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IN THE NIGHT

By Susanne Schuricht

In Berlin, where I live, everything in the city is marked with Prussian frugality and strict regulations that dictate building heights. Nothing changes that much. I wanted to grasp what was meant when Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, said, "Why make small steps if you can make big ones?" So I went to see it for real. To see how it compared to the images in my head, of fantasy landscapes and Luna Park, of new Towers of Babel and newer Pyramids of Giza.

I got the impression that most of life is going on indoors in Dubai: inside the villas, office buildings, and malls. At night, it's like Dubai is waking up, exactly when the temperature is going down.

During these hours, the future face of Dubai appears. The buildings are set out against the darkness by their construction lights. Each lit-level marks each new floor. Everything shifts at night. In the daytime Dubai is impressive, but not mystical. That's why I began to feel that I wanted to shoot at night. I had a special interest in construction sites because there you can feel at night what is still hidden during the day. I call these photos *First Series*.

This series deals with structures that have their own life, their own temporary dynamic. Burj Dubai is just another structure in the night, with lights that rise towards the sky and make it seem taller than it already is. The promise of the Burj seems more genuine during these hours.

Sometimes, at night, you're in a *Matrix* movie, where only a campfire of orange lights offers some heat. Sometimes beings from foreign planets appear at the horizon or on a gigantic opera stage. Robots communicate with their antennae. The rest of us don't exist. It is a surreal atmosphere. When the lights are switched off maybe they've gone. In a way, it is all a mirage, on the way to somewhere else.

