

SCULPTING ARCHITECTURE

Left Bank Leeds: 02.09.2019 - 28.09.2019

20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe: 28.04.2018 - 23.06.2018

Rheged, Penrith: 10.01.2018 - 07.11.2018

LEFT BANK

LEEDS



INF 23, 2019

ripstop, fan, digital timer, air

26 x 13.6 x 7.8m

installed @ Left Bank Leeds



INF 23, 2019
ripstop, fan, digital timer, air
26 x 13.6 x 7.8m
installed @ Left Bank Leeds

INF23 by Michael Shaw was a commission that delivered above and beyond expectations and really wowed such a range of different visitors. The project came about when I wanted something epic that really utilised the stunning space at Left Bank Leeds, a Grade II* listed former church building that is now an arts venue. The sense of space, with imposing columns and high vaulted ceiling is incredible but in comparison, our doors are relatively small. I wanted something that we could get in the building but would really use the space and respond to the architectural elements within it.

It was fabulous to watch the reactions of visitors as they opened the doors to be confronted by a smile-inducing sea of striped fluorescent fabric and watch them look either way, trying to figure out what it was and how best to begin exploring it. They walked around it, followed as it coiled around columns and went underneath it as sections crossed above. They gently touched it and peered into the hole in the end to try to get a better sense of what it was and how it had been constructed.

The Dr Suez-like stripes really emphasised the sculptural form of the inflatable and gave it a playful quality. The piece was inflated by a fan that was on a timer which was on for two minutes and off for a minute, this gave the piece a breath; and many visitors felt it had a lifelike quality to it, like some sort of sleeping giant gently breathing.

INF23 was accompanied by a sound piece by Bob Birch that was made in response

to the sculpture. This too was on a cycle so that at points visitors heard different combinations of the sound piece, the fan and silence. Though there was never really silence as the sculpture made its own noises whilst it inflated and deflated, rubbing against itself and the choir stalls that it was almost wedged in between.

This piece attracted such diverse audiences, we had one little girl visit several times with different family members so that she could visit the 'giant worm'. We had two men who were working on the roads nearby, who had seen it on BBC Look North and popped in to take a look. Some people had come as part of Heritage Open Days specifically to see our building but found the presence of this huge fluorescent sculpture encouraged them to look up more and really see the building and appreciate the sheer scale of the space.

To bid farewell to the epic sculpture we held a closing party to celebrate *INF23*. We gently lit the sculpture from within, which became the focal point of the party. A group of contemporary dancers choreographed a piece in response to the sculpture, there was a live sound performance and a DJ playing. It was a fabulous way for visitors to see the piece one last time; though in a completely different light.

Courtney Spencer
Director & Curator
Left Bank Leeds



INF 23, 2019
ripstop, fan, digital timer, air
26 x 13.6 x 7.8m
installed @ Left Bank Leeds

20-21 VISUAL ARTS CENTRE

SCUNTHORPE



INF 22, 2018
ripstop, fan, digital timer, air
18.2 x 12.4 x 7m
installed @ 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe



Michael Shaw – Sculpting Architecture

The former Neo-Gothic church space here, with its sprawling concrete floor spaces, rising pillars and elegant arches is spectacular - however it comes with its challenges. How does an artist respond to something so grand and ideologically loaded? Having known Michael for some years I was sure he would rise to the challenge, and the results would be more than fitting, and most likely ambitious, ingenious and breath-taking.

The gallery housing the sculptures is a vibrant space, populated by a broad range of people during opening hours; older visitors often drop by to admire the church space (some reminiscing about their memories of it as a working church). Children love to negotiate the architecture - they move and play between the pillars, and run their fingers along the crumbling stonework. Michael Shaw's inflatable *INF22* does all of these things in its own way; through forms of sculptural 'play' it aims to become part of the building, and encourages visitors to encounter the building itself in new ways.

Inflate

At the heart of *Sculpting Architecture* is a monumental sculpture. The artwork was created digitally using sophisticated 3D modelling software, and manifests itself as a massive inflatable intervention dominating the space.

The normal airy view up into the arches and roof of the church is disrupted by a triumphant and enormous colourful cartoonish bulb form, appearing a little like a crashed hot-air balloon. From there the sculpture stretches and curls around the building, negotiating pillars and looping back on itself several times in an extended snake-like form.

