

The Marsh Award for Public Sculpture 2009

The PMSA and the Marsh Christian Trust announce the winners of the Marsh Award for Public Sculpture 2009. The awards ceremony will take place at the Whitechapel Gallery, London on Monday 16 November at 6.30pm in the presence of Boris Johnson, Mayor of London.

This year's award is shared between three new works and one restoration project. The main award winner, *Dream*, is a 20m high sculpture depicting the head of a young girl with eyes closed in meditation. It is the creation of Catalan artist Jaume Plensa and is constructed on the site of the disused Sutton Manor Colliery at St Helens. The material used is a concrete aggregate mixed with sparkling white Spanish dolomite. Evans Concrete Products Ltd. of Ripley, Derbyshire were responsible for the design and manufacture of the individual pieces of concrete that make up the sculpture.

Commissioned by former miners and St Helens Council as part of Channel 4's *Big Art Project*, this 400 tonne sculpture, which is highly light reflective even on a dull day, is the artist's response to the miners' desire for a work that expressed the future of their community and landscape.

Jaume Plensa says that his sculpture is about celebrating life and the human experience; of standing between past and present, present and future, knowledge and ignorance. *Dream* was inspired by the spectacular setting, the local heritage, a vision for the future and the warmth, humour and passion of the former miners.

There are three further awards representing the diversity of contemporary work and conservation, firstly, *Perceval*, by Sarah Lucas; a 2.3m tall dray horse pulling a cart of squash, which is situated in the grounds of Waddesden Manor. It is both an homage to, and satire of, English culture. *Perceval* represents a giant replica of a popular ornament which has adorned many mantelpieces in Britain. Lucas plays with scale, rendering the cement (a favourite material) vegetables almost equal in size to the high finish of the painted bronze Shire horse.

Secondly, *The Lion*, unveiled in April 2009 on the corner of Wardour Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, and representing the traditional Chinese symbol of greeting and guardianship, was created by two Royal College of Art graduates, Hsiao-Chi Tsai from Taiwan and Kimiya Yoshikawa from Japan. Approximately 3m high, *The Lion* is made from Perspex, Jesmonite, fibreglass and steel. In the words of David Tse Ka Shing of Chinatown Art Space (organisers of the commission from Shaftesbury plc), it is 'a vibrant, playful, modern interpretation of a traditional East Asian icon...a striking addition to Chinatown's increasing public artwork'.

The third award, for the restoration of the Grade I listed monument to George III on the Esplanade at Weymouth, recognises the continuing role for sculpture 200 years after its erection in 1809, proving the longevity of Coade stone, the pioneering process created by Eleanor Coade. The award goes to Chris Daniels PACR and Osirion Building Conservation who reflect the commitment of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council in maintaining this key feature of the historic seafront.



High resolution images are available on the PMSA website

Notes to editors

The Marsh Award for Public Sculpture is awarded annually for a newly commissioned public sculpture, or for a public sculpture restoration project. It is administered by the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association (PMSA) and run in partnership with the Marsh Christian Trust. The PMSA is a charity, founded in 1991, to raise awareness of art in public places. The Marsh Christian Trust supports this and other awards.

Previous winners of the Marsh Award include Maggi Hambling (2005), Peter Randall-Page (2006), James Turrell (2007) and Ian Rank-Broadley for his powerful Armed Forces National Memorial at Alrewas in Staffordshire (2008).

The 2009 Award panel comprises Jo Darke (founder of the PMSA), Ian Leith (Deputy Chairman PMSA), Zuleika Dobson (Award Administrator), David Charlesworth (Marsh Christian Trust), Michael Paraskos (Art critic and writer) and Sue Ridge (Artist).

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