

# Another beautiful gift from the mystery book sculptor



## ***NEW 'PREPARING TO FLY' BOOK SCULPTURE GIFTED TO EDINBURGH UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE TRUST***

The mystery book sculptor has struck again, this time in the very heart of literary Edinburgh at the offices of the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust (EUCL).

Discovered by Ali Bowden, the director of Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust, the anonymous artist's distinctive handwriting on the modest brown paper-wrapped parcel spelled out the familiar dedication "in support of libraries, books, words & ideas" giving a clue about the giver.



Ali Bowden was stunned by the beautiful discovery:- "I really couldn't believe that something as delicate and irreplaceable as a book sculpture would appear so quietly in the post. It was incredibly exciting. We huddled round, opened it and inside found a lovely travel chest with a glorious paper sculpture inside. We couldn't believe our eyes! The message inside about literacy and the request 'let's keep shouting out about libraries and how other special places enrich our lives' is one we feel really strongly about. We've launched our Edinburgh Bookshops app and virtual trail a few days ago, telling the world about how great Edinburgh's bookshops are as 'special places', and now we've received this wonderful gift."

 Inside the brown paper parcel was a book – a World Book – in the shape of an old-fashioned travelling trunk, complete with hinged lid and travel stickers. It opened to reveal a set

of delicate paper feather wings, a safety helmet and goggles, 'to provide some protection throughout journey', with a handbook (a tiny copy of Daphne du Maurier's *The Birds and Other Stories*) and route map in the shape of an embroidered map with the threads radiating out from Edinburgh.



"This is our second book sculpture," Ali continued, "And we feel so proud and humbled that someone has taken the time to create such a beautiful thing for us. We're intrigued by the message of 'Free to Fly' and will be 'looking to the skies' as instructed to see how the adventure unfolds."

The anonymous paper sculptor inscribed this particular work of art very much with the UNESCO City of Literature in mind. An information sheet in the chest quoted the UNESCO Statement for the United Nation Literacy Decade, the notion of which was 'Literacy as Freedom' – a sentiment echoed in the sculptures wings and the urge for people to 'keep shouting out about how libraries and other special places enrich our lives' by following @freetofly\_ on Twitter to 'have your say'.

✘ The EUCL sculpture is the last in three sculptures – 'Preparing to Fly 3/3' – which appeared in May and June this year. The first – a birdhouse with a nest containing three eggs – was gifted to the Scottish Poetry Library and the second, a nest with three baby birds in it, appeared in Leith Library.

The story of the anonymous book sculptures has gone around the world and gripped the literary community in Edinburgh, the world's first UNESCO City of Literature. Ten original sculptures – 'in support of libraries, books, words & ideas' – mysteriously appeared in venues connected to literacy around the city over the course of 2011, with crime author Ian Rankin receiving his own personal sculpture. Fifty paper flowers were then left around the Edinburgh International Book Festival and

five sculptures were commissioned anonymously for the inaugural Book Week Scotland, both in 2012 and released with cryptic literary online clues guiding people to the location of the sculptures. A final sculpture was sent to the Scottish Poetry Library to be opened on the last day of the GIFTED exhibition held at the library and showcasing all the sculptures to date.

✘ Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust's book sculpture 'Lost in a Good Book' is currently on exhibition at Central Library, George IV Bridge.

For further information see the **Book Sculpture Virtual Trail** on [cityofliterature.com/booksculptures](http://cityofliterature.com/booksculptures) and follow online @EdinCityofLit