



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The sun to rise over Derby Cathedral's 100th year this autumn

A spectacular seven-metre model of the sun is set to light up Derby Cathedral this autumn marking the start of its centenary celebrations.

Internationally acclaimed artist Luke Jerram will bring his latest touring installation, Helios, to the city from 20 to 31 October, giving visitors the chance to get up close to a breathtaking recreation of the sun.

The immersive artwork combines art, science and sound to reveal the extraordinary detail of our nearest star, featuring imagery created from NASA observations and photographs captured by astrophotographer Dr Stuart Green.

A range of interactive activities linked to the installation will be available for Key Stage 1 and 2 schoolchildren, as well as visitors of all ages.

The exhibition follows the huge success of the artist's previous installations at Derby Cathedral. More than 55,000 people visited Museum of the Moon in 2019, while thousands more flocked to see Gaia, his giant sculpture of the Earth, in 2022.

The installation, named after the ancient Greek god of the sun, Helios, is built to an approximate scale of 1:200 million, meaning every centimetre of the glowing sphere represents around 2,000 kilometres of the sun's surface.

To help visitors grasp the massive scale of the sun, the installation will feature a tiny model of the Earth nearby, which will demonstrate the sheer difference in size.

Visitors will be able to see remarkable features including sunspots and vast solar filaments, all brought to life through animated lighting and a specially created soundtrack.

As a symbol of life and hope, Helios provides a powerful opportunity for reflection within a sacred space, strengthening the Cathedral's mission of inclusion, learning and community engagement.

Derby Cathedral will celebrate 100 years as a Cathedral in 2027. The Diocese of Derby, established the same year, will be jointly celebrating this milestone with a series of special events and activities.

The Very Revd Dr Peter Robinson, Dean of Derby, said: "We are delighted to welcome Helios to Derby Cathedral as the sun rises on our centenary year of celebrations.

"This remarkable artwork brings together science, creativity and spirituality in a way that will inspire curiosity and wonder and enforce our vision of being an arts and culture hub within the city.

"We look forward to welcoming schools, families and visitors from across the region to explore the installation, engage with the educational activities on offer and discover Derby Cathedral as a place of culture, learning, reflection and community.

"The themes of light, creation and hope resonate deeply within the Christian tradition, making Helios a particularly fitting addition to our centenary programme."

Artist Luke Jerram said: "It is very dangerous to look at the Sun directly as it can damage our eyesight, so Helios provides a safe opportunity for the public to get up close to, and inspect its extraordinarily detailed surface, including sunspots, spicules and filaments.

"As well as highlighting the science of the Sun, the artwork allows us to consider its importance in all our lives; for light, warmth, energy for our planet and how our nearest star has inspired culture and religion throughout history, all around the world."

The installation has been made possible through support from the Friends of Derby Cathedral and All Saints Derby Charity. There is no charge to enter Derby Cathedral; visitors are encouraged to make a donation of £5 to enjoy Helios. The donation will go towards supporting the Cathedral's vision of being a place for all.

The Cathedral will remain open for worship throughout the exhibition, with services continuing as normal as often as possible.

If schools would like to book visits and/or educational sessions at Derby Cathedral during the Helios installation they should contact office@derbycathedral.org or 01332 341201.

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For media enquiries about the installation please contact Olivia Hancock on 01332 416228 / 07932922267 or email olivia@penguinpr.co.uk

About Luke Jerram

Luke Jerram is a multidisciplinary artist whose large-scale installations have been exhibited around the world since 1997. His work explores ideas from science, culture and the natural world, creating memorable experiences that engage diverse audiences. In 2019 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Helios follows on from Luke's other astronomical artworks [Museum of the Moon](#), [Gaia](#), and [Mars](#).