

New Orleans at Night





New
Orleans
at Night

The Magic of the
Crescent City After Dark

Kerri McCaffety



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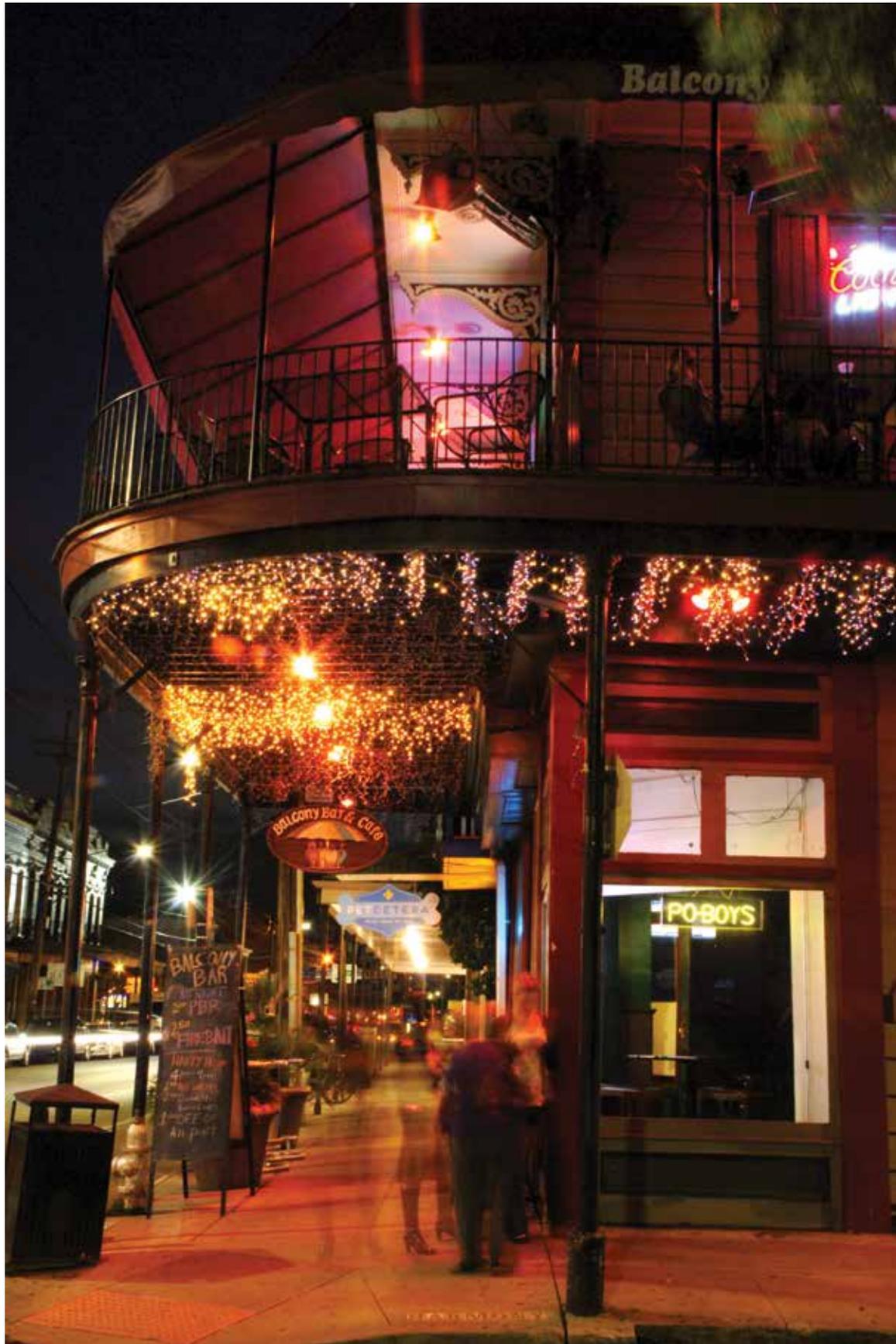


