

OUT OF DARKNESS COMES LIGHT

Lights in Alingsås brings the small Swedish town just outside Gothenburg to the forefront of lighting design through its annual workshop and festival.

Once a year in the darkness of the Swedish winter, there is one place that shines... In the west of Sweden lies the small town of Alingsås with its 40,000 inhabitants. Since the turn of the century its buildings, parks, lakes and playgrounds have been lit up every autumn when the international event, the Lights in Alingsås festival, takes place. It all began when a group of architecture students from Gothenburg needed somewhere they could experiment with lighting - and Alingsås municipality allowed them to use certain places in the town. The results sparked an interest and desire to see more; ever since Lights in Alingsås has evolved year on year and now consists of two different elements. Firstly there is a week's workshop where seven international lighting designers create and develop the year's theme, which is then designed and built with the help of 60 students from all over the world. The second part of the festival starts when the light trail is officially opened and visitors find their way

through the town centre, following a trail, which creates exciting new flows of people looking at the installations.

Today Lights in Alingsås is the largest light event in northern Europe with 80,000 visitors a year. For restaurants, cafés and other businesses in the town, October has become one of the most prosperous months in the year.

Alingsås municipality continues to be responsible for the festival, which is run in collaboration with Estrad Alingsås, IALD and several major sponsors of which the foremost are Alingsås Energi and Sparbanken Alingsås.

This year's theme, *The Development of Light Through the Ages*, was selected in conjunction with the International Year of Light and Light-Based Technologies.

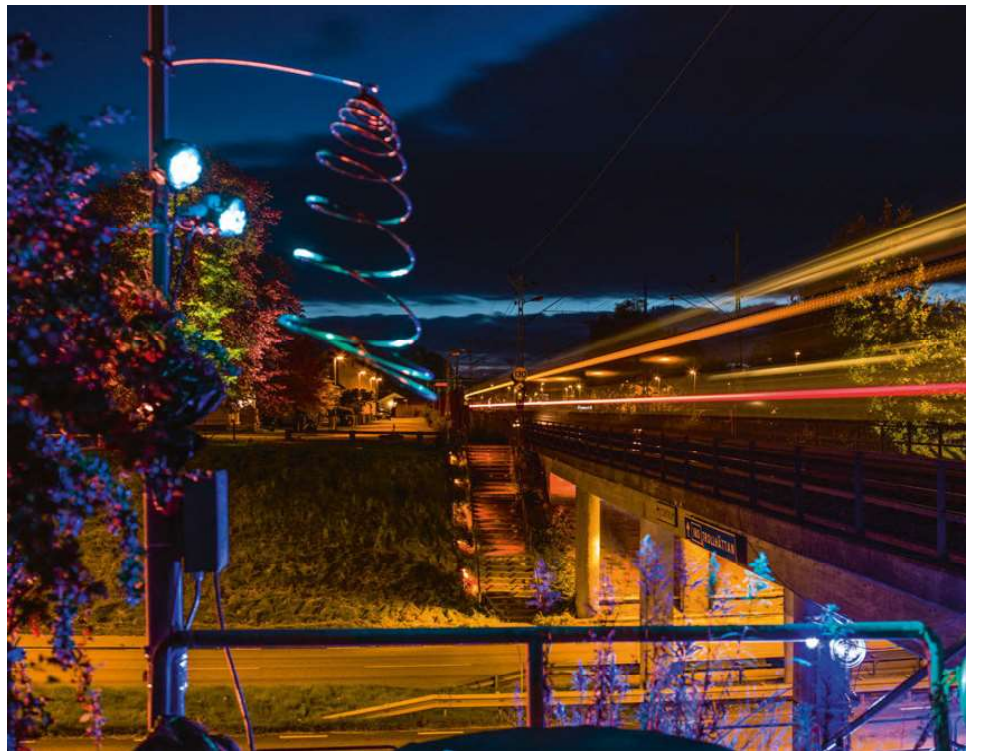
"We share the hope of the UN for an enlightened world, in both senses of the word," said Anna Davidsson Project Developer for Lights in Alingsås. "One way for us to contribute is by offering financial



Pics: Patrik Gunnar Helin



Above Under the Boardwalk Workshop Head Anna Sbokou Right 'Natural Light at Night' Workshop Head Kevan Shaw Far Right 'The Evolution of Iron' Workshop Head Andrea Hartranft.





