

From 9th to 16th March “Echo of the Lumiere” in Durham Castle
Art project organised by Goshka Bialek
Written by Flora Loughridge

Visualisation of “Ghost” installation in Durham Castle



Every two years, Durham City is transformed by a series of dazzling installations, sculptures and LED displays created by leading artists from around the globe as a part of the *Lumiere Festival*. The scale of the artwork in the 2013 festival was even larger, thanks to the support of numerous sponsors and partners, working in collaboration with the Artichoke Trust. It isn't surprising that the festival attracted thousands of spectators to Durham, not least because of the stunning setting of the historic city. Ross Ashton's light projection 'Crown of Light' drew attention to Durham's fascinating past, using one of England's most beautiful Norman buildings, Durham Cathedral, as the backdrop. *Lumiere* also focused our attention on many of the less eye-catching corners of the medieval city, as well as gently reminding us of some of the pressing concerns of the modern day, in particular the negative implications of our materialistic society.



This year, students from Durham University will be at the forefront of artistic invention in an exciting new project inspired by the 2013 *Lumiere Festival*, where they will be creating two installations themselves during Art Week at Castle College. Their project, *Echo of the Lumiere*, will open on the 9th March, to illuminate Durham Castle with seven spectacular nights of 'Light Art'. Backed by the iconic castle walls, one of the light sculptures is inspired by the story of the castle ghost, who, it is rumored, still haunts the Black Staircase. Whilst the other installation, of a garden gnome, is to be located in the Master's garden - a cheeky nod to the fact that this mischievous creature will find a home in a place where students are not usually allowed. This project has been funded by the Master of University College, Professor David Held and is being led by SCR member Goshka Bialek, an artist well-known internationally for her large-scale sculptures and glasswork. Bialek made her artistic presence felt locally in 2002, when she was the first artist since the sixteenth century to exhibit her impressive work at the centre of Neville's Screen, next to the main altar in Durham Cathedral.

The installations for *Echo of the Lumiere* are currently being created and assembled in Bialek's studio in Durham City, where volunteers from all over the university are being given the opportunity to add their own design ideas to the project, whilst learning the welding methods used in Goshka's own unique artwork. Luckily, the project has Mr. Ian Garrett with several budding undergraduate engineers onboard, who will be adding their valuable touch to the dazzling display by taking on the responsibility for the 'electrics'. Challenges are inevitable when facing a project of this scale and students must contend not only with the practicalities of hanging a two and half meters sculpture from the ancient castle walls, sourcing and installing battery-powered lights, but also with the technical difficulties of assembling the figures. Despite these obstacles, the creation of the installations remains an engaging and inspirational task.

Preparation of sculptures by students - volunteers from all over the university



As part of the project, a photographic competition has been organised to encourage both senior and junior members of the university to create their own visual record of the preparation and installation of the sculptures. An exhibition of the photographs will be displayed in the Castle during the final weekend of Art Week. Our prize in this competition would be publication of the best photograph in one of newspapers.

It is not too late to get involved in the project or to enter the photographic competition. Anybody with an artistic eye can take part. Email **Goshka** at goshkab@gmail.com or join the 'Castle Arts Soc Lumiere Project' group on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/castleartslumiereproject/>.

If university life has already filled every spare moment, be sure to come and see the finished installations. The spectacular display of artwork will undoubtedly provide a welcome divertissement and uplifting glow to the dark winter evenings.

Visualisation of "Gnome" installation

