



Studio of S Mark Gubb  
Portfolio of Works

## The Studio of S Mark Gubb...

...is the working home for the creative output and collaborations of S Mark Gubb - a 25yr practice extending across visual art, art in the public realm, design, moving image, publishing, writing, and audio/music.

Based in Cardiff, Wales, Mark has become a prominent name in his field, with permanent public artworks commissioned for a range of UK locations, national and international exhibitions and residencies, and design-led projects for the likes of James Dean Bradfield (Manic Street Preachers), The National Museum Wales, and Three Impostors independent publishers.

Collaboration and public engagement are key; in 2021 Mark completed a PhD focussed on the audience involvement in the construct and activation of site-specific artworks. Mark's approach is always rooted in research, expertly responding to the work's proposed site and its wider context and history. Wherever possible, and relevant, engagement with specific local communities informs the development of the work.

This portfolio gives an overview of some key projects from recent years, with budgets ranging from several thousand, to hundreds of thousands of pounds, Each one was completed on-budget and on-time.

Speculative conversations are invited and welcome, and invariably fruitful.



## Alight

Permanent public sculpture

Commissioned by Stoford Ltd and Admiral PLC

10m tall steel, glass, and LED lighting sculpture

'Alight' was commissioned to be sited alongside the newly built Admiral Insurance offices in Cardiff city centre. The brief was simply to develop a permanent sculptural piece for the site. I was interested in the architecture of the site, both in terms of its history - or lack of it, as the entire area had been redeveloped - and also its position within the city - this area could be described as an entertainment district, housing a cinema, a live music arena, shops, restaurants and bars. Where the work is sited was not typically an area of high footfall, due to it being at the back of a shopping centre, so through this work I was proposing a conversation between it and the very large architecture that surrounded it, encouraging the eye up and out of the space to the sky above, at the same time creating a new landmark and reference point in people's navigation of the city.



