

AN ARTS STRATEGY *How art can make a place* DISCOVERY QUARTER

Whilst the River Tyne, with its many bridges, is an iconic and instantly recognisable landmark, and the Quayside has tremendous appeal as a location for the pursuit of pleasure whether it be for socialising, exercise or cultural entertainment, it is interesting to note that such a great natural resource is only exploited in a small area of Newcastle, beyond which most of the river frontage becomes the domain of expensive flats, business parks or declining industry.

This project aims to reinvigorate the area of the River Tyne that falls within the Discovery Quarter boundaries, transforming it from an unused, and seemingly bleak outpost, into an area thronging with visitors exploring the city and enjoying the open space.

Taking its inspiration from the notion of promenading – the idea of walking for the sake of walking – ‘Riverlife’ proposes the creation of a 21st Century Pier as a new flagship project, creating a new bold and beautiful landmark on the River, a large statement that breathes life back into the area, creates atmosphere and sets the tone for further regeneration.

The Victorians invented the concept of a pier purely for the purpose of ‘promenading’ and ‘taking in the air’, understanding the pleasure of wandering without intent, and in doing so, discovering previously unobserved details and experiencing the city as a theatre for mankind.

‘Riverlife’ will seek a 21st solution to the Victorian Pleasure Pier; this will not be a structure that repeats a Victorian Pleasure Pier but a contemporary solution that reflects the concept of one. In other words it exists for pleasure, to take the air, take some exercise and enjoy the surroundings. It is anticipated that this solution would be whimsical and imaginative, a kind of outpost for the city, possibly even heading towards the realms of fantasy, such as a floating park or teahouse.

There would be a number of outcomes for this project; firstly it would kick-start regeneration of the area, it would create another focal point on arrival over the Tyne, it would become a visitor attraction as well as a crucial link between the rest of the DO, the Silverlink development and the Quayside.



1 Seducer, Light Installation for Boscombe Pier 2000, Muf
2 Floriade, 2002, Waterstudio NL

