Black Marble

The project is part of the New Store from Nieuwe Instituut at Residency for the People.
Black Marble

Hosted by: Arnout Meijer

Project Information (EN)

Why at the New Store?

Black Marble imagines a future where we, as consumers, have to contribute our own energy sources if we want more light. But how much light do we really need when darkness has its own special qualities? Darkness creates a cosy atmosphere, prepares people for sleep, does not disturb animals and consumes no energy. These are natural qualities that can benefit humans and more-than-humans alike. The two light installations illuminate the space while giving darkness visibility. The intensity is not static, but is dynamically controlled through gradual dimming and the use of visitors' light sources. "Engravings referencing the moon, a symbol of an unspoilt landscape, have been set into discarded glass shards that are hold by sanded old beams." In one installation, the engraving is illuminated by discarded electronics; in another, the flashlight function of visitors' smartphones is used. The human eye automatically adjusts to light and dark, so slow changes are not immediately noticeable, but it also becomes clear that we do not need so much light. "The light installations are functional, but at the same time they point to over-consumption and light pollution."

About the project

Designer Arnout Meijer sees darkness not as a lack of light, but as a quality in itself. Darkness is necessary for human biorhythms, creates a cosy atmosphere and provides tranquillity. For many creatures, including bats, moths, foxes and deer, a dark night is essential. Light pollution can disrupt (animal) behaviour and entire ecosystems. The title of the installation, Black Marble, plays on the "Blue Marble" nickname given to Earth after the now-famous image of our planet was taken on 7 December 1972 by the crew of Apollo 17, from some 29,000 kilometres away. Illuminated by the sun, the Earth indeed appeared as a blue sphere; however, its other side, in darkness, was black.

Image List

Filename	Caption	Credit
am-nasa-earth-observatory-images-by-joshua-stevens_1697442472.jpeg	Earth and Night	NASA

The images above are included in the ZIP under `/images`.