

JAUME PLENSA

Works

One of Jaume Plensa's most notable works of art is the *Crown Fountain* at Millennium Park in Chicago. Another is *Blake in Gateshead*, in North East England, a laser beam that on special occasions shines high into the night sky over Gateshead's Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art. In the summer of 2007 he participated in the Chicago Public Art exhibit, Cool Globes: Hot Ideas for a Cooler Planet.

In 2007, working closely with a group of local ex-miners, he was also commissioned to create a new work on the landmark site of the former Sutton Manor Colliery in St Helens, Merseyside, North-West England as part of the Big Art Project, a major national public art initiative linked to Channel 4. The proposed sculpture titled *Dream* takes the form of a young girl's head with eyes closed, seemingly in a dream-like state. It is to be fabricated in pre-cast concrete, with a white, marble/concrete aggregate mix, so that it has a luminescent finish. The artwork will be 20 meters high, and, subject to planning permission and project progress, *Dream* is intended to be launched in Spring 2009, when the Channel 4 TV series is also due to be aired.

On 16 June 2008 Plensa's sculpture of a listening glass entitled *Breathing* was dedicated by the incumbent Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, as a memorial to journalists killed whilst undertaking their work. The sculpture in steel and glass sits atop a new wing of Broadcasting House in London. At 22:00 GMT each evening a beam of light will be projected from the sculpture extending 1km into the sky for 30 minutes to coincide with the BBC News at Ten.

Encana Corporation, one of the world's largest Oil and Natural Gas producers, announced in June 2008 that Plensa had been chosen to design the reportedly multi-million dollar central art piece to reside in the plaza in front of their new headquarters in Calgary, Alberta. The project will consist of two separate installations and the design will be unveiled later in 2008.

El alma del Ebro was created for the International Exposition in Zaragoza, the theme of which was "Water and Sustainable Development". It is eleven meters high, the sculpted letters representing cells of the human body which is over 60% water. Its white letters and hollow structure invite the view to look inside and reflect on the relationship between human beings and water.

Biography

Born: Barcelona, Spain, 1955

Lives and works in Barcelona and Paris

Plensa studied art in Barcelona, in the "Llotja" School and in the Escola Superior de Belles Arts de Sant Jordi.

Plensa's works are included in more than 60 museum and public collections around the world including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Bibliotheque Nationale de France, the Honolulu Contemporary Museum, the Des Moines Arts Center, the Miami Art Museum, the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna, the Kirishima Open Air Museum in Japan, the Skissernas Museum in Sweden, the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Sofia Imber in Venezuela, the North Carolina Museum of Art and Duke University's Nasher Museum of Art.

His public art commissions have included projects in Nice; London; Chicago; Toronto; Stockholm; Jacksonville, Florida; Miami Beach; Paris; Dusseldorf; Fukuroi, Japan; Tokyo; Luxembourg; Jerusalem; Malaga, Spain; Gateshead, UK; Halifax, Canada; Barcelona; and numerous other cities.

He has had more than 100 solo exhibits since 1978, in museums and galleries in cities including New York, London, Tokyo, Madrid, Paris, Vienna, Chicago, New Orleans, Caen, Salzburg, Brussels, Berlin, Tel-Aviv, Geneva, Toronto, Naples, Sarajevo, Caracas, Taipei, Milan, Cologne, Amsterdam, Yokohama, and Bonn.

Awards

- 1993: Medaille des Chevaliers des Arts et Lettres by the French Minister of Culture.
- 1996: Awarded by the Fondation Atelier Calder
- 1997: National Award of Arts by the Government of Catalonia.