



Historic England

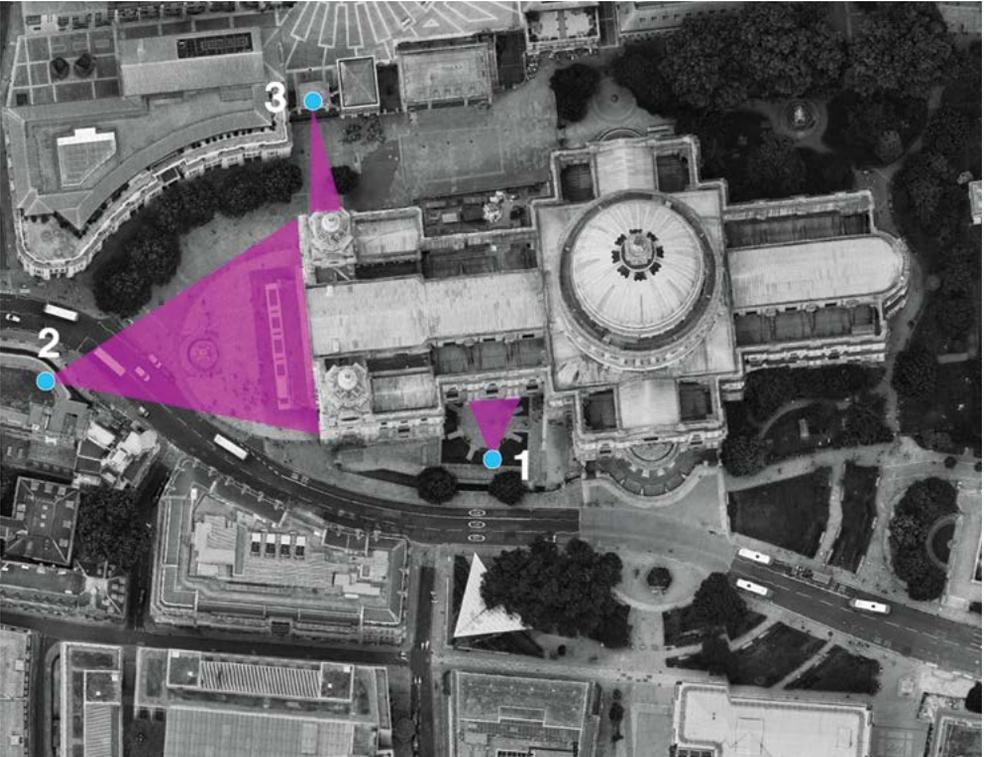
# WHERE LIGHT FALLS

St Paul's Cathedral  
24–27 October 2019

Coventry Cathedral  
14–16 November 2019



# St Paul's Cathedral projections map



## St Paul's – *From the Log Book*

1. Section 1 of the poem – south side
2. The full poem with original music score and animation – main façade, west side
3. Section 2 of the poem – north side

# Where Light Falls

## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Where Light Falls.....                          | 2  |
| St Paul's Cathedral .....                       | 3  |
| Coventry Cathedral.....                         | 4  |
| The Poetry Society .....                        | 5  |
| <i>From the Log Book</i> by Keith Jarrett ..... | 8  |
| <i>In a New Light</i> by Jane Commane .....     | 14 |
| Double Take Projections.....                    | 18 |
| Our Partners.....                               | 22 |
| Find Out More .....                             | 24 |

# Where Light Falls

## Spectacular projections at two iconic cathedrals

It was Winston Churchill who said ‘we shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us.’ Buildings and places are important to all of us. Acting as reference points, they ground us and play host to our most important and personal moments. No wonder then, when these important places are threatened, damaged or destroyed, it goes to the heart of our communities.

*Where Light Falls* marks 80 years since the start of the Second World War. The deadliest conflict of all time, it claimed the lives of an estimated 70-85 million people, bringing destruction across the globe. St Paul’s Cathedral and Coventry Cathedral, two buildings so integral to telling the United Kingdom’s wartime story, become the focal point to remember this important anniversary and the courage that followed. Inspired by original poetry, co-created with local school students, groups of people from a refugee and migrant background, and groups of older writers, these spectacular light shows tell the story and legacy of these two great buildings and the people who stopped at nothing to protect them.