For Leonardo and Gabriel who wish on stars



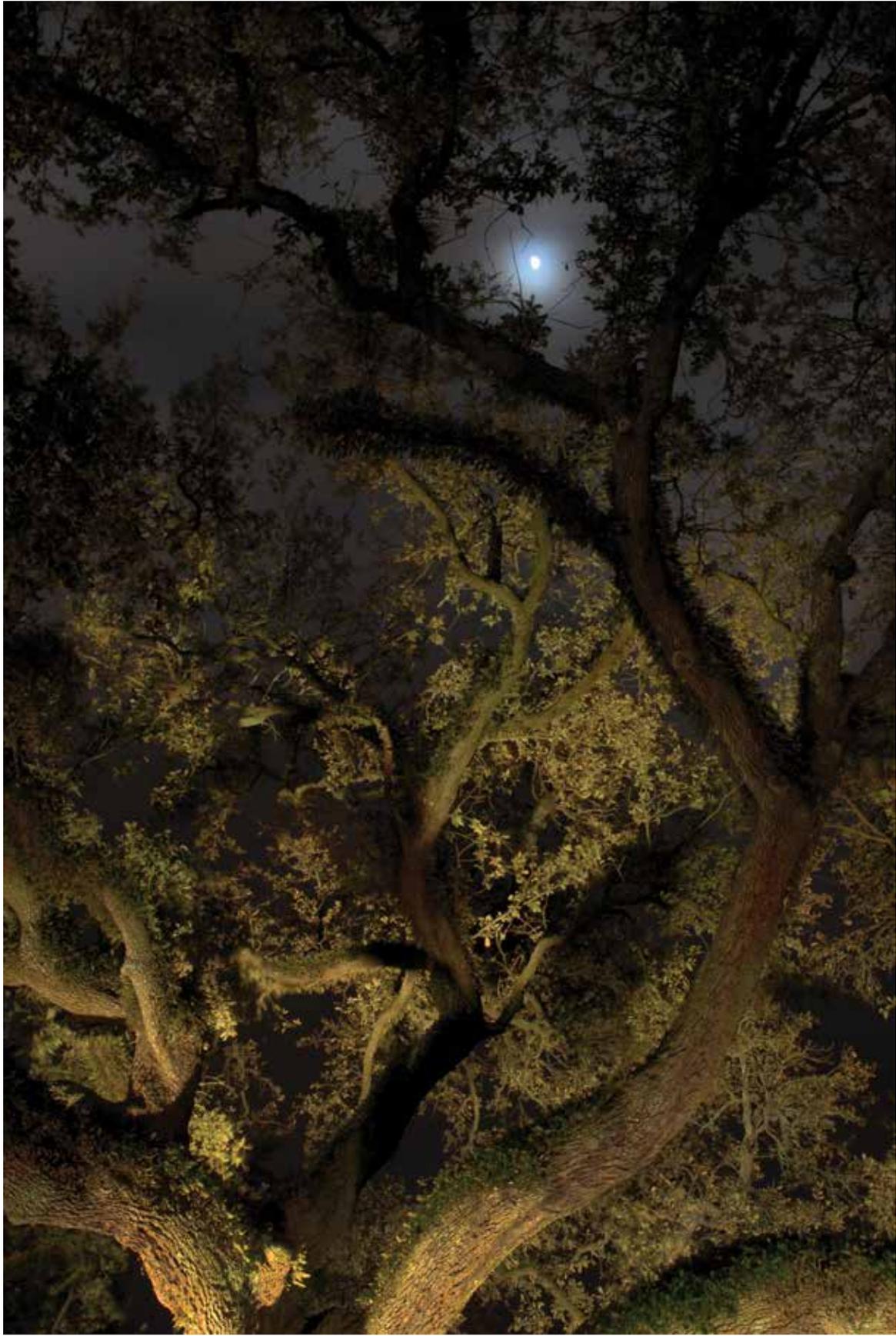
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The Balcony Bar & Cafe, Magazine Street

*I often think that the night is more alive
and more richly colored than the day.*
—Vincent Van Gogh



Introduction by Kerri McCaffety

New Orleans is a night city. Like Paris, its night lights are of a subtle beauty, not spectacularly bold like the Las Vegas Strip or New York's Times Square. New Orleans' night beauty is made of ephemeral things—cemetery angels, lacy tree branches, rippling reflections, and wisps of clouds covering the moon.

Like Paris in the 1930s when Brassai fell in love with the dark and created *Paris de Nuit*, 21st-century New Orleans' nights are rich with life, art, music, and food. The city, both sophisticated and bohemian, is an ever-fascinating blend of old and new.

This is my 17th book and a next verse in my visual love letter to New Orleans. The beauty of night is hard to capture photographically and always surprising. In these long-exposure, low-light images, the camera shows movement in unexpected ways and records saturated, vibrant colors that you barely see with the naked eye. For many months, I set out with my camera as the sun went down. I chased the beauty of New Orleans nights—from the lights that glitter on Lake Pontchartrain to moonrise over the Mississippi River.



