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THE NEXT 7 DAYS: **EVENTS (32)** + **OPENINGS (16)** + **DEADLINES (9)** + **CLOSINGS (10)**

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NUIT BLANCHE
October 02, 2012



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I must confess, right off the bat, that **Nuit Blanche** beat me this year. As in the past, I headed out with mixed-feelings: physical exhaustion combined with a temperamental skepticism is my usual state of mind. I know the odds aren't in my favour, but the night has always been redeemed by at least a couple transcendent experiences to offset my antisocial dread and ideological resistance to adapting art to such a mass endeavor and such a limited period of time. However, despite my three and half hour tour, I never reached those heights.



Gordon Monahan

Things started well with my traditional first stop: Hart House on the University of Toronto campus. **Barbara Fischer** and the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery crew had assembled a selection of works united by their focus on the piano. **Euan MacDonald's** video of a piano being riotously tested in a factory brought the musical machine to the fore and throttled me to attention. **Gordon Monahan's** long string piano resonator in the courtyard made for a contemplative site in the open air, and the performance of his *Piano Mechanics* piece was just the right combination of arty and experimental to make me feel like I was experiencing something I hadn't before. I should have gone home from here.

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An Te Liu

The official footprint of Nuit Blanche seems to be getting smaller and smaller every year, and with that condensing comes crowds. Call me a curmudgeon, but I liked it when there were major sites from Bloor and Lansdowne to Yorkville, all the way down Young, through the business district and way over to Liberty Village. The spread and associated search made the night truly white. Sure, there are still things happening in Parkdale, the Distillery District, and Casa Loma, but the core zones are now trapped between Dundas and Front, and navigating the mess got the better of me. After being swarmed by the masses at Dundas Square, I retreated to the peripheries and made my way over to St. James Park. After wandering past a couple shiny happy installations of lights and stuff, I happened upon **Dave Dymont's** multi-screen video tribute to the end of the world. I resisted the urge to read it as a comment on the night itself, but couldn't help thinking how Christian Marclay's *The Clock* and YouTube (via compilations like "Nicholas Cage losing his shit" and "best movie mid-air car crash explosions") have rendered these sorts of mash-ups moot.

The full apocalypse was waiting for me at City Hall (insert *Resident Evil* joke here). The egress through the rear loading dock was more than sufficient to allow easy passage to **An Te Liu's** Death Star of consumer goods and **Josh Bonetta's** elgy for the loss of one specific commodity. However, getting into the main feature of the underground garage was out of the question at this time and I never made it back to witness the horrors therein. After that it was a matter of slugging it out through the hoards, and more often than not shrugging when I arrived. Giant space invaders? Meh. Crazy streets lights? Okay. A rave run by photocopiers? Sure, why not?



Jon Sasaki

In the end, I heard about more exciting experiences than I saw. The spectacle under City Hall was worth the wait according to most, but, perhaps to make me feel better, I wondered whether it was spectacle that I was in search of.

I headed home via Queen West, hoping to find some respite past the clubbers and partiers. What I found were the remaining cube vans of the Parkdale Village BIA. My memory of Nuit Blanche 2012 will forever be defined by **Jon Sasaki's** "hand on the van" contest for his artist's fee. Somehow, this exercise in duration, endurance, and the commerce of public humiliation felt apropos. The poetic close to my evening was **Pascal Paquette** and **Cindy Blazevik's** *Border Control* van at the furthest reach of Queen, a lonely outpost marking the end of the art-friendly section of the city and, come seven a.m., the art-friendliest day of the year.

Scotiabank Nuit Blanche: <http://www.scotiabanknuitblanche.ca/>



Terence Dick is a freelance writer living in Toronto. His art criticism has appeared in *Canadian Art*, *BorderCrossings*, *Prefix Photo*, *Camera Austria*, *Fuse*, *Mix*, *C Magazine*, *Azure*, and *The Globe and Mail*. He is the editor of *Akimblog*. You can follow his quickie reviews and art news announcements on Twitter @TerenceDick.



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Posted by **Jean Bridge**, on **2012-10-02 13:12:50**

I kept wondering (wandering) if this enterprise really considered its audience. I would call the night more carnival than exhibit. Lots of photo ops for peeps who saw art as a fun backdrop to their fun evening. I wanted to be wowed by the art rather than frustrated by the "event". Felt I got close when I arrived at David Picault square and rested by Matthew Moore's veggie patch.