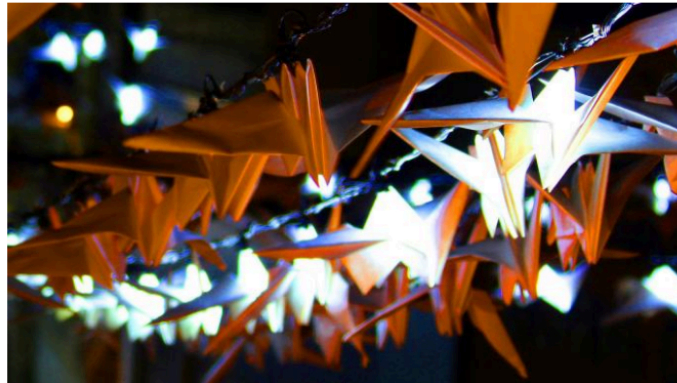




FEATURE

Installation: Luminous Birds

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◆ Kingarth Lane, Glasgow ★★★★★

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◆ *Kingarth Lane, Glasgow, until Wed 16 Nov; The Lighthouse, Glasgow, until Sun 15 Jan*

2016 is Scotland's self-proclaimed Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design, and Kathy Hinde's Luminous Birds is a key commission that focuses our attention on places both extraordinary and ordinary. For the Glasgow leg of the project (it's also on in Dundee and Dumfries), the artist has chosen contrasting sites, and the audio-visual artwork is as beautiful in the rafters of the Lighthouse's Mackintosh tower as it is tucked away on Kingarth Lane in Glasgow's artist-dwelling Govanhill area. That said, there is something poignant about the delicacy of Hinde's flock of origami birds set against a neglected back lane.

Some locals pass by too hurriedly to notice it; others stop, arms laden with shopping bags, mesmerised by the rippling lights and discordant but beautiful sounds of the distorted piano score. It isn't until you're standing a few paces into the deserted lane, with its bricolage of backstreet detritus, that the noise of the traffic gives way to the ethereal sounds of Hinde's delicate composition.

Though the birds - remarkably all handcrafted by the artist - hang stationary from their cables, the simultaneous movement of light and sound conveys magically the sensation of migrating flocks. The acoustics are surprisingly sharp: the high walls either side contain the sound as the origami birds 'fly' overhead.

Lights rush in perfect harmony with the wash of sound creating a unified sensorial experience. As the small LED bulbs light up the fragile forms, the patchy brick walls and foliage are momentarily illuminated too. For the duration of the artwork - it's only on for a few hours after sunset - the neglected alleyway feels like a magical interior world.