

PRESS RELEASE

1st October 2009

JAUME PLENSA WINS 2009 CREATIVITY IN CONCRETE AWARD FOR “DREAM”

Internationally renowned artist Jaume Plensa has been awarded the British Precast ‘Creativity in Concrete Award’ for 2009 for his design of *Dream*, a 22m high precast concrete sculpture of a girl’s head with her eyes closed in a dream-like state that stands on the site of a former colliery in St.Helens.

The Creativity in Concrete Award is presented each year to an architect, designer or artist in recognition of a particular achievement for the creative use of concrete. In 2008 this award was presented to esteemed Danish Architect, the late Jørn Utzon, for his creative use of precast on a number of projects, most notably the magnificent Sydney Opera House.

Jaume Plensa flew in specially from Canada to receive his award from Martin Clarke, Chief Executive of British Precast, at a special event held at Southwark Cathedral. He spoke about the inspiration behind *Dream* and how he came to be involved in the project. Garry McBride, Chairman of bespoke precast concrete specialists Evans Concrete, also spoke at the event, explaining how his company turned *Dream* into reality.

Dream has already attracted much acclaim from the art world and featured in Channel 4’s Big Art Programme. It is also much admired by the local community in St.Helens.

Jaume Plensa said; “By artists and manufacturers working together they open their minds up to new possibilities and that’s when something succeeds – just like *Dream*. Ideas without materials simply can’t exist.”

“We are thrilled that Jaume chose concrete for *Dream*, the first time he has featured our material, and we are delighted to make this award,” said Martin Clarke of British Precast. “*Dream* stands out, quite literally, this year and is a beacon of optimism for the precast industry as well as for the North West region and the local community. Congratulations also to Evans Concrete, one of our most progressive and exciting member companies, for their dedication and skill.”

Garry McBride, Chairman of Evans Concrete, said: “*Dream* is probably the finest achievement in the company’s history and it also has to be one of the highlights of my own professional career. The skill and attention to detail that were necessary to design and manufacture the individual pieces of concrete

which form this sculpture needed to be of the highest quality. I am proud to say that I believe that we have succeeded in creating an iconic sculpture which will remain as a permanent showcase to our skills and traditions. I am therefore particularly delighted that British Precast has chosen Jaume as the recipient of this special award.”

Jaume Plensa's public artworks in the UK include 'Breathing' a spectacular 2008 illuminated listening glass memorial for journalists for BBC Broadcasting House in London. He has also created the Crown Fountain in Chicago's Millennium Park where voices and digital images of Chicago residents are displayed on 50ft glass towers.

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Notes to editors

Dream is a landmark feature for the North West, symbolising regeneration in the region, standing on the former Sutton Manor Colliery in St.Helens, midway between Liverpool and Manchester, overlooking the M62, where it will be seen by millions of motorists each year.

It was commissioned by St.Helens Council as part of Channel 4's Big Art Project, an ambitious public art initiative supported by Arts Council England, the national development agency for the arts and The Art Fund, the UK's leading independent art charity. It seeks to inspire and create new works of public art, commissioned by communities, as well as debating the importance of art in the built environment.

A focus group comprising ex-miners from Sutton Manor played a pivotal role in the whole development of the project, which was curated by Liverpool Biennial and is supported by the Forestry Commission and the Northwest Coalfield Communities Regeneration Programme.