A NEW URBAN MASS MEDIUM?

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ABSTRACT
Contemporary methods in architecture, and even more so recent display technologies challenge novel designs for hybrid architecture. With the dropping prices for LED technology more and more facades will be lit, displaying large-scale media content and allow for interaction. Screens will be increasingly custom tailored to address specific economical needs and creative concepts. Hence screens in all measures are about to pervade urban public space. Radical changes for the so-called specific local appearance of a city as well as for the culture of public urban space will be two of many consequences. The 19 century introduction of light in public spaces accompanied by the advent of advertisement changed not only appearance of cities and led to the development of the icon of the modern city. Moreover it gave rise for new social groups being able to use the city at dawn and night and establish new urban behaviour, like night-time shopping. Today we witness the beginning of a new transformation: Urban Light changes from a technology to brighten the night into a medium of communication and interaction. The paper will focus on the question: are we going to stay silent witnesses of this socio-technological evolution or are we going to shape the upcoming urban mass medium interdisciplinary and creatively?