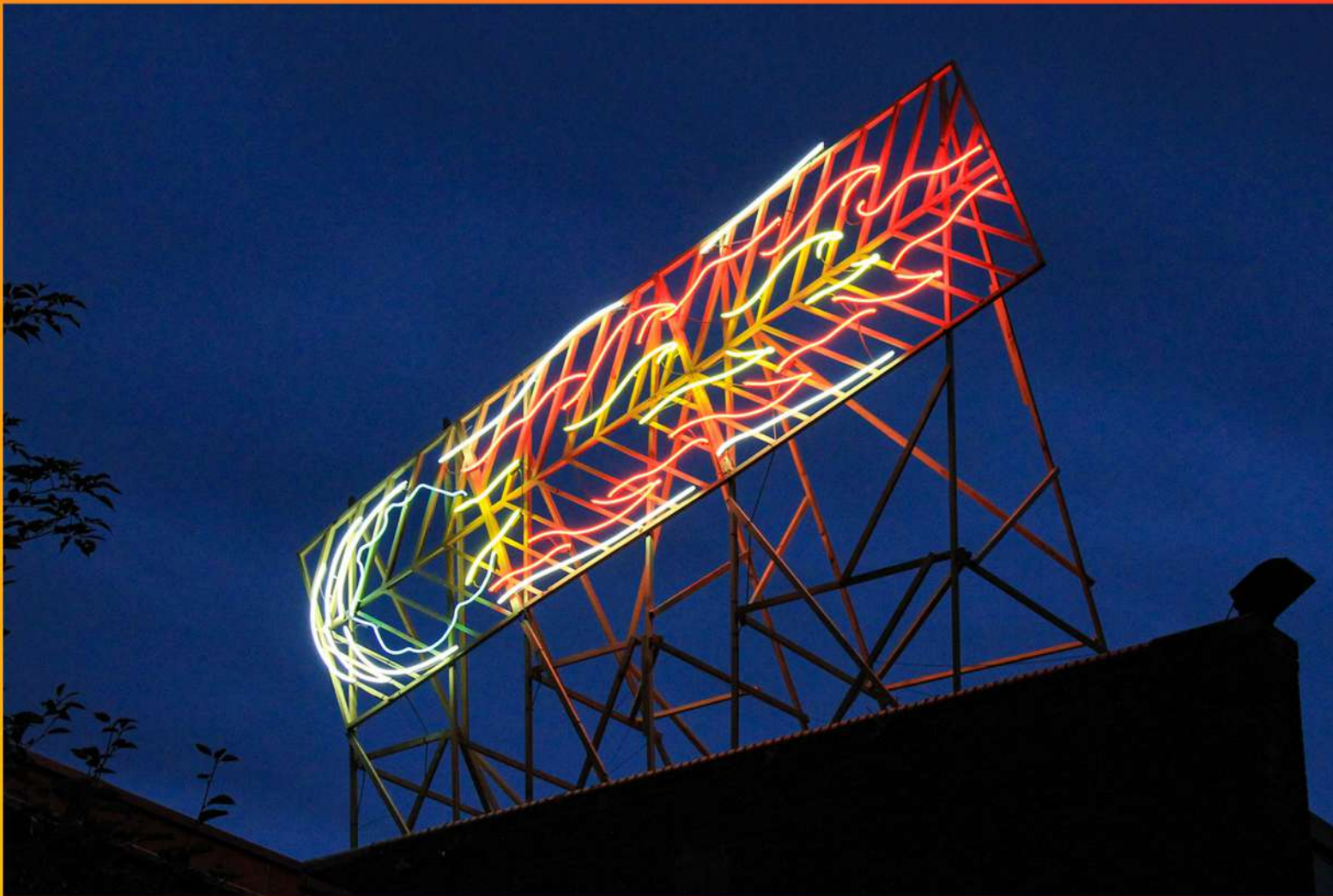


# Nottingham Contemporary

Permanent public sculpture  
Commissioned by Nottingham Contemporary

Prior to their launch, Nottingham Contemporary developed the idea of commissioning fifteen artists to design logos, with a commitment to use all of them, rather than having a single branding or logo for the gallery. The list included Ryan Gander, Chris Evans, Olivia Plender, Lucy Skaer, and Pae White. Drawing on my longstanding interest in Googie architecture - a radical and forward thinking architecture, used almost exclusively for public buildings like diners, banks and motels - my design nods to this style of the American West coast. I was also commissioned to fully realise the logo's potential, as a sculpture to be sited permanently outside the gallery.





## Around 3.35pm

Semi-permanent public sculpture  
Commissioned by Middlesbrough  
Council

5m x 1.5m neon on wooden frame

'Around 3.35pm' takes 'The Middlesbrough Meteorite' as it's key reference; on 14th March, 1881, around 3.35pm, workers on the 'Pennyman's Railway Siding' heard a rushing sound, followed by a thud. Further investigation revealed a meteorite, since dated to around 4.5 billion years old, meaning it formed at the same time as the Earth. In making this work it was a celebration of a unique piece of local history and by placing it on top of the Dorman Museum, it guided people to the spot where they could see the meteorite. Beyond that, this playful neon sculpture was as open to interpretation as a meteorite's appearance was to the ancients; it could be taken as a comment on the precarity of existence, it could equally be seen as a portent of great things to come. That's for the viewer to choose.





## After the Soft Ascent / Wedi'r Esgyniad Ysgafn

Permanent public sculpture  
Commissioned on behalf of the Welsh Government for Cardiff Airport

Permanently installed at Cardiff Airport, this work was commissioned to reflect the bilingual nature of Wales. Taking a line from Wales' most famous English language poet, Dylan Thomas ("after the soft ascent"), and a line from Wales' most beloved Welsh-language band, Super Furry Animals ("pan ddaw'r wawr"), they were combined to create a new mini-poem - (in English) "After the soft ascent, when dawn breaks...", (yn Gymraeg) "Wedi'r esgyniad ysgafn, pan ddaw'r wawr...". This new text conjures an image of the moment a plane breaks through cloud to sunlight, or a long haul flight when dawn peeps through the blinds. The words of the sculpture are sequenced to illuminate one-by-one, in their Welsh/English language pairings, illustrating the translation, before illuminating collectively.