*Where Light Falls* is part of Historic England’s *Loss and Destruction* season: a series of events and an exhibition at Imperial War Museum (IWM London) that seek to understand the consequences when cultural heritage is attacked during conflict and how we save, protect and restore.

# St Paul's Cathedral

As the Blitz raged from September 1940 to May 1941, Churchill said St Paul's must be saved at 'all costs'. The daring members of St Paul's Watch responded to that call and re-assembled in 1939 to put themselves in the path of bombs night after night.

When most people took refuge in tube stations and air raid shelters across London, and bombs rained down over St Paul's, the volunteers patrolled the cathedral to keep it safe. Armed with sandbags and water pumps, they were ready to put out flames at any moment. Their bravery ensured the survival of a masterpiece that became a symbol of resilience and hope.



Left: St Paul's Cathedral with the snow-covered ruins of a bomb-damaged building in the foreground. John Gay, 1947. AA093717. Right: Bomb damage and demolition debris beside County Hall on London's South Bank, with the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Bridge in the background. John Gay, 1940-1947. AA093799. Both images © Historic England Archive.

# Coventry Cathedral

Similar fortitude was shown in Coventry. On 14 November 1940, in the midst of heavy bombing throughout the city, people took shelter in the cathedral crypts. Others climbed on to its roof, to throw incendiaries on to the ground below, or ran in to the nave to put out fires.

The onslaught was too great and the cathedral had to be abandoned.

Coventry Cathedral's scarred remains reflect the devastating raids the city suffered. Out of this destruction, Coventry established itself as a City of Peace and Reconciliation, borne out of the hope and resilience that came with the post-war rebuilding of a new cathedral.



Left: A view looking over the remains of Coventry Cathedral, from the north-west showing the damage sustained in an air raid. James Nelson, 11 October 1941. AA44.18725. © Historic England Archive. Right: Medieval stained glass fragments from Coventry Cathedral. Len Furbank, Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, c1994. BB94/07840. © Crown Copyright. Historic England Archive.

# THE POETRY SOCIETY

## Creating the poems

Historic England worked with The Poetry Society to commission two new poems for *Where Light Falls*.

The Poetry Society is the UK's leading voice for poets and poetry. Founded in 1909 to promote 'a more general recognition and appreciation of poetry', the Society is one of the country's most dynamic arts organisations, promoting poetry nationally and internationally. With innovative education and commissioning programmes, and a packed calendar of performances, readings and competitions, they champion poetry for all ages.

**'Working with writers Keith Jarrett, Jane Commane, the cathedrals and the local writing groups on Historic England's *Where Light Falls* has been a fascinating, rewarding experience. We hope the messages of reconciliation and reconstruction contained in the poems continue to shine long after the projections fade.'** – Julia Bird, The Poetry Society

Keith Jarrett, who created the poem with groups in London, lives and works in the city. He's a poet, playwright and

fiction writer, and is currently a PhD scholar at Birkbeck, University of London, where he is completing his first novel which explores the migration of religion from the Caribbean to London. Keith has set up many poetry workshops for schools. He was one of six initial Spoken Word Educator trainees teaching at a secondary school in East London while researching Creative Education for an MA at Goldsmiths; the project was the first of its kind in Europe.

Jane Commane, who created the poem with groups in Coventry, was born in the city and now lives and works in Warwickshire as a poet, publisher, writing tutor and mentor. She's led writing activities in museums, castles, city centres, orchards and along riverbanks, was poet in residence at the Brontë Parsonage in Haworth and has been commissioned to provide workshops for Girl Guiding UK, Ledbury Poetry Festival and Birmingham Literature Festival, amongst many others. She's a publisher and editor at Nine Arches Press.

