

**Get ready to be spooked — and dazzled — by £1m of video art we can all have a go at**

A part of Castle Wharf will be transformed into a spectacular work of art tomorrow to try and raise the city's cultural profile — and you can be part of it.

**JAMES KAY** reports

**T**HE world's brightest projector floods the forecourt with 110,000 lumens of dazzling white light.

As people walk through the illuminated space a camera and computer track and predict their progress.

Then something strange happens to the elongated shadows they cast upon the 1,500sq metre space of canal bank.

The bodies and faces of other people appear, as if those shadows had suddenly revealed their secret lives.

Those shadows smile back at you, beckon, shout, scream, or swear — and then vanish as you pass beyond the light.

This is the ever-so-slightly spooky effect of *Under Scan*, the "world's largest interactive video art installation".

Over the last week the paved space in front of Nottingham Magistrates' Court in Castle Wharf has been transformed into its backdrop.

A team of technicians has been busy putting up the 20-metre high projector, the rigging and preparing the control room.

*Under Scan*, which opens to the public at 7pm tomorrow, promises to be a spectacular and unusual show.

So it should be — it has cost the East Midlands Development Agency and the Arts Council just under £1m.

*Under Scan* is intended both to put the region on the cultural map and to herald the start of a major programme of investment in the arts.

And *Under Scan* will act as a standard bearer for the East Midlands if and when it goes anywhere else.

Word is that the piece has already "serious interest" from some of the biggest institutions and arts festivals in New York, Tokyo and Sydney.

If one or all of those cities decide to host the installation, the East Midlands will take a share of the proceeds — and the kudos.

**Research**

The show, which has been touring the region since January, is the brainchild of Mexican artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.

A double Bafta winner for his previous projects, Mr Lozano-Hemmer, 38, was selected from a shortlist of six artists.

He said the project, which involved almost a year's research and development, was his most ambitious yet.

He said: "I hope it will bring a new experience to Nottingham people and visitors to the city, and will provide them with an intriguing shadow-play where members of the public become actors."

As well as illuminating random members of the public, Emda and the Arts Council hope *Under Scan* will put their investments in the arts under the spotlight.

Both organisations are part-funding the £13m Centre for Contemporary Art Nottingham (CCAN), in Garners Hill, the £5.7m refurbishment of the Broadway Media Centre, in Hockley, and the £5.8m New Art Exchange, in Hyson Green.

Ross Willmott, Emda board member with responsibility for *Under Scan*, said: "This will highlight the region's arts and cultural offering and its vibrant cultural quarters."

"It demonstrates our commitment to encouraging innovative approaches to public space and, as a hi-tech installation, reflects our strengths in science and technology."

Councillor Leon Unczur, Nottingham City Council's portfolio holder for culture, community service and tourism, said: "The installation of this internationally-significant new public art work reflects Nottingham's status as a city where the arts are celebrated and can thrive."

● *Under Scan* will be open to the public from 7pm until midnight each night, and until 2am on Friday and Saturday.



**DAZZLING:** The set-up outside the Magistrates' Court C140306SR5-1

**Me and my shadow tripping the light fantastic**



DESCRIBING himself as an "electronic artist", Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, 38, specialises in large-scale "interactive" works of art for public spaces.

His projects often involve the use of cutting-edge technology, including robotics, projections, the internet, and mobile phones.

High profile previous commissions include the Millennium Celebrations in Mexico City in 1999, the United Nations World Summit of Cities in Lyon in 2003, and the Expansion of the European Union event held in Dublin in 2004.

Along the way he has won a clutch of awards from the arts establishment, including two Baftas, a Golden Nica, and a Trophée des Lumières.

For more information about his work visit [www.lozano-hemmer.com](http://www.lozano-hemmer.com)



**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

*UNDER Scan* relies on a camera-based tracking system that follows people across the forecourt.

It feeds information to a main computer, which can predict where participants next few steps will take them.

The computer commands

14 robotically-controlled projectors to project a video portrait into the moving shadows.

About 200 people from Nottingham had their portraits pre-recorded by a team of local film-makers in summer and autumn last year.

The portraits are stored on 14 media servers, which can instantly cue, rotate and scale each sequence to account for geometric distortions.

The giant projector that casts the shadows is the brightest in the world, generating 110,000 lumens.