

LIGHT POINTS

On January 26, 2025, the Underground Stage presented the artistic intervention *Light Points*, a walking route through nine historical sites around “Synergeio”. The project aimed to highlight forgotten stories and their significance in public space by illuminating selected locations with artistic interventions.

The research of architect and cultural heritage researcher Sevina Floridou guided the selection of these locations, while visual artist Julia Georgiadou and lighting designer Vasilis Peteinaris created unique lighting installations that transformed these spaces into living narratives.

People of all ages explored the city and discovered the historical and cultural importance of these sites through light, art, and storytelling, experiencing a unique connection with the everyday public space.

Below, you can read a summary of the stories of each location, following the order of the walk, based on the research and texts of Sevina Floridou. You can also view photos of the illuminated sites, capturing the atmosphere of the intervention.

01-LIGHT POINTS: “River and the Bridge of the Four Lanterns”

The river of Limassol, which was affected by heavy rainfall, frequently caused flooding in the city. The floods of the 19th century, especially in 1894, were devastating and left lasting marks. The river had three names: "Garyllis" for its muddy condition, "The Wolf" when it was swollen, and "The Deep" for its depth. Vassilis Michaeilidis, in his poem about the flood of 1894, describes how the city turned into a dark sea in just one hour.

In 1914, under the guidance of Mayor Spyros Araouzou, the river area was transformed with decorative trees, giving the city a rural feel. In 1919, Limassol was considered "the most beautiful and cleanest city on the island" by the governor, Malcom Stevenson.

The Bridge of Four Lanterns was built between 1898-1900 by the British administration to address the needs following the 19th-century floods. It was the first metal bridge in the city, which possibly replaced an Ottoman bridge. The bridge had two stone foundations, two stone arches, and a metal deck. On top, there were four cast-iron lampposts, which gave the bridge its name, "Four Lanterns."

In the early 1960s, during the intercommunal clashes, the bridge became a symbol of the division between the communities in the city.



Image description: The image shows a group of people under a bridge at night. The space is illuminated with blue and purple lights, creating an atmospheric setting. Some people are engaged in conversation, while others are looking towards a point of interest. In the background, there are trees, streetlights, and murals.

02 LIGHT POINTS: “Silap Sahitlery, Cemetery of the Flood Victims of 1894”

The 1894 floods were the second worst in a series of floods that affected the city since 1880. Contemporary reports describe 23 victims who were found in the mud of flooded homes along the riverbanks. Oral history recalls that they were first taken to the bathhouse in the Dere Hammam neighbourhood (now the Talias Ouzo factory) to be ritually prepared for burial in the designated cemetery (Akif, 2008).

In 1932, Hazif Dervish Effendi built the stone fence with a wrought-iron gate, framed by carved stone pillars, topped with a stone lintel that bore an inscription in Turkish: "1894 YILI SEILAP SEHITLER MEZARLICI" (Cemetery of the victims of the 1894 flood). This stone inscription disappeared after 2003.

Image description: The image shows a stone wall at night, with a brightly lit rectangular frame in its centre. The frame surrounds a section of the wall, highlighting it with intense white light. Around the wall, there is dense vegetation, trees, and grass, while the rest of the environment remains dark.



03 LIGHTPOINTS: “Neighborhood of the Women of the River”

Pilavakis mentions that the area along the river was known for its "nightlife." Levkis vividly describes the river area, which was flooded with the poor, beggars, and many prostitutes. With the development of that era, the city had acquired both high-class and low-class brothels, whose clientele grew with the hundreds of British soldiers arriving at the nearby port. The poor, marginalized women living in the western outskirts of the city, along the banks of the Garyllis River, were referred to as the "Women of the River."

It is no surprise, therefore, that the cemetery for the expelled souls lost in the floods was separately buried in the neighborhood in anonymous graves.

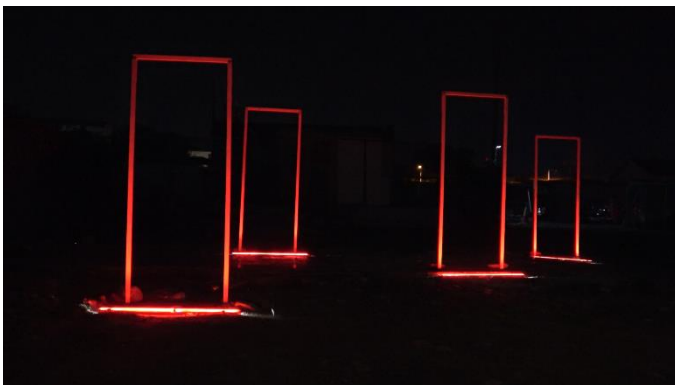


Image description: The image depicts a nighttime art installation featuring four glowing red gates in an open space. The gates are metallic, rectangular, and illuminated with neon lights, creating a futuristic atmosphere. The surrounding darkness emphasizes the vivid red glow, while faint city buildings and lights are visible in the background.

