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Press release

7 February 2022

## Volunteers Sought to Help Deliver Out of This World Experience on Divis & Black Mountain

- *Our Place in Space* is an epic scale model of the solar system designed by artist and children's author Oliver Jeffers, incorporates a 10km three-dimensional sculpture trail on Divis & Black Mountain from 11<sup>th</sup> June until 10<sup>th</sup> July 2022
- Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Belfast residents to join in major art project

Nerve Centre, producers of *Our Place in Space*, are seeking volunteers to take up a range of positions when the major new installation comes to Belfast in June.

*Our Place in Space*, part of UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK, is an epic scale model of the solar system designed by artist and children's author Oliver Jeffers, incorporating a 10km three-dimensional sculpture trail in Northern Ireland and Cambridge, an interactive AR app, and major learning and events programmes.

The **Our Place in Space** sculpture trail will open to the public at Divis & Black Mountain from 11 June to 10 July and is free and accessible to everyone.

Executive Producer at the Nerve Centre, David Lewis says: "We really want as many people as possible to become involved in **Our Place in Space** not just to enhance the experience for others but to have an unforgettable experience themselves. We have a variety of volunteering positions available across lots of different areas in each of the places where the Sculpture Trail will exhibit with commitment requiring as little as two hours a week."

Volunteering positions include **Local Legends** to help welcome and inform visitors, **Backpack Heroes** to support school and community group tours of the interactive planetary experience, and **Green Team** to take on litter picks and clean-ups before and after the trail is installed.

Those interested in becoming a volunteer guardian for **Our Place in Space** should email [p.larkin@nervecentre.org](mailto:p.larkin@nervecentre.org)

From creating a star to writing a symphony for the universe, inventing a new form of transport, building a Minecraft planet or connecting with space watchers around the globe, *Our Place in Space* invites participants to consider how we might better share and protect our planet in future. It



brings our solar system down to Earth and sends us soaring into the stars to find new perspectives and reconsider what it means to live life on Earth.

*Our Place in Space* has been designed by artist and children's author Oliver Jeffers with support from leading astrophysicist Professor Stephen Smartt, and features music by award-winning sound artist Die Hexen. From April 2022, the trail will travel from Derry~Londonderry to Divis and the Black Mountain, Belfast and to the Ulster Transport Museum and North Down Coastal Path in Northern Ireland, as well as a riverside location in Cambridge.

The Our Place in Space app will be available on Apple and Android devices and will allow users across the world to take a walk through our solar system, experiencing the planets in augmented reality and considering 10,000 years of human history. Users will collect space souvenirs, including characters from the world of Oliver Jeffers, as well as launching a personalised star into space.

Oliver Jeffers says: *"For centuries, we've defined ourselves by who we are and who we're not. Which side we choose, on what ground we stand, who and what we fight for. A human story, that lives merely in human minds. But with distance comes perspective – and what happens to our perspective on everything when we look back at Earth from space? Our Place in Space is a playful experiment that asks: What is the difference between 'us' and 'them'? Which side are we on, and if we look back at ourselves from vastness of outer space – alone on our tiny planet, the only one that can harbour life – should there be any 'sides' at all?"*

*Our Place in Space* is one of 10 major creative projects commissioned by UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK, a celebration of creativity taking place across the UK in 2022, designed to reach millions and bring people together. It features free large-scale events, installations and globally accessible digital experiences in the UK's most ambitious showcase of creative collaboration.

Martin Green CBE, Chief Creative Officer of UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK says *"Our Place is a fabulous collision between art, science and tech, with the opportunity to experience something really huge – our solar system – right here on earth. What's more, it's a wonderful opportunity to explore our beautiful landscapes with family and friends, as you discover more about the planets that in galactic terms are our neighbours."*

*Our Place in Space* is produced by Nerve Centre Collective, led by arts organisation the Nerve Centre and commissioned by UNBOXED with Belfast City Council. The collaboration behind the project includes the Astrophysics Research Centre at Queen's University Belfast, National Museums NI, NI Science Festival, Big Motive, Taunt, Microsoft, Jeffers & Son, Dumbworld, Live Music Now, Little Inventors, Cambridge University, the National Trust and Urban Scale Interventions.

UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK is funded and supported by the four governments of the UK and is commissioned and delivered in partnership with Belfast City Council, Creative Wales and EventScotland.