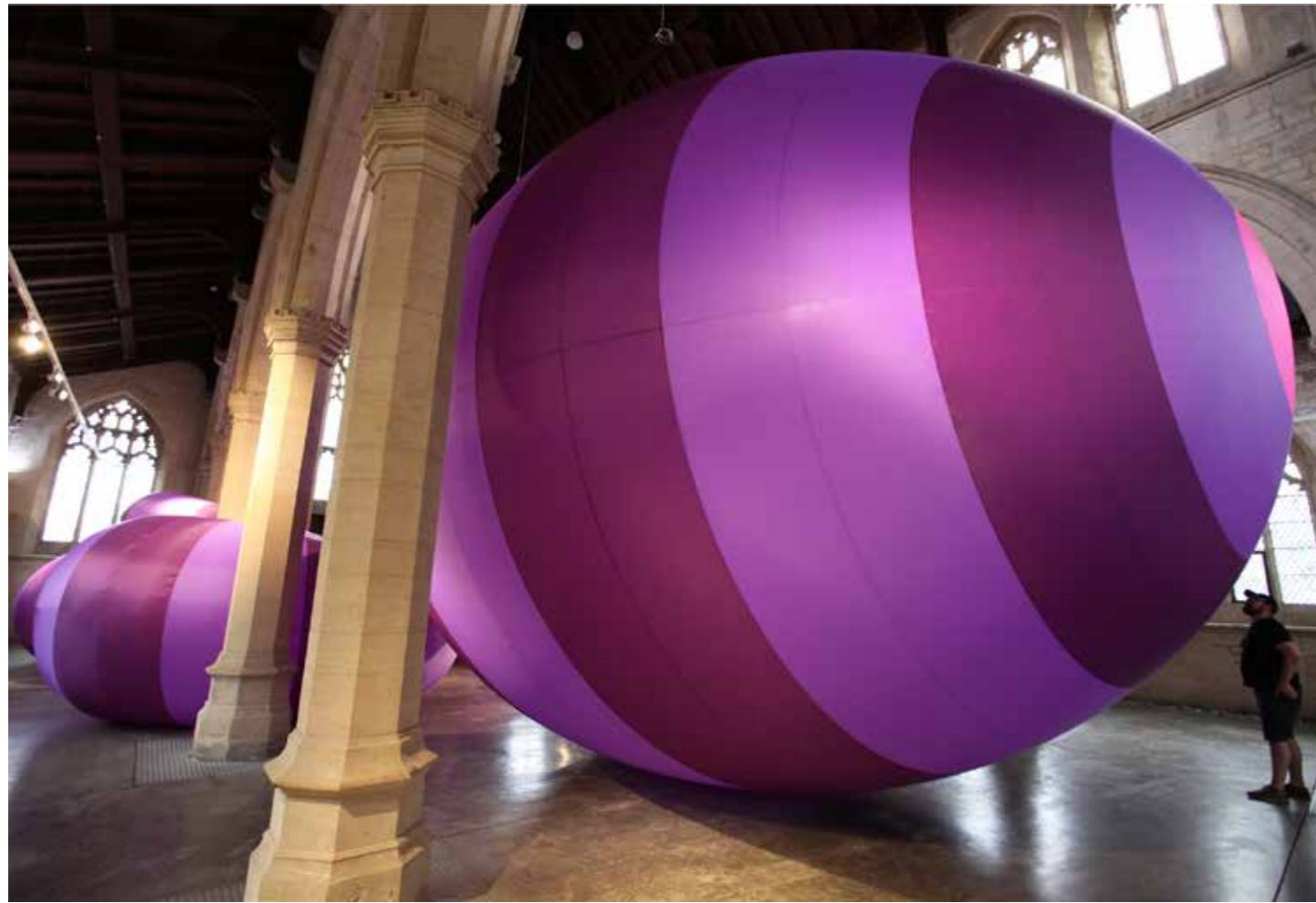
Despite its digitally-created origins and cartoonish appearance, it is hard not to see the piece as bodily, perhaps even erotic? As the pump sustaining the inflation buzzes in and out of action, the piece becomes alive and breathing.

Visitors can let their imaginations wander, and ponder whether it might be a sleeping monster or the tail of some yet-larger entity. Perhaps they can imagine the building as a mould that the work is gradually expanding into, or the sculpture as a parasite, that will eventually consume its host?

As they look up into the space to cast their eyes across the bulk of the sculpture, I hope visitors might notice a previously unseen aspect of the building. They may perhaps glance at one of the building's beautifully crafted angels, the profile of an arch, or a lovingly carved detail in the stonework.

Resonances

I have been told that every object has a resonance, even buildings? Church spaces especially are constructed to echo, intensify and resonate with the music within.



It is not hard to consider the works in *Sculpting Architecture* as musical. Michael himself talks about the work as 'riffing' with the architecture. The sculptures and actions themselves are only activated by cyclical rhythms of air, material and people in the space.

I have enjoyed working with Michael Shaw on this project immensely. In the planning stages of this exhibition we pondered a variety of different positions, formats, colours and sizes. However, despite seeing multiple digital renderings of the final piece prior to construction, nothing prepared me for what I saw when the sculpture was inflated in the space for the first time - *INF22* is huge in every respect, towering some 7m above visitors' heads.



Since it has been installed, I have been fascinated whilst watching people's reactions when they enter the gallery, witnessing a fair few gasps and dropping jaws. I've also enjoyed exploring the space myself, and wondering if resonances of the work will remain when it is deflated for the final time, and removed to make way for the next exhibition in our programme.

The inflatable in *Sculpting Architecture* maps the space with sculpture, drawing, and intervention. I hope visitors to our space over the coming weeks enjoy the experience of encountering Michael's work as much as I have.