04 LIGHT POINTS: “The Domed Fountain at Gazi Pasha Square (Kubbeli Çeşme)”

Alternative names for the fountain: Süleyman Agha Çeşmesi, İsmet Pasha Fountain, Fountain of the Good Samaritan

The fountain, built in the western Turkish Cypriot neighbourhood of Limassol during the late Ottoman period, before 1870, by Mayor Süleyman Agha. It was a source of water for both the residents and the animals. It is located in the centre of a triangular square that separated the affluent 'Lower' neighbourhood from the poorer 'Upper' side.

The fountain consisted of a stone base with three steps and four round marble columns that supported arches. At the top, there was a cross-shaped domed roof with a pyramidal prism. The fountain was mainly used by workers who washed their faces before heading to the warehouses or factories.

In the 1960s, it was damaged by a truck and later further destroyed during the intercommunal clashes and the Turkish Invasion of 1974. In 2007, the Limassol Municipality restored the fountain, returning it to the city as a public landmark



Image description: The image depicts a nighttime outdoor event with a crowd gathered around a stone fountain with Gothic arches, illuminated by blue light. There are trees, buildings with flags, and shadows cast by the lighting in the square.

05 LIGHT POINTS: “The Jendi Mosque (Friday Prayer Mosque), Minaret and Cemetery (1826)”

Alternative names: Köprülü Hacı İbrahim Agha Mosque, The River Mosque, The New Mosque (Yeni Jami, 1913).

The Jendi Mosque (1826) is located on the eastern bank of the Garyllis (or Lycos) river in Limassol and it is one of the most important historical buildings in the city. It was built by Köprülü Hadji İbrahim Agha, who survived Napoleon's campaign in Egypt and Syria, promising to build a mosque if he returned alive. The mosque was inaugurated in 1826 and has undergone many restorations due to natural disasters, such as the 1894 floods. The original minaret was destroyed and rebuilt in 1913, and in 1914, a canopy was added at the entrance to facilitate the worshippers.

The mosque is linked to the historical and cultural landscape of the city, with inscriptions above the entrance recording the events of these restorations. The lower inscription refers to the original construction of the mosque in 1826, while the upper one honours the second restoration after

the 1894 floods.

The area around the mosque has been beautified with the planting of olive trees, prickly pears, and palm trees. The landscape has been depicted in various paintings and photographs, capturing the changes in the environment and the life of the city.

Today, the Jendi Mosque continues to serve the Muslim community of Limassol, remaining a living religious and historical monument, a reminder of the region's enduring history.

Image description: A mirror, placed on the ground among stones, reflects the interior of an old stone bridge with an arched structure. The mirror is surrounded by a thin luminous strip, accentuating its outline and creating an atmospheric contrast with the dark surroundings.



06 LIGHT POINTS: “Turkish Cypriot Girls’ School (around 1890)”

Other uses: Co-educational municipal school and boarding school (around 1950-1974).

The school building, located on Ankara Street (formerly Hameli Street), was constructed around 1890 with a donation from the judge of Limassol, Bodamializade Hakki Effendi. It initially served as a girl’s school, and in 1949, it was converted into a mixed school. In the 1950s and 1960s, it was expanded, and it was used as a boarding school for Turkish Cypriot girls from the surrounding villages. The building features colonial architectural characteristics, with single-story wings and a covered veranda with an elegant arched portico on the front facade.

The facade displays distinct architectural features such as intricate stone framing, arches, and carved Narcissus motifs. The building, which does not have windows facing the street, ensures the privacy of the students. On the veranda, Maltese tiles and small protrusions for bird nests add traditional Ottoman charm.

After years of restoration, the building functioned as a community centre, but recent interventions, such as the construction of parking areas and the cementing of gardens, have degraded the historical and aesthetic value of the building. Despite being listed as a protected monument, these changes have destroyed much of the historical landscaping and its significance as one of the oldest schools on the island.



Image description: The image shows the side view of a house at night. Two windows with open shutters emit a warm, yellow light. In the centre, a closed blue shutter is brightly illuminated, creating a striking contrast. A low-lit pathway runs along the bottom of the image.

07 LIGHT POINTS: “Tumbezia”

The Tumbezia, also known as the fig tree, is an evergreen tree with heart-shaped leaves and dense shade. During the summer, it produces small ochre-coloured figs on its branches. The tree, introduced to Cyprus from East Africa, thrives in the coastal areas of the island due to the mild climate. Since the Middle Ages, it has been popular in the gardens and orchards of the Middle East and North Africa.

Orchards with fig trees, known as "Bakhchédes Toumbezion," provided shade and coolness to the inhabitants and were popular for relaxing moments in outdoor coffee shops. The trees were planted near water tanks, keeping the water cool and offering shady paths. Giorgos Seferis referred to his experience under a centuries-old fig tree in Ayia Napa, describing the natural beauty of the place.

The tree located today at the corner of a public parking area is 200-300 years old and is the last Tumbezia in the city centre.

