



SWITCH-ON: HOW PASSERS-BY LAUNCHED £1 MILLION ART SHOW

Lighting up our lives

by NADEEM HANIF

A £1 million light show by an award-winning artist has launched in Leicester.

An exploding 12,000 watt projector bulb created a minor delay before the switch-on last night, while engineers replaced it and checked other equipment for damage.

When the show got under way, passers-by were entertained by images of people dancing and pulling faces, projected on to their shadows as they walked along.

The exhibition, called Under Scan, is in Humberstone Gate.

Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, who created it, said: "This exhibition has already attracted interest from places like Spain and Germany and I'm confident it will help to put Leicester on the map artistically."

INTIMATE EXPERIENCE

"Because this is being done outdoors, people will find it much easier to engage with and I'm confident they will like the results."

"I wanted to make it into an intimate experience and I think we have achieved that."

The artist, who has been awarded a Bafta, was the winner of an international competition to highlight the East Midlands' cultural development.

Scaffolding has been put up on either side of Humberstone Gate, near clothes shop Gap, for the exhibition.

A powerful bulb lights up part of the precinct, and 14 projectors throw images of people on to the ground.

Sensors on the scaffolding detect when somebody walks through the exhibition zone, triggering the projected images.

The scheme has been funded by the East Midlands Development Agency, and the equipment used in



PICTURES: MAX EWEN/168208-11

PUBLIC IMAGE: The Under Scan light show is launched in Humberstone Gate

the project will remain in the region. Paul Angrave, 34, from Hamilton, Leicester, took his children to the launch.

He said: "It's really interesting and it's not what I had expected. It's strange because, as you're walking along an image appears, and then starts moving."

"It's a lot of fun and the children have enjoyed it."

Sylvia Wright, head of art for Leicester City Council, said she was delighted with the public's reaction to the show.

She said: "Leicester-based art companies have been involved with this from its inception about eight

months ago, and the results are fantastic."

"We are delighted that Leicester was chosen for the national launch and it will certainly help the profile of the city"

The display will run until January 22, 6.30pm until midnight, and until 2am on Friday and Saturday nights.



PICTURE: 168208-06

COPY: Mike Cowley and his projected image



PICTURE: 168208-08

SHADOW: Little Josef Geisler enjoys the show

Is art installation streets ahead of the rest?



Paul Butron, 25
city centre

"It's very clever with the technology, but I'm not sure what it's trying to say. I studied art but I don't know what this is about."



Ketna Parmar, 30
Evington

"It's good because it has got a lot of people, who would not normally be interested in art, to experience it."



Pat Munroe, 38
Beaumont Leys

"I think it's brilliant. I have read a lot about it in the Mercury and decided to bring my children along as a surprise. They have really enjoyed themselves."



Mike Cowley, 61
Narborough

"It's very good. What I like most is that it is so unusual and is striking when you see it. The money they spent on it seems a bit steep though."



Julie Isaacs, 43
Narborough

"I thought the images would be in 3D, which is not the case and that was a little disappointing. From what I've seen it's not worth the £1 million they spent on it."