



Aberdeen's spectacular and popular festival of light, SPECTRA, returns in 2020.

**SPECTRA 2020
Thursday 13 – Sunday 16 February 2020**



- **Free, family friendly and interactive, SPECTRA is huge fun for the curious experience seekers and fun seekers of all ages.**
- **SPECTRA is Scotland's premiere light festival with leading names from the UK and around the world creating a stunning lightscape across the city centre.**
- **SPECTRA 2020 is inspired by Scotland's Coasts and Waters and includes artists Designs in Air, Heinrich and Palmer, Richard William Wheater, Seb Lee-Delisle, Mark Anderson and Dodda Maggý.**
- **5 commissions, 12 works and 4 artists new to SPECTRA announced today.**

- **SPECTRA embodies Aberdeen's cultural credentials kicking off a year-round programme of festivals, and showing off the attractive city centre.**
- **The free to see art works will be live from 6.30pm to 10pm each night.**
- **Locations in 2020 include: Marischal College Quad, Broad Street, Upper Kirkgate, Schoolhill, St Nicholas Kirkyard, Marischal Square The Kirk of St Nicholas, and Aberdeen Art Gallery.**
- **SPECTRA Catalyst Conference (14 & 15 February) asks 'What is culture's hidden contribution to a city's sustainability?'**
- **SPECTRA is an Aberdeen City Council event, delivered by award-winning production company Curated Place.**
- **Further information on Spectra is available at www.spectrafestival.co.uk**

[IMAGES HERE](#)

The return of Scotland's leading light art festival, SPECTRA was announced today.

Taking its inspiration from Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters, SPECTRA 2020 explores Aberdeen's position as the connecting point to other cultures on Scotland's North East coast through a series of thought provoking, playful and just plain stunning light art works.

From the Thursday 13th to Sunday 16th February, SPECTRA will once again light up the winter nights in Aberdeen encouraging audiences to get out and experience the city looking its best using **interactive light sculptures, architectural projections and film to create new ways of exploring the city.**

This year the works of art created in light will appear in **Marischal College Quad, Broad Street, Upper Kirkgate, Schoolhill, St Nicholas Kirkyard, The Kirk of St Nicholas, and Aberdeen Art Gallery.**

The Spectra website will share more information on the installations and how to enjoy them and your evening whether you are travelling in to the city centre with your family or travelling from Dundee, Perth or Edinburgh with friends.

www.spectrafestival.com

Information on SPECTRA 2020 artists and work:

Designs in Air (UK)

Bringing their unique 3d Street Art to the Aberdeen Designs in Air will release a menagerie of sea creatures both real and imagined across the entire area of SPECTRA. Playfully bringing to life the intrigue and beauty of the deep their giant inflatables will frame the festival for 2020.

<https://www.filthyluker.org> <https://www.designsinair.com>

Heinrich and Palmer (UK) will bring two works to Aberdeen for their first appearance at SPECTRA.

Using film, 3D laser scanning technology, and sound and lighting effects, Heinrich and Palmer create the ghostly, ephemeral *Ship of the Gods*, inspired by

the Norse myth of a magical shape-shifting vessel which was large enough to carry all the gods yet could be folded up small enough to fit inside a pocket. Heinrich and Palmer connect this story with the landscapes of Norway and with Aberdeen and Hull's maritime histories drawing on exhibits and stories featured in Aberdeen's museums (in association with Absolutely Cultured)