Image description: The image shows the Toumpeziá tree at night, with dense foliage and a thick, carved trunk. A bright LED line cuts through the air, forming a horizontal luminous intervention among the branches. In the background, yellow streetlights and a dark sky can be seen.



08 LIGHT POINTS: Stories and counter-stories in Cleopatra’s alley

This particular side of the neighbourhood (or mahalla) was mixed, but with mainly Turkish Cypriot inhabitants. Walking along Cleopatra Street, one can observe the colonial-era architecture, which reflects social changes while also referencing some oral histories.

Story 1: The Akif House on Cleopatra Street – Easter Memory

Here stands the house of the Akif brothers, Ozay and Selcuk Akif, whom Sevina Floridou tells us she had the pleasure and privilege of meeting in 2003, during a project funded by UNOPS-CCF, researching how Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot neighbourhoods in Limassol coexisted until the present day.

She is always moved by the following story they shared as they walked with architect Tassos Andreou along the road to their house on that sunny winter afternoon in 2003, with the soft afternoon light streaming down the street from the west. This walk became possible immediately after the opening of the checkpoints for citizens.

Picture the following scene in your mind: The Greek Cypriot residents of the Agios Anthony parish walk down this alley on their way to the church, on the western outskirts, dressed in their best clothes with their Easter candles glowing in the night. Their Turkish Cypriot neighbours stand in their doorways, greeting the procession of Christian neighbours passing by, wishing them well and offering

trays of baklava and sweets specially prepared for the occasion.



Image description: A nighttime scene in a narrow street with old houses, illuminated by orange lights. A group of people walks or stands, observing something. Along the houses, small lights on the sidewalk and windowsills create a subtle, atmospheric glow, enhancing the sense of a guided path.

Story 2: The House with the Carved Wooden Door of Usta Suleiman Arifoglu on Cleopatra Street

This is an example of Cypriot woodcraft, built by Usta Suleiman Arifoglu (1882-1951), a famous carpenter from Limassol. The door, which cost 66 pounds, was the most sought-after and expensive of its time, impressing with its rich floral decoration. Arifoglu was also known for his baroque-style furniture. Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot craftsmen worked together harmoniously in the construction of the mansions, with the former specializing in stone and the latter in wood.

Image description: An old wooden door with intricate carvings, framed by stone decoration, stands in the middle of a weathered facade. Three steps lead up to the entrance, while warm orange light illuminates the wall, and small lights highlight the scene.



Story 3: The Balcony Scene, Loutsios Residence, Corner of Eleftherias and Cleopatra Streets (Formerly Chrysostomidis Hotel, built around 1900-1908)

A photograph from 1964, taken from the balcony of the Loutsios residence and found in the archive of Makarios Drousiotis, captures young Greek Cypriots posing with British rifles, influenced by movie stars of the time. The youths, lying on the balcony, aim towards the neighborhood, including the houses of Arifoglu and Akif. A few days later, in February 1964, the area became the focal point of armed conflict, with the fate of the residents on Cleopatra Street marking the course of the country, as violence spread to the Turkish Cypriot neighborhoods.

09 LIGHTPOINTS: “Eleftherias Street”

- **REGAL Cinema**

In the 1960s, an ambitious young man from Platres built the Regal Cinema in Limassol, along with a series of shops and apartments designed in a modern colonial style. However, in 1964, the new development on Eleftherias Street was reportedly requisitioned by the Minister of the Interior, Polycarpus Georgiades, for the needs of the central guard, as the area became a strategic zone during the conflict. The business was destroyed, and the owner, due to unpaid loans, saw his property lost overnight.

Image description: A nighttime scene in front of the old Regal cinema, with a worn-out facade covered in graffiti. A crowd has gathered, listening to two men speaking. A purple light illuminates the entrance, highlighting the aged concrete and creating a nostalgic atmosphere.



- **A story of a good neighborhood on Eleftherias street**

Mrs. Tasoula accepted his proposal, and their wedding was set for Sunday, February 15, 1964. "Our wedding almost got cancelled, I thought it wasn't my destiny to get married. The fact that we managed to go through with the wedding, I owe it to our Turkish Cypriot neighbour."

"The other neighbours across the street, seeing that he had come, became unfrightened and came too. We called the priest, and he came, and we had the wedding done. Nothing special, just to get it over with. That's how we got married," she concluded quietly. "If he hadn't come, we wouldn't have gone ahead with the wedding those days."

Two houses away, there is a two-story konaki. On that day, the Turkish Cypriot owner of the konaki was informed at his doorstep by the Greek Cypriot army that he had to leave his family home, as it had been requisitioned to serve the Greek Cypriot guard, and he and his family had to gather their belongings and leave immediately.

So, what did this man do on that fateful day, his last as a Limassolian?

He went to his neighbours' house to bid farewell to Tasoula's parents and congratulate the newlyweds.

Image description: The image depicts the facade of a two-story building at night. Colourful lights project pink and white floral-like patterns onto the wall. A small balcony with an iron railing is centered, with an open window beside it. In the foreground, a bare tree is visible.