Dominic Mason
Exhibitions Manager
20-21 Visual Arts Centre



INF 22, 2018
ripstop, fan, digital timer, air
18.2 x 12.4 x 7m
installed @ 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe

RHEGED

PENRITH



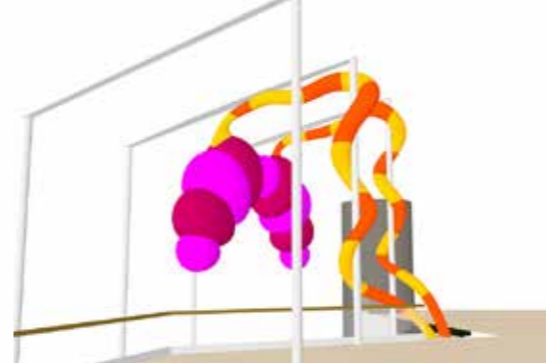
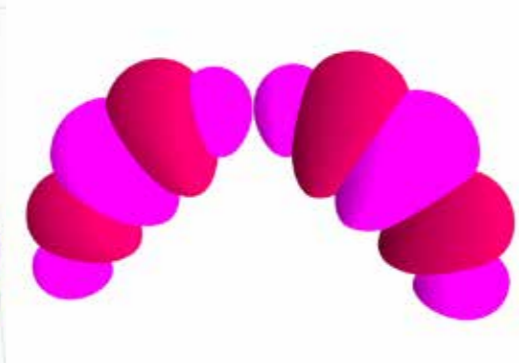
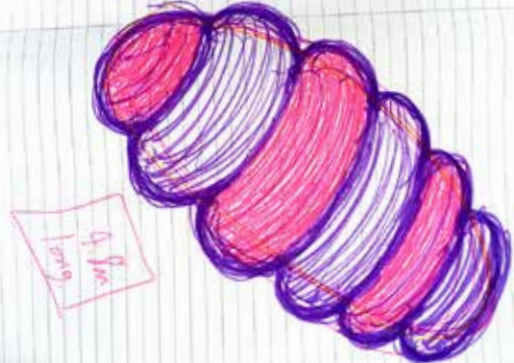
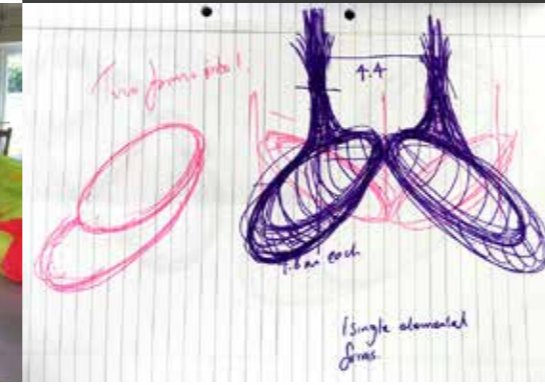
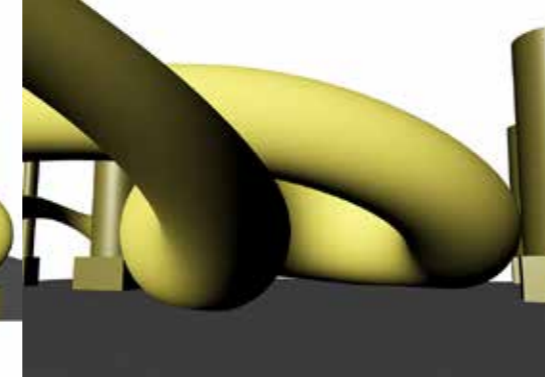
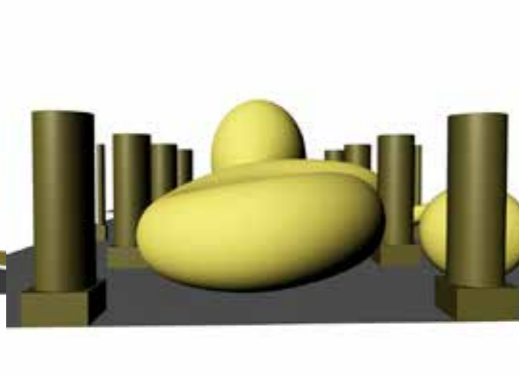
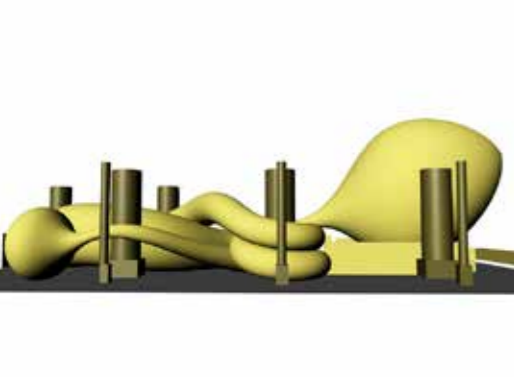
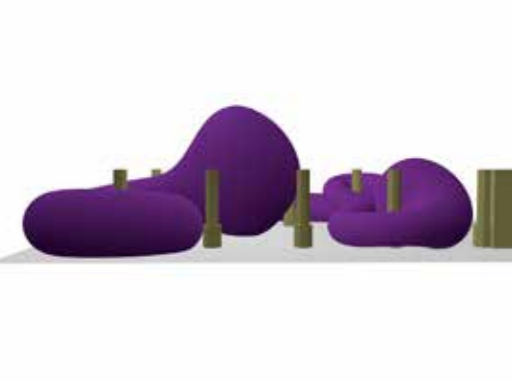
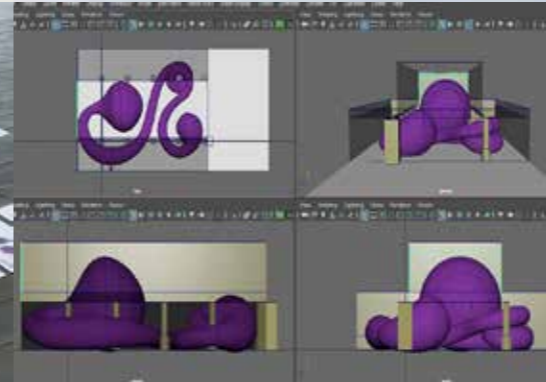
