CHICAGO LIGHTS

Please look up. The moving walkway is coming to an end.
A moving experience at Chicago’s O’Hare Airport

Photographs by Andrew Davidhazy
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This is a collection photographs made with a Canon Digital SLR and an Apple iPhone while on the moving walkway connecting terminals B and C at Chicago’s O’Hare International airport.

The neon light display flashes multicolored patterns that appear to travel along the length of the tunnel and while visually these look like continuous sources of light they are, in fact, flashing at a high frequency which makes them appear to be so.

However, the intermittent nature of the lights can be visualized and exploited by quickly moving the camera with the shutter set to a longish time if the camera has such provision or, if not, as in the case of the iPhone, by moving the camera very rapidly so the tubes appear to be in different positions on the camera’s sensor.

While reminiscent of the “toss the camera” movement, in this case the camera is held and rotated, gyrated or waved from side to side as the exposure is made. With a DSLR the sensitivity might be at 100, the aperture at f/11 and the time 1/4 to 1 second in duration. Using the iPhone the exposure time is not controllable and because it is relatively short, movement of the image of the fluorescent tubes across the sensor is accomplished by much faster movements of the camera.

There is a significant element of “luck” in capturing a visually captivating image but it is very satisfying that during the “post-visualization” (editing!) process one discovers a jewel or two as a result of the experience.

Not to mention the look of amazement and disbelief generated on the faces of fellow travelers on the moving walkway and amused witnesses to the process.
Warning: You should be looking DOWN, not Up, as the moving walkway comes to an end. But do look UP to make the photographs!