

## News release

**To be released:** Immediately  
**Date:** September 2000

### Artist commissioned as part urban regeneration programme

Artist Simon Watkinson has been appointed lead artist for the town centre enhancement scheme that is part of a major regeneration initiative in the Norfolk town of Fakenham. With the assistance of public art organization Commissions East, North Norfolk District Council commissioned Watkinson to develop a series of proposals that bring emphasis to the town centre and increase access and orientation for residents and visitors. North Norfolk District Council and the National Lottery through the Arts Council of England have funded the commissioned art for the scheme, which will be launched in September 2000.

With the intention of engendering a sense of civic pride and local distinctiveness the scheme has been created for the newly reclaimed Market Square. As an equal member of the Design Team, Watkinson drew inspiration from the towns printing industry. The central part of the scheme is a cast iron paving feature created using tens of thousands of letterpress characters based on the die-case matrix used for casting typeface. Complemented by a sequence of architectural street lighting, the printing theme is extended with the structure and design of the lighting columns alluding to the form of writing instruments.

In addition, furniture designer Robert Kilvington has been commissioned to produce seating and litterbins and artist blacksmith Matthew Fedden has been appointed to produce information posts for the centre.

On all aspects of the project the artists involved worked with All Clear Design Disability Consultant, James Holmes-Siedle to ensure equal access to the scheme. Interpretation leaflets will be available to increase public understanding of the project.

- Ends -

#### **Commissions East**

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**Editors notes:**

1. **About Commissions East**

Commissions East is the visual arts development agency for the East of England, providing an advisory and management service for commissioners, a programme of special projects addressing new areas of visual arts practice and support for artist-led initiatives.