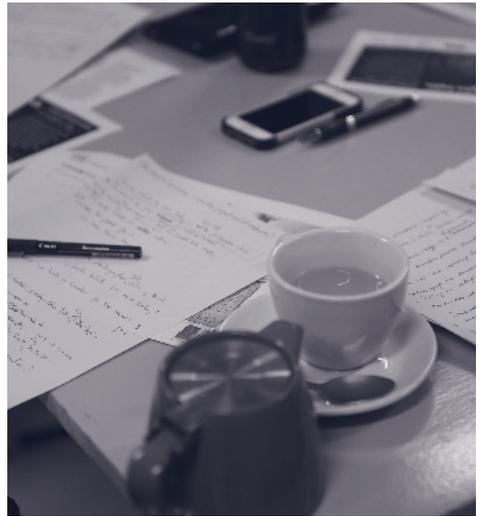
# London's poem

## The past and the present

'It gives you a sense of realisation,' said one Year 9 student of their workshop with Keith Jarrett in St Paul's, 'It makes you feel fortunate that you're not in this situation.'

Students from four London schools contributed to Keith's poem. Some of the pupils from Archbishop Tenison's School, Eastbrook School, George Green's School and Lady Margaret School had never been to St Paul's Cathedral before, some were more familiar; some were born and brought up in London, some spoke English as a second language. All of them responded thoughtfully and

imaginatively to the photos and archive reports that Keith had discovered during his research at the cathedral, The British Library and Imperial War Museum. 'Even though I already work a lot with young people,' he says, 'I was impressed by how the school groups engaged with the [writing] prompts, even though it was very much over there in the past for them. Some of the pupils wrote imaginative pieces and, in one school workshop, other ideas came out about faith, the role of women during this time, ideas that weren't voiced in the adult groups. I used some of the words that



Left: Keith at Exiled Writers Ink workshop.  
Right: Workshop materials.

came out of the adult groups in starter prompts for the student sessions. My idea was to bring them together, if not physically in the same room, then at least in their words.’

In Keith’s finished poem, the students’ words mix with those of Exiled Writers Ink – a group of writers who have in common a background of immigrant, exile, refugee or migrant status – and the Creative Writes group – older writers who gather regularly in Islington. Keith continues, ‘Exiled Writers Ink had such considered and complex reactions,

especially to the building itself, the ways in which symbols can sometimes be problematic, exclusionary, even, and yet full of hope to some. Someone in that group came up with the phrase “building of contradiction”, which stayed with me throughout my whole writing process.’

‘Firebomb turns to fireweed’ states Keith’s poem, an image of transformation to be felt and fully understood by its student and adult creators, and its readers.

**Turn the page for the London poem**  
*From the Log Book.*



Left: Creative Writes at St Paul’s Cathedral.  
Right: Creative Writes at the workshop.  
All photos by Hayley Madden, © Historic England.

# From the Log Book

by Keith Jarrett

*Wednesday 16 April, 1941*

*'5am: Report very bad night, everyone behaved splendidly'*

This building, dressed in a collar of smoke,  
at whose feet only fog and ash flower,  
whose bricked heart hides Wellington's monument,  
prepared for the inevitable blasts.

Unsleeping structure, lit by the Thames' glow,  
building of contradiction, vulnerable,  
and yet, still, imposing in its stature,  
patrolled by volunteers who douse the fires.

*'2.30am: Bomb through North Transept. Blast terrific.'*

The North Transept only whispers of scars:  
like the barely-visible giveaway  
of a recapitated statue's shine  
by the shrine, once upturned, now candle-bathed.

Or the old High Altar, blown apart  
by a quarter-tonne bomb dropped through the roof;  
built up again to be a remembrance  
of Commonwealth members who died in war.

*'1.52am: Cathedral roofs pelted with incendiary bombs'*

Members of the Watch unite in resolve  
to protect you from the flames at all costs,  
knowing how to navigate by dark each inch.  
At the nave's west end, a tile remembers them.

You, who intone grand hymns of survival,  
who holler out chords of determination,  
under your breath, you whisper other tales:  
the legacy of loss, of grief's debris.

*When morning came, the light overpowered the darkness*

Sunken into this Cathedral's fabric,  
a tile bows in its commemoration  
of determination and defiance,  
but who now can sing humanity's song?

*Does rubble speak the same language as hope?*

Where do shadows hide when no light is cast?  
Shall we salvage this too from our history –  
the toll of uncertainty's sleeplessness?  
Can we find un-silent sanctuary?

*My childhood home, a memory made of longing:  
if it stood still through time, maybe I could too.*

Who can measure fear's wingspan, its claws' reach?  
When morning comes, may my structures rebuild,  
may the light overpower the darkness,  
may my landscape be rewritten in bold.