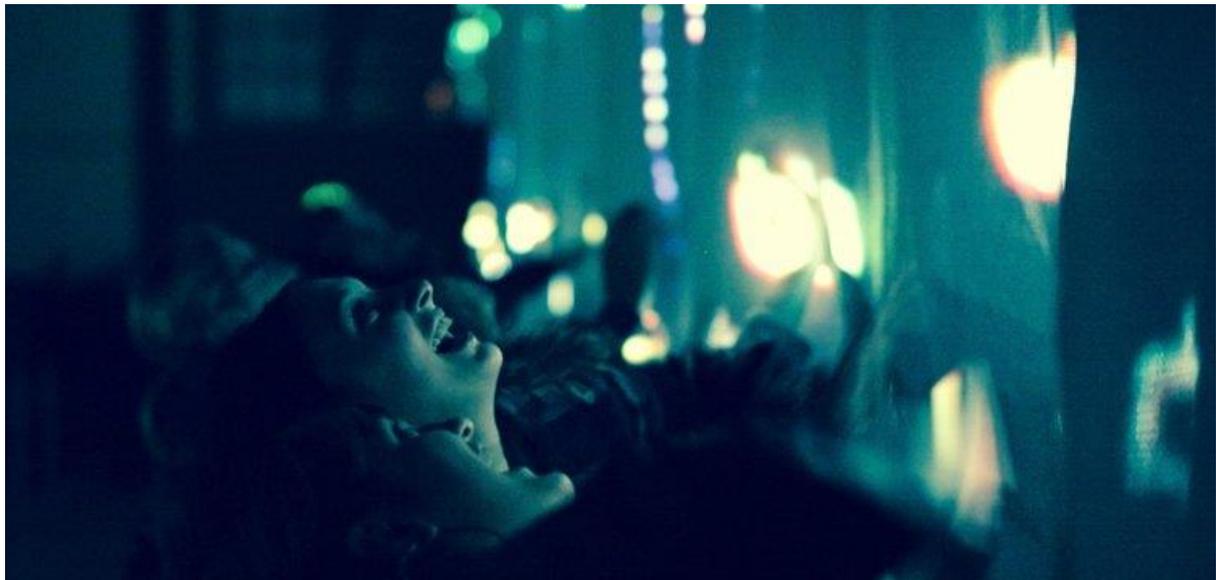
Heinrich and Palmer's second work, *Aerial* occupies the airspace of St Nicholas Kirk to take visitors on a visual journey through the ethereal forms of migratory birds. Birds range from the sora rail, a rare American visitor to Aberdeen, to the now extinct North American passenger pigeons; from the red-listed cuckoo to the bird with the longest migration, the arctic tern (in association with Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery, Exeter)

<http://www.heinrichpalmer.co.uk/>

Richard William Wheeler (UK)

Richard's new commission for Spectra will be an industrial recreation of the Aberdeen coastal climate descending on the city as neon rain on an epic scale. Exploring the harshness and beauty of living on the coast his work will marry the human and natural world using the beauty of rare gasses.

<http://www.richardwheater.com>



Seb Lee-Delisle (UK)

Returning to SPECTRA after his stunning *Lightning Strikes* in 2018, award winning artist Seb Lee-Delisle brings *Marine Flares*, a newly commissioned large-scale light installation. Computer generated fireworks are projected onto the front of Marischal College using state-of-the-art lasers. But unlike most firework displays you don't stand back and watch - each firework is set off by members of the audience.

<http://seb.ly>

Illuminos (UK)

Illuminos are working with the University of Aberdeen to bring to life the 525 year history of the University to life, highlighting the research and collections brought together through the travels and explorations of the students, faculty and researchers over more than half a millennia. A co-commission between the University of Aberdeen and SPECTRA.

www.illuminos.co.uk

Chris Paul Daniels(UK)

The Book of Lies is the name of the journals and photographic scrapbooks of Pike Ward – a British fish merchant proclaimed as ‘the best-known man in Iceland’ in the early twentieth century, but largely forgotten soon after.

The book of lies was rediscovered in a forgotten archive by writer Katherine Findlay which inspired Artist and Filmmaker Chris Paul Daniels to travel across Iceland following in Ward’s footsteps, documenting the travels onto analogue film and bringing two visitors to Iceland a century apart together. Commissioned as part of Curated Place’s ongoing NATURproject.org for SPECTRA with Iceland’s Einkofi Productions funded by Creative Europe’s European Year of Cultural Heritage.

www.chrispauldaniels.com www.naturproject.org

Yiannis Kranidiotis (Greece) returns to Spectra for the third time, bringing two works in 2020.

Cyma {Fos} is a real-time data-driven kinetic light and sound sculpture very much inspired by natural repeating patterns and wave movement. Real time data of the solar wind defines the motion of the wave. The whole sculpture waves in the natural fundamental frequency and in higher modes called harmonics in a hypnotic and mesmerizing way.

Plastic Sea is a comment on the increasing pollution of seas with plastic debris. Visitors can select a spot from an interactive map of the Earth. The installation will read the plastic pollution data of this spot and will adjust the height of the waves and the lighting conditions to the current time of day. The installation also selects random spots from the 5 oceans and the Mediterranean Sea and according to the amount of the plastic debris found there changes the magnitude of the plastic sea’s waves.

