



Glazing manifestations by Perry Roberts
Image: Tom De Gay

Artists:

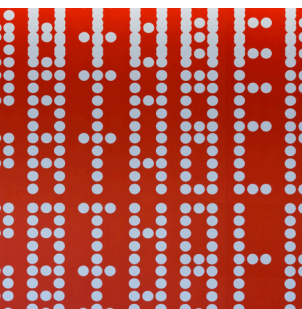
Kate Blee, Perry Roberts, artNucleus

Funders:

North Bristol NHS Trust

Collaborators:

Avanti Architects, Design Buro, Laing O'Rourke



Detail of wall panel by Perry Roberts
Image: Sarah Blee



Detail of glazing by Kate Blee
Image: Sarah Blee

In partnership with North Bristol NHS Trust, Willis Newson developed and delivered a public art strategy for the development of new Learning & Research and Pathology buildings on the Southmead Hospital site in Bristol. Entering early to the design process, we were able to commission artists who then worked alongside the architects and building contractors.

Lead artist, Kate Blee designed the colour and composition of the exterior glazing cladding both buildings as well as large ceramic wall pieces for the interiors. Perry Roberts created supergraphics for windows and walls, helping to define the identity of each building and support way-finding within them. ArtNucleus – artists Simon Ryder and Reinhild Beuther - worked with staff throughout the building process and during the move to the new facilities to create a series of photographic works. This close and early collaboration between artists and architects has resulted in commissioned artworks that successfully complement and enhance the finished building.

“... the art looks fantastic – the whole office looked at the photos today and were absolutely stunned and thought it was the best integrated arts project they had seen.”

Claudia Bloom, Director, Avanti Architects.



Detail of ceramic panel
by Kate Blee
Image: Tom De Gay

Background

This project was part of the 'enabling' phase of the PFI redevelopment of Southmead Hospital. This involved moving various facilities to make way for the construction of the new Southmead Hospital, due for completion in 2014. Willis Newson was asked to devise a public art strategy for the new Learning & Research and Pathology buildings.

Scope

We developed the public art strategy in collaboration with North Bristol NHS Trust, architects Avanti and Design Buro and the contractor (through a Procure 21 scheme) Laing O'Rourke. We commissioned and worked with artists Kate Blee and Perry Roberts to deliver the plan and worked with the architects to integrate the finished artworks within the design and fabric of the new buildings. We also managed and supported an artists' residency in each of the two departments during the construction process and following completion.



Glazing manifestations
by Perry Roberts
Image: Tom De Gay

Process

Willis Newson was involved early, meaning that the public art strategy could be fully integrated into the design and build process. We collaborated closely with all key stakeholders and appointed Kate Blee as lead artist at the start of the project to give it a coherent overall vision.

Resident photographic artists were placed in the two departments. They documented the work done there, and captured moments of change and memories of the old buildings. These residencies also gave staff a chance to participate in the creative process.



Photographic work
by artNucleus
Image: Sarah Blee



Photographic work by artNucleus
Image: Sarah Blee

Strategy

The public art strategy was developed not just to ensure that public art was an integral part of the design of new buildings, but also to help ease the transition from existing buildings and set a benchmark for public art commissioning as part of the new PFI development.

Artworks were commissioned that would contribute to the creation of a unifying identity for the buildings. We aimed, through thoughtful design, to create good and interesting working environments and to provide vital orientation points.

It was important to us that department staff were involved in the consultation process and that they also contributed to the work produced by the resident artists. This was a chance for their specialisms and interests to be reflected within the fabric of their new workplace.



Gazing articulation by Kate Blee
Image: Sarah Blee

Conclusions

A close and early collaborative working relationship between Willis Newson, our lead artists and the design and build teams was key to the success of this project. The result has been a very satisfying unified aesthetic, which extends throughout the new buildings.



Wall panel by Perry Roberts
Image: Tom De Gay



Glazing articulation by Kate Blee
Image: Sarah Blee



Large ceramic panel by Kate Blee
Image: James Harris

Commission: Lead Artist – Coloured glazing and ceramic wall pieces

Artist: Kate Blee

Kate Blee worked closely with the design team to specify the articulation and colours for the full height glazing forming curtain walls on the four elevations of the new buildings. The colours used were extended to louvred panels and doors and other interior spaces.

As well as lending visual interest, the glazing provides a unifying sense of identity and connection between the two buildings, both inside and out. The design was inspired by the natural range of colour found in the trees on the Southmead site – browns and warm greys at the lower level, moving up through greens to the blue sky above. The coloured panels have been specifically designed to provide an appropriate environment inside, without adversely affecting working conditions.

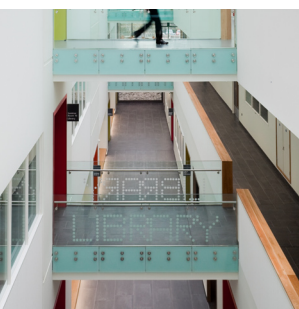
Kate also created two large panels made of ceramic tiles for the end walls of the atrium of each building. Titled 'One in a Million', they reference the scientific methodology of the work that is done there. They reflect light and feature tactile, dynamic surfaces in which intriguing objects invite exploration.



Glazing detail by Kate Blee
Image: Sarah Blee



Wall panel by Perry Roberts
Image: Tom De Gay



Glazing manifestations
by Perry Roberts
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Commission:

Internal glazing, wall panels and supergraphics

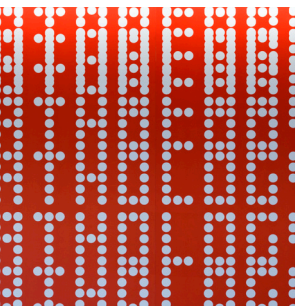
Artist:

Perry Roberts

Two large laminate panels designed by Perry Roberts in collaboration with Kate Blee and the design team, welcome people into the entrance lobby areas of both buildings. Their colours complement those of the curtain wall glazing and their patterns are derived from the names of the buildings.

Perry Roberts' designs for the large amount of internal glass provide privacy for individual offices, seminar rooms and other spaces. The vinyl designs and dot matrix patterns also lend interest to corridor spaces and generate a sense of unity and cohesion between the two buildings.

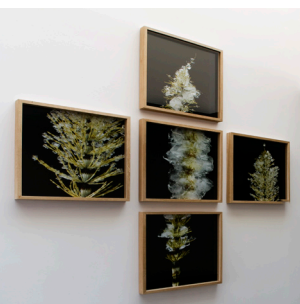
Working with the architects, Perry Roberts also devised supergraphics, whose design links with all the other art elements in the building. These support way-finding and create visual signposts at important focal points.



Detail of wall panel
by Perry Roberts
Image: Sarah Blee



Photographic work by artNucleus
Image: Tom De Gay



Photographic work by artNucleus
Image: Sarah Blee

Commission:

Artists in residence programme

Artists:

artNucleus - Simon Ryder, Reinhild Beuther

Simon Ryder and Reinhild Beuther were resident for almost two years at Frenchay and Southmead Hospitals, during construction of, and following the move to the new buildings.

The resulting series of photographic artworks include some inspired by explorations of the old medical library, images reflecting analyses of chromosomal data by the genetics team and a series based on time spent in the Immunology Department. These are now on permanent display in the new buildings.

The artists also designed a screen-saver used in the Learning & Research Centre lecture theatre. This features historical photographs of the old buildings alongside images of the natural world taken on the Frenchay and Southmead sites.



Photographic work by artNucleus
Image: Sarah Blee