

College of Surgeons sculptor wins award

Winner of Public Sculpture award

If you have ever peeked into the courtyard at the College of Surgeons then you will have spotted the Covid memorial there sculpted by Kenny Hunter.

Mr Hunter has won the 2023 Public States and Sculpture Association Award for Excellence in Public Sculpture for the work entitled "Your next breath, a Covid Memorial".

The sculptor said: "Before I began work on the memorial I was able to meet with a range of frontline healthcare workers to discuss their working conditions, allowing me to gain a deeper understanding of the physical and psychological impact on NHS staff. What emerged from these dialogues was a sense that this memorial should contain a mixture of light and dark to truthfully reflect their experience. Certain words seemed to recur through these collective testimonies and I kept them at the forefront of my mind as I developed the sculpture.

"Exhaustion from the intense shifts compounded by the fact that many had contracted Covid and so were fatigued with post viral symptoms.

"Reflection throughout the NHS, on working with dedication at such a globally significant moment in history.

"Resilience in the face of stressful working conditions straining the emotional and physical well-being of staff.

"Compassion, of the NHS staff who despite all the difficulties and challenges they faced continued to put themselves in harm's way to deliver care to those in need.

"The memorial depicts four healthcare workers in scrubs at the

end of a shift on a Covid ward. They are sited close to ground level, instead of the traditional plinth, encouraging from the viewer empathy over reverence. You can move among them and return their gaze. They are a group but are isolated on their own base, the space or distance between them being such a significant and relatable experience for everyone who lived through this period.”

We are very glad that our photographer, the late John Preece visited Surgeons Hall last year to photograph the sculpture for us.



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NHS Covid Sculpture, Surgeons Hall, Edinburgh, 13th Oct 2022
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