*Here you have a night painting
without black.*

—Vincent Van Gogh

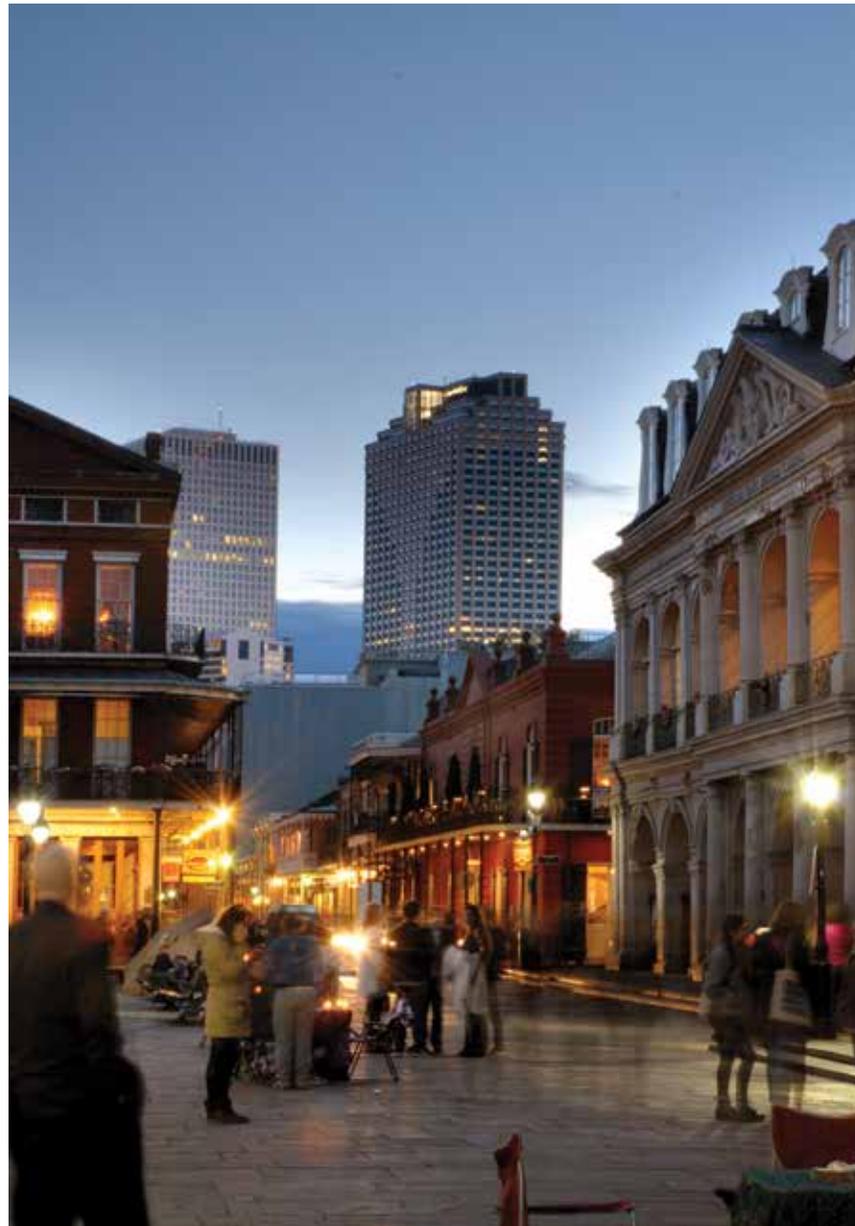
The photographs of Brassai in *Paris by Night* inspired this book, but black and white can only show the profound contrast of light and dark. Long before Brassai captured the lights of Paris, even before the turn of the 20th century, artists like Van Gogh found the night to be filled with unexpected colors.

In 1888, after finishing *Café Terrace at Night*, Van Gogh wrote this in a letter to his sister: “I was only interrupted by my work on a new painting representing the exterior of a night café. On the terrace there are small figures of people drinking. An immense yellow lantern illuminates the terrace, the façade, the side walk and even casts light on the paving stones of the road which take a pinkish violet tone. The gables of the houses, like a fading road below a blue sky studded with stars, are dark blue or violet with a green tree. Here you have a night painting without black, with nothing but beautiful blue and violet and green and in this surrounding the illuminated area colours itself sulfur pale yellow and citron green.”

My photographs of New Orleans at night are inspired by the black and white images of Brassai and the frenetic colors of Van Gogh and the city itself, the Paris of the New World experiencing its most exciting era yet, now in the early decades of the 21st century.

*Night, the beloved. Night, when words
fade and things come alive. When the
destructive analysis of day is done, and all
that is truly important becomes whole and
sound again. When man reassembles his
fragmentary self and grows with the calm
of a tree.*

—Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



Chapter 1: Uptown



Lower Garden District



Riverbend



The World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition of 1884 (Louisiana's first world's fair) laid the foundation for Audubon Park. The entrance pillars on St. Charles Avenue were designed by John Charles Olmstead in 1897.



At the entrance of Audubon Park is a bronze sculpture by Isadore Konti, *The Meeting of Air and Water*, Gumbel Memorial Fountain, 1919.





Isadore Konti's 1919 bronze is bathed in seasonal colors at the entrance to Audubon Park.





Lighting was added to Audubon Park trees, entrance pillars, and the Gumbel Memorial Fountain in 2015.