<https://kranidiotis.gr>

Dodda Maggý (Iceland)

Artist Dodda Maggý has explored the stories, memories and myths and that connect the people of the North Sea coast, to Iceland. Responding to the theme of Coasts and Waters her investigations draw on a series of seafaring legends, and highlight how our creation of myths has shifted from the supernatural threats to question how we became the monsters once attributed to the mysterious deep. Commissioned as part of Curated Place’s ongoing NATURproject.org with Iceland’s Einkofi Productions and Absolutely Cultured funded by Creative Europe’s European Year of Cultural Heritage.

doddamaggy.info

Steve Symons (UK)

A new commission for SPECTRA. The Ashray - a Scottish water faery - is relatively harmless but caution should be used. While some may be malicious others are not but may accidentally harm humans by luring them into the water where they drown. *The Ashrays of the Digital Forest* is an interactive light and sound installation that allows the Ashrays to come to life and engage with the real world. They will toy with you as you walk around their habitat. Be prepared to be followed, sung to, watched and lured deeper into their realm.

<http://muio.org/> <http://owlproject.com>

Mark Anderson

Mark returns to SPECTRA with four works which capture the transience and lightness of birds creating beautiful and poignant works which have captivated audiences across the UK with their sense of otherworldliness. (image below)



Double Take Projections (Scottish)

In a new co-commission between the RSPB and Spectra, Double Take, the Scottish company specialising in creating immersive visual experiences will create a new projection mapping work highlighting the rich biodiversity of Aberdeen's coastal waters bringing the sounds and sights of Aberdeen's Harbour to the city centre.

<http://doubletakeprojections.com>
www.thewire.co.uk/about/artists/lee-patterson

Fusion Youth Dance Company

Fusion is Citymoves' Youth Dance Company, for aspiring talented young dancers which performs on stages and in unusual spaces in Aberdeen and beyond. For SPECTRA they will work with Designs in Air to bring the sea to the streets of Aberdeen.

www.citymoves.org.uk

Amy Gear (Shetland)

A co-commission with Look Again Project Space, this new work by multi-disciplinary artist Amy Gear is a response to the theme of coast and water, resulting in an exhibition, new projection and sound work that explore the possible (and impossible) interrelationships between landscape, coast and the body, playfully knotting together film, spoken word, Shetland dialect and myth.

Look Again Aberdeen is part of Gray's School of Art at Robert Gordon University.

Sara Stroud – NATUR Residency

Sara is already known to SPECTRA audiences through previous festivals. She is a moving image artist who creates playful work which surprises. Through her NATUR residency in Norway she explores the financial and emotional legacy that the Oil Industry has in both Aberdeen and Stavanger.

Cllr Marie Boulton, Aberdeen City Council Culture Spokesperson said:

"Aberdeen City Council is proud to invest in and deliver a year round events calendar, bringing high quality activities and culture to our public spaces. I can't think of a better way to kick off our 2020 programme than with Scotland's festival of light Spectra returning to the city and the programme being put together by Curated Place is truly world class. Aberdeen is a city inextricably linked to the sea through our heritage, industry and culture, so it's exciting that this year's theme celebrates Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters and I'm really looking forward to seeing that reflected in the artists' work."

Andy Brydon, Director of Curated Place said: "Curated Place are excited to return as the producers of Spectra alongside Aberdeen City Council's culture and events teams. After working tirelessly to develop the festival in its inaugural years we're now keen to develop more opportunities for Aberdeen artists and producers to work with the seasoned team. We'll be creating stronger ties with creative peers in Stavanger and further afield through new residency opportunities and launching a new creative producers scheme for 2021 as well as delivering the festival as a major event that reflects the people and creativity of the city across an all new site."

Running alongside the public light art of SPECTRA is the third edition of the industry conference **SPECTRA Catalyst Conference**.

In 2020 the SPECTRA Catalyst Conference returns with guests from the world of culture, tourism, heritage, music, diplomacy and business to ask 'What is culture's hidden contribution to a city's sustainability?'

Taking place in the newly refurbished Music Hall, Spectra Catalyst Conference runs Friday 14 Feb at 9.30am to Saturday 15 Feb at 5pm and welcomes cultural leaders from across Scotland, the UK, and Internationally.

Challenging the notion that investment in culture is a 'nice to have' our speakers will explore the hidden benefits or true value culture brings to the city's economy, identity and well-being, and will present on issues as diverse as the activation of archives to neuro-diversity, and the death of retail to surveillance capitalism. The conference will promote culture as a human right and take an asset-based approach to mapping out strategies to cement culture as a 'must-have' for Aberdeen - becoming a critical meeting point for anyone serious about the business of Culture in the North East and in Scotland.

Further information on Spectra is available at www.spectrafestival.co.uk

For further media information and images including the full programme please contact Magda Paduch or Susie Gray, The Corner Shop PR, magda@thecornershoppr.com or susie@thecornershoppr.com // 07583 164070// 07834 073 795 or 0131 202 6220.