



*„five ways to switch off the lighth“
www.switchoff.org
2004*

Switch Off

Tim Otto Roth was awarded with the first German Light Art Award „LUX.US“ on 5 March 2004. For the city of Lüdenscheid he developed the concept Switch Off - a reaction on the urban light pollution inspired by the recent blackouts in Northern America and Italy. Switching of the current for one hour he wanted to sensitize the 80.000 inhabitants of the city of Lüdenscheid for the night sky as a rarely perceived source of natural light and to remind to the infinite space above us. Uwe Rüth wrote in the juries plea: “To win a light award with an action centring the darkness implicates to render moot the whole light art and to disclose that light can't exist without darkness”.

The project was already in the advanced stage of realization. But finally the project failed in the „city of light“, in spite of an intensive dialogue with the power supply company of Lüdenscheid. The decisive factor for the failure of the realization was that the radicality of the idea, for which it finally was priced, could not be reconciled with the premise of the power supply company, that Switch Off should be based solely on the voluntariness. The artist understands this political decision of an entrepreneur. However an ambitious art project failed again because art offered a striking surface and resisted a simple consumption.

Nevertheless Switch Off in Lüdenscheid had already a couple of effects: the project brought together an artist and an energy provider in order to discuss on a round table earnestly how one could turn off for an hour the light in a 80,000 inhabitants counting city. In several articles and press releases already the population was informed - whereby the expected outcry failed to appear. Finally with the promise of the minister of culture Dr. Michael Vesper to function as a patron the project got top-level support! Switch Off is failed therefore in no case, it will be realized however in another place.

www.switchoff.org

the awarded concept: *www.photograms.net/press/luxus/luxuskonzkurz.pdf*

plea of the jury: *www.photograms.net/press/luxus/luxuxpleajury.pdf*