

Media Release: October 2007

Kevin Carter/Media 19/University of Teesside – Landscape/Portrait



AMBITIOUS ONLINE PROJECT BREAKS DOWN POSTCODE STEREOTYPES

Are you typical of where you live? Do you live up to the stereotypes of your postcode area?

These are just some of the questions being asked by a provocative project that will uncover the faces behind the postcodes. **Landscape/Portrait** is a new interactive website launched on 8 October that attempts to build an accurate portrayal of the people behind closed doors, uncovering whether your postcode really does define who you are.

A collaboration between artist **Kevin Carter**, **Media 19** and the **University of Teesside**, the project invites members of the public to view and respond to their demographic stereotypes by recording their own personal video portraits, providing a unique view of the citizens and communities of North East England. The self portraits will allow the lives of real people to be compared with postcode statistics and stereotypes, which can quite often determine the planning and design of public services and regeneration projects. Three communities, North Ormesby, Seaham and Gateshead, have already produced their own self portraits which will appear on the Landscape Portrait website.

Mapping each portrait geographically, the website allows visitors to search for video portraits by postcode, username and questions answered. Visitors to the site are encouraged to leave comments under profiles to open up discussion and debate; Landscape/Portrait invites people to think about whom they are, how they are and what they would like the places they live to be like.

Landscape/Portrait forms part of a **Dott 07** (Designs of the time 2007) project called Vital Signs which aims to provoke discussion about how the designed environment affects everyday life and what voice people have in the design and planning decisions that affect them. Anyone can add their own video portrait, and challenge their stereotypes at www.landscape-portrait.com. Vital Signs forms part of North East England's world-class programme of festival and events for 2007.

The project will be presented at the Dott 07 Festival, Baltic Square on the NewcastleGateshead Quayside, 16-28 October, where visitors will be able to contribute to the website using the webcams and laptops available on site, and the short self-portrait films produced with the residents of Seaham, North Ormesby and Gateshead will be screened. Admission to the festival is free. To create a video portrait at home people need a basic webcam and a broadband connection.

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For further information contact Hannah Barnes at Forma (0207) 837 7777, hb@forma.org.uk or Chris Lines / Louise Robinson of Press Ahead on (0191) 5166235, (07971) 868329, cl@pressahead.info or lr@pressahead.info

Notes to editors:

Landscape Portrait

The project forms part of North East England's world-class festivals and events programme and is being produced by Forma www.forma.org.uk, commissioned by Dott 07 and supported by the Design Council, One North East and Arts Council England. www.landscape-portrait.com is also supported by Teesside University and Digital City, and data is supplied by upmystreet.com. Additional support was provided by Digital Knowledge Exchange, d|lab, Fluid Pixels Studio and Babel Digital

Dott 07

Dott 07 (Designs of the time 2007) is a year of community projects, events and exhibitions based in North East England that explore what life in a sustainable region could be like – and how design can help us get there. A partnership between the Design Council and regional development agency One NorthEast, Dott 07 enables communities and individuals in North East England to collaborate with designers in real-life situations. These projects are small but important examples of what life in a sustainable region might be like. Dott 07 projects set out to improve six aspects of daily life in practical ways. They deal with health issues, food, school, energy, tourism, and travel. For more information visit www.dott07.com.

Vital Signs

One of the Design showcase events for Dott 07, Vital Signs commissions artists to work with communities across the region to ask who we are, how we are and how we would like our lives to be. By asking such fundamental questions, Vital Signs aims to provoke discussion about how our designed environment affects everyday life, and about the aspirations people hold for their lives and for the places they live in.

Forma Arts and Media Producers

Forma is a creative production agency for ambitious, interdisciplinary contemporary art. Working closely with artists over extended periods of time, Forma produces, tours and publishes groundbreaking new projects that seamlessly combine diverse media. Its extensive international touring programme, delivered in collaboration with major venues and festivals world-wide, pioneers new hybrid forms of music, visual art, film, new media, dance, theatre and live art. For further information, please visit www.forma.org.uk. Forma is supported by Arts Council England.

Kevin Carter

Kevin Carter is a London based digital artist and co-lab projects founder. He has created a range of award winning online art projects, artists CD-ROMs, artist kiosks, and interactive installations. Kevin has collaborated with programmers, artists and technicians in producing his digital art projects.

Media 19

Media 19 is a leading North East independent production company with series and single credits for network and regional broadcasters, producing award-winning documentary, arts, current affairs and television based campaigns with national partners that gets people watching and gets them involved. Media 19 combines broadcast production, project and campaign management, publishing, exhibition, events and new media.

Teesside University and DLab

DLab is the Centre for Research, Development and Innovation in Design at the University of Teesside. The Centre assists global and local organisations in the origination and development of both intellectual property and new knowledge within the design subject area, in order to address markets of scale and significance. DLab works across two key fields of design: invention and innovation in the products and devices marketplace, and service design and transformation in the

service innovation marketplace, whilst offering a complementary portfolio of communication and knowledge transfer services. It also acts as a key development resource for technologies originating within the university.

Culture¹⁰ is an annual curated programme of exceptional cultural events and festivals across NewcastleGateshead and North East England. Established in 2004, it is managed by the Culture¹⁰ team based at NewcastleGateshead Initiative and is funded by Newcastle City Council, Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, One North East, Tyne Wear Partnership, Northern Rock Foundation and Arts Council England, North East. For further details see www.NewcastleGateshead.com

Landscape/Portrait

Wednesday 17 October – 18:00-20:00

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Level 1

Dott 07 & Forma present Landscape/Portrait, a web-based project produced by media artist Kevin Carter in collaboration with the University of Teesside and Media 19. Contrasting the statistical and demographic profiles of three locations across the region with self-portraits made by inhabitants of each location, the Landscape/Portrait website invites residents of North East England to create their own video portrait to contribute to a new and unique view of the region, its people, places and communities.

Participants in the panel discussion include project artist Kevin Carter and Brian Wilson, Assistant Dean (Enterprise) School of Arts & Media at the University of Teesside and Director of d | lab the Centre for Design and Innovation. The discussion will focus on the project's themes and ambitions to explore how data is used to define our communities and design our environment.

To book your place, go to www.dott07.com/go/partnerevents