Left 'Big Bang Sun' Workshop Head Katja Winkelmann Right 'Living Room Under the Highway' Workshop Head Reinhard Germer.



help to students who are not well off." In September Anna Sbouko from Greece, Kevan Shaw from Scotland, Roberto Corradini and Marco Palandella from Italy, Reinhard Germer and Katja Winkelmann from Germany, Andrea Hartranft from the US, and Jan Ejhed and Katarina Hennig from Sweden led the groups responsible for lighting up Alingsås. Working in international workshops, they were assisted by around 60 students from countries including Japan, Israel, Panama, Colombia and Italy. The designers interpreted important events in the history of light to create experiences including lighting, sound and other elements to stimulate the senses. The aim was to give visitors to Lights in Alingsås an immersive experience where they could travel both back and forwards in time. Professor Jan Ejhed from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm acted as a sounding board in the process. Sound was also an important element in the installations along the light trail. Collaborating with lighting designers, composer Sebastian Studnitzky from Germany produced haunting and exciting sounds that intensified and enriched experiences for the visitors.

The 'Lights' workshop was made possible by international collaboration and the commitment of sponsors who provided the equipment. But there is another element too - and that is local involvement. "The group that came to Alingsås this year were great," said Davidsson. "People worked well together, discussions were lively and ideas flowed freely among the lighting designers. The last thing German designer Reinhard Germer said before he left was that Alingsås felt warm and welcoming - and that the professional organisation had made him feel at home. It bodes well for the future." Students come from all over the world, but for some of them the adventure can be an expensive business. Plane tickets, accommodation and the registration fee add up to quite a substantial amount, in particular for those who come from outside Europe. With this in mind Lights in Alingsås, acting through its project owners Alingsås Town Hall (ABAR), started to award grants making it possible for more people to participate; grants covering course fees were awarded to 25 applicants this year. "We don't want attending Lights in Alingsås to create financial problems for students, but would like to be able to offer all

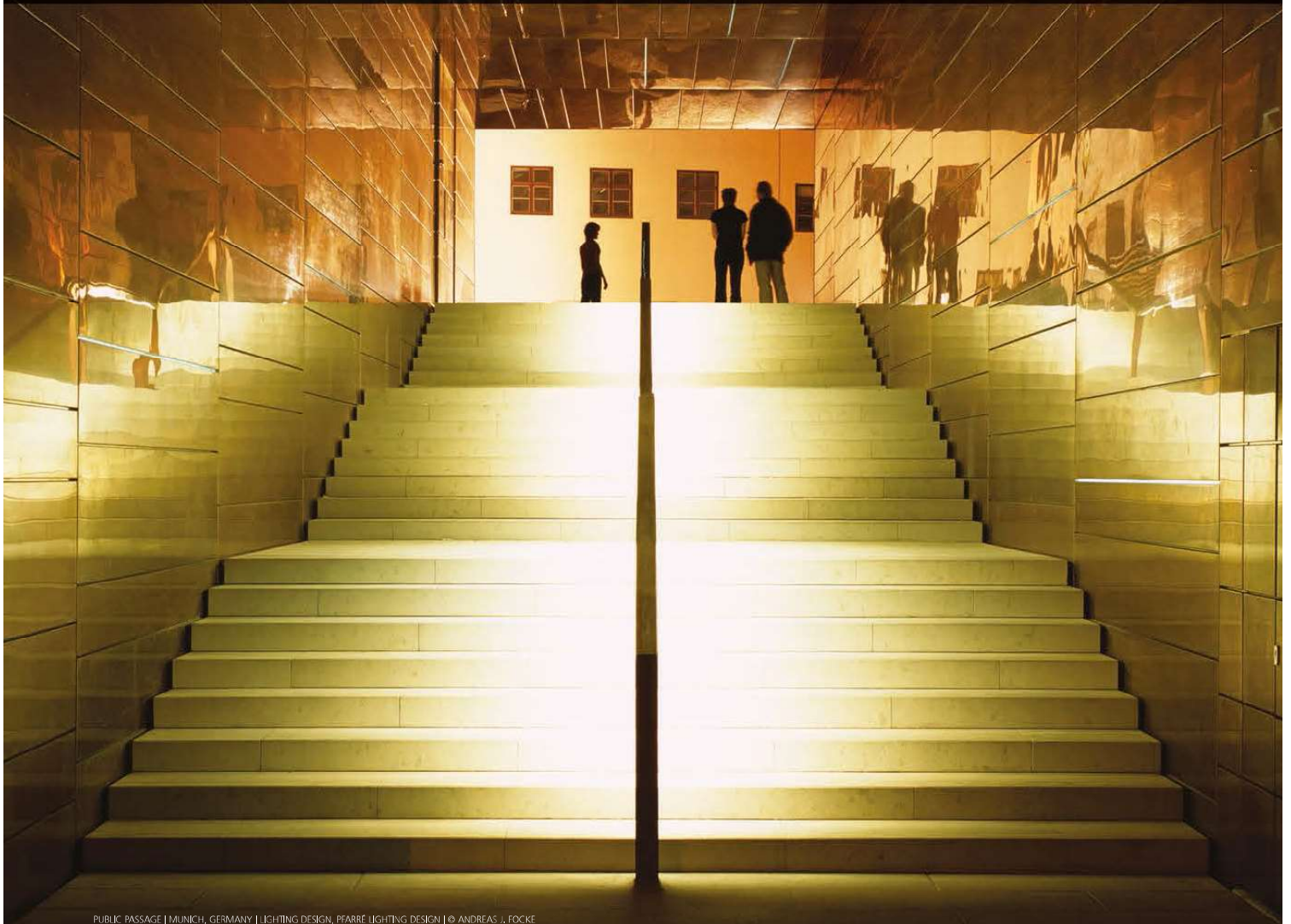
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIGHTING DESIGNERS

