



Award of

MERIT

SteelStacks Campus

Bethlehem, PA

L'Observatoire International

Hervé Descottes, Wei Jien, Jeff Taylor, Jessica Jie Soo Tchah, Kristy Philp, and Oliver Huang



The SteelStacks Campus in Bethlehem, PA, is the former Bethlehem Steel plant turned dynamic arts and cultural campus. The redevelopment focuses on the 10 acre central core that includes multiple performance venues, plazas, and parks.

The lighting installation brought new life to an old factory that hasn't been active in 20 years. L'Observatoire's design gives a visceral sense of the action that once took place within the furnaces, creating a dynamic lighting scheme using saturated colors that highlight the various functional elements of the steel factory.

Elements closest to the visitors are lit first, then a layer further back, and so on until all of the elements of the factory are visible. The first sequence at sundown uses red lighting, the second a deeper red, and following sequences gradually turn to blue, echoing the fires of the furnaces being ignited and then cooling down. At the end of each sequence, which lasts an hour, the lights flicker in a dynamic "sparkle" effect, and the entire factory comes to life.

"At night, we should feel the burn and see the roughness of material. We don't want the beautification of Disneyland, or for it to be melancholic."

—Hervé Descottes

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