*Bravery and protection matter more than ever before.*

Firebomb turns to fireweed, wounds are salvaged  
from wounds, *safe* becomes our treasured mantra,  
and this city surrounds itself with shells  
of memories passed down, of photographs.

*Hope finds breath between sirens.*

The fireweed outside has long-since blossomed  
to buildings that reflect a watchful sun  
and we summon the aftermath's silence  
through this structure of endless echoing.

*When morning comes, I'll wear a dome of hope, intact.*



St Paul's Cathedral, the Festival Gardens and surrounding building ruins. Aerofilms Ltd, 14 March 1952. EAW041957. © Historic England Archive. Aerofilms Collection.

# Coventry's poem

## See it in a new light

'I've felt an affinity with Coventry Cathedral for a long time,' writes poet Jane Commane. 'I can remember doing a project on it at primary school, and the great impression it made on me visiting as a child – it is such an unusual and unique building – or rather two buildings – the ruins of the old cathedral and the new cathedral itself and its own story is so closely woven into Coventry's own story of destruction and reconstruction.'

To write the poem, which inspired Double Take Projections to create their

spectacular illuminations, Jane led poetry workshops and material-gathering sessions with Caludon Castle School, Coventry Older Voices, Good Chance, The Poetry Society's Coventry Stanza, and performers at the city's regular Fire & Dust poetry night. Jane's own research in Coventry's archives inspired the framework of her poem, and helped her shape the conversations she wanted to have with the members of the groups. 'The turning point for me,' she says, 'was reading Provost Howard's diaries, and particularly the desperate battle to stop



Left: Good Chance workshop.

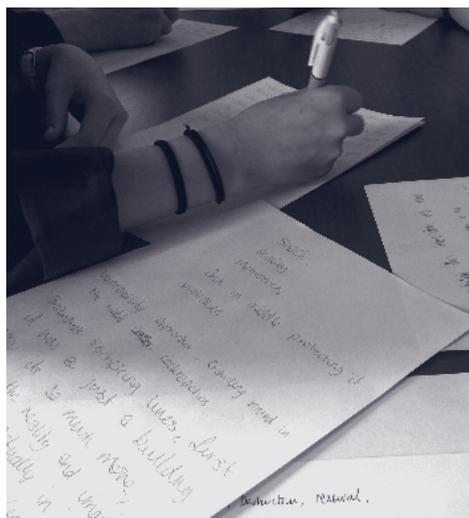
Right: Coventry Older Voices workshop.

the cathedral burning and his account of the following day. Also, the first-hand accounts from diaries and letters of the time that described the night of the Coventry Blitz and the aftermath. One memorable pocket diary, where the opening words of the entry – ‘Bright day’ – had been crossed out and, in fierce red ink and blunt, broken sentences, the terrible aftermath of the bombing raid was documented.’

Jane asked participants again and again, ‘What does the cathedral mean to you?’

You can find the answers in the italic refrains of the poem. ‘Our cathedral – a symbol of permanence’, ‘Our cathedral for a blitzed city that would not give up’, ‘Our cathedral – our community’s heart’ – these are words expressing determination, ownership and love. Coventry citizens have a new poem. ‘Still here and enduring’ it says to them. ‘We are one’.

The Coventry poem *In a New Light* is reproduced in full overleaf.



Left: Caludon Castle trip to the ruins.  
Right: Caludon Castle workshop.  
All images © Historic England.

# In a New Light

By Jane Commane

O sisters too, how may we do / for to preserve this day

This poor youngling for whom we sing / “Bye bye, lully, lullay”?

– from The Coventry Carol, 14th Century.

Lay down a blue thread of river and make here a city,  
weave a busy tapestry of trades and guilds and merchants.  
from castle and monasteries, the red sandstone walls form  
and reform, and three spires rise to touch the hem of skyline.  
Cappers, girdlers, dyers, weavers, city of hands building  
chapels of industry that become churches, cathedrals,  
streets where devout carnivals of mystery plays reflect back  
in stained glass the crowd for the Shearsman and Tailor’s pageant;  
below, a glovemaker’s son from Stratford takes notes, above  
a stonemason puts down his tools, whistles *lully, lullay*.