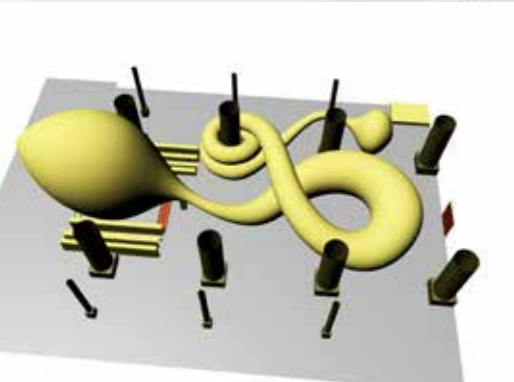
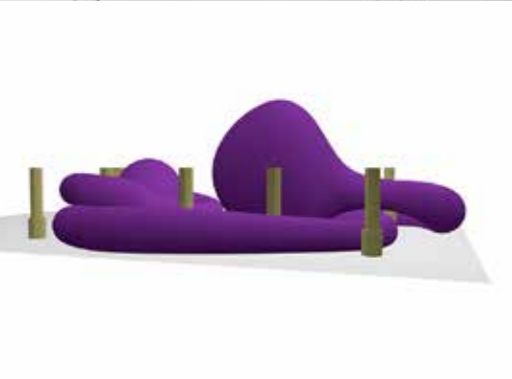
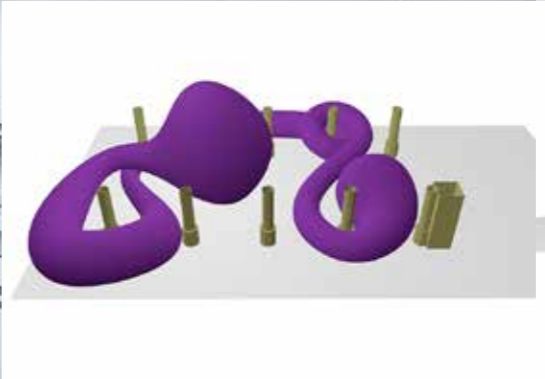
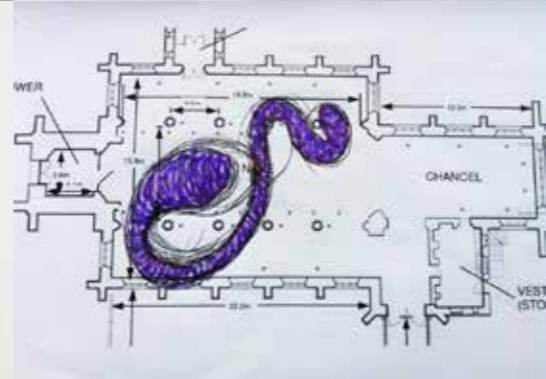
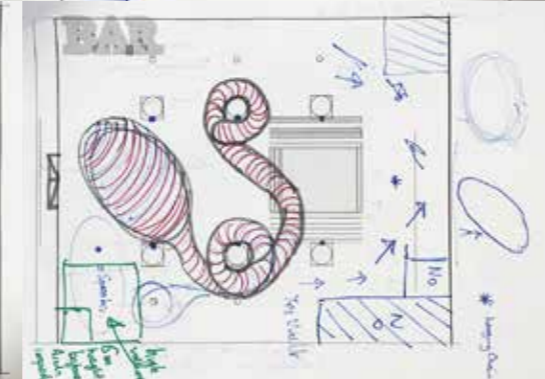
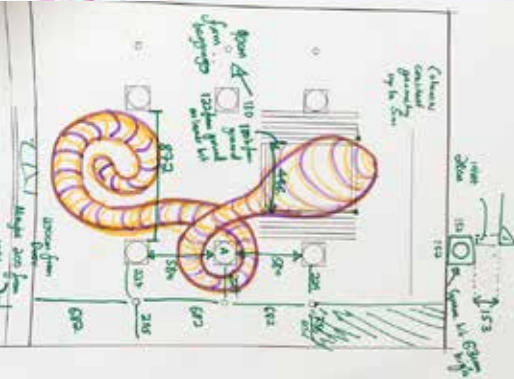
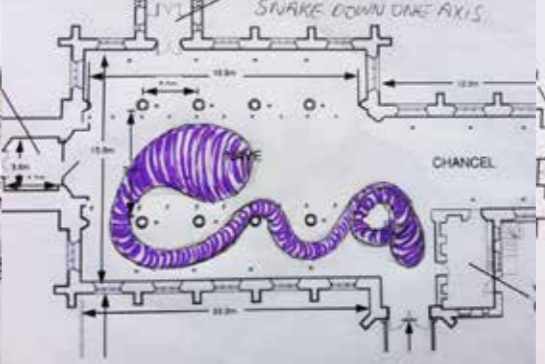
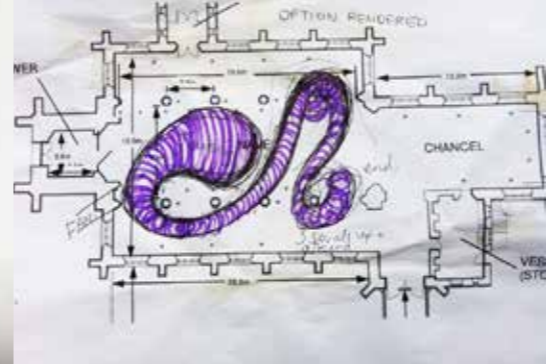
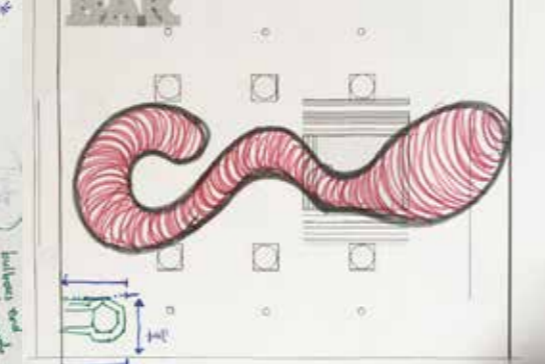
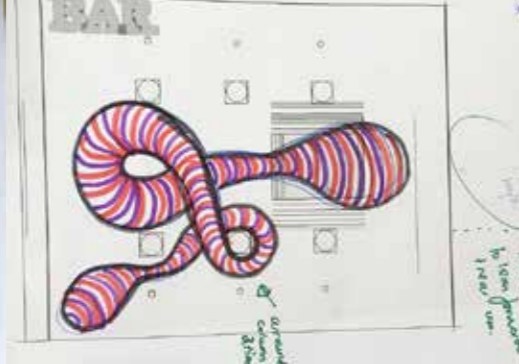
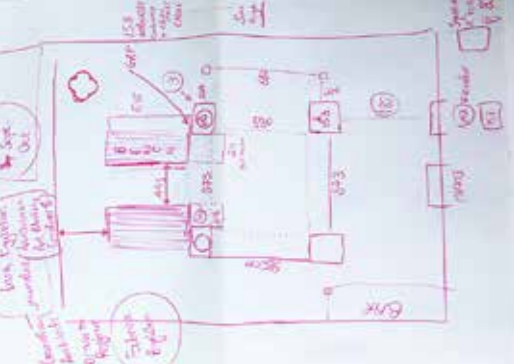
Slung, 2018
ripstop, fan, digital timer, air
8.6 x 8.4 x 10m
installed @ Rheged, Penrith



