



For immediate release
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LUMIERE, THE UK'S LIGHT ART BIENNIAL, RETURNS WITH SPECTACULAR 2025 LINE-UP

- **The UK's landmark light art biennial transforms Durham once again, Thursday 13 – Saturday 15 November 2025.**
- **Announced today, a remarkable programme of light artworks from international and UK artists, with major new commissions, premieres, and community collaborations.**
- **Over 15 years, *Lumiere* has attracted more than 1.3m visitors and boosted the local economy by an incredible £43m since 2009.**
- **Beyond the lights, *Lumiere's* Learning & Participation programme has engaged more than 14,000 local people since 2009**
- **Backed by over 100 supporters, a testament to the pride and commitment of County Durham's businesses and communities in championing culture.**
- **Inspiring communities, creating opportunities, celebrating County Durham as the Culture County, *Lumiere* has propelled the city and the county onto the international light art map.**

Produced and curated by Artichoke and commissioned by Durham County Council, *Lumiere* returns this November for its ninth edition, transforming Durham into an illuminated city-wide art gallery.

Taking place over three evenings, from Thursday 13 to Saturday 15 November, audiences will encounter a dazzling line-up of installations and experiences, ranging from large-scale spectacles to intimate moments of reflection.

Since its beginnings in 2009, *Lumiere* has become recognised internationally as the UK's light art biennial, and has inspired light shows and festivals up and down the UK. Over the years, it has welcomed more than 1.3 million visitors and delivered £43m of economic impact. Its significance extends across the global light art community. *Lumiere* is made possible by funding from Durham County Council and Arts Council England, who are joined for the first time by regional commissioning partner North East Combined Authority.

Lumiere's success depends on the backing of Durham's visionary businesses and individuals, including major partners Durham University and Point North. This year, over 100 local supporters have come together to make *Lumiere* possible: from long-standing partners like MGL Group who champion the volunteers, to new sponsors such as Prima Cheese who

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collaborated with us on the Prima Commission. Their commitment helps bring *Lumiere* to life and leaves a lasting legacy of inspiration and opportunity for County Durham and beyond.

For 2025, the programme *Lumiere* once again brings together world-renowned artists, UK debuts and commissions alongside community-created projects that celebrate the creativity of County Durham's people. From the monumental to the meditative, the 2025 programme reflects *Lumiere*'s power to enchant and inspire.

Durham Cathedral Quarter

A highlight of the biennial since 2009 has been the artistic interaction with Durham's Norman Cathedral both inside and out. Inspired by the building's significance as a place of sanctuary, two new commissions for the Cathedral Nave and Cloister will engage with this history.

EVERYONE EVER by Nighthouse Studio (Elaine Buckholtz and Ian Winters, USA)

transforms the vast nave of Durham Cathedral into a poetic confrontation in stone and light. Accompanied by an original soundscape, the work acknowledges past and present injustices while offering space for reflection and resilience.

The Cathedral cloister will be the site of a new commission **by Amelia Kosminsky (UK).**

Solace fills the Cloister with hundreds of handmade lanterns, suspended as if in mid-flight. Offering comfort and hope during turbulent times, they invite audiences to imagine the lanterns' journey while reflecting on their own.

Visitors approaching the Cathedral will be greeted by riot of colour as Palace Green becomes a supersized forest of illuminated flowers standing two metres tall. **Elysium Garden by Jigantics (UK)** was inspired by mythical gardens of paradise, with the towering blooms offering a kaleidoscope of colour and light, an uplifting celebration of nature, empathy and hope.

Elemental Nature

From Koi carp to butterfly clouds, fire, melting glaciers and waterfalls, many of this year's installations contemplate the joys of the natural world, and the uncertain future of our planet.

The Garden of Shadows by Jony Easterby (UK) takes the audience on a magical journey of eight installations through **The College** and **South Bailey**, that blend sound, shadow and ecological reflection, contemplating the contrast between light and darkness.

Cédric Le Borgne's The River (France) suspends three giant illuminated koi carp above Prebends Bridge. Majestic yet wild, the glowing sculptures conjure an unexpected encounter with nature, inviting audiences to look up and dream.

