

## The magnificence of Dubai captured in 8 seconds

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For a number of years, Montreal photographer Nicolas Ruel has been working on “8 seconds,” an ambitious project of photographic works offering a new look at the world’s great cities. From Paris to New York, from London to Tokyo, he is conducting a sharp and structural exploration of figures of architecture, light, and industry. A stop in Dubai was inevitable.

### Dubai, theatre of new and luminous energy

When he visited Dubai for the first time, in 2006, Ruel sensed the effervescence of a city in transformation and motion. He decided to return in 2012 to capture the architectural settings of this quintessential figure of urban modernity. Inspired by the city’s palpable pace and energy, he explored its light, textures, and materials.

The Dubai International Financial Centre, the marina, the old city, the many tall buildings, and the illustrious Burj Khalifa were subjects that particularly caught Ruel’s eye. “The Burj Khalifa is fascinating not only because it is the tallest skyscraper in the world,” Ruel explains, “but because its layered architecture creates an illusion of gradual evaporation and it is integrated perfectly into the urban landscape.”

Transfiguring the city’s qualities in his images, Ruel offers a luminous, graphic, fast-paced Dubai in which metal, glass, and concrete are stunningly superimposed on the heat of the desert.



### 8 seconds: a work in motion

Ruel has come up with a new way to take pictures that he has used for a major body of work called 8 seconds, in reference to the shutter speed used for the photographs. Since 2007, he has been refining an in-camera double-exposure technique that involves a quick swivelling motion of the camera. With this technique, a second shot is overlain on the main shot, providing a new and enhanced dimension to the image. This project, bringing together pictures taken between 2007 and the fall of 2014 in some sixty cities in forty countries, offers an original look at the urban world.

### **About Nicolas Ruel**

Nicolas Ruel is a professional photographer specializing in architecture and culture. His first exhibition, *Inox*, took place in 2005 and featured a collection of large-format prints on stainless steel plates. This type of presentation became his signature and inspired other series, including *Elements*, *Carnival*, and his current project, *8 seconds*.

Ruel's works have been featured in solo and group exhibitions and in contemporary art fairs in Canada, Europe, and the United States. They are included in numerous public and private collections, including the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Power Corporation, and Rothschild Investment Banking.

Ruel is represented in Europe by Galerie Seine 51 (Paris) and in North America by Galerie de Bellefeuille (Montreal).

Seine 51 – Galerie d'art contemporain  
[www.seine51.com](http://www.seine51.com)

Galerie de Bellefeuille  
[www.debellefeuille.com](http://www.debellefeuille.com)

Ruel's works are currently on display in London as part of the exhibition *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier – From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*.  
Barbican Centre, London, England  
from 9 April to 25 August 2014

BY NICOLAS RUEL PHOTOGRAPHER