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PROCESS

STATEMENT - CV



STATEMENT

Sculpting Architecture seeks to unify architecture and sculpture by considering the building a mould that forms and informs the sculptures' geometry. Hopefully, the resulting site-specific sculptures heighten visitors' experience of architectural space; delivered through a series of epic inflatables that entwine architectural features.

Buildings with open spaces were avoided in favour of two deconsecrated churches and a contemporary atrium, each delineated by axes of columns. Sculptural geometry was developed to block existing sitelines, reconfigure pathways of movement, create overhangs and continually curving forms that kissed the ground in limited contact points.

Their physical size was deliberately made vast so that observation from one viewpoint became impossible; instead viewers experienced diverse perspectives as they moved around the buildings. This helped the sculptures to become experiential, rather than just observed.

In the larger pieces installed in the ex-churches, elements of the sculpture criss-crossed around the axes of columns; meaning that viewers could walk under parts of the sculpture. This development in my sculptural language

has augmented the sense of a temporal journey, of moving around the sculpture, observing its interactions with each buildings' architectural features.

The colouration of the sculptures is important, with stripes becoming a defining characteristic that underlines the curvature of the sculptures' geometry. The variegated colours help emphasise changes in the tubular forms' diameters, whilst creating a dynamic spectacle. The use of day-glo hi-vis colours in INF23, deliberately contrasted the muted colours of its host Left Bank Leeds. These strong colours created a subtle glow on the building, its hue often intensified with strong sunlight.

