



PUBLICATION :	EYE MAGAZINE
COUNTRY :	BRAZIL
DATE :	2011

DESCRIPTION :	REVIEW OF 'LDN - REDUX' WITH INTERVIEW
---------------	---



A million stories in the naked city

LDN-Redux

By The Light Surgeons

São Paulo, 23 July 2011

Reviewed by Catherine Dixon

The Light Surgeons' *LDN-Redux*, which premiered in São Paulo in July, is a 35-minute audiovisual performance that features a 24-hour cycle of London life. Video, graphics and music are mixed live on stage and projected above the three digital performers – Christopher Thomas Allen, Jude Greenaway and Tim Cowie – and all their technical kit, so that process and projection are in equal evidence before you.

The piece grew out of an installation for the Museum of London entitled *LDN24*, which hangs above one of the museum's public spaces. A huge ellipse of LEDs, it tracks the passing seconds and triggers live online data feeds, acting as both real-time clock and information cardiogram of the city.

In performance, the 24-hour narrative becomes the holding structure for a million other stories to emerge, both on screen and in the imagination of the viewer. A tiny red dot crosses the screen to form a simple graphic timeline, the only consistent visual element. At times the full width of the screen is focused on just one element; at others, the screen is divided into horizontal sections, creating sequences of windows into simultaneous yet different graphic worlds or multiple repeat units, abstracting form and emphasising time and texture. The editing was crucial to the success of the performance – the wit of the juxtapositions, and the endlessly satisfying

plays on shape and line as forms, and horizons merging and re-aligning.

The Light Surgeons' techniques reveal often invisible information structures and render the familiar anew. We laugh at the speeded-up sequence of the disembarkation machinery at an airport wrapping around the plane as though it was alive, and at the sequences of pirouetting kebabs. While the city is processing people and processing its waste, we start to understand the piece as a biological portrait of the bodily functions of a metropolis.

But not just any metropolis. The London colour palette was beautifully observed, its particularly yellow tinge quite different than the colour profile of São Paulo. Such accuracy in the detail defined this as a piece about the uniqueness of a city identity and a space for the individual. The performance also captures a sense of the city as a space for rhythm and reflection, whether through the strokes of a solo swimmer in his lane, a meat-worker taking five, or a hairdresser lost in her thoughts. Yet the performance never strays into the sentimental. The stage shows a city I recognise, both for good and bad. The projection opens up to full screen as a new day dawns and, as the film fades, the final image, from agency Space Syntax, shows the city as a circulation system. What the Light Surgeons make is much more than a clever visual experience, and each show is mixed live, so no two performances are the same.