

A Rich Seam exhibition launches funding bid for a mining statue for Doncaster

Exciting ideas for a mining statue for Doncaster have been unveiled in a new exhibition at the Frenchgate Centre (Unit 78 on the ground floor) until 4 August 2018.

A Rich Seam exhibits the developing ideas of acclaimed international artist/sculptor Laurence Edwards who has been commissioned to design an iconic piece of art drawing on the fascinating stories of our former miners and their families. When finished, it will be located in the Waterdale area, easily accessible to Doncaster residents.

The proposed art piece will celebrate Doncaster's proud mining history and to help shape his designs, Laurence has met with hundreds of local people. The meetings have extra significance as Laurence has sculpted the portraits of people from mining communities in wax while they have told their stories. These will be cast in bronze and be a part of the figurative, bronze mining statue.

A Rich Seam will be an opportunity to also learn more about Laurence's work and the journey of this exciting project. There will be chance to view a 10ft mock-up of the proposed design and some of the bronze heads will also be on display, as well as photographic portraits of the miners and their families. Students at Doncaster College have documented the project, creating a series of portraits and videos which will be used as promotion and archival material for further exhibitions/publications.

Mayor Ros Jones said: "As a daughter of a Doncaster miner, I am incredibly passionate and proud of our mining heritage. This is about our legacy – we want to celebrate our mining history by creating a flagship piece of art which recognises all of our mining communities located in the centre of Doncaster.

"The iconic piece of art will commemorate our past but also look forward to the future capturing the hearts and imaginations of generations to come.

"We also want to bring more public art to the town centre. This is a great way of complementing our regeneration plans, helping to further boost the town centre as a vibrant place to visit and explore.

"This will be an outstanding piece of art for Doncaster for everyone to enjoy."

Cllr Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Culture, said: "The exhibition **A Rich Seam** will not only give people a fascinating insight into Laurence's work so far but it's an opportunity to get a glimpse of how the finished statue will look – and I'm sure visitors will agree once they see it, it really is quite impressive.

"Our ambition is to locate the iconic piece of art right in the heart of Doncaster – a celebration of our mining history and the huge spirit of our miners and their communities.

“The exhibition will also mark the start of our crowd funding campaign which gives us four months to raise funds for the sculpture. We’re calling on everyone’s support to make the piece of art a reality.”

Sculptor Laurence Edwards said: “It’s been an extraordinary journey so far, I’m very excited about presenting my ideas to the people of Doncaster. The evolution of ideas will be on display in Frenchgate, 18 bronze portraits, a 5 metre wall of drawings and a giant 10ft rock together with films and photographic portraits. I have learnt so much and am looking forward to the feedback.”

A Rich Seam exhibition will be open from 9th July to 4th August, 10am – 4pm (closed Sundays) in Unit 78, Ground Floor, Frenchgate Shopping Centre, Doncaster.

Crowd funding campaign launched!

The exhibition also marks the launch of a Spacehive crowd funding campaign to raise £130,000 to meet the cost of the statue. You can pledge online from as little as £2. No money will be taken before the campaign ends, and it is completely secure. Please visit the following link - [Space Hive](#)