



MEDIA CALL

Overview: Press are invited to the private preview of the brand-new exhibition *Cosmic Titans: Art, Science and the Quantum Universe* at Lakeside Arts, for a guided walk through the exhibits with curators and quantum scientists from the University of Nottingham

Date: Friday 24 January 2025, from 11am

Location: Djanogly Gallery, Lakeside Arts,
University Park Campus, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

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Art and science collide in a fascinating new exhibition exploring the quantum universe.

An ambitious and brand-new co-created exhibition between the University of Nottingham's Faculty of Science and Lakeside Arts, exploring the mind-blowing world of quantum science, will open at Lakeside's Djanogly Gallery on 25 January 2025.

Cosmic Titans: Art, Science and the Quantum Universe will include newly commissioned works by nine artists who have worked alongside leading University of Nottingham scientists – who are at the cutting edge of research into quantum science and have established the university as a centre of excellence in this rapidly evolving field.

Quantum science deals with the smallest particles in nature at a sub-atomic level. Using the language of mathematics and laboratory simulations to 'see' the invisible, it is bringing about a revolution in our understanding of the origins of the universe and delivering groundbreaking technology such as quantum computers and ultra-precise measuring devices.

The exhibition – which is free to the public – has been curated by Professor Silke Weinfurter in the School of Mathematical Sciences – whose pioneering work in the field of black hole simulations remains unrivalled, Dr Ulrike Kuchner, Senior Researcher in Astronomy and Art-Science collaborations in the School of Physics and Astronomy, and Neil Walker, Head of Visual Arts Programming, Lakeside Arts.

In 2022, Professor Weinfurter and Dr Kuchner founded the ARTlab Nottingham to enable a creative two-way exchange between artists and scientists. Its first art-science residency, completed by Royal Academician Conrad Shawcross, resulted in two commissioned works for *Cosmic Titans* and set the stage for future collaborations.

Dr Kuchner said: “Art and science collaborations can benefit each other enormously and have done so throughout history. They hold tremendous potential for nourishing creativity and addressing complex challenges from very different perspectives.”

Professor Weinfurter said: “*Cosmic Titans* unites the realms of arts and sciences, driven by their shared pursuit of transforming abstract ideas into tangible reality. At the exhibition, you'll uncover the beauty in science, the rigour in the arts, and a profound sense of excitement, wonder, and joy.”

Conrad’s two large-scale installations are the centrepiece of the exhibition, each occupying one of the main gallery spaces at Lakeside’s Djanogly Gallery.

Ringdown takes its title from the scientific term for the final phase in the merger of two black holes. In this work, two spinning and colliding bronze bells within a geodesic hemisphere provide a poetic metaphor for our attempts to visualise this cosmic phenomenon. His second installation *The Blind Proliferation* addresses more directly the notion of ‘blind ways of seeing,’ something Shawcross sees as common to both artists and scientists as they seek to gain insights into the abstract and sublime. Here, in a spectacle reminiscent of Plato’s Cave, the occupants of two cloned offices are treated to a shadow play that fills the gallery whilst never being able to see the source of light that creates it.

The artist said: “Both pieces created for *Cosmic Titans*, are a direct response to a fascinating and creatively fertile residency that I undertook in Nottingham in summer 2023. I was taken into Silke Weinfurter’s early universe laboratory and was shown their experiments into modelling the earliest moments of the universe, as well as some of its most humanly incomprehensible phenomena such as black holes and their collision. It was a genuinely enthralling experience and something that resonated with much that I attempt with my own work.”

The exhibition also features new commissions from emerging artists who have each completed residencies working alongside world-leading researchers in quantum physics. Through immersive sculptural installations and photography, they give expression to the excitement, wonder and poetry of cutting-edge scientific discovery that is transforming our future.

In his installation incorporating projection and sound, Alistair McClymont makes direct reference to analogue experiments in which the patterns of waves on the surface of vibrated water are used to conjecture the dynamics of the universe in the split seconds after the big bang. Daniela Brill Estrada and Monica C. LoCascio, use soft materials including expansive crochet nets to explore the perception of gravity and spacetime curvature as well as wall-based drawings and poetry referencing the metaphors and language employed by scientists to describe abstract concepts of the cosmos. In a work that invites interaction, personal exploration and play, Matthew Woodham makes connections between human decision making and the concept of quantum superposition, a state in which particles coexist in all possibilities until observed. Artist duo Daria Jelonek and Perry-James Sugden (Studio Above&Below) employ virtual reality to explore such mind-bending topics as quantum entanglement and quantum tunnelling to reveal the beauty and strangeness of the quantum world. Their work has been developed at the University’s Virtual and Immersive Production Studio led by Professor Helen Kennedy.

Neil Walker said: “This exhibition has taken artists, scientists, and curators on an amazing journey and revealed some surprising parallels in the way that artists and scientists work. Their goals may differ, but both are fundamentally driven by curiosity and creativity. It has been inspirational to see how the artists have responded to often complex science and how they have given expression to the

same sense of excitement and wonder shared by scientists at the cutting edge of research that is transforming our understanding of the universe.”