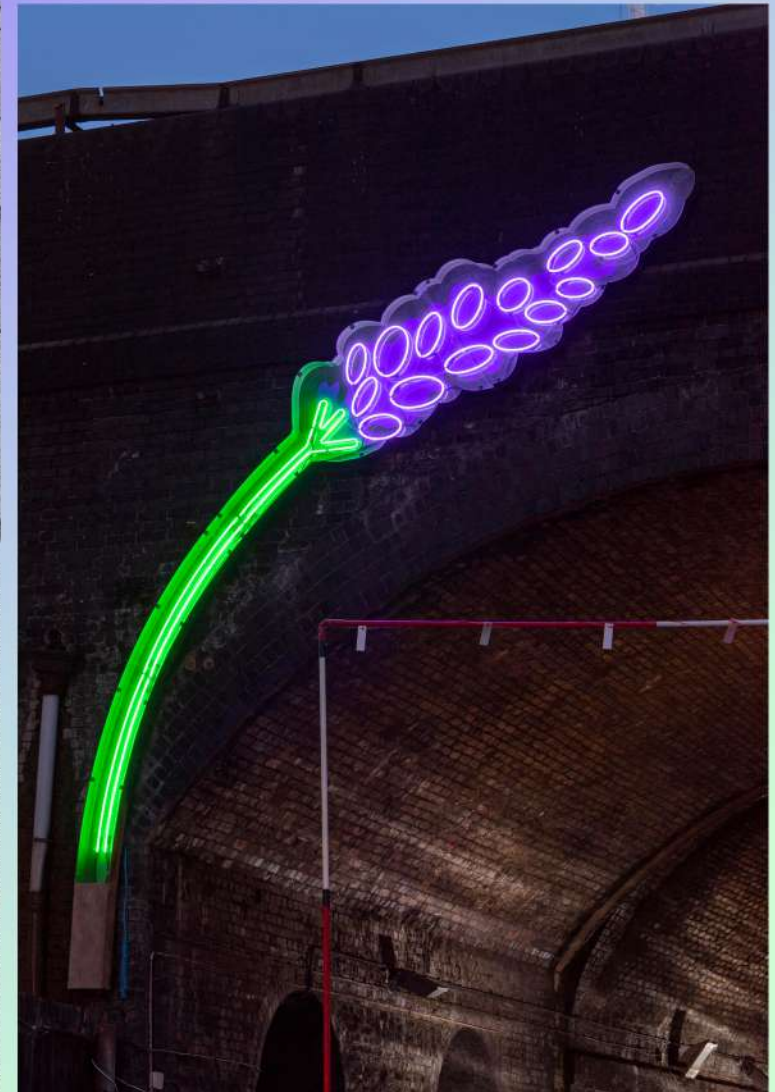
# Wassail

Permanent public sculpture. Commissioned by Berkeley Homes, London.

Commissioned by Berkeley Homes to be sited around their 'Vista' development on the Nine Elms, Battersea, the specific focus was to create way markers for the site. My logic was that anything can act as a way marker - a tree-stump, a bent lamppost - essentially, anything that's specific and unique to a site. Seven works were developed and set into the hardscaping at specific points, each of which was thematically developed from research into the history of the borough. An eighth, lighting-work, was commissioned to be installed on a railway arch at the rear of the site.

Some of the references through the works are:

- The area's pre-industrial revolution history as a lavender farming area.
- Pink Floyd's classic album cover for 'Animals', featuring a pig flying between the chimneys of Battersea Power Station.
- The work of Battersea Dogs and Cats Home.
- The formation of the Workers Educational Association in a terraced house in the borough in 1903.
- The filming of The Clash's 'London Calling' video on a pier off Battersea Park.
- The 'Pleasure Gardens' funfair in Battersea Park during the 1951 'Festival of Britain'.
- The discovery of the Seax of Beagnoth in the River Thames - an Anglo-Saxon dagger containing a full runic alphabet.





## Free For All Forever

Permanent public sculpture  
Commissioned by Bristol City Council

This was commissioned to be sited in two pedestrian subways on the edge of the Easton/St Paul's districts of the city. The area has a high level of politically active groups and one of the issues that the council wanted to address was the constant graffiti and fly-posting in the subways. They had put up a temporary information-board between the subways to advertise the proposed redevelopment of this area which was instantly adopted by the residents for use as a notice board, so this was something I incorporated into the finished work. The work draws on the aesthetics of graffiti and the provocation of radical politics; both embedded in the culture of the area.

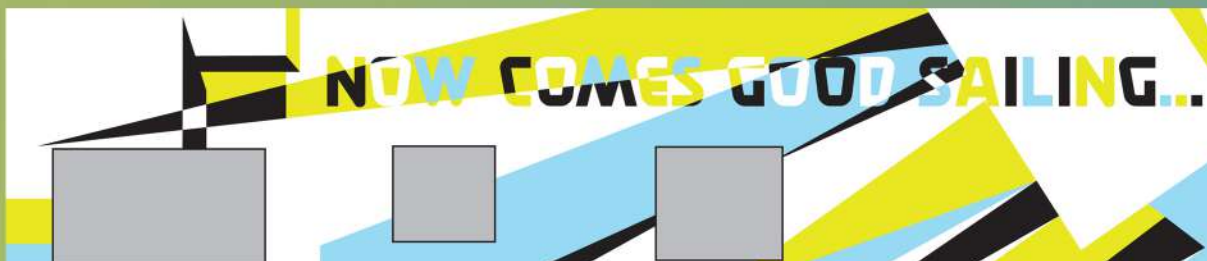




## Good Sailing

Open Eye Gallery  
Liverpool

This was a semi-permanent vinyl-wrap commissioned to cover the exterior of the new Open Eye Gallery when it relaunched in Liverpool. The gallery is based on Mann Island in Liverpool's docks and the bold, colourful, design is based on 'Dazzle Camouflage' designs of the First World War. Many of the ships painted with this design were painted in these docks. Through applying this design to the exterior of the gallery it conceptually hides it in plain sight. At their best, art galleries are embraced by our cities and also function as provocateurs; spaces where difficult questions can be asked. The quote in the work is the final words of the well-known naturalist and political agitator, Henry David Thoreau. The difficult questions that galleries are in a position to ask are the kinds of questions he spent his life asking.





## Free For All Forever

I-70 Sign Show  
Missouri, USA

Two versions of this work were shown concurrently – one in the USA and one in the UK. In doing so, something of a transatlantic conversation was established between the two iterations. The 'I-70 Sign Show' is an existing programme of artists billboards exhibited along the I-70 in Missouri, USA, and the other, in Southampton, UK, was commissioned by the organisation UGO as a part of the British Art Show 8 fringe. The presentation of both formed part of a larger solo-project titled 'Revelations' which consisted of multiple exhibitions, public works and publications across two continents in a three-month period.



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