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Protagonists

An interview with Bruce Munro On the way to Eden



He was driving across the Australian desert. The lights of the encampments were glowing in the dark, creating a unique atmosphere. The fascination that those surroundings exerted on Bruce Munro formed the basis for his Eden project. Fifteen years later (from 2008 through spring 2009) the project developed by the British lighting designer was there for everybody to see: 24,000 m of fibre optic cable shaped into 6,000 "flowers" illuminated the English south-west coast at night, creating a place of bliss and delight made entirely from fibre optic.

He is one of the most acclaimed lighting designers. His passion for light dates from childhood and has grown over the years, given that, as he explains, it is a passion that bubbles up from his soul. Here is his story.

When did you start with lighting projects and why?

I have been fascinated by light since my childhood; in my late teens early twenties I realised that light touched everything.

Is there any designer/artist/architect from the past, you appreciate a lot?

So many...where does one start!

It's impossible to have a thought or emotion that comes from thin air. We are all influenced by history, environment and people. Our inspirations help to define us as individuals. I am inspired by those who connect people through their work.

What project has given you the most satisfaction?

Depends on what one is looking for. Every project is different and depends on the unique challenges and goals one is presented with. I am getting more opportunity to express my own ideas; this has always been my ambition. I have not yet been truly satisfied but hope I feel so one day in the future

Who is your client? Who is interested in your light projects?

My clients are many and varied. I think its amazing that people show an interest. I am truly thankful that it has happened because it means I can continue working.

Do you think lighting projects are a field that is growing?

Yes definitely so. But I am not too bothered about trends. This is a passion. I do it because I have to...its in my blood, I cant help myself.

Which is your favorite light source?

I love natural sources and am keen to do more with sunlight and candles. I have been playing with fibre optics. Its quite magical, but could be gimmicky in the wrong hands.

Can you explain your amazing Eden Project in Cornwall?

It was an idea I had in Australia, eighteen years ago. I am bit like a terrier at heart...I don't let go until the project happens!

Are you working on new projects?

There are a lot of new projects- an installation called CD Sea, and another installation called Water-Towers which will both be at Long Knoll Field in Wiltshire (Great Britain). There is an installation for a public space in San Diego, another for a public space in Washington DC, and we are doing all the lights and chandeliers for several big private residences in England, London, Manchester and other places in the UK. I have also been asked to submit a design for a group exhibition at the Guggenheim museum in New York and we are working on a huge project in Moscow.













(M.Z.)

Photos by Mark Pickthall

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