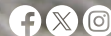


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ARMAGH MINIATURE STREET SCULPTURE

Gargoyles and Angels

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ARMAGH MINIATURE STREET SCULPTURE

Gargoyles and Angels

DOWN FROM THE ROOFTOPS

Are you being watched?

As you walk around the streets of Armagh City, you may have the eerie feeling that you are being watched. You are not wrong. Twenty-two tiny sets of still, glinting eyes will be silently following your every move. In nooks and crannies, these fantastical, humorous and grotesque creatures are living their lives, often as a parody of our own strange human ways. They are there for you to discover and enjoy. These small and intricate bronze sculptures of gargoyles, chimeras and angels have been created by artist Holger Christian Lönze in response to the City's sacred architecture and the angels and gargoyles which already exist at both Cathedrals combined with the jetsam of everyday life. His work brings these creatures into our time and down to our level, giving each one a distinct character of its own and a place in the City's modern street-life.



Back in Time

The sculptural depiction of mythical and spiritual supernatural creatures like gargoyles, chimeras and angels come from the medieval period. Their origins go back much further. Angels (from the Greek angelos, “messenger”) are found in many of the world’s religions. Surprisingly, angels only earned their wings in depictions dating back from 4th Century AD Konstantinople. The origins of gargoyles on the other hand, goes back to ancient Egypt, where they were used to eject water from temple roofs. While the term gargoyle (from the French gargouille for throat or gullet) always refers to sculptural and functional waterspouts, the term chimera or grotesque describes a purely ornamental statue. In Britain, gargoyles fulfilled their functional purpose right until the early 18th century, when an Act of Parliament made the use of down-pipes compulsory for any new buildings. Angels, gargoyles and chimeras also fulfilled a more spiritual function. Besides being messengers from God, angels also were warriors or guards, hence the term “guardian angel”. Chimeras and gargoyles also fulfilled a similar function of warding off evil spirits from the sacred buildings to which they had been applied.

More than a dozen stages are involved in creating a piece of bronze sculpture from beginning to end. Although complex and full of chemistry and physics, Holger used a particular process for the Armagh sculptures that has been practiced nearly unchanged for more than 4,000 years in Ireland. Holger’s studio foundry is located in West Cork, only 2 miles away from the oldest Bronze-Age copper mines of Ireland on Mount Gabriel.

Hiding Places

Gargoyles are shy creatures, and it is by the very nature of their business that guardian angels are never seen. Hence you will only discover these creatures by accident or by exploring the City with curious eyes. They are hiding in boot scraper niches, behind glass doors, on drainpipes and on walls. They are climbing gables, watch from ledges and peep down from house corners and windowsills. Whether amiable, stoical or strangely mechanical, these are a motley collection of small fellas and fella-esses. No more than 15 inches high these gargoyles, angels and chimeras have a greenish camouflage. But are they friend or foe? Find them before they spot you...

7. Dwelling at corner of Market Square/Castle Street (below COI Cathedral Gates)

Has this kangaroo-style gargoyle hopped too far in his search? Do you think he can see the Australian restaurant (Uluru) he was looking for from this lofty perch?

8. Amma Centre, Marketplace

Is this the Mouth of Truth for the new digital age? Perhaps this gargoyle is what future generations will evolve into if we spend too long staring into our laptops!

9. Danske Bank, 78 Scotch Street

This banker gargoyle is keeping an eye on the night safe... just in case you have any funny ideas!

10. McCrum's Court

One too many bottles? At least this Gargoyle stuck to drinking bottled water... or so he says!

11. Mall Shopping Centre

More parking warden than decorative feature, those beady eyes gazing out over his VW Beetle bonnet-snout might make you doubly careful to pay and display before you leave the car park.

12. 42 Scotch Street/Linenhall Street

Oh the vanity of gargoyles... but then have you ever seen a gargoyle in a pair of glasses?



13. 34 Scotch Street

A free-running angel is scaling the city's buildings and performing his urban acrobatics. It's all made a bit easier though when you've got a fighter plane wings attached.

14. Former Butter Market, Dobbin Street

Time to sit and stare. Or is this