To enable bespoke production accurate to the cm, each building was physically mapped and modelled in 3D software. Multiple solutions were drawn onto plans of each space, and the most dynamic were chosen, modelled virtually and digitally cut into smaller panels. Once flattened with seam allowances, the requisite shapes were laser cut from ripstop parachute fabric and sewn together. The sculptures' breathing was enabled by a fan and timer cyclically inflating and deflating; this kinetic rise and fall animated their presence by continually transforming their geometry over time.

EDUCATION

2001-05 PhD in Sculpture, University of Gloucestershire
 1993-96 BA (Hons) Fine Art, Leeds Metropolitan University
 1992-93 Foundation Certificate in Art and Design, Isle College, Wisbech

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2020 National Centre for Craft and Design, (NCCD) Sleaford
 2019 *Sculpting Architecture*, Left Bank Leeds*
 2018 *Sculpting Architecture*, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe*
 2017 *Sculpting the Museum*, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum (RAGM), Rugby*
 2016 *Sculpting the Museum*, Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM), Exeter*
 2014 *Chameleons and Shape Shifters II*, Peterborough Art Gallery and Museum
 2010-12 *Chameleons and Shape Shifters*, Schwartz Gallery, London & Gallery Oldham
 2008-09 *Virtually Sculpture*, The Study Gallery, Poole & South Hill Park Arts Centre, Bracknell*
 2008 *Animated Sculptures and Drawings*, Clapham Picture House, London
 2004-06 *Membranes and Edges*, Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Honiton - toured:
 20/21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe; MAC, Birmingham; Red Gallery, Hull*
 2003 Alternatives Gallery, Rome
 Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy*
 2002-04 *Sculpture in 2D: Object as Artist*, RBS Gallery, London - toured: Stamford Arts Centre;
 Otter Gallery, Chichester; Babylon Gallery, Ely; Hans Price Gallery, Weston-Super-Mare*
 2000 Palazzo Pretorio, Sala Espositiva, Sansepolcro, Italy
 1997 Leeds City Art Gallery * catalogue

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2019 *OPEM5*, The Collection, Lincoln (artist in residence)
All Work and All Play, AIR Gallery, Altrincham
Wirksworth Festival (artist in residence)
Sculpture Open, Royal West of England Academy (RWA), Bristol
 2017 *Drawing For Sculpture*, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe
Naturally Sculpture, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford*
APT Shots: Passionate Process, APT Gallery, London*
 2016 *Taiwan International Wood Sculpture*, Sanyi Wood Sculpture Museum, Taiwan*
 2015 *Artists' Books*, Riverside Gallery, Richmond
 2014 *Elemental*, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford*

CV

2014 *OPEM3*, The Collection, Lincoln
 2013 *Sculpture by the Sea*, Aarhus, Denmark*
Illuminate, Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford
 2012 *Screenings*, The Public, West Bromich
The Drawing Project, Crocus Gallery, Nottingham
Pertaining To Things Natural, Chelsea Physic Garden & John Martin Gallery, London
 2011 *Erasure*, Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent
Animation Open, Salisbury Arts Centre
Lines Fiction, Fruehsorge Contemporary Drawings, Berlin
 2010 *Xtend IV*, South Hill Park Arts Centre, Bracknell
Process, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford*
Sculpture, Great Western Studios, London
 2009 *First@108 Public Art Award*, RBS Gallery, London
212 D, RBS Gallery, London
Light, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford*
Digital Ritual, Open Concept Gallery, Grand Rapids, MI, USA
Terminal, Short Video Festival, Terminal, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN, USA
Outside the Lines: New Directions in Drawing, AD Gallery, University of North Carolina, USA
CounterText 09, Bridport Arts Centre
Digital to Physical, Anderson Ranch Arts Centre, Snowmass Village, CO, USA
Captured in Stone (Friday Lates), V&A, London
 2008 *Space to Draw*, Jerwood Space, London*
A Space to Think Outside the Body, ArtSpace, Southwell
Drawn to Sculpture, Fermynwoods, Brigstock*
 RGB Gallery, The Collection, Lincoln
Zerosandones, Fairfield Arts Centre, Basingstoke
Figure, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford*
 OSOP, Northampton
DigitalArt.LA, Los Angeles Center for Digital Art, Los Angeles, USA
Abstracta, Filmstudio 80, Rome
The Fine Art of Drawing, Museum of Fine Arts, Florida State University, USA*
Wirksworth Festival, Parish Rooms, Wirksworth*
Conjunction 08, Bethesda Chapel, Stoke-on-Trent
Galvanise Festival, Winter Gardens, Sheffield
 2007 *Open Sculpture*, Royal West of England Academy (RWA), Bristol
WRO 07 Media Biennale, Lodz, Poland*
Digital Experience, Walford Mill Crafts, Dorset
Tracing Light, Royal West of England Academy (RWA), Bristol (3 person show)
Shot by the sea, Hastings film festival
Arts and Mathematics - Intersculpt 07 biennale, École Nationale Supérieur des Arts et Métiers, Paris

2007 *ING Discerning Eye*, Mall Galleries, London
Prints Tokyo 2007, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Japan