*Our cathedral – a symbol of permanence, reassurance  
in a city where buildings go up and buildings come down,  
our spire still stands tall, a beacon to all.  
With a mind of togetherness, how strong we can be.  
Our cathedral of global visitors and lunchtime trysts,  
place of peace, our intrinsic Coventry-ness.*

Lay down your tools and clock-out at the factory whistle,  
time turns on a crankshaft from cloth to clockwork, bicycles  
to cars, the work-song of lathes turning swarf’s string of silver  
from metal. Peace work turns to war work, the cathedral crypts  
become shelters. November moonlight. Frost gleams white on lead  
as firewatchers with broom and pitchfork, the Provost and Jock,  
join others on the roof. Sirens, then hard rain of the raid  
through the night, hand to hand, sweeping, quenching until buckets  
of water and sand and all the brigade’s hoses run dry,  
the city lit red in cross beams of radar and searchlight.

*Our cathedral in bronze-coloured smoke, concentrated blaze.  
All night the city burned and our cathedral burned with her.  
Our cathedral of Corley stone, glass shatter.  
Firefighting on the roof, granddad never forgave himself.  
All this matters: our togetherness and our unity.  
Our cathedral, laid open to the sky*

Lay down the crossed beams of charred oak in the smoking dawn light.  
All through the night the cathedral bells still rang the hours out  
but from the channel the red ribbon on the horizon  
was a city ablaze, citizens now emerging dazed  
to morning: *nothing left but the spire and the shell . . .*  
*it makes you think it all a bad dream.* In ash and rubble  
three roof nails make cruciform, the Provost finds the right words.  
But this *poor youngling*, the child who grips a mother's hand tight  
is heartfelt of fear at the bombsite's empty eye sockets:  
how does a city find the thread of a song and rise again?

*Our cathedral – warm sandstone holding the remnants of heat  
of November in her peaceful arms, fragmented voices;  
this broken building, half a cathedral.  
Our Cathedral for a blitzed city that would not give up.  
Small voices echo; glass once shattered now illuminates,  
symbol of hope, the open air now embraced.*

Lay down threads of light on fallen city walls, rise again  
with hands extended, friendships, twin cities: a stone restored  
in the ruins becomes a cross made for the Frauenkirche.  
Step for a moment from the carousel by the market,  
a new city's giddy spin of concrete arcades, mosaics,  
and find the quiet embrace of the ruined cathedral  
under the wing of the new, Spence's act of faith. *Oh  
Sisters!* Godiva on horseback, the sound of requiems,  
sci-fi symphonies of sirens, the city catches a glimpse  
of itself in new glass from the old cathedral steps.

*Our cathedral, echoing with the sound of shuffling feet,  
with the resonances of other people; I see, I hear,  
then I open a new sense that I was not aware of.  
Our cathedral, our community's heart, reverberating  
2-Tone town walls welcoming, celebrating our differences.  
Do you feel better than when you went in?*

Lay down your shades of blue in stained glass – let light shine through  
on true blue, engineer's blue, French woad blue, three spires sky blue  
a tapestry of nine hundred colours – our warp and weft,  
Huguenot weavers, rainbow rolls of silk on Foleshill Road,  
your name on a Cash's label at the nape of your neck,  
the Ska rhythms in your step, and here, at Coventry's heart  
a living gift that belongs to us all, filled with art, sound  
and colour, peace and reconciliation made concrete,  
my story and yours woven together, from hand to hand,  
lay down our threads of history and make here our city.

*Our Cathedral, where we can see ourselves in a new light,  
a building that seemed to say in quiet voice: I am  
the sacrifice, now build for the future.  
Our Cathedral, where we see our city in a new light;  
we are not the building, we are the light streaming through it,  
still here and enduring, the years returning back to us,  
we are the echoing sound of old and new, we are one.*



The Parish Church of St Michael, Coventry. Bedford, 1900.  
AL0197/009/01. Source: Historic England Archive.

