



Award-winning Faversham artist Robert Jarvis



Robert Jarvis has created a sound art installation for Sittingbourne High Street

High Street to be wired for sound in art project

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AN AWARD-winning Faversham artist has created an innovative high street sound installation.

Robert Jarvis is the first of two artists in Swale to be commissioned to transform an urban site within the borough.

The work will form part of Encounter, which is a project being held across north Kent from July to October.

Art works will be created for familiar spaces in the heart of the communities, such as

empty shops, vacant buildings, businesses, high streets and public squares.

Robert's Streetwaves installation will make use of a recent advances in music technology, allowing shop windows in the High Street to be used as audio sources, which are able to play quiet sounds.

His plan is to create a series of unique sound zones along the lower end of the Sittingbourne stretch from which people will be able to hear the gentle effect of the installation.

The sounds used will be connected with the street

itself, and Robert has been working with shopkeepers and the public to choose and record sounds that reflect the area's past, present and every day activity.

The sounds will be brought together in a musical way to create a larger composition, which people will be able to hear as they walk along that part of the street.

The installation will run for one week at the end of July, and will sound from the different shop windows on either side of the High street.

Robert said: "Imagine walking in the town early one

evening. There are not many people around and it's quite quiet.

"As you walk you pay little attention to your surroundings, you just keep walking.

"Gradually you become aware of different sounds coming from different directions, possibly from the shops on either side, and you look to see where the sounds are coming from.

"For a short while the High Street is alive with subtle sounds fading in and out of each other and appearing to 'dance' across the street from one shop to another; and then, as mysteriously as it began, the wave of sounds settles and quietly fades allowing the street to resume its unanimated state, only to spring to life again a few minutes later.

"It will feature 26 shop windows and focus on independent traders.

"It will encourage people to relook, relisten and reconsider their environment and surroundings."

■ To find out more about other Encounter commissions dotted round north Kent visit: www.encounter-northkent.co.uk

Using sounds related to specific areas

Robert Jarvis works as a sound artist and composer.

In recent years he has been concentrating on installations that use sounds related to specific areas or scientific data collected from natural processes.

This work involves the processes of listening, engaging, collecting, composing and sharing,

in order to bring out new understandings in harmony with the sounds of the area and the lives of the people that live there.

In 2005 and 2006 Robert won the New Media category of the British Composer Awards.

In 2008 and 2010 he was shortlisted for the New Music Award.

More recently he completed a commission for the BBC, and was again shortlisted for the British Composer Awards, this time for his insect-inspired Entomophonix.

Robert plays trombone, working internationally as an improviser, performing with the Dutch NDIO project and the London Improvisers' Orchestra.