

Public Art Strategy

4.4 Examples of Artworks in Urban Environments...

This section provides a series of case study examples of successful artworks in urban environments. These have been specifically selected as a similar approach might be considered appropriate for parts of Chester. Each artwork example gives a suggested location or context within Chester (which relates to the projects identified in the strategy in section 4.5).

1. Exeter Traceries

- Artist: Katayoun Dowlatshahi
- Client: Land Securities
- Commissioner: inSite arts
- Type: Permanent, Architectural Glass
- Suggested location/context in Chester: Northgate Development



Exeter Traceries by Katayoun Dowlatshahi Client: Land Securities © inSite arts

Six glass panels, each measuring 4137 mm by 1748 mm, have been installed on the facade of the pavilion featuring the work of Iranian-born British artist Katayoun Dowlatshahi. Inspired by the sacred architecture of Exeter Cathedral, and in close proximity behind the square, the artist has created a series of 'windows' which echo the notion of a medieval rood screen. In the same way that cathedral windows are intended as apertures to heavenly bodies, as well as being focal points for personal contemplation, the glass panels bring to a secular space the opportunity for peaceful reflection while at the same time emphasizing the ephemeral nature of light.

The designs appearing on each glass panel, applied through a process of hot enamelling and silk screening, also carry references to the city's network of medieval subterranean aqueducts.



2. The Pits, Canterbury

- Artist: Janet Hodgson
- Client: Land Securities
- Commissioner: inSite arts
- Type: Permanent, Paving
- Suggested location/context in Chester: The Walls Breakages/Northgate Development

Janet's permanent work celebrates the artistry of archaeology that both records and interprets on-site archaeological findings. It consists of sandblasted drawings in the york stone paving slabs of Whitefriars Square. The sandblasted drawings are exact copies of the stratigraphic archaeological drawings of the pits or holes that were found on the site during the excavations, enlarged to full size and positioned exactly where they were discovered.

The work was developed during more than a year's observations of the archaeological excavation and recording that took place on the site. Janet was fascinated not only in what the archaeologists found, but also in the detail of the excavation process, what the archaeologists considered important and how they 'drew' time. She was also struck by the archaeological practice of removal - a direct inversion of the normal process of construction.

The drawings reproduced on the paving stones were executed with exacting precision, all using the agreed form of notation or language, yet each one retains the hand of the person who drew them. They serve as permanent reminders of the many dedicated and talented individuals who worked on the site.



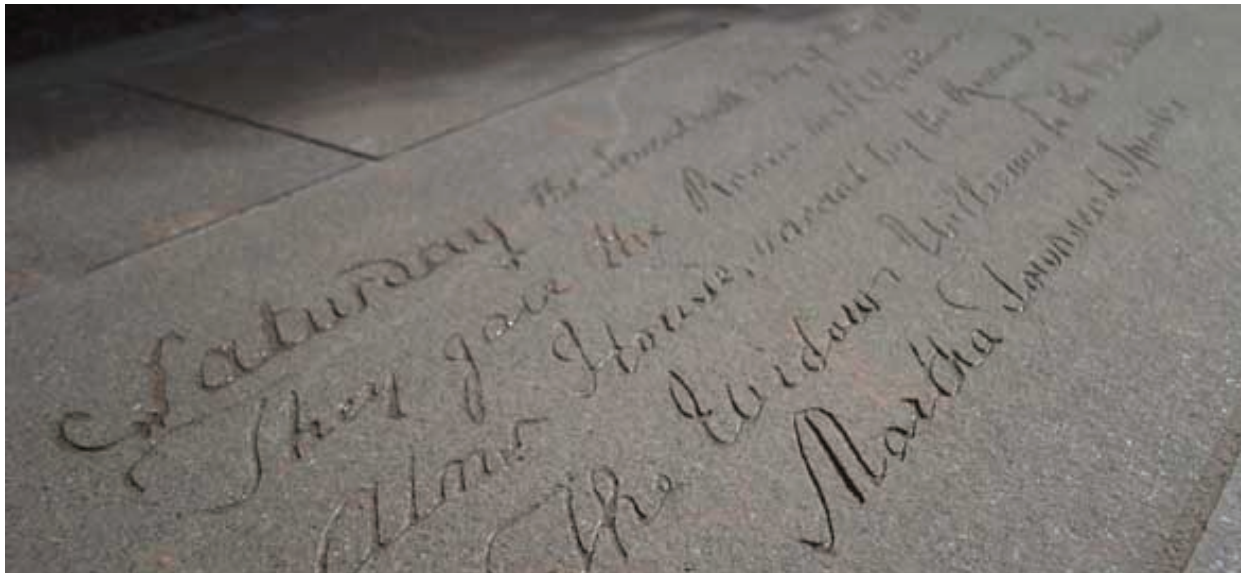
The Pits by Janet Hodgson, Whitefriars Development Canterbury. Client: Land Securities © inSite arts - Archeological drawings of sites below etched into the paving.



