

A giant elephant and interactive sun: Lumiere returns to Durham brighter than ever

By Sarah Jackson | 07 October 2013

Tags:

[Preview](#)

[Comments](#)

Festival preview: Lumiere Durham, various venues, Durham, November 14-17 2013



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Solar Equation (2010). In Federation Square, The Light in Winter Festival, Melbourne, Australia

© Marcel Aucaer

What do an elephant, a sun and Durham Cathedral have in common? Nothing to do with their size - they all feature in this year's Lumiere Durham festival.

Created by Artichoke, one of the country's leading creative companies, Lumiere attracted an estimated 150,000 visitors to the city in 2011. Participants in the festival will use light to create exciting new art pieces to illuminate a trail through the city streets at night.

Helen Marriage, Lumiere's Artistic Director said: "Lumiere has become a fixture in the cultural calendar of the North East. It brings some of the world's most eminent artists to Durham and attracts attention around the world."

Highlights of this year's events include Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Solar Equation*. Never before seen in the UK, the interactive model of the sun is exactly 100 million times smaller than the real thing. Live mathematical equations will generate solar animations to simulate flares, sunspots and turbulence, which audiences can interact with via free app.

French artists and designers (some of whom have featured in Lyon's

world famous Fête des Lumières) dominate much of the festival, including design studio Top'la who will give visitors the unforgettable opportunity to see an elephant on Framwellgate Bridge. The large-scale installation will project a 3D hologram of Ménestrier the elephant above the ground, allowing visitors to walk underneath.

Durham Cathedral will be the home of several different installations, including *Dresses* by Korean artist Taegon Kim who will decorate the Cathedral Cloisters with a trinity of larger-than-life dresses made from LED lights that shift in colour to represent changing relationships and love.

Visitors to the nave and gardens will find themselves surrounded by dancing sparks and shafts of moving light created by French artistic duo Atsara.

Some works in the festival touch upon themes relating to science, nature and the environment, including two works by Mayo Avrabou and Dimitri Xanakis, which will ask visitors to reconsider their own impact on the environment. *Greenhouse Effect* will transform cars into brightly lit greenhouses and *Guardian Angels* will transform the humble watering can into stunning lanterns that pour light from mid-air.

Visitors will be able to make their own contribution to the festival by donating their used plastic bags to *The Consumerist Christmas Tree*. Created by Spanish underground collective Luzinterruptus, the plastic bags will be used to create a giant Christmas tree filled with light to call attention to our wastefulness.