

## News

### Art meets science at Lumiere Durham

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Durham's research into space and the human eye has inspired two striking light installations which will be based at the University as part of the city's 2013 Lumiere light festival.

Academics in Physics, Biology and Psychology have joined forces with well-known and aspiring artists around the globe to create public works of art that encourage people to learn and talk about science.

Durham is a world-renowned centre for research into the cosmos and it is this field of academia that has inspired electronic artist

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer to create *Solar Equation*; a huge simulation of the Sun which will float above the University Calman Centre and be visible from different parts of the city.

The large-scale public art installation, *Solar Equation* is a faithful simulation of the Sun, 100 million times smaller than the real thing. It was commissioned originally by Federation Square for the Light in Winter Festival in Melbourne, and features the world's largest spherical helium balloon, custom-made for the project.

The artwork will be illuminated by a constantly changing display generated by data relayed live by NASA from a space probe orbiting the Sun and interpreted using mathematical equations to simulate the turbulence, flares and sunspots seen on the surface of the sun. Members of the public will be invited to 'disturb' the animations in real-time and manipulate the projection through an iPhone/iPad app.

Carlos Frenk, Ogden Professor of Fundamental Physics and Director of the Institute for Computational Cosmology at Durham University, says: "Science and art are all about discovery: *Solar Equation* will show the people of Durham and its visitors how these two creative forces can come together to inspire and amaze us with the beauty of our cosmos."

John Girkin, Professor of Biophysics and Director of the Biophysical Sciences Institute has been working with new media artist Gina Czarnecki on "I", a new commission for Lumiere supported by a Wellcome Trust Art Award.

The video based art examines the eye and perception. Using eye-scanning equipment, beautiful and dynamic images of irises have been created and will be projected onto the façade of the Bill Bryson Library. Audiences will be invited to interact by having their own irises scanned.

A public science outreach event linked to the "I" installation is taking place on Saturday 16 November, it will be a unique opportunity for members of the public to understand the eye from the perspectives of a physicist, biologist and psychologist.

The two installations will form part of the third Lumiere festival to be held in Durham from 14-17 November. The event will feature 27 light installations which are being designed by artists around the globe.