2006 *Heavenly Bodies: Astronomical and Anatomical*, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford*
Drawing with Light, Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford
Paperworks, Bury Art Gallery
Trenta Anni, La Rocca Paolina, Perugia, (con Il Gianicolo) Italy*
Jerwood Drawing Prize, toured: Jerwood Space, London; MAC, Birmingham; Pittville Gallery,
University of Gloucestershire; Bury St Edmunds Art Gallery; Durham Art Gallery; BayArt54, Cardiff*

2005 *Sculptors Drawing*, Burghley Sculpture Garden + Stamford Arts Centre*
Through Time and Process, The Study Gallery, Poole
6 X 6, Fermynwoods, Brigstock
Encantas, St Nicholas's Church, Gloucester
Sculpture in the Planning, Sculpture in the Making, Atkinson Gallery, Street
Watch Out For The Small Print Too, City Gallery, Leicester
Prototype, New Museum of Contemporary Art, Norwich

2004 *Jurassic Challenge*, Honiton Festival*
Omaggio a "Umbria Jazz" 2004, Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy
Fantastic Plastics, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, Scunthorpe
Drawing the Line, Orleans House Gallery, Twickenham

2003 *Itinerari*, Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy
Open Sculpture, Royal West of England Academy, (RWA), Bristol*
Jerwood Sculpture Prize, Jerwood Space, London + MAC, Birmingham*

2001 Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford + *Inside-Outside*, Stamford Arts Centre*
Made Flesh, Francis Close Hall Chapel, Cheltenham
L'Immagine del Gioiello, Alternatives Gallery, Rome*
Royal West of England Academy, (RWA) Bristol
Bursary 2000-01, RBS Gallery, London

2000 *Vetrina del Premio Arezzo*, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea, Arezzo, Italy*
Michael Shaw & Roberta Bernabei, Galleria le Arti Orafe, Florence, Italy
Fili d'oro, Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy
Hilde Leiss Gallery, Hamburg, Germany

SELECTED COMMISSIONS

2012 *Observatory*, Wednesfield School, Wolverhampton

2010 *Body Of Evidence*, GP medical practice Chesterfield
Leadlight, for MHP, installed King St, Derby

2005 *Neon Ice House*, Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford

1997-98 *Untitled*, for Gleeson Homes, installed at Bamford Mill, Bamford, Peak District

PRIZES / AWARDS

2018 Arts Council of England

2016 Arts Council of England

2014 Oppenheim-John Downes Memorial Trust

2012 Pollok-Krasner Foundation , NY.

2010 Arts Council of England

2007 Lynn Chadwick Prize, Royal West of England Academy (RWA), Bristol
Discerning Eye Drawing Bursary

2005-08 AHRC Research Fellowship, Loughborough University

2004 Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation
Arts Council of England

2003 Shortlisted for Jerwood Sculpture Prize

2002 Kensington & Chelsea Arts Council
AHRB Postgraduate Award

2001 Membership Bursary, Royal British Society of Sculptors
Bursary, Royal West of England Academy (RWA), Bristol + Gilbert Bayes Charitable Trust

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Books / Catalogues

2019 *Sculpting Architecture*. Mason, D., Shaw, M. & Spencer, C.

2016 *Sculpting the Museum*, Clark, R., Rosenbloom, P., Shaw, M. et al. (RAMM), Exeter

2014 *The Language Of Mixed Media Sculpture*. The Crowood Press, Ramsbury. Scott, J. p108-112, 136-37.

2011 *The Future Of Art In A Postdigital Age*. Intellect Books/University of Chicago Press,
Bristol/Chicago. Alexenberg, M. p53.

2010 *Process*. Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford.

2009 *Light*. Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford.
Virtually Sculpture. Loughborough University. Abbott, F., Chong, A., Remes, O. & Stonyer, A.

2008 *Digital Animation*. AVA Publishing, Lausanne. Chong, A. p158-159.
Drawing For Animation. AVA Publishing, Lausanne. Wells, P. p76-77.
Figure. Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford.
The Fine Art Of Drawing. Museum of Fine Arts, Florida State University, USA.
Space To Draw. Jerwood Space, London.
Drawn To Sculpture. Fermynwoods, Brigstock.

2006 *Heavenly Bodies: Astronomical and Anatomical*. Burghley Sculpture Garden, Stamford.
Jerwood Drawing Prize. Jerwood Foundation, London.
Trenta Anni. Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy. Fulli, E. p76-78.

2005 *Michael Shaw: Membranes and Edges*. MAC, Birmingham. Slight, N. & Stonyer, A.
Sculptor's Bible. Quarto Publishing Plc, London. Plowman, J. p29-30, 221.

