



Northampton under surveillance

It's not everyday that Northampton can boast a 'world's largest' something. But the world's largest interactive video art installation: titled Under Scan is on its way to light up your life!

Project Facts:

Under Scan is a free public art installation

It's commissioned by The East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) in association with Arts Council England, East Midlands and local authorities.

The world's brightest projector emits 110,000 lumens of intensity.

Rafael has won two BAFTA British Academy Awards in Interactive Art in London in 2002 and 2005.

Such is the scale of this project (both in size and imagination) it's going to take a bit of explaining.

So, imagine yourself walking through the Market Square one evening between 7pm and midnight (2am on Fridays and Saturdays).

Overhead is the world's biggest projector flooding the Market Square with light, and casting your shadow on the floor. A surveillance camera 'whurrs' in to action; it spots you and fires a shaft of light into your shadow where a video portrait appears and introduces themselves....ladies and gentlemen, the future is here!

1000 interactive video portraits of members of the public from the East Midlands (including 200 people from Northampton) have been made and are ready to pounce in your shadow! Who you get, is randomly selected by the projector.

Local filmmakers are behind these short films, but who is the man behind the entire project?

The man behind it all

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is the highly decorated Mexican-Canadian contemporary artist behind Under Scan.

His work in kinetic sculpture, responsive environments, video installation and photography has been shown in two dozen countries, including Switzerland, China, Brazil and Cuba to name a few.

Speaking about the installation, Lozano-Hemmer said: "The unveiling of Under Scan represents the culmination of almost a year's work including intensive research, technical and artistic development behind this, my latest and most ambitious installation.

"I hope it will bring a new experience to Northampton people and visitors to the town, and will provide them with an intriguing shadow-play where members of the public become actors."



Your comment:

Kevin Misan

I've checked out the 'Underscan' installation on the Market Square last night, an 'intresting' experience, it certainly is 'different'... but im not sure Northampton is ready for 'Art' the amount of people I saw there was sparse (very) I got the impression people were 'Underwhelmed' by Underscan. The most enjoyment seemed to be gleaned by youngsters, it's The Market Square, not the Tate. I think Underscan would work well in a large indoor set-up the images were a little faint plus the lack of an kind of audio made it a bit of a missed oppurtunity, imo. Well at least yes we can boast 'the biggest something or other', briefly... L Jennings comments regarding the Roadmender does raise the question... another missed oppurtunity, a much missed facility the Town needs resurecting.

Louise Jennings

Im sure this will be an amazing event, andd I am look forward to seeing it. Im just scared that money being payed into short lived things like this, and misplaced things like the new sculpture in abington street is taking money away from projects that need it such as youth projects and the roadmender.

Victoria

Brilliant, can't wait to have a look tonight!

Liz Walsh

I too caught this a few weekends back when I was visiting mates in Leicester: it's engaging, fun, and brought a spark of local life into a row of faceless corporate shops. And, over a few pints whilst we thawed out afterwards, it inspired a long discussion about serious things like CCTV surveillance and the stuffiness of art galleries. I'm looking forward to seeing how it changes the Market Square - and I'll definitely be bringing a few friends along.

Peter Slack

I'm looking forward to seeing the work tonight and I hope that it will encourage more people to see the potential the town has for challenging, world-class art work. Congratulations to all involved in setting this project up and running. The work involves/ employs a number of people in it's construction and operation and the people who are travelling miles to see it will benefit the local economy. The artist initially trained in science and has applied some of that knowledge and understanding to produce his work across the globe.

Grace O'Malley

It's fantastic that something is being created to make the winter nights more inspiring!

sophie minto

I was lucky enough to be in Leicester when Under Scan was there, I was really impressed. It really engaged the people walking by. I am sure when it comes to Northampton it will do just the same. Definetely worth a look.