IALD

ANOTHER PERSON'S DARK SPACE IS OUR BLANK CANVAS.

AN IALD PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING DESIGNER SEES
THE POSSIBILITIES IN EVERY ENVIRONMENT.

LEARN HOW AN IALD LIGHTING DESIGNER CAN TURN YOUR VISION INTO REALITY.
VISIT IALD.ORG AND CLICK ON "FIND A LIGHTING DESIGNER" TO REFINE YOUR SEARCH.





'Mediterranean Breeze'
Workshop Head Roberto Corradini & Marco Palandella

students with a keen interest in light design the chance to participate in our workshop - and we can do that now," said Davidsson. After the workshop, the events organisation takes over and the light installations go on show in Alingsås for five weeks. At the same time there are a variety of different activities taking place such as shopping evenings, illuminated cafés, runs, special events for children and evenings of cultural activities. Every evening there are guided tours from Alingsås tourist office along the light trail. Visitors can hear more about the history of light, the work behind the light installations and learn about the international light designers and their work. There were also several new developments this year: the Children's Park of the Future was one - a series of workshops on the theme of the future, created by Alingsås nursery schools and after-school centres. More than five hundred children, attending five different after-school centres, were free to make their own light creations. The children's own mini-installations were exhibited in the centre of the town as part of the light trail, the idea being that visitors would bask in light from the future. "It's fun, but also really important, to work with innovation and development in this way; they are two of the festival's most crucial areas of interest," said Angelica Larsson, Event Manager. "In children, developments and new discoveries come quite naturally out of their desire to learn. And of course, children are our future." Currently, planning for next year's Lights in Alingsås festival is in full swing and lighting designers interested in applying for a workshop place or head designer position can now register their interest through IALD.

www.lightsinalingsas.se



'The Rhythm of Flames'
Workshop Head Vivi Katarina Hennig

LIGHTING PARTNERS

acdc, Barco, ETC, Fergin, iGuzzini, Insta, Irrlicht, Kungsbacka Lighting, LED Linear, Luce&Light, Lumenpulse, Luxlight, Martin Professional, Meyer, Rebel Light, Stockholm Lighting, Traxon, Uplight, Wibre, Wireless Solutions, Zumtobel