## Listings information

## Our Place in Space



Bay Road Park and River Foyle, Derry-Londonderry: 22 April – 22 May 2022

Divis & Black Mountain, Belfast: 11 June – 10 July 2022

Midsommer Common and River Cam, Cambridge: 30 July – 29 August 2022

Ulster Transport Museum and North Down Coastal Path: 17 September – 16 October 2022

info@ourplaceinspace.earth

<https://www.ourplaceinspace.earth/>

### **UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK**

1 March – 2 October 2022

Unboxed2022.uk

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UNBOXED is presented across the UK and online. Projects presented in Northern Ireland are [About Us](#) (Derry–Londonderry, 15-21 March); [Dreamachine](#) (Belfast, 1 August – 11 September); [Green Space Dark Skies](#) (Various locations 30 April to 25 September); [Our Place in Space](#) (Derry–Londonderry and Belfast, 22 April – 14 October); and [Story Trails](#) (Omagh 2-4 July).

### **For more information, images and interviews**

*Our Place in Space* and UNBOXED media enquiries, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland: Lyn Sheridan | [lyn@aikenpr.com](mailto:lyn@aikenpr.com) | 07770 584157

### **Notes to editors**

[UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK](#) is a celebration of creativity taking place across the UK in 2022, designed to reach millions and bring people together. It features free large-scale events, installations and globally accessible digital experiences in the UK's most ambitious showcase of creative collaboration. Produced by some of the brightest minds in science, technology, engineering, arts and maths, UNBOXED features ten major multi-site and digital creative projects that share new ideas and possibilities for the future. Events and activities take place from 1 March to 2 October 2022 – from the Outer Hebrides to Dover and from Omagh to Swansea, and across traditional and online media. UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK is funded and supported by the four governments of the UK and is commissioned and delivered in partnership with Belfast City Council, Creative Wales and EventScotland.

[Oliver Jeffers](#) is a visual artist and author working in painting, bookmaking, illustration, collage, performance, and sculpture. Curiosity and humour are underlying themes throughout Jeffers' practice as an artist and storyteller. While investigating the ways the human mind understands its world, his work also functions as comic relief in the face of futility. Jeffers' engagements and practice are truly international in scope. His critically acclaimed picture books have been translated into over fifty languages and sold over 14 million copies worldwide. His original artwork has been exhibited at such institutions as the Brooklyn Museum in New York, the Irish Museum of Modern



Art in Dublin, the National Portrait Gallery in London, and the Palais Auersperg in Vienna. Jeffers has been the recipient of numerous awards, including a New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books Award, Bologna Rigazzi Award, An Irish Book Award, and a United Kingdom Literary Association Award. Oliver grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where he currently lives.

[Die Hexen](#) is a BIFA nominated, award-winning multi-instrumentalist composer, producer, sound artist and filmmaker. David Holmes has said: "Die is a special artist in more ways than one. From the first time I heard her compositions I knew she was destined for great things especially in the film soundtrack and art world."

Her avant-garde, often otherworldly compositions exist and operate on the edge of reality. A notable constant throughout Die Hexen's musical journey is her preternatural understanding of the union of sound and vision. From sweeping orchestral scores to minimal percussion, hypnotic synths to delicate piano. Die Hexen is known for creating unique sound worlds spanning a wide range of genres for narrative, experimental film, animation, game, dance and performance.

[Professor Stephen Smartt](#) FRS is professor of astrophysics at Queen's University Belfast and has previously worked at the University of Cambridge and the UK's Isaac Newton Group of Telescopes. He uses telescopes around the world to survey the sky in search of exploding stars. An exploding star is called a supernova, which can shine with the power of 11 billion suns. Professor Smartt leads several international teams using telescopes in Chile (in the southern hemisphere) and Hawaii (northern hemisphere) to search for these spectacular explosions. He also searches for light emitted by sources of gravitational waves which are thought to be dense neutron stars that smash together. Professor Smartt is a Fellow of the Royal Society and a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, and was awarded the George Darwin Lecture and Herschel Medal by the Royal Astronomical Society and the RIA Gold Medal in the physical and mathematical sciences.

[Nerve Centre](#) is Northern Ireland's leading creative media arts centre with a vision of 'changing live through creative technologies and the arts'.

More than 120,000 people a year benefit from a wide-ranging programme of arts events, innovative projects, creative learning, and production facilities. A successful social enterprise, the Nerve Centre employs 50 staff in Derry~Londonderry and Belfast. At an educational level, the Nerve Centre has developed the Creative Learning Centre model, empowering teachers and community learners to engage with creative technologies to unlock learning in the curriculum.

The Nerve Centre's artistic output has gained an international reputation with Oscar and BAFTA nominations, and an ongoing collaboration with visual artist Willie Doherty, twice nominated for the Turner Prize.



OUR PLACE  
• IN SPACE  
by OLIVER JEFFERS



NERVE CENTRE  
PRESENTS

OUR PLACE  
• IN SPACE

OLIVER JEFFERS

Commissioned by Belfast City Council as part of UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK

CREATIVE TEAM



LOCATION PARTNERS



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