3. Marking Time, Exeter

- Artist: Patricia MacKinnon-Day
- Client: Land Securities, Exeter City Council, English Heritage
- Type: Permanent, Interpretation
- Suggested location/context in Chester: St John's Church

The work created by Patricia MacKinnon-Day, entitled 'Marking Time', provides an explanation of the buildings' history, and consists of the recreation of the lost doors which would have originally been part of the Almshouses. These take the form of free-standing arched doors made of glass, and are sited in the precise



Marking Time by Patricia MacKinnon-Day, interpretation and presentation of objects at the Almhouse ©

As part of this major programme of public art in and around Princesshay, Patricia MacKinnon-Day was commissioned to create a permanent installation on the site of the historically important Almshouses in Catherine Street. Constructed in 1450, the Almshouses have recently undergone structural repair and enhancements following an initiative by Land Securities, Exeter City Council and English Heritage to create an improved setting for one of Exeter's most historic landmarks.

location of where the doors were originally situated. Copied from the medieval designs of the Almshouses, these doors are illuminated to showcase archaeological finds from the site, encased within the glass. Other elements of the installation include rows of still and flickering votive lights filling the chapel space, with texts from the historic Chapter Acts books, describing the lives of medieval occupants, etched into the paving.

4. Service yard gate, Debenhams, Workington

- Creators: Alan Dawson Associates
- Client: Allerdale Borough Council
- Commissioner: Working Arts
- Type: Permanent, Interpretation
- Suggested location/context in Chester: St John's Street



Debenhams service yard gates by Alan Dawson Associates, Workington

The gates to this service yard are mostly open and prominent on this main street. An architectural metalworker was commissioned and worked with the Civic Trust on the theme of the ships that docked at the port, an important but forgotten trade. This was abstracted to form the sails (metal mesh) and beam (wooden centre bar). The gate needs to be opened by one person and meet the engineering standards for a service yard gate.

5. Market Street, Cockermouth

- Creators: BCAL & Smiling Wolf
- Client: Cockermouth Partnership
- Type: Permanent, Interpretation
- Suggested location/context in Chester: St John's Street



Pig Bollard, showing the animal and price it sold at the market, Cockermouth Market Place by BCAL and Smiling Wolf

Artworks were incorporated into functional elements, bringing to light many details from the towns past. Each bollard, manhole cover, and some of the paving slabs tell local stories unearthed during extensive historical research, and conversations with local people. Regionally distinctive burgrave-plot field patterns dictate how the paving was laid out. High quality materials such as bronze, cast iron and natural stone are used to enhance the historic Georgian setting of the market place.

6. Ashford ring road

- Artist: Nayan Kulkarni and Simeon Nelson
- Client: Ashford Council
- Commissioner: RKL partnership
- Type: Permanent
- Suggested location/context in Chester: St John's Street/Station – City Road



Ashford Ring Road day time, integrated pavement design and lighting Artists: Nayan Kulkarni and Simeon Nelson © Ben Hamilton-Baile

Artwork by Nayan Kulkarni and Simeon Nelson fully integrated with highway design at Ashford, Kent. This multi-award winning 'shared space' scheme has been shortlisted for the Prime Minister's 'Better Public Buildings' Award 2009.

