

David Cotterrell: Maelstrom

Date: 27th October 2017

Materials:

Coemar LedKo Ext, Rosco Gobo rotators and I-Cue, Pharos LPC1, Acid-etched glass and Laser-cut steel.

A public installation, Maelstrom, appearing on the rivers and canals of Chester.

King Charles Tower, on the city walls, hosts Chesters first artwork that acknowledges the citys emerging relationship with water. As a whirlpool appears and disappears in the Shropshire Union Canal, it rapidly turns to create the illusion of extreme depth and speed. David Cotterrell has taken his inspiration from the maelstrom, whirlpools and eddies that feature in literature from The Odyssey to Jules Verne, Herman Melville and Edgar Allan Poe, His new work seeks to represent the magnificence of these awe-inspiring natural phenomena, recreating them on this gentle stretch of Chesters waterways.

How and why the whirlpool has appeared is intended to cause intrigue and provoke curiosity from the public visiting the canal with the intention that it draws attention to the waterway, its geography and environment. Working with David, pupils at local schools have imagined their own myths and stories of how the whirlpools came into being. Creating fantastical stories about a mysterious creature that ate a chunk earth from the bottom of the ocean, disrupting the flow of the water, causing a massive whirlpool; or a Superhero who blasted a villain during combat; or a massive serpent living beneath the water wagging its tail, causing destruction. The project was accompanied by a series of schools workshops with Year 6 pupils at Hoole CE Primary School and Waverton Community Primary School.

Cotterrells artwork acknowledges Chesters relationship with water, as a whirlpool appears and disappears in the Shropshire Union Canal, rapidly turning to create an illusion of extreme depth and speed. This intriguing artwork encourages alternate viewpoints of the city that rewards curiosity and creates a sense of wonder and surprise.

Waterways Strategy

The artwork is part of the recent improvements at King Charles Tower Gardens, a refurbishment that transformed a once derelict part of Chester; and forms part of Chesters Waterways Strategy which aims to reconnect Chesters Waterways to the city.

Chester Heritage and Visual Arts Strategy

The Chester Heritage and Visual Arts Strategy, recently adopted by Cheshire West and Chester, presents a city wide study that will deliver a clear and coherent direction for interpreting and presenting its heritage and visual arts to deliver a world class offer that inspires audiences and visitors. The strategy recognises the scope for the visual arts to renew our curiosity, highlight the charm of the citys past and contribute to its future.

Funded by Arts Council England and Cheshire West and Chester Council.



Credit: © David Cotterrell (2017)