

10000 balloons in the Museum



World-renowned New York artist, Jason Hackenwerth, unveiled his latest creation at the Edinburgh International Science Festival this weekend. *Pisces*, a work specially commissioned by the Science Festival, has been created with more than 10,000 coloured balloons and hangs over 40 feet tall from the Grand Gallery of the National Museum of Scotland. The installation represents the artist's interpretation of the legend of Aphrodite and Eros.

The Edinburgh Reporter went to see it yesterday and our chief photographer has made a slideshow of images of the large balloon sculpture:-

Born in St Louis, Jason now lives and works in New York and has exhibited his work around the world at galleries and museums including the Guggenheim in New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and at the 51st Venice Biennale as well as in Hong Kong and Mexico. *Pisces* is the first artwork that he has created in Scotland.

Jason said:- "I am very excited to be working here at the Edinburgh International Science Festival. We have had such a wonderful response from everyone who has come to see us this week while we have been creating *Pisces*, and it's a privilege to be working in such an extraordinary city. I have always been inspired by the intricate structures in nature, and the connectivity of environments and ecosystems and it's very exciting to be able to combine art and science in this way."

Amanda Tyndall, Deputy Director of the Edinburgh International Science Festival said:- "I have wanted to bring Jason to the

Science Festival for a number of years as I have always found his work inspirational. We commissioned this piece of artwork to tie in with some of the Festival's key themes in this, our 25 year – patterns in nature, the future of life, and with the advent of synthetic biology, our ability to build life from the ground up and Jason has met this challenge admirably. From the reaction of our audiences over the last few days, and as Pisces was revealed this morning, I know that they have been equally impressed with his work."

It has taken three members of Science Festival staff six days to blow up the 10,000 balloons which have been woven into an intricate three dimensional structure by Jason and his assistant Leah Blair. It has not only proved to be backbreaking work, but Jason and his team have also to wear ear defenders to protect their hearing from the constant popping and squeaking of balloons, and protective tape on their fingers.

Pisces will hang in the Grand Gallery of the National Museum of Scotland until Sunday 14 April. Jason will be creating more sea creatures, on a somewhat smaller scale, in the Science Festival's Secret Life of Coral Workshop in the Hawthornden Court of the National Museum.

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Now train the camera on this image below which is the Edinburgh International Science Festival logo:-



You will as if by magic be watching our video of the balloons.....And you can use your phone to access the video whenever you see the logo. We have other auras too which you will be able to see from the app on your phone. Let us know what you think of them!

The Edinburgh International Science Festival continues until Sunday 7 April with events, activities, workshops and sensational science for all ages every day throughout the week. Full details of the programme, and all tickets, can be found at www.sciencefestival.co.uk