Glittering Grove by Sound Intervention (UK) creates an immersive 300-metre woodland walk, where mirror balls scatter dancing points of light like fireflies. Accompanied by an

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original soundscape by Dan Fox, the trail encourages visitors of all ages to wander among stars and trees.

Entanglement Is Existential (II) by Justin Brice Guariglia (USA) reimagines solar-powered highway message boards as roadside signals for change. Instead of traffic alerts, the boards display compelling ecological texts by writers and thinkers including Margaret Atwood, Robert Macfarlane, Timothy Morton, Zadie Smith, Re:wild and Guariglia himself, blending poetry, metaphor and humour, challenging audiences and sparking new conversations about our planet.

Sign by Vendel & de Wolf (Netherlands) conjures an illusion of flames and sparks rising into the night sky. Both terrifying and mesmerising, the work reflects on fire as destruction and renewal, an elemental force of change.

Flutter by Emma Allen (UK) immerses visitors in a glowing swarm of butterflies at Crook Hall, inviting them to reconnect with the natural world. Inspired by Durham's Green Corridor, the kaleidoscope of wings celebrates biodiversity and the beauty of ecosystems.

As Water Falls by Iregular (Canada) is a digital waterfall that responds to human touch. Constantly evolving with organic patterns, no two moments are ever alike. Inspired by the power and unpredictability of flowing water, each interaction releases a surge of movement and sound, much like water breaking free from a dam.

Point of (No) Return by Anastasia Isachsen (Norway) merges luminous visuals with music by Nils Petter Molvær in a powerful metaphor in which behaviour mimics human impacts on the environment.

Dreams of Freedom and Connectivity

A number of installations address the human condition, be it a longing for freedom in body and spirit or patterns of connectivity.

Ralf Westerhof's Take Flight! (The Netherlands) is a large-scale three-dimensional drawing in light, a neon bird perched on the dome of Hotel Indigo on Old Elvet. Visible across the city, for the artist it symbolises the freedom of letting go and the courage it takes to begin again.

In Market Place, **Rhizome by Bobolito&Co (Belgium)** is a living network of luminous ropes and sound that dominates the space. Reflecting on both the complexity of natural networks and the way we build digital and social connections, the tangled web of its glowing ropes, often found in forests or urban spaces, evokes a living structure – organic yet artificial, beautiful yet chaotic.

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Run Beyond by Angelo Bonello (Italy) is a large-scale light sculpture of illuminated figures leaping along Milburngate Riverside. Animated in perpetual motion, the work embodies the liberating leap towards freedom and the courage it takes to overcome fear.

BRILLIANT – Lumiere’s small-scale commissioning programme

Since 2011, Lumiere has nurtured new talent through this scheme, which encourages anyone from the North East and across the UK, to submit their artistic light ideas to be created and exhibited.

This year five artists have been selected and helped to develop their work, including three from County Durham. **Conduit by Mani Kambo (UK)**, is a luminous archway inspired by sacred thresholds across cultures, that invites audiences to step through a ritual portal. **LOVE IS by Kevin Edworthy (UK)** is a playful homage to his own true story, reflecting Durham’s everyday life through street photography-inspired humour. **A light still shines by Lewis Hobson (UK)**, is an installation inspired by austerity-era window grates, offering space for reflection on inequality and resilience in County Durham’s communities.

FluoreCycle by Hannah Ayre (UK) presents a canopy of woven UV-reactive bicycle wheels, a colourful celebration of cycling, sustainability, and joy. **Vault of Echoes by Aaqib (UK)** is a mirrored installation that blends Islamic geometry with County Durham’s brutalist landmarks, revealing hidden threads between heritage and place.

Spotlight on Shildon

This year’s “Spotlight on Durham” falls on Shildon, currently celebrating the 200th anniversary as home of the first railway station and passenger service. A trio of installations will bring the *Lumiere* magic to Locomotion, including community-created lantern installation, *Glimmer*, and two new commissions that reflect on Shildon’s special history.

Newcastle-based **NOVAK (UK)** return to *Lumiere* with **Alight**, a celebration of 200 years of railway heritage through a spectacular projection-mapped artwork at Locomotion, telling a story of connection and imagination inspired by the world’s first railways. Also at Locomotion, **Iron Horse Junction by Hannah Fox (UK)**, created together with Durham Academy students, offers a whimsical signal-box journey through 200 years of railway history, blending light, sound and original heritage objects.

