**Claire Morgan Brochure Copy**

**FRONT PAGE**

**ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM**

CLAIRE MORGAN

Princes Quay Shopping Centre

7 AUG – 15 OCT

**COPY**

**ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM**

Claire Morgan’s sculpture, based on the life-size form of a whale, has been made from many thousands of fragments of torn paper, suspended on nylon threads. With obsessive precision she, and her assistants, have spent months meticulously making this work for Hull to display in Princes Quay.

Titled *Elephant in the Room* the sculpture was modelled on the Greenland Right Whale (a historical name for the Bowhead Whale), which grows to an adult length of 13 – 16m. In the 1820s Hull was home to the largest whaling fleet in the country, with over 60 whaling vessels based in the port. The Greenland ‘Right’ Whale was so called because it was classed as the right whale to catch being slow, not too dangerous and floated when it was dead. Heavy commercial hunting, beginning in the 1500s, depleted all populations of Bowheads, and their numbers have recovered substantially since the end of commercial whaling in the early 20th century. However, the implications of global warming, melting sea-ice and increasing plastics pollution means that the future for the Bowhead is uncertain.

In this work, suspended from its tail, the whale points downwards towards the water of Princes Dock which flows beneath the floor of the shopping centre. With historical references to Hull’s past there is something incongruous, almost disturbing, in seeing this whale as a transient presence in the centre.

Claire Morgan says, *"With my installations, I hope to create things that provoke thought, wonder and something of the impossible**or**the unknown.  A theme I constantly come back to is time: the passing of time and how it shapes our lives as we try to control it and halt it.”*

Through her work, Claire Morgan engages with the impact which human activity has on the earth’s life, finding new ways to remind people of the beauty and fragility of the world around us. In looking to prick people’s conscience she reminds is that, *“Out of sight means out of mind, and we can more or less experience the world through a device, purchasing things that have been grown, killed, or manufactured cheaply in places we will never visit, by people we will never meet, all the while signing online petitions for ethical treatment of humans and animals in order to absolve ourselves of any guilt. It’s a system that offers just enough value, just enough separation, and more than enough convenience to keep our concerns at the very back of our minds”.*

*Elephant in the Room* consists of 12,000 fragments of hand torn paper, arranged across 4,270 individual threads over 109 layers. The sculpture, which is 16.5m high, uses over 14 kms of nylon thread.

Claire Morgan was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and currently lives and works in Gateshead in the North East of England. Claire exhibits internationally, with solo exhibitions in museums and galleries across Europe, and works included in museum shows in the US and Australia.

**CREDITS**

Artist Claire Morgan

Studio & Install Assistants Sharon Ayre, Nicola Flint, Oonagh Hegarty, Lottie Smith & Hope Stebbing

Rigging & Lighting Agility Events

Princes Quay Sarah Smith, Marketing & Customer Services Manager

Look Up Curators Hazel Colquhoun and Andrew Knight

With thanks to Princes Quay Shopping Centre and Realm Ltd for their cooperation in

the development and realisation of this commission.

Claire Morgan is represented worldwide by Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne, Paris, St. Moritz

[www.claire-morgan.co.uk](http://www.claire-morgan.co.uk)

hull2017.co.uk/lookup

@2017HULLLookUp