

Encouraging Enterprise: Public Art Commission

Emily Cant – Suidae Sulis joins the herd of King Bladud's Pigs

Overview

Emily Cant, a first year fashion and textiles student, responded to a brief and had the best design for representing Bath Spa University in a major public art project in Bath.

About the Project

'King Bladud's Pigs in Bath' was a public art event to celebrate Bath, its origins and its artists during the summer of 2008. In total, 105 pigs were sponsored by businesses, organisations, local groups and individuals and then turned into works of art by local and national artists. The pigs were then installed all over the city and were popular with residents and visitors alike. The pigs were later auctioned in aid of the Sustrans-supported Two Tunnels Project in Bath.

The Business Support Office sponsored the University's entry into this public art event. Students and graduates were invited to bid to decorate the Bath Spa University pig by illustrating, on a pig template, how they would:

"Convey the emotion, energy, excitement and cutting-edge innovation of Bath Spa University and its students."



Suidae Sulis at Farewell Event before Auction

Fast Facts

- Emily Cant won the brief against fourteen other applicants
- The Suidae Sulis pig sculpture was auctioned off with 25% of the proceeds going directly to the artist
- Emily was supported and mentored in her work by local artist, Al Greenal
- As well as Emily's design being on display outside the Holburne Museum in Bath city centre, it achieved widespread press and PR cover for Emily's portfolio

Benefits

Winning the brief and participating in the King Bladud's Pigs public art event brought Emily the following benefits:

- The sculpture acted as an advertisement of her skills and artistic talent in a major tourist destination for more than five months
- Press and PR coverage
- Profile on the King Bladud's Pigs official website and auction brochure
- Practical experience of pitching for a commission, working to a brief and communicating with a client

Outcomes

The Business Support Office selected Emily's eye-catching design because it demonstrated good technical skill, encapsulated the aspirational emotions of university life, and was subtly vibrant in colour, which gave it energy.

Along with other local artists working on pig sculptures, Emily was able to take up residence in the King Bladud's Pigs Marlborough Studio close to the University's School of Art & Design. She was given appropriate space and equipment at the studio for painting the life-size fibre-glass pig.

Consistent with Bath Spa University's core aim of enhancing graduate employability through working in partnership with industry professionals, an arrangement was made for Emily to be supported and mentored throughout the project by local artist and writer, Al Greenal.

The Bath Spa University's pig was aptly named 'Suidae Sulis' by Senior Teaching Fellow, Mimi Thebo. The name derives from 'Sulis' the local Celtic goddess of the thermal springs that still feed the spa baths at Bath, and from 'suidae' meaning 'one of the hog family'.



Suidae Sulis

Perspective

In describing her design, Emily said:

“My use of colour portrays a deep and creative emotion and the idea of hope through the humming birds, which symbolise Bath Spa. The travelling birds are heading towards the flower, illustrating a bright and creative future, with people holding onto their tails in an abstract paper chain design. I wanted to represent how everybody works together to achieve their dreams and depicting in my design the vibrancy and creativity that is always in the atmosphere here at Bath Spa.”

With Suidae Sulis on prominent display outside the Holburne Museum, the University's Business Support Manager – Susan Cherrett – commented:

“We are proud to showcase Emily's wonderfully uplifting design. It is always a rewarding experience to encourage and see a student's creative expression and conceptual ideas turn into a practical and workable reality.”

Bath Spa University's Business Support Office acts as a catalyst for engaging with employers, providing enterprise opportunities for students and graduates, and maximising on the expertise of the university for the benefit of the local business community. For further information, contact the Business Support Office at businessenquiries@bathspa.ac.uk www.bathspabusiness.com