# Double Take Projections

## Illuminating stories

**‘I have a passion for untold stories – for the history that doesn’t get told in museums,’ says Steven McConnachie.**

Steven and his twin brother David are directors of Double Take Projections, the Edinburgh-based projection mapping studio which transforms buildings and landscapes with astonishing light shows. The multi-coloured projections on Buckingham Palace during the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations inspired them to set up their own company – and now they themselves have become experts in illuminating historical buildings and landscapes. Previous projects have seen them light up bridges and castles – and once, memorably, beam a poem across the width of a waterfall.

The commission from Historic England to transform the façades of Coventry and St Paul’s Cathedrals with poetry and archive images was, says Steven, ‘a dream brief’. As children, the brothers’ favourite pastime was to wander round castles, learning about the past – but the more modern wartime history of Britain is also a passion of theirs. Delving into the cathedrals’ archives has deepened their

appreciation of the histories. For example, they were surprised to discover that most of the people who watched over buildings during bombing raids were volunteers, motivated by love of their cities’ heritage. ‘Under threat of destruction, the spaces became symbols of everything that needed protection,’ says Steven. Volunteer wardens and firewatchers worked in extremely stressful conditions, yet ‘no-one complained. That stiff upper lip attitude – I think Keith has captured it very well in his poem’.

While the stories of individuals associated with the cathedrals stimulated Double Take’s creativity, the buildings directly inspired the illuminated artwork. ‘When I stood in the new Coventry Cathedral, I thought it was the most beautiful building I’d ever been inside’, says Steven. The stained glass has made its way straight into the Coventry projections – look out for the tumbling, glowing shapes which resemble sun shining through the rainbow colours of the building’s glass. Sir Basil Spence, Coventry Cathedral’s architect, trained in Edinburgh – another important connection for the Scottish company.

The development of ever-more precise and powerful lighting technology over the last few years has led the UK to discover its love for light festivals – think of the lantern parades at *Truro City of Lights*, the glowing glasshouses of *GlasGLOW* or the artworks and animations of Durham and London’s Lumiere events. On dark winter nights, a light show brings people out from their houses and into their communities – connecting people and places through spectacular visual storytelling. ‘St Paul’s is very quiet at night,’ says Steven. The flash of an image at dusk, or a glimpse of scrolling text draws people closer, enabling them to appreciate a building and its hidden history in a whole new way.

Poets are used to working within the constraints of the page – a line of poetry is not usually longer than the width of a book. The *Where Light Falls* poets had a different set of instructions however – their poetry had to fit around the shapes of windows and doors in the cathedral walls. Double Take specialise in converting architectural details into typographical details. There are moments

in the projections when words shatter like broken glass, or collapse and grow like bombed and rebuilt walls.

‘Our artistic style is to make things as bright as physically possible,’ concludes Steven. In darker times, the two cathedrals were hidden in a blackout. Now their stories shine bright as searchlights.



# The Coventry Cathedral Projections



To create the start of Coventry's main installation, designer Cameron Gleave hand-drew copies of the John Hutton Screen, which welcomes visitors to the new Coventry Cathedral.  
Courtesy of Double Take Projections Ltd. © Historic England 2019.



Blue is a recurring motif throughout Jane Commane's poem, *In a New Light*.  
Courtesy of Double Take Projections Ltd. © Historic England 2019.

# Our Partners

## **St Paul's Cathedral**

St Paul's is the cathedral church of the diocese of London, which it has served for over 1,400 years. The current building has become a potent symbol of the life of a nation and is one of the world's most beautiful buildings. Designed by Sir Christopher Wren in the late seventeenth century, its stones have absorbed the hopes, fears, sorrows and joys of generations and stand as an enduring symbol of our communion with those gone before and those still to come. Each year nearly two million people flock to the cathedral for services, concerts, debates, educational events, performing arts and sightseeing. All are most welcome.

During the First and Second World Wars, when raids on London began, a group of brave women and men formed the St Paul's Watch to patrol and look over the building each night. Risking their lives, the Watch had a great deal of responsibility; putting out incendiary bombs and keeping guard until the war ended. The St Paul's Watch were the original Friends of St Paul's, with many becoming founding members in 1952. Today the Friends of St Paul's are vital to the future of our great cathedral and form the majority of our dedicated volunteers. Visit [stpauls.co.uk/friends](http://stpauls.co.uk/friends) to become a Friend and make a difference.