- 2004 *Jurassic Challenge*. Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Honiton. Doyle, M. p10-11, 26.
- 2003 *Michael Shaw: Sculpture In 2D - Object As Artist*. RBS Gallery, London. Bailey, C. & Stonyer, A.
- 2003 *Jerwood Sculpture Prize*. Jerwood Foundation, London.
- Open Sculpture*. Royal West of England Academy, (RWA), Bristol. p27.
- Drawing*. Cassell Illustrated, London. Thomas, P. & Taylor, A. p71.
- 2002 *L'Immagine del Gioiello*. Alternatives Gallery, Rome, Italy.
- Faccia a Faccia: Artisti Italiani e Stranieri in Vetrina*.
- Associazione Romana Gallerie D'Arte Moderna, Rome. p34.
- 2001 *Michael Shaw: Sculptures, Drawings And Monoprints*. Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy.
- 2000 *Michael Shaw*. Il Gianicolo, Perugia, Italy. Shaw, M & de Albentis, A.
- Vetrina del Premio Arezzo*. Galleria Comunale D'Arte Contemporanea, Arezzo, Italy. p68-69.
- 2008 *Michael's inflatable has it all figured out*. Sheffield Star. 14/11/08, Soutar, I. p14 & 20.
- 2006 *Michael Shaw: Membranes and Edges*. A-N Magazine. April. p10.
- 2005 *Membranes And Edges*. Devon Today. November, p85.
- Flog It*. (interviewed as curator/exhibitor Burghley Sculpture Garden) BBC2. 28/09/05, 6pm.
- Cannon Hill: Park Gallery Blows Up Exhibition*. Birmingham Evening Mail. 8/11/05, p10.
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- 2004 *Experimental Art Is A Shaw thing*. Ely Weekly News. 08/01/04. p12.
- Boundaries Blurred*. Cambridge Evening News. 09/01/04.
- Sculpture in 2D*. Eastern Daily Press. 30/01/04, Events p3.
- Hanging Screens of Babylon*. Cambridgeshire Journal. February, Whittaker, A. p76.
- Sculptor Has High Hopes*. Gloucestershire Echo. 5/03/04, p7.
- Inflation Hits Council Run Gallery*. Connect. Issue 27, Oct/Nov, Arts and Events, p19.
- The Shape Of Things To Come At Art Exhibition*. Exeter Express and Echo. 22/10/04, p8.
- 2003 *Michael's In Shape*. Gloucestershire Echo. 10/02/03, p23.
- Easy On The Public Eye*. Big Issue. February, 10-16th. Sumptier, H. p31.
- Price Is Right*. Art Review. February, p18.
- Shortlist Announced*. A-N Magazine. February, p19.
- Showing Room For Growth*. Metro London. 26/02/03, Güner, F. p22.
- Jerwood Sculpture Prize*. Time Out London. 12/03/03, Geldard, R. p49.
- Jerwood Sculpture Prize*. The Times. 19/03/03, Russel-Taylor, J. p15.
- Gioielli Alternativi*. Next Exit. (Rome, Italy) September, Laurenti, C. p33.
- Gesso e Plastica per Scoprire la Forma Pura*. Corriere dell'Umbria. (Italy) 11/10/03, IV:Arte. Durati, M.
- Alternativas: Roberta Bernabei Y Michael Shaw*. Arte Y Joya. (Spain) no. 156, p144-147.
- 2000 *Telegiornale*. (TV report on solo show in Sansepolcro, Italy) Teletruria, Tuscany. 16/12/2000.
- Zoom*. Argento. (Italy) December, Macri, G. p7-9.
- 1998 *Bamford Mill Sculpture*. Gleeson New Homes News. Spring/Summer.
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- 2019 *Eyewitness*, Guardian. 03/09/2019, p30-31.
- Coils of Colour*, Telegraph. 03/09/2019, p9.
- Inflated Ideas*, Yorkshire Post. 03/09/2019, p6.
- Look North, BBC1, 03/09/2019.
- 2018 *Razzle-Dazzle at Rheged*. Cumbria Life. Ingham, M. (ed) 29/01/18
- 2017 *Sculptures Reimagine Art Gallery*. Rugby Observer. 19/01/17. p2.
- 2016 *Art Gets Fun*. Exeter Life. Nov. Burns, C. p86-88.
- 2012 *A Luminous Start To The Gallery Year*. Oldham Evening Chronicle. 10/01/12, Hooton, R. p23.
- Shifting Shapes*. The Oldham Advertiser. 19/01/12, p37.
- Sculptor's Shifting Shapes*. Oldham Evening Chronicle. 23/01/12, p12.
- A Monster Of A Show*. Manchester Evening News. 13/02/12, Walters, S. p10-11 CityLife.
- Michael Shaw: Oldham*. Guardian (Guide). 04/02/12, Clark, R. p37.
- 2010 *The Computer Aided Design And Manufacture of Specific Objects*. Leonardo. Vol43 No.2.
- Shaw, M. p 113-120.
- 2009 *Virtually Sculpture*. Evolver. No. 49, Jan/Feb, p11.
- Bringing Art To Life*. Listed. (Bournemouth and Poole) No.15, Jan/Feb, Ansell, E. p20-21.
- Bringing Designs To Life*. Update. Spring, p25.
- Big Picture: Michael Shaw*. A-N Magazine. February, p20-21.
- Light*. Guardian (Guide). 02/05/09, Clark, R. p39.
- CAD Sculpting At South Hill Park*. Bracknell and Wokingham Times. 01/07/09.
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