

New public art for Kingston town centre:

***Party Animal* by Alex R T Davies MRSS announced as winner of Kingston Sculpture Trail public vote**

Party Animal by Alex R T Davies MRSS has been announced today as the winner of the Kingston Sculpture Trail and will become a permanent feature in Kingston town centre, with the artist receiving a £10k prize. The artwork is a fun and interactive bronze goat sculpture which stands proudly with a street cone on its back, inviting the viewer to touch and even sit on the piece.

Alex R T Davies MRSS (pictured below) is a locally-based sculptor who runs a fine art foundry, Milwyn Casting Ltd, in West Molesey. Davies was the creator of two sculptures on the trail, *Party Animal* and *The Kiss*, both part of a series of works titled 'Unwanted Monuments'.



The Kingston Sculpture Trail, organised through a partnership of Canbury Community Trust, Kingston Council, Kingston First and Kingston University, ran from August to October 2021 and comprised of seven temporary sculptures. Local residents and visitors were asked to vote for their favourite and almost 1700 people responded to the voting survey with *Party Animal* winning 51% of the vote, showing the strength of feeling for this particular piece.

Party Animal will be installed in a suitable location in the town centre for all to enjoy in early 2022.

Alex R T Davies MRSS, artist and creator of 'Party Animal', said:

"It's been a great experience being involved in the Kingston Sculpture Trail, made all the better by the positive feedback I have had and of course winning the vote. It is a real honour to have a sculpture chosen to be permanently sited in Kingston, a town that I have visited

many times growing up in Surrey, having worked there as a teenager, to now having my own business and workshop so close."

David Mach RA, artist and creator of iconic Kingston sculpture 'Out of Order' (1989) said:

"A great choice, and good to have a local artist. This is Kingston's version of the boar statue near the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. The nose of "Porcellino" is golden from the number of tourists rubbing it for luck; the cone on the back of Alex's goat is going to be just as shiny. It's going to be a very popular piece."

Kirsten Henly, Chief Executive of Kingston First said:

"Announcing the winner of the first-ever Kingston Sculpture Trail is a proud moment for all the partners who helped bring this exciting, collaborative project to life. The trail brought a wealth of public art to Kingston and created new experiences for visitors and residents alike, building on our shared vision for the town centre's streets and spaces. The incredible legacy of the trail is this brilliant piece of permanent public artwork which will be enjoyed for many years to come. Congratulations to the artist and thank you to everyone who visited the trail and voted for their favourite sculpture."

Councillor Rebekah Moll, Portfolio Holder for Culture at Kingston Council said:

"Thank you to everyone who took part and voted for the amazing sculptures, and to the artists behind them. The Kingston Sculpture Trail reinforces the Council's commitment to supporting arts and culture as an integral part of our wider economic recovery, and we are delighted that Party Animal will be around for visitors and residents to enjoy."

Mandy Ure, Dean at Kingston School of Art said:

"Alex R T Davies' 'Party Animal' is a worthy winner of the public vote, a fantastic addition to the landscape of Kingston and a sculpture the local community and visitors can enjoy for years to come. It's been a real pleasure working in partnership with Kingston First, the Royal Borough of Kingston and community groups, and for my colleagues from Kingston School of Art to be able to contribute. Our students have also enjoyed opportunities to take their work out into public settings in previous projects and I hope there is further collaboration in the future."

To find out more about the sculpture trail, visit kingstonfirst.co.uk/sculpture-trail/ or email shareena.merzi@kingstonfirst.co.uk.

More imagery can be found at the link [here](#).

Notes to editors:

About the trail

The project was organised through a partnership of the Canbury Community Trust, Kingston Council, Kingston First and Kingston University. The trail was launched in August 2021 and ran for three months, ending on October 31. After an open call to artists earlier in the year, the

entries were considered by a selection panel which was chaired by David Mach RA and also included two local students. Seven sculptures were chosen and publicly sited across the town centre and Canbury Gardens for everyone to enjoy. The public vote for the winning artwork closed on 31 October 2021.

All of the trail's branding and visual identity (including the logo, background and all supporting marketing collateral) was created by three talented Kingston University students; Imogen Ashby, Esdras Da Costa and Sophie Smith. The work was commissioned through Studio KT1, a creative agency powered by Kingston School of Art which provides students with valuable industry work experience before graduating.

To find out more about the sculpture trail and the seven sculptures which were installed, visit kingstonfirst.co.uk/sculpture-trail/

About Alex R T Davies MRSS

Alex R T Davies has been making sculpture and other objects, mostly in metal, for the last 30 years. During this time he has exhibited his sculptures in a number of exhibitions, art fairs and sculpture gardens.

A member of the Royal Society of Sculptors, Alex's work has recently featured Goats as an inspiration and starting point. The Goat is such a diverse animal, it has adapted to most environments, from deserts to mountains. In art, the Goat has been used from Egyptian paintings, to cultural icons, to a metaphor for agriculture, to symbolism for good and evil. After leaving art college in the early 90's, he set up an artist blacksmith business (Red Forge) making and designing commissioned sculpture, furniture and architectural Iron work. By 2000, he started working in bronze, casting for many well known artists and managing foundries in Corsham, London and Essex. In 2008 he moved back to Surrey to further establish his own Fine Art Foundry, Milwyn Casting Ltd, which is based close to Kingston, in West Molesey, Surrey.

This year's highlights as an artist have been the 10 Gram Challenge, devised and produced by Alex, a response to the first coronavirus lockdown. He invited Members of the Royal Society of Sculptors to make sculptures using 10 grams of provided wax, which was then lost-wax cast into bronze. Over 200 sculptors were involved with the results exhibited in June 2021 at Dora House (home of the RSS). Another highlight was having two sculptures, Party Animal and The Kiss, selected for the Kingston Sculpture trail. He was also shortlisted to produce a live sculpture for the UK Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai.

About Kingston First

As the UK's first Business Improvement District (BID), Kingston First has been driving initiatives to support the commercial success of the business community in Kingston since 2005. They deliver exceptional services that ensure Kingston is a thriving and attractive environment to do business in, as well as a vibrant and exciting destination for people to visit, shop, learn, live and work in.