7. Crown of Light as part of the 'Lumiere' Festival 2009

- Artist: Ross Ashton
- Produced by Artichoke in partnership with Sky Arts and Durham County Council.
- Type: Temporary, Interpretation & Branding
- Suggested location/context in Chester: The Walls



Crown of Light as part of the 'Lumiere' festival 2009. Artist: Ross Ashton Produced by Artichoke in partnership with Sky Arts and Durham County Council. © Matthew Andrews.

Light as a medium is increasingly being used to create public art and as a means to explore public space. LUMIERE was a four-day festival to brighten the historic city of Durham, bringing a sprinkle of winter magic to the North East. More than 50 artists created a series of installations, illuminations and performances using light. Lumiere turned the city into a winter wonderland, transforming its stunning buildings, streets and riverbanks, with a nocturnal winter festival that amazed residents and visitors alike.

8. Glow Winter Light Festival, Newcastle 2008

- Client: Newcastle Gateshead
- Type: Temporary, Interpretation & Branding
- Suggested location/context in Chester: The Walls



Slot Machine interactive installation at the Glow Light Festival, Newcastle 2008 © Cathy Newbery

Glow Winter Light festival highlights the remains of medieval Newcastle using large scale architectural light projections to present and join together sites both grand and intimate, rarely seen by visitors or known to local residents. Several phases of development have radically altered Newcastle's visual landscape in recent years, and Glow aims to reveal buildings, spaces and views largely lost to the public, tucked away and "hiding" amongst late 20th century roads and buildings.

9. Projection Little Castle Oberhausen, Emscher Park

- Type: Temporary animation
- Suggested location/context in Chester: The Walls



Projection Little Castle Oberhausen, Emscher Park Germany light projection.

An image of the old blueprints for this building in Oberhausen, Germany, as projected back onto the redeveloped building as a temporary event to remind people of its original use.

10. Creative Heritage Interpretation, Norwich Riverside

- Commissioner: Norwich City Council
- Funded by Council and Intereg through Water City Partnership.
- Type: Permanent, Interpretation
- Suggested location/context in Chester: The canal



The Bales, Norwich riverside. © Cathy Newbery

The River Wensum winds around Norwich and links the city to the Norfolk Broads. The river itself is part of the Norfolk Broads National Park. A scenic stroll along its banks is the perfect way to experience the living heritage of the waterway. The bales (pictured) would have come off barges, and each has the name of someone who lived or worked there over the last 200 yrs. It is part of the regeneration of the area and an important walking /cycling route into the city centre along the riverside. Riverside walk developments are often used for tourism and the example in Norwich uses heritage as a mechanism to theme the walk (www.visitnorwich.co.uk/riversidewalk.aspx).

11. The Sultan's Elephant, London

- Created by Royal de Luxe
- Produced by Artichoke in 2006 for London
- Type: Temporary
- Suggested location/context in Chester: Festivals/Events



The Sultan's Elephant, Created by Royal de Luxe
Produced by Artichoke in 2006 for London © Matthew Andrews

Royal de Luxe is an extraordinary European street theatre company, renowned on three continents but hardly known in Britain. The director Jean Luc Courcoult founded the company in 1979, and they have performed all over the world ever since. The company has visited countries all over Europe, as well as Korea, China, Vietnam, Chile and Africa. Some of their most celebrated shows – including *La véritable histoire de France*, *Roman photo tournage* and *Le péplum* have been revived many times and performed in front of thousands of spectators.

In the past dozen years, they have created a series of spectacular shows involving giant figures as big as 11 or 12 metres high. Shows are simple – the animal or giant arrives in town and lives its life, going about its business for a few days. Extraordinary interactions take place between passers-by and the performance; residents become enchanted with the activities of these miraculous beings and begin to follow their every move. By the end of the performance, huge crowds gather daily to watch the latest episode in the life of the visiting creature.