Beyond the lights: Lumiere and Community Participation

Community creativity remains at the heart of *Lumiere* which continues to deliver lasting benefits across the county. Since 2009, its Learning & Participation programme has engaged more than 14,000 local people, inspiring schoolchildren, supporting community creativity, and offering skills and training opportunities.

For this year’s light art biennial, hundreds of local residents of all ages have taken part in lantern-making workshops across County Durham to create **Glimmer**, a two-part installation

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presented in both Durham City and Shildon. Each lantern carries a message, a memory, a hope, or a truth, personal to the maker, evoking a moment of pause and reflection.

Celebrating Lumiere's Brightest Moments at the Dead Dog Gallery presents a retrospective of *Lumiere* through the lens of North East locals and visitors. Artichoke has worked with Durham Sixth Form Centre students, supporting them through the process from designing a photography competition to curating the final exhibition of images of *Lumiere* over the years.

New College Durham's media students have also been involved in a film-making project, guided by the Artichoke team. The film memorialises *Lumieres* past and present through interviews and voxpops with County Durham residents.

Lumiere tickets

Lumiere in Durham City and Shildon runs from 17:00-22:00 each night from Thursday 13 November to Saturday 15 November. Tickets will be required to enter the central controlled zone in Durham City throughout each evening and should be booked in advance. More than half the installations are outside the ticketed zone and can be visited without a ticket. Tickets are not required for Shildon at any time.

County Durham residents will be able to book free tickets (£1.50 booking fee applies) from **10:00, Tuesday, 30 September**. The general release to the wider public will be from **10:00, Wednesday 1 October**.

Ahead of tickets going live, visitors are advised to register for an account in advance via [the Lumiere website](#), to enjoy a faster booking process.

Helen Marriage, Artistic Director of Artichoke says:

"The 2025 Lumiere programme is a love letter in light — a glowing tribute to the wonderful city and County of Durham. It doesn't take long to feel the extraordinary beauty of this place — where the countryside gently cradles its towns and cities, which rise from the ancient landscape, proud, enduring, and strong.

"Generations have left their mark here, and many more will follow. But as we walk this earth together, we're reminded of the transience of our existence and the enduring, restorative power of the natural world.

"In this 2025 edition of Durham's world-renowned art event, you'll discover old friends alongside fresh voices and emerging talent. We're grateful to everyone who has stood beside us over the last 15 years — helping to create unforgettable moments of light and joy for those who call the North East home and for those who travel from afar to experience the richness and diversity of this remarkable place."

Cllr Andrew Husband, Leader of Durham County Council says

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“Lumiere is a bright example of how culture can transform places and lives and, as commissioners of the festival, we are pleased to once again bring this event to the county. Over the years, it has attracted more than a million people to County Durham, boosted our economy by millions, and created opportunities for residents, schools, and businesses alike. This year’s programme will once again showcase Durham on an international stage while also bringing Shildon and its contribution to worldwide history into the spotlight. Through Lumiere we continue to demonstrate why we are proud to be known as the Culture County, and we look forward to welcoming visitors from near and far to experience this extraordinary festival.”

Lumiere Durham is a central pillar of The Culture County, the long-term creative regeneration strategy born out of the Durham 2025 UK City of Culture campaign.

Rebecca Ball, Area Director, Arts Council England says:

“Over 15 years, Lumiere has illustrated how sustained investment and strong partnerships in creativity and culture can deliver extraordinary results, from generating skills and employment opportunities to attracting visitors and contributing significantly to the local economy. This year’s exciting programme promises to dazzle its audiences once again and I’m looking forward to my visit.”

North East Mayor Kim McGuinness says:

“Lumiere is a simply brilliant festival for Durham and I want as many local people as possible to go see it, have a great night and feel inspired. That’s why we have made sure that, through our funding for this year’s festival, even more people from the local area will be invited and encouraged to come into the city to see this amazing festival of light.

“Durham has a really strong offer to visitors, steeped in the pride and creativity of its people, places and rich history. Lumiere really puts that on the map and will bring people together to celebrate that as they marvel at the beauty of the illuminations.”

