, there is a general lack of interest in architecture. Although, we do see several architects grace our television screens every week including the lovable Ted Mosby from *How I Met Your Mother*, presenters argued that the public is a critical component of any successful building and that future design will be guided by a city's culture. The presenters used the example of Ontario Place as a landmark that is being re-envisioned for different purposes like a transit hub and an urban park. From transforming business hubs into well-developed living spaces with sustainable transportation networks from being a place to performing a task, the presenters argued that buildings must become multi-purposeful in order for them to be sustainable in the long run.

What was different about Nuit Blanche this year from the last? Well, there was surely more people and it seems more of them picked up smoking from last year. For what you could see, the art is thought-provoking and it provided a Torontonians who may not have thought about global warming or the future of architecture encouragement to become more active in the community and if you don't, you surely don't have the right to complain about it.