

Public Art on Cockshaw Burn



The Environment Agency has a remit for protecting and enhancing the environment of England and Wales. It has specific responsibilities for flood risk management, industry regulation, water and land quality, water resources and waste management.

To find out more about your environment and the work of the Agency visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk

COMMISSIONS NORTH

Established in 1999 as part of Arts Council England North East, Commissions North is client focussed working in partnership with a wide range of public and private sector clients to develop opportunities and artists' commissions that can enhance and develop the region's reputation for public art and innovation.

To find out more about public art commissioning in Northumberland please visit www.commissionsnorth.org or contact rebecca.farley@artscouncil.org.uk

Credits:
Photography: David Williams
Designed and produced by Ripe

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Steve Hyslop



Matthew Fedden



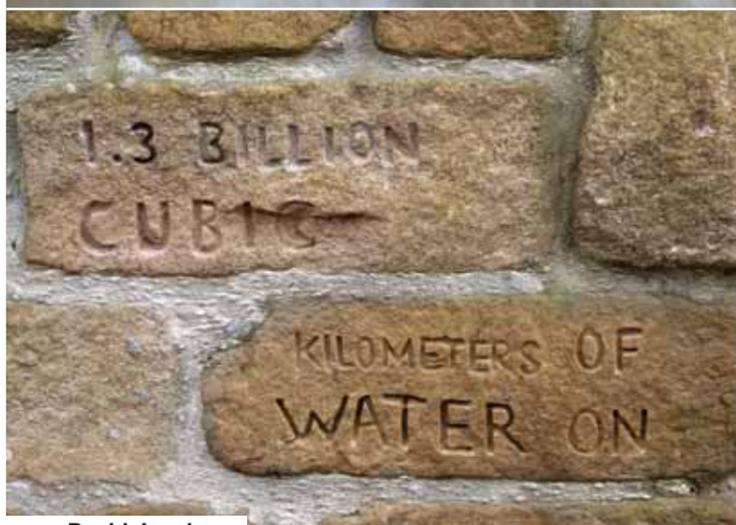
North East England has developed an internationally acclaimed profile for public art over two decades and contemporary public art commissions are now established as a vital ingredient within many regeneration, heritage and environmental projects across the region.

The Cockshaw Burn commissions in Hexham, Northumberland are the first artworks to be developed as part of an emerging partnership between the Environment Agency and Commissions North (Arts Council England, North East). The project aims to demonstrate the creative potential of civil engineer and artist collaboration and represents an exciting new departure for the Agency in terms of its flood defence work here in the North East.

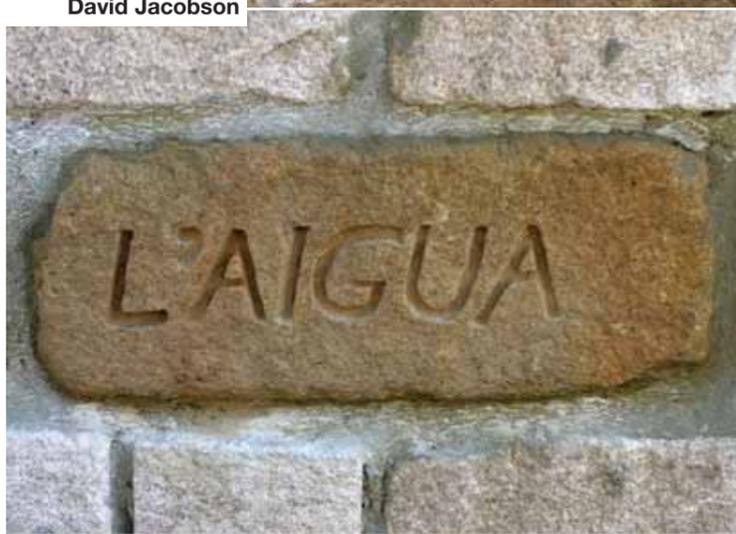
“Traditionally we have included ‘environmental enhancement’ work as part of our projects often in the form of planting schemes or specific features to help species such as otters or birds. However, we recognise that public art is also a very important way to improve environments, and we are now trying to find ways to make art part of our projects rather than a bolt on at the end. The work on Cockshaw Burn with Commissions North and Northern Rock Foundation has been extremely useful for us in better understanding what is possible and how it can best be delivered.”
Peter Kerr, Programme Manager,
Environment Agency North East



David Jacobson



David Jacobson



Commissions and artists

The artworks were planned as a series of integrated elements which would improve the visual quality of essential new flood defences being installed by the Environment Agency along Cockshaw Burn, providing artistic interventions into the structural improvements and creating discreet but engaging new points of interest along the burn's route through the town.

Artist-blacksmith Matthew Fedden worked in close collaboration with the scheme's civil engineers to design and fabricate a series of new trash screens that make visual allusion to water patterns and river flow. The first completed screen is installed in Sele Well, alongside Steve Hyslop's giant carved oak debris catchers. Further screens will follow during 2007-08.

Downstream, between Sele Bridge and Glover's Bridge, David Jacobson's carved stones, using granites imported from drought plagued countries of the world, are half submerged within the streambed, creating playful interactions with the water at different levels of flow. Text and linear elements in the stream and enclosing walls refer to the essential vitality of water and hint at the various historical uses of the burn.

Commissions North worked with the Environment Agency on the project brief and selection of artists for the scheme, resulting in commissions for three UK based artists.

The Cockshaw Burn artworks have been supported by the Environment Agency, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Arts Council England and Northern Rock Foundation.

For more information about the artists please visit www.mattfedden.co.uk and www.davidjacobson.co.uk