

News release

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Stefan Gec 'Tilbury Mappamundi'

Saturday, 17 September – Sunday, 25 September 2005
Open daily 11am – 5pm (except Thursday, 22 September)
London Cruise Terminal, Ferry Road, Tilbury, Essex RM18 7NG

Stefan Gec's latest project, 'Tilbury Mappamundi' (meaning 'map of the world') engages with the town and docks of Tilbury in Essex, creating a survey of the area that draws upon its history and connections to the world.

Located in the former rail station of the vast London Cruise Terminal, Gec's installation consists of an aerial film of Tilbury that documents the current layout of the town, its docks and the liner berth on the Thames. To accompany the film, a soundtrack has been created from found text and writing about the area, including the 'Port of London Journal'. The film and soundtrack contrast a contemporary view of the area against the site's history, which resonates with the arrival and departure of thousands of liner passengers (including the Empire Windrush) who have passed through since it opened in 1886. The film will be projected onto a large screen constructed in the space alongside a portable cabin containing a rich display of archive material. Gec says of the work:

"By employing fragments of information from different voices, I hope to form a wide picture of the town's status and history both as a destination and a point of departure for passengers and cargo from around the world."

'Tilbury Mappamundi' builds on themes that Gec has explored in previous works – including migration, displacement and the sea as a metaphor to reflect upon political and social concerns.

Commissions East

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Commissioned by Thurrock Council and developed by Commissions East, 'Tilbury Mappamundi' is part of a series of projects that includes Nina Pope and Karen Guthrie's film 'Bata-ville: We are not afraid of the future' (selected for Edinburgh International Film Festival in 2005) and Juneau/projects/ 'Stag Becomes Eagle'.

Funded by Arts Council England, East as part of the Arts Generate initiative, these projects have all examined Thurrock's identity in the context of the wider regeneration of the Thames Gateway.

During 'Tilbury Mappamundi', Commissions East is holding a conference at the London Cruise Terminal entitled 'Changing Minds, Changing Places' on Tuesday, 20 September from 10.30am – 4.30pm. Chaired by David Cross (of Cornford & Cross) with presentations by Stefan Gec, Nina Pope & Karen Guthrie and Juneau/projects/, it will present and discuss the three commissions and their relationship to Thurrock's history, identity and regeneration.

To book a place contact joanna@commissionseast.org.uk by Tuesday, 13 September.

'Tilbury Mappamundi' previews on Friday, 16 September from 5.30 – 8.00pm
(RSVP to allia@commissionseast.org.uk by Thursday, 8 September).

- Ends -

To arrange interviews, filming or photography contact:

Charity Green Director of Development
01223 356882 charity@commissionseast.org.uk

Editors notes:

1. About the artist

Stefan Gec has been gaining critical acclaim across North America and Europe, particularly for his site-specific installations. Over the last fifteen years Gec has been involved in a number of ambitious projects which have drawn upon his Ukrainian heritage and dealt with notions of movement, dislocation and history. His work uses a variety of media including film, photography and computer generated animation. In 2003, he was short-listed for the Fourth Plinth project for Trafalgar Square in London. His most recent solo exhibition was at the Annely Juda Gallery in London in 2004.

2. About London Cruise Terminal – history and directions

Owned and managed by the Port of Tilbury London Ltd, the London Cruise Terminal has welcomed cruise ships from all over the world since the 1930s. It is a Grade II listed building. From A13 Eastbound take the A1089 exit (signposted to Tilbury) to the 'ASDA' roundabout. The second exit off this roundabout takes you into St. Andrews Road, signposted the Docks. Continue past the port entrance, over the first mini roundabout and turn right at the second mini roundabout. The London Cruise Terminal is in front of you. Immediately off the roundabout bear

sharp left into the carpark. Free parking is available on a first come, first served basis. Trains from London to Tilbury Town station are at 20 and 50 minutes past the hour from Fenchurch Street station returning at 24 and 54 minutes past the hour (Monday to Saturday). On Sundays, trains are 20 and 50 minutes past the hour from Upminster station, returning to Liverpool Street station at 24 and 54 minutes past the hour.

3. 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 a range of services for artists.

4. About Thurrock Council

Thurrock is in Essex, on the River Thames and to the East of London. Thurrock Unitary Council was formed in the 1998 local government review. The grant from Thurrock Council has been funded by Arts Generate – an Arts Council England, East initiative that pioneers new approaches to regeneration through the arts and creative industries.

5. About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts. Between 2003-06 it will invest £2bn of public funds in the arts in England, including funding from the National Lottery.