**[StPauls.co.uk](http://StPauls.co.uk)**

## **City of London Corporation**

*Where Light Falls* is part of *Fantastic Feats: the building of London*, presented by the City of London Corporation – a six-month season of events celebrating the achievements (and failures) of architecture, engineering and invention in the Square Mile. In addition to *Where Light Falls*, highlights include the Guildhall Art Gallery exhibition, *Architecture of London*, illustrating how London's ever-changing cityscape has inspired artists over four centuries (until 1 December).

The City Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile, dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City and supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally-successful UK.

**[CityofLondon.gov.uk/FantasticFeats](http://CityofLondon.gov.uk/FantasticFeats)**

## Coventry Cathedral

The place we call 'Coventry Cathedral' is in fact two buildings that lie at the very heart of the city of Coventry. The ruins of the 'old cathedral' are the remains of a medieval parish church, consecrated to be the cathedral of the new Diocese of Coventry in 1918. In a little over 20 years, this building would be destroyed by enemy air attack in the Second World War. Rather than sweeping away the ruins or rebuilding a replica, the then leaders of the cathedral Community took the courageous step to build a new cathedral and preserve the remains of the old cathedral as a moving reminder of the folly and waste of war. From that point, Coventry Cathedral became the inspiration for a ministry of peace and reconciliation that has reached out across the entire world.

*Where Light Falls* is an extraordinary new installation reflecting on the history of both cathedrals and what they mean to the people of Coventry. We invite you to discover the hidden history of these special spaces and to join us again for fun, worship, celebration and community.

[CoventryCathedral.org.uk](http://CoventryCathedral.org.uk)

## Coventry City Council

Coventry is a multicultural, welcoming city, known worldwide for its work in peace and reconciliation. *Where Light Falls* tells the story of the old and new cathedrals, which have become symbols of resilience and hope in the face of adversity. We are proud to support the event, which we see as an exciting addition to Coventry's cultural calendar, and a celebration of the city's unique history, proud heritage and exciting future.

Coventry is European City of Sport 2019 and UK City of Culture 2021.

[VisitCoventry.co.uk](http://VisitCoventry.co.uk)

## Thanks to

**City of London Corporation, St Paul's Cathedral, Coventry Cathedral, Coventry Council, UK City of Culture 2021: Coventry, Keith Jarrett, Jane Commane, Creative Writes, Exiled Writers Ink, Archbishop Tenison's School, Eastbrook School, George Green's School, Caludon Castle School, Coventry Central Library, Coventry Older Voices, Good Chance, Coventry Stanza, Fire & Dust, Double Take Projections, Barnaby Smith, The Poetry Society, Genesis Oil and Gas Consultants Ltd, Sarasin & Partners, Barnabus Fund, St Paul's Cathedral School.**



Historic England

## Find out more

We are the public body that looks after England's historic environment. We champion historic places, helping people understand, value and care for them.

Visit Historic England's exhibition *What Remains*, curated in partnership with Imperial War Museum. This free exhibition is on until 5 January 2020.

For more details about the creation of the poems, visit [PoetrySociety.org.uk/projects/WhereLightFalls](http://PoetrySociety.org.uk/projects/WhereLightFalls)

## Keep in touch

**Historic England**

[HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk)



[@HistoricEngland](https://twitter.com/HistoricEngland)



[HistoricEngland](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricEngland)



[@HistoricEngland](https://www.instagram.com/HistoricEngland)

# Coventry Cathedral projections map



## Coventry – *In a New Light*

1. Jane Commane reading stanzas 1 & 2 of the poem – Priory Row
2. Stanzas 3 & 4 with typographic animation – Coventry Cathedral, west side
3. Stanzas 5 & 6 with typographic animation – Coventry Cathedral Ruins, north side
4. Stanzas 7 & 8 with typographic animation – Coventry Cathedral Ruins, north side
5. The full poem with original music score and animation – Coventry Cathedral Ruins, spire



# Historic England

We are the public body that looks after England's historic environment. We champion historic places, helping people understand, value and care for them.

## Keep in touch

Historic England

[HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk)



@HistoricEngland



HistoricEngland



@HistoricEngland

Published October 2019 © Historic England

In Partnership with



Supported by

