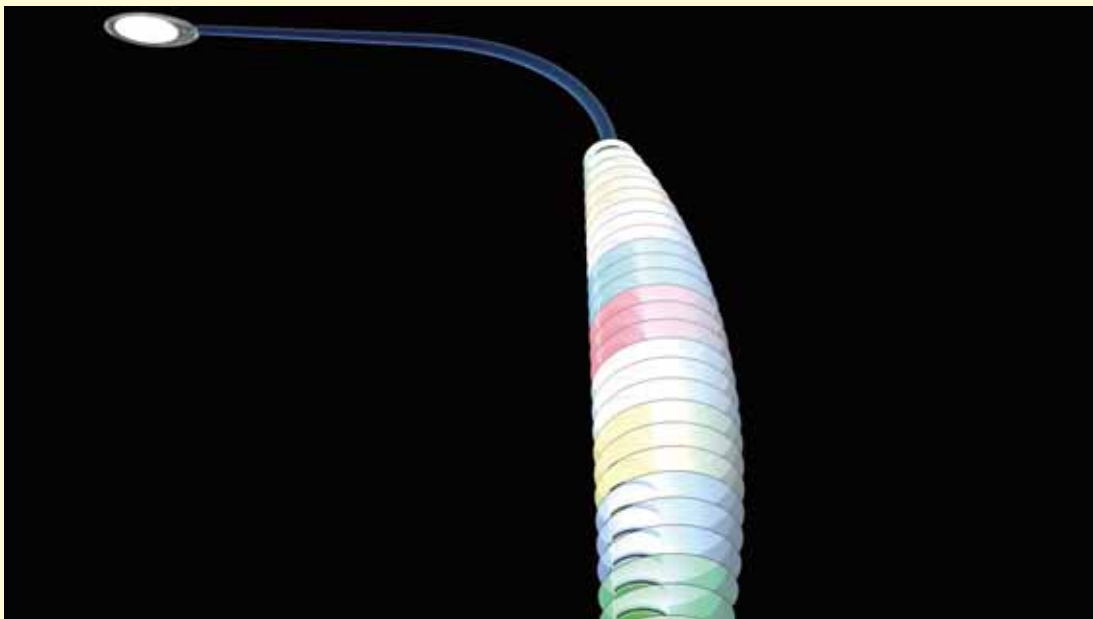


**Cultural Mapping Project:** Neighbourhoods fact sheet

# Leicester Lights: Art on the Move

Interactive lights marking a route between the Cultural Quarter, St George's South, through to the Peepul Centre, Orchardson Avenue, Belgrave, Leicester

Installation: August 2005

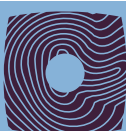


## Artist

**Jason Bruges** with Aquila (Urbis Lighting Ltd.) and Interactive Imagination (technical and fabrication designs).

## Biography

**Jason Bruges** is a lighting artist whose interests include interactivity and the way that people move in and around architectural spaces and public places. Trained as an architect, he has worked on numerous collaborative projects as project artist and as a member of design teams. He produces a diverse range of work comprising interactive light sculptures, environments and permanent installations. His artwork explores the dynamic and ephemeral qualities of light and interactivity with the public through the use of highly imaginative technologies. Projects develop out of a process of rigorous research and development. Jason's work can be seen around the UK and beyond: street artwork in Camden, London, Litmus for Havering Borough Council, and new projects for Gloucestershire Royal Hospital outpatients' wing and an interactive lighting installation, integrated in the foyer wall, Hotel Puerto America, Madrid.



**Public Art Leicester**  
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## Statement

**“The route will be marked with light sculptures glowing like jewels. To create digital painting like banners... Light paintings created through a movement study shows how a colour sequence can be created through a procession of cars or people. Colour change in nature... colour change in an urban environment reflecting the moods/preferences of the community. Light patterns can be seen up to 360 degrees within the sculptural column along all the main vistas into the gateway node at either the Cultural Quarter or Peepul Centre.”**

**Jason Bruges**

## Project Brief

For artists' to research and identify a route, and design a scheme, which connects two of the city's newest developments, the Cultural Quarter (St George's South) and the Peepul Centre, Orchardson Avenue, Belgrave. Artworks should define and interpret a 'journey' between these initiatives. The aim is to 'way mark' the route between the two locations and make it easier to follow, highlighting places of interest and activities along the way, including entrances and gateways. The 'way marked' route should be the most accessible and direct pedestrian route between the two developments. When devising schemes artists' need to take into consideration the processional, performance and carnival use of the street, together with the wider interventions affecting the regeneration area of St George's South and North. The artist's research & development should inform and contribute towards a Plan for future artists interventions along the route.

In their application submissions artists were asked to demonstrate a commitment and outline their approach and strategy to community engagement, an integral dimension within the Cultural Mapping Programme.

## Community Involvement

The community was involved in the artist's comprehensive site research and design development, which informed the Leicester Lights artwork. Action research included analysis of a number of route's, patch walking with the Liveability project which included participants drawn from residents, businesses, service providers, numerous talks, consultative presentations and participatory workshops. Several of these were with schoolchildren, who were invited to measure and survey the colour of vehicles and level of traffic flow in their neighbourhood. A number of consultation and 'visioning' workshops took place between a variety of allied professionals such as carnival / performance companies, urban designers, highways and traffic managers, street amenity and lighting specialists, culturally specific and general interest groups. Furthermore the completed artworks also offer a wider, continued community involvement through interaction with and response to, pedestrian and vehicular users of the street. The technology used in the Leicester Lights artwork can read and translate the movement and colours of passing pedestrians clothing and vehicles, informing the sequential programme of coloured LED lighting which is integrated within the sculptural columns.



