

An aerial night photograph of Baltimore, Maryland. The city's lights are reflected in the water of the harbor. In the foreground, a large, white, tent-like structure is illuminated with green and blue lights. A red and white lighthouse is visible on a small island in the water. The city skyline is visible in the background.

SPiRiT OF

BALTIMORE

With historic haunts, a vibrant arts culture, and a growing culinary scene, Charm City more than lives up to its name. During your stay, dig into delicious crab cakes, take in harbor views, and be dazzled by Baltimore's second annual Light City.

By Melissa Flandreau

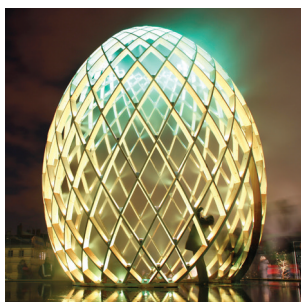


Artist alaa
minawi created
“my light
is your light.”



LIGHT CITY

Last year, more than 400,000 people attended the inaugural Light City, and in 2017, the festival is back and bigger than before. With two added evenings of excitement, there's no shortage of bright ideas.



You'll have to cross a path in the water to reach the interior of “OVO,” created by OVO Collective.

When Light City illuminates Baltimore's Inner Harbor and eight distinct neighborhoods from March 31–April 8, it won't be the first time the city has been a beacon for light innovation. Its connections trace back to 1816, when it became the first U.S. city to introduce gas street lamps.

Two hundred years later, the level of accomplishment is no less impressive. An electric nine-day festival, Light City features 23 light art installations, 35 concerts from local and international artists, more than 200 performances, and a series of conferences that focuses on social

change in different disciplines—from design to education.

Their scale isn't the only reason the 23 eye-catching installations are impressive. The works are as diverse as the artists who made them, with rich meanings that speak to everything from the relationship between nature and technology to the humanitarian crisis in Syria. The displays include “ARGO,” a 70-foot work that represents water's influence, and “Impulse,” an interactive urban playground with 15 seesaws outfitted with LED lights and speakers. At Pier 5, attendees can view “Sueños,” a piece created by Balti-

CELEBRATE THE LIGHT

9 DAYS AND NIGHTS
IN BALTIMORE

LIGHT CITY
A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT, MUSIC AND INNOVATION

MARCH 31–APRIL 8, 2017
LIGHTCITY.ORG

23 light art installations. 35 concerts. 200+ performances. And the 1.5-mile BGE Light Art Walk. Now 9 days and nights, the epic celebration of innovation, creativity and community returns to Baltimore.

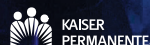
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Mayor Catherine E. Pugh



more-based artist Edgar Reyes to showcase the Latino community's struggle for social justice. To create the work, whose title means "dreams," Reyes collaborated with Latino youth from Baltimore and Langley Park, a nearby suburb of Washington, D.C. All of the installations are new this year except for two returning crowd favorites from the festival's 2016 iteration—Tim Scofield and Kyle Miller's "The Peacock," and "The Pool [Reflect]" by Jen Lewin.

Attendees will also be surrounded by performances—from dance to live music to puppet theater. On the festival's final two nights, Squonk Opera will perform "Light Cycles" by creating double-decker, human-powered cycles to promote sustainable power. Other high notes include

performances by local groups like Peabody Preparatory Wind Orchestra and Bmore Than Dance.

Although some concerts are scheduled at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater, pop-up performances are a common occurrence at the BGE Light Art Walk. A 1.5-mile stretch along the Inner Harbor, the Art Walk features interactive displays, maker tents, and local food. At its eastern end, you'll find Baltimore's bustling Harbor East neighborhood, which will be illuminated during the festival. With fine dining, luxe accommodations, and shopping options that include Under Armour's flagship store, the mixed-use district is a nod to modern "New Baltimore."

For families, Mini Light City is a must-see. Along with light-themed crafts and hula hoops, you can join

"The Pool [Reflect]" shifts color to create an interactive landscape.



"The Peacock" by Tim Scofield and Kyle Miller is one of two returning installations.



THE PEACOCK BY TIM SCOFIELD AND KYLE MILLER, THE POOL [REFLECT] BY JEN LEWIN COURTESY OF BALTIMORE OFFICE OF PROMOTION AND THE ARTS



The National Aquarium's touchpools feature species like Atlantic skates.

Put yourself in the middle of the action by enjoying Harbor East's sights and sounds.



the Family Jam session with Dance & Bmore FazaFam and try fanciful snacks (last year's treats included glow-in-the-dark cotton candy). Before the festival opens, families can also swing by Baltimore's National Aquarium. Home to 20,000 animals—including Calypso, a 500-pound green sea turtle—the aquarium will offer scavenger hunts and themed activities tying light to the aquatic world. Along with exploring the Blacktip Reef and watching flicks at the 4-D Immer-

sion Theater, guests can visit the Living Seashore, two touchpools with species native to the Mid-Atlantic.

Although Light City's epicenter is in the Inner Harbor, its Neighborhood Lights initiative involves surrounding neighborhoods that are creating an immersive community arts program and illuminated public project. Each of the eight neighborhoods—from Hampden to Station North—will feature a light installation reflecting its unique character. In Little Italy, you'll find Kaiser Permanente's "The Sweetness of Doing Nothing," a canopy and fountain crafted from recycled water bottles. The neighborhood will also have a lantern-making workshop where participants repurpose recyclable materials into a canopy across High Street.

The innovation at Light City doesn't stop with the art—it also highlights creative cuisine and drinks. Along the BGE Light Art Walk, the festival will serve Asian



Enjoy aerial views with
 Monumental Helicopters,
 and beat the traffic with
 Baltimore Water Taxi.

street food, with contributions from local restaurateurs like Phil Han. Other eats include empanadas, Baltimore barbecue, and organic falafel, as well as a sustainable seafood concept with oysters and a dessert bar. At Light City's eight bars, you'll find local beers like Union Craft Brewing's Blackwing lager, and a signature cocktail created at a local competition with the festival's official spirit—Sagamore Spirit Rye.

Throughout the city, businesses and restaurants—including Fell's Point Main Street—are illuminating their buildings to promote the "Brilliant Baltimore" initiative.

Located in Fell's Point, Max's Taphouse has been the go-to spot for suds for 30 years. This watering hole boasts a bevy of brews—102 beers on draft and more than 2,000 bottled options, to be exact. The knowledgeable staff, some of whom have been at Max's for decades, is always happy to make recommendations.

For a convenient—and picturesque—way to travel the city's

waterfront neighborhoods, step aboard the newly redesigned Baltimore Water Taxi. BWT will offer extended hours during Light City, with service running until the end of each night's programming. And with 17 landings, it can connect you to everywhere from Harbor Place to Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine.

To see Light City from a different vantage point, book Monumental Helicopters' "City Lights" tour. The night flight soars over the city, offering aerial views of the illuminated Inner Harbor. Monumental Helicopters also hosts daytime tours that highlight views of Fort McHenry, Oriole Park at Camden Yards, and M&T Bank Stadium. Tours are private, accommodate up to three passengers, and last 25–50 minutes.

With electric works of art, a packed schedule, and delicious fare, Light City offers endless entertainment and juxtaposes the city's history with its focus on innovation.



For three decades, Max's Taphouse
 has served a wide variety of beer.

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF PERRY THORSVIK (HELICOPTER), BALTIMORE WATER TAXI, AND HERMES CUELLAR (MAX'S TAPHOUSE)