

Everyone's talking about: A winter of light



The Castle Museum, illuminated at the York Festival Anna Gowthorpe/AP

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October 29 2011 12:01AM

Why With winters such as ours, it's natural to flock around pretty lights. But it's only recently that we have taken the lead

from France'sson *et lumière* shows and used digital technology to venture beyond glowing Santas, flashing Rudolfs and sponsored tie-ins. The year is set to end in a riot of innovative illumination across the country.

York is ablaze with light, thanks to the Illuminating York Festival, the centrepiece of which is a project that uses state-of-the-art video projection mapping to bring a façade of the Castle Musuem alive with 3-D animations. Then comes IFO (Identified Flying Object), a luminous 9m-high cage by the French artist Jacques Rival, part of the RELAY art programme at King's Cross. During the day visitors will be able to walk between its rainbow-coloured bars and sit on its swing; at night it will be hoisted into the sky.

But it is Durham that has established itself as our very own City of Light with its biennial Lumiere Festival. The inaugural event in 2009 drew 75,000 visitors and this year a massed lantern parade will kick off four days of dazzling wonders, including LED dancefloors, illuminated bridges and viaducts, and projections on to the city's churches and Norman cathedral. Produced by Artichoke, the team behind London's most successful piece of street theatre, *The Sultan's Elephant*, more than 30 works will be scattered across the city.

Participating artists include Tracey Emin, David Batchelor and Cédric Le Borgne, who places eerily lit humanoid sculptures on top of buildings. The most ambitious piece looks set to be *Splash* by the Canadian artist Peter Lewis. He is turning the Kingsgate footbridge into a huge illuminated waterfall. Let there be light!

Illuminating York Festival, ends today, illuminatingyork.org.uk; IFO, King's Cross, London N1, opens Nov 16; Lumiere festival, Durham, Nov 17-20, lumieredurham.com