



## JO FAIRFAX NESTA Fellow

SCULPTOR / HOLOGRAPHER / DESIGNER / VIRTUAL REALITY PRACTITIONER / ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING

Since 1995 I have worked as a public artist. My practice is varied. I light buildings, make public sculptures, sculptural seating, integrate poetry, make digital films, create holograms, design for dance, produce architectural glass with etched, silk screened and slumped glass. I trained in Holography at the Royal College of Art, London. I learnt how to make holographic animations at the Holocentre, New York. I was awarded the NESTA Dream Time Fellowship to develop virtual reality as a public artform. I was shortlisted for the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad Artists taking the lead competition.

My previous work include:

- Millennium Cones public sculpture for Leicester City Council – 4 six and a half metre high artificial grass cones rising out of the existing landscaping sited on a ring road roundabout.
- Haymarket Leicester, canopy glass entrance - a pre-programmed light changing display and coloured slumped glass panels.
- Sculptural lighting for Persistence Works Sheffield (shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Building of the Year Award and commended by the Civic Trust in 2004).
- Three bus shelters in Chelmsford High street (nominated for the best public art in Essex in 2003).
- Public sculptural seating for Tesco in Leicester where the wind is captured in parabolic dishes and the sound within the wind transferred down the seat to laser cut listening disc's within the seat backs.
- Re-designed the Insect Gallery, Wollaton Hall, Nottingham.
- Illuminated Southwell Minster and Wollaton Hall (Natural History Museum), Nottinghamshire.
- Pre-programmed changing lighting of the two Toll Houses in Gainsborough with hidden mist sensors so that when the river mist arrives, it switches on 2 white spot lights secretly housed in the chimney pots, which use the mist as a screen for the white light.
- Designed the artwork for the glass entrance to the Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery.
- Six of my digital films were part of the British Artist's videos screened at the Royal College of Art, London 2003.
- I was awarded an International Artist's residency at the Holocentre, New York in 2002 where I made two holographic animations.
- In 2005 I had a sculptural pre-programmed lighting piece installed for Gateshead Council in the new Sage Gateshead car park.
- Installed a sculptural lighting piece for the new Hillsborough College, Sheffield. Two nine meter stainless steel cones are adorned with 3000 small shiny stainless steel propellers that rotate in the wind and sparkle in the sunlight. At night-time they are illuminated by 4 pre-programmed colour-changing spotlights. The rotating propellers reflect the slowly changing colour of the lights.
- I was shortlisted with Patel Taylor architects to redesign the Market Square in Nottingham – incorporating virtual reality – we were placed in the top three (International Competition) and won the public vote.
- I have an 11m x 10m sculptural lighting piece installed at the Neptune Marina, Ipswich in the shape of an inverted water droplet. The sculpture changes colour throughout the evening.
- I have designed the new Market Place for Chester – ie – Street District Council, Co Durham, which includes a 23m brick arch with integrated lighting and 57 linear meters of granite seats incorporating etched poetry and lights. Nominated for 3 awards detailed below.
- I have installed a looped dvd projection onto the Sage Gateshead Music Centre, car park facade.
- I was awarded an Oxford Film and Video award with NESTA dancer Fiona Millward to produce a dance film
- NAN Award to develop dance work in relation to architecture with NESTA dancer Fiona Millward
- Dance film residency - Danslab, Swindon with NESTA dancer Fiona Millward
- Design 7 dance costumes for Fiona Millward's site specific Oxford dance 'Arch' at Worcester College.
- Second Oxford Film and Video award with NESTA dancer Fiona Millward to produce a dance film. Shown at the Phoenix cinema, Oxford and the film festival, Oxford 2009.
- Entrance lighting feature for the new Heart and Lung Hospital, Bristol. Awarded best Healthcare project for 2009.
- 25m x 2.5m yew hedge that lights up when people kiss in the central arch. Sheffield Hallam University
- Lighting designer for the new Market Square lighting, Northampton including a 165 minute looped projection. No 2 hours are the same for the year. Seasonal colour lighting palette.
- Asked to write a Cultural Strategy for part of Gateshead by Mcinerney Homes for a proposed new development.
- Kinetic mechanical tree activated by people's movement. Walton Hospital, Derbyshire.

## Current projects include:

- 33m wide x 3.8m long glazing for the new Northern Ballet Theatre building, Leeds. Coded animated images. The images move as people walk past the building.
- Designing the new Market Place for Wooller, Northumberland.
- 24 Interactive sculptural lighting columns for the new Bury town centre. A conversation in light.
- Designing the new Railway Town Station Square, Colchester
- I am the Artist on the Cultural Think Tank team to redevelop the cultural experience of Silverstone
- Kinetic robotic sculpture for Chester-le-Street, County Durham.

In January 06 I had a one man show at the City Gallery, Leicester as the first stage culmination of my NESTA Dream Time award developing virtual reality as a public art form. 1000 people experienced the fully immersive artwork within a pre-programmed headset. There was a strong reaction to the experience. Two quotes supplied by the City Gallery from participants give a sense of the response:

- *The images were so beautiful I cried. It's a type of image I've dreamt about since I was very young, of objects suspended in no content, no space I guess.*

- *I am 63 years old. I have never experienced anything like that in my life. It is amazing.*

*21.1.06. The Guardian described the vr experience as '...float off into other worlds of serene beauty and unnerving drama. Fairfax has always displayed a sensitive use of often quite subtle sculptural elements for their evocative and poetic potential. Here he lets you explore to the full, in the 3D virtual world of your own susceptible consciousness, his vision of everything as somehow bewilderingly wonderful'.*

*The show was recommended 3 weeks running as the top five shows to visit nationally in the Guardian.*

I have completed a book 'The rambling ruminations of an average Jo' which has been described by John Moat (co-founder of the Arvon Foundation):

*'I'm amazed by it. I'm amazed by the sheer grip that sustains it and the sustained invention that makes it compelling and which gives it a real and quite imposing presence'.*

I have received numerous awards ranging from eight Arts Council East Midlands Awards, two Southern Arts Awards, The Wingate Commonwealth Award to the New Technologies Award (Leicester City Gallery), Oxford Film and Video Award and the NESTA Dream Time Award (Fellowship). My work is included in the following magazines: Art and architecture, Artists Newsletter 2003 jan 08, June 08, August 08, Roadside Art 2001, Architecture Today 2002, Sci-Art 2000, Northern Garden, South Bank Centre London publication, Dialogue in the Dark, Architects Journal 1997, 2002 and 2008, Off Beat Magazine, Public Art in Tyne and Wear, Commissions in the North East of England 2003 - 2007 and the Guardian 2006. It is also featured in the Feilden Clegg and Bradley environmental handbook 2008.

The Chester-le-Street Market Place project was nominated for three architectural awards. 'Most Innovative use of Brick and Clay' and 'Best Landscaping in Brick' in Britain and the 'British Urban Regeneration Award' 2007.

The project is featured in Braun's 'Set in Stone' - a book about exciting architectural projects in Europe. The work is also included in the International Lighting Index, an index highlighting innovative lighting projects throughout Europe.

The Northampton Market Square Lighting including a 2.5 hour projection onto a shopping centre façade was awarded 'Cultural Olympiad' status. Also currently nominated for the Philips International Lighting Awards.

The slumped glass and gold leaf entrance piece for Dudley School is included in Charles R Hajdamach's book - '20 Century British Glass'.

I have represented Britain in the International and World Snow Sculpting Championships held in Colorado and Moscow respectively (we finished 7<sup>th</sup> from 20).