Cosmic Titans opens on 25 January 2025 at Lakeside’s Djanogly Gallery and runs until 27 April 2025. The exhibition will be one of the worldwide activities celebrating 2025’s [International Year of Quantum Science and Technology](#) (designated by the United Nations), recognising 100 years since the development of quantum mechanics.

Through art and interpretive text, audio and video, this exhibition will communicate the wonder, complexity and otherworldliness of quantum science, with the pioneering research taking place at the University of Nottingham, explained and interpreted for a general audience. A public programme of talks, workshops and tours will accompany the exhibition offering audiences the opportunity to delve deeper into the artistic-scientific collaborations underpinning the exhibition. Full details can be found [here](#). The exhibition also incorporates a public engagement area including photography by David Severn and Jim Grainger and video interviews with leading UK quantum researchers.

—Ends—

More information is available from **Timothy Rushby**, Head of Audience Development and Marketing, Lakeside Arts, via timothy.rushby@nottingham.ac.uk or **0115 846 7379**; **Amy Steels**, Marketing and Communications Manager, Lakeside Arts, via amy.steels@nottingham.ac.uk or **0115 748 7277**; or **Liz Goodwin**, Media Relations Manager for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, via liz.goodwin@nottingham.ac.uk or **0115 748 5133**.

Notes to editors

The University of Nottingham is part of the Quantum Technologies for Fundamental Physics (QTFP) programme – a £40m Strategic Priorities Fund programme that aims to transform our approach to understanding the universe and its evolution. The University of Nottingham is a recipient of one of 24 awards made since 2020 (the University of Nottingham was one of the original seven projects funded). Professor [Silke Weinfurter](#) is the principal investigator at Nottingham of the funded project Quantum Simulators for Fundamental Physics (QSimFP) which explores essential processes linked to the dynamics of the early universe and black holes through analogue quantum simulations. Dr Ulrike Kuchner is a pioneer in the research on the collaboration of art and science and co-leads the global ArtScience collective SEADS (Space Ecologies Art and Design), alongside fundamental research in Astrophysics.

The exhibition has been generously supported by the following: UKRI: STFC (Science and Technologies Facilities Council), EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council), UKRI: HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Funding), SIF (Strategic Innovation Fund), APEX Award (in partnership with the British Academy, Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society and Leverhulme Trust), BMKÖS (Federal Ministry of Arts and Culture Austria), University of Oxford: Department of Physics, Imperial College London, QTFP (Quantum Technologies for Fundamental Physics) and AION (UK atom interferometer observatory and network).

About Lakeside Arts

0115 846 7777 | lakesidearts.org.uk
Lakeside Arts, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

Lakeside Arts is the University of Nottingham's public arts centre presenting a programme of visual arts, manuscripts, and museum exhibitions, as well as music, theatre, dance, children and family productions. Its venues include the Djanogly Gallery, opened in 1992, which stages a year-round programme of 20th-century and contemporary art exhibitions complemented by a lively programme of public lectures and learning activities. Recent exhibitions have included: *Paula Rego: Visions of English Literature* (2024); *Grayson Perry: Man Hours* (2024); *Saad Qureshi: Conversations Before the End of Time* (2024); *Sophie Ryder* (2024); *Reimag(in)ing the Victorians* (2023-2024), *Rhythm & Geometry: Constructivist Art in Britain Since 1951* (2023).

lakesidearts.org.uk

Lakeside Arts Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter): @LakesideArts

About the University of Nottingham

Ranked 32 in Europe and 16th in the UK by the [QS World University Rankings: Europe 2024](#), the University of Nottingham is a founding member of Russell Group of research-intensive universities. Studying at the University of Nottingham is a life-changing experience, and we pride ourselves on unlocking the potential of our students. We have a pioneering spirit, expressed in the vision of our founder Sir Jesse Boot, which has seen us lead the way in establishing campuses in China and Malaysia – part of a globally connected network of education, research and industrial engagement.

Nottingham was crowned Sports University of the Year by [The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024](#) – the third time it has been given the honour since 2018 – and by the [Daily Mail University Guide 2024](#).

The University is among the best universities in the UK for the strength of our research, positioned seventh for research power in the UK according to [REF 2021](#). The birthplace of discoveries such as MRI and ibuprofen, our [innovations](#) transform lives and tackle global problems such as sustainable food supplies, ending modern slavery, developing greener transport, and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

The University is a major employer and industry partner – locally and globally – and our graduates are the second most targeted by the UK's top employers, according to *The Graduate Market in 2022* report by High Fliers Research. We lead the [Universities for Nottingham](#) initiative, in partnership with Nottingham Trent University, a pioneering collaboration between the city's two world-class institutions to improve levels of prosperity, opportunity, sustainability, health and wellbeing for residents in the city and region we are proud to call home. [More news...](#)

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