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Sea Music Conservation

Why did Sea Music need refurbishing?

In 2013 Poole Museum recognised that Sea Music needed special attention if it was to survive the effects of coastal weather and erosion. The Museum made contact with the artist to discuss a plan for its conservation and subsequent celebrations.

The sculpture was structurally safe but over the previous 25 years the sea air had caused corrosion to the steel and parts of the galvanised steel viewing platforms. The blue paint had faded; nesting birds nearby had left their droppings on and around the sculpture. If left untreated Sea Music would have begun to rapidly deteriorate and cause further significant issues at a later date.



Image credit: David Ward and Poole Museum



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As an internationally important artwork Poole Museum, their partners and the Heritage Lottery Fund wanted to ensure the sculpture looked great again and safeguard it so that it would last for another 25 years. Bids were successfully made to the Heritage Lottery Fund & Arts Council England, with grants and donations from The Henry Moore Foundation, Troika & J P Morgan. The project also received contributions from private individuals and generous visitor donations through Poole Museum to cover the costs of conservation and public celebrations

Foley Conservation prepared a Conservation management plan for Poole Museums in 2016 which highlighted the following issues:-

“Restoration treatment was carried out in 2000, sixteen years have passed and the sculpture has degraded, with corroded steel fixings, some corrosive activity at junctions with floor levels and worn galvanized coating on the walkway; there is surface abrasion with loss of density of the colour in the paint and chips in the coating and graffiti damage.”

The Conservation

Hall Conservation Ltd won the tender contract and undertook the conservation of Sea Music.

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Work began in February 2017 and included a full restoration to secure the future of the sculpture and return it to its original shade of blue – as requested by Sir Anthony before his death. In October 2013 Also in line with Sir Anthony's wishes the work will change the viewing platform metalwork from blue to silver to help distinguish it from the sculpture itself."

Work included steam cleaning to remove dirt and guano and ice blasting on areas of corrosion. Some damaged areas were repaired on site, while other elements were taken to the Hall Conservation workshop for repair



Image credit: Hall Conservation



During the conservation process in early 2017, scaffolding went up around the whole site and temporary information panels were put up onto the hoardings to explain what was happening. When the process was completed, two new permanent information panels were installed on the quayside, on the Sea Music plinth alongside the updated original brass plaque.

New improved and energy efficient lighting was installed in 2018 to help Sea Music shine through the summer evenings and dark winter months.

Caring for Sea Music

The 2017 conservation plan created a regular cleaning, monitoring and care programme so that Sea Music continues to withstand the British weather and salty coastal conditions.

A Friends of Sea Music group has been set up to raise funds towards the ongoing care and celebration programme.

Please help us with this care by supporting Poole Museum Foundation's fundraising programme. Donations can be made at Poole Museum or via the Poole Museum [Make a Donation](#) page.

The 2017 Sea Music Project Partners & Funders were: Poole Museum, Borough of Poole, New Art Centre, Barford Sculptures Limited, Soundstorm, Roche Court Educational Trust, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England - Grants for the Arts, Troika, Henry Moore Foundation, members of the public plus other anonymous donors.

We worked in partnership with the following organisations:



NewArtCentre.

The Roche Court
Educational Trust
NewArtCentre.

BARFORD SCULPTURES LTD



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