## Purpose/Function

The Leicester Lights columns and way markers, map and highlight the entrances and most accessible route, and create a journey between the Cultural Quarter (St George's) and Peepul Centre initiatives, while encouraging connections between the public and the two locations. The artist's research document, which informed Leicester Lights: Art on the Move works, provides an invaluable resource for developing future arts projects along the route.

## Site/Location

This particular project has a number of sites within the public realm, primarily located within the eastern part of the city centre and adjacent neighbourhoods. The sites include (1) the Cultural Quarter, St George's South. This is a conservation area located within the city centre's regeneration area. The aim is to transform, over time, this presently run-down area through a culturally led regeneration programme. In less than a decade there will be: new dedicated workspaces for cultural industries, LCB Depot (Ash Sakula Architects); a purpose-built performing arts centre (Rafael Viñoly Architects); a moving image centre; and enhancement of the public realm infrastructure, public spaces and streets, together with the creation of a new community in St George's North. (2) The Peepul Centre (Belgrave Baheno initiative) is a multifaceted capital development (Andrzej Blonski Architects) with integral public artwork (Nayan Kulkarni, Architectural Glass, Bhajan Hunjan, concrete entrance floorscape, Howard Angus, large scale canvases) The Peepul Centre is geographically located on a site between Belgrave and the neighbouring St Matthews estate adjacent to the St George's area of the city centre. The Peepul Centre will offer a range of services from health to arts and cultural activity, and will open a gateway of opportunities to reflect the richness of cultural diversity, and to mainstream marginalised groups across the city and beyond.



## Special Features/Points of Interest

- The artist has designed multifunctional lighting columns and light-based 'way markers'; sculptural forms that are attached to existing street lighting columns.
- To realise this project the artist worked with a team which included specialists in public art project management, Street Lighting (Leicester City Council) and lighting column designers and fabricators (Aquila, Urbis Lighting Ltd.) an LED light technologist (Interactive Imagination) who created a to scale 'proto type' to test some of the ideas before going into full scale production.
- Inspiration for the integrated lighting programme design comes from the way that people and vehicles use the road and pavements.
- Utilising interactive technology to programme the decorative light sequence, the lights glow like jewels day and night to mark the route and key entrances.
- Inspiration grew from celebrating the ordinary everyday use of the street and public spaces, as well as participatory, processional, performance and carnival use of the street.
- There are 6 lighting columns of steel construction measuring 10.m in height, each of these columns have 6.m of integrated LED light units, consisting of cast semicircular aluminium housing which form a ring around the column.
- The aluminium housing is separated with reflective brushed stainless steel circular discs 3mm thick and of various diameters ranging from 395mm to 805mm.
- The lighting columns are sited in 3 pairs of 2 columns and create an archway emphasising the main entrances along the route.
- There are 12 smaller interactive light 'way markers' sited along the 'route'. These smaller units 950cm in height are attached, bolted onto, existing street lighting columns
- The artist's research and street analysis revealed that the best way to view / capture processional carnival and other street / pavement activity was from above. This research finding informed the height and location of specially designed sensors, which are located beneath the LED light units and have a have a 5m x 6m viewing range.
- Specially designed controlling and programming technology, housed within the lighting columns, translate the information into colour sequences.



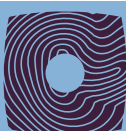
## Possible Focus or Point of Engagement for Learning

- How many different colours and colour changes can you count?
- Do you know what the meaning of the different colours might be?
- How is colour used in the many different festivals we have in Leicester?
- Draw patterns and shapes using different forms of light. How would you capture these?
- Make a lantern or special light sculpture, which you can use in a celebratory procession or in a carnival.
- Light is faster than anything else – how many light years are we away from different planets in our solar system? In which other different ways can you measure time and distance?
- This is a very different work to other commissions within the **Cultural Mapping** project. What do you think are the main differences?
- Do you think this project is a good idea? If so why and if not why not?
- Why is the regeneration of the city an important issue?
- What were the original functions of the buildings that are now part of the Cultural Quarter?
- Do you think the conversion of old business premises is a good use of existing buildings? Some people argue for completely new buildings – what do you think?
- What are the names of the architects who have designed the new Performing Arts Centre and Peepul Centre? Imagine you are an architect commissioned to design a cultural facility – what would your starting point be? Who would you need to consult with and why? How would you engage an artist in the process?
- How can artists contribute to the design of architectural spaces and places, the public realm? Do you think this is important? and why?
- Design 'way markers' for a journey you walk frequently. Would you create them for the pavement, to be free-standing or to attach to buildings?
- What are the special conditions that you might need to consider in a conservation, heritage or residential area?
- What do you think the main access, health & safety and maintenance considerations might be for a project of this kind?

## For More Information

[www.leicester.gov.uk/publicart](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/publicart)

Toolkit author Jasia McArdle with input from Steve Cooke. Image © Jason Bruges Studio 2005 for Public Art Leicester **Cultural Mapping** project.



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