Professor Karen O’Brien, Vice-Chancellor and Warden of Durham University, says:

“We’re really pleased that Lumiere will again take place in our beautiful city in November and to be supporting the event as a major partner.

“The incredible installations all across the city, including on some of our campus locations, will shine a light on the amazing places to see right on our doorstep. We’re looking forward to welcoming visitors and being part of this brilliant event.”

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lumiere-festival.com

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Media pack and images found [here](#).

Editors' Notes

[About Lumiere](#)

Lumiere, the UK's light art biennial, is a free-to-attend event produced by leading arts producers, Artichoke, and commissioned by Durham County Council with additional funding from Arts Council England. In 2025, *Lumiere* will return to Durham from 13-15 November. Since 2009, *Lumiere* has presented more than 300 bold installations enjoyed by over four million attendees across Durham, *Lumiere London* 2016 and 2018 and *Lumiere* in Derry~Londonderry, as part of the celebrations for City of Culture 2013. Past highlights include French artist-architect Jacques Rival's playful snowdome, *I Love Durham* (2011), Fujiko Nakaya's *Fogscape #03238* (2015), Catherine Garret's extraordinary 3D whale in the river, *Mysticète* (2015), Jim Campbell's *Scattered Light* (2021), Ai Weiwei's *Illuminated Bottle Rack* (2023) and Chila Burman's *Hurts So Good* (2023). Past *Lumiere* highlight videos [here](#).

Artichoke is committed to addressing climate injustice and reducing the environmental impacts of all the work it produces. *Lumiere* artists pledge to support this work through the design of artworks, making responsible use of materials and ensuring works produced contribute to the circular economy through future touring. Key technical suppliers are chosen based on their sustainability commitments and work together with Artichoke to challenge established practice and plan the operational aspects of *Lumiere* as sustainably as possible. Continuing our work with industry experts, [A Greener Future](#), *Lumiere* Durham 2025 will undertake a carbon impact assessment of the event to examine the success of the planning and to enable future editions of the light art biennial to further reduce emissions.

[About Artichoke](#)

Leading UK arts producers, Artichoke, works with artists to create extraordinary and ambitious public art in cities, the countryside and on coastlines around the UK. Artichoke believes in the transformative power of art to undermine the mundane and disrupt the everyday to create a new kind of world that we'd all like to live in.

Over the last 16 years Artichoke has produced more than 25 ground-breaking productions including the inaugural Artichoke project, Royal de Luxe's *The Sultan's Elephant* (London in 2006); La Machine's 50-foot high mechanical spider for Liverpool's Capital of Culture celebrations (2008); Antony Gormley's *One & Other* commission for the Fourth Plinth in

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Trafalgar Square (2009); *Lumiere*, the landmark light art biennial events produced in Durham, Derry-Londonderry and London (2009-2025); Deborah Warner's *Peace Camp* commission for the London 2012 Festival with Fiona Shaw and *London's Burning*, a festival commissioned by the City of London Corporation to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London (2016). Recent projects include *Sanctuary* (2022), the 65ft Covid memorial, designed by American artist David Best and built by 500 community members, set alight in a moment of catharsis for the nation and *The Gallery* (2022, 2023, 2024, ongoing), a new public art initiative taking over billboards and digital screens with art, sparking national conversation. The 2025 edition of *The Gallery* will be presented in October across UK and Brazil in partnership with The British Council as part of their UK/Brazil Season of Culture.

[About Durham County Council](#)

Durham County Council is one of the largest unitary authorities in the country. The council is committed to culture-led regeneration and is proud to commission *Lumiere*, the UK's light art biennial, cementing Durham's position as the 'culture county'. Alongside *Lumiere* the authority supports a year-round culture, heritage and tourism programme and delivers major capital cultural projects. This helps to bring economic, community and creative benefits to the county, raising its profile as a great place to live, work, study, visit and invest.

[About Arts Council England](#)

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Our vision, set out in our strategy *Let's Create*, is that by 2030, we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. Between 2023 and 2026 we will have invested over £467 millions of public money from the Government, alongside an estimated £250 million each year from The National Lottery, to help ensure that people in every part of the country have access to culture and creativity in the places where they live. Until Autumn 2025, the National Lottery is celebrating its 30th anniversary of supporting good causes in the United Kingdom: since the first draw was held in 1994, it has raised £49 billion and awarded more than 690,000 individual grants.

[About North East Combined Authority](#)

The North East Combined Authority was formed on 7 May 2024. We're led by an Elected Mayor, Kim McGuinness, and Cabinet and cover the seven local authority areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

[About Durham University](#)

Durham University is a globally outstanding centre of teaching and research based in historic Durham City in the UK. We are a collegiate university committed to inspiring our people to do outstanding things at Durham and in the world. We conduct transformative research that improves lives globally and we are ranked as a world top 100 university with an international reputation in research and education (QS World University Rankings 2025).

We are a member of the Russell Group of leading research-intensive UK universities and we are consistently ranked as a top 10 university in national league tables (Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, Guardian University Guide and The Complete University Guide).

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About Point North (formerly County Durham Community Foundation)

Founded in 1995, Point North (previously called County Durham Community Foundation) works to fight poverty and enrich lives in County Durham and Tees Valley, by connecting people and businesses who want to make a difference with community groups and voluntary organisations looking for support. In its 30-year history it has raised and then granted funds of over £70 million. www.pointnorth.org

Lumiere 2025 Supporters

Commissioning Partners

- Durham County Council
- Arts Council England

Regional Commissioning Partner

- North East Combined Authority

Major Partners

- Durham University
- Point North

Event Partners

- Radisson Blu Hotel, Durham
- Ramside Hall Hotel, Golf & Spa
- Royal Academy of Engineering *Ingenious* Scheme
- Durham Cathedral

Major Supporters

- Northern Powergrid
- Prima Cheese
- EMG Solicitors
- Gillian Dickinson Trust
- BAM Nuttall
- MGL Group
- The Riverwalk
- Avison Young
- National Trust (Crook Hall)

Event Supporters

- Lambton Park
- Sir James Knott Trust
- New College Durham
- Swinburne Maddison
- Northumbrian Water
- Walkergate
- Karbon Homes
- Durham Sixth Form Centre
- Citrus Group
- Workwear Express

Supporters

- The Ogden Trust
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- Hays Travel Foundation
- Savoy Educational Trust
- The William Leech Charity
- Québec Government Office, London
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- The Leonard Curtis Foundation
- Henry Smith's Charity, Durham
- Italian Cultural Institute, London
- Bannatyne Hotel, Durham
- WL Distillery
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- Parkers Chauffeurs
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Gold Business Club Members

- Hotel Indigo Durham

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Lumiere Giving Circle

- Sally & Mike Waterston

With Thanks To

- Caviar Studios
- The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust
- Durham Brewery
- Enter CIC
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- AdLibretto
- Alnwick Garden Trust
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- The Auckland Project
- The Barbour Foundation
- Beamish, The Living Museum of the North
- Bloom Procurement Services
- The Bowes Museum
- Chichester Festival Theatre
- Chocolate Fayre, Barnard Castle
- Corps of Drums Cleveland ACF
- County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service
- Coutts
- Durham Cathedral
- Durham County Cricket Club
- Durham Constabulary
- Eldon Financial
- Esh Group
- The Fire Station, Sunderland
- FW Capital
- George Clarke
- The Grange Vineyard & Winery, Alresford
- Hilton Garden Inn, Sunderland

- Hotel Indigo, Durham
- Lanchester Wines
- The Lord Crewe Arms, Blanchland
- LNER
- Muckle LLP
- Musicians of the Rifles Associate Northern Band
- National Centre for Circus Arts
- The National Glass Centre, Sunderland
- Newcastle Eagles
- Newcastle Theatre Royal
- Newcastle United Foundation
- Northumberland National Park
- Northumbria Helicopters
- PD Ports
- Lord & Lady Barnard, Raby Estates
- Ramside Spa, Durham
- Rockliffe Hall Golf
- Rockliffe Hall
- Sir Tim Rice
- Lord Shipley
- Sunderland AFC
- Sunderland Empire Theatre
- Supreme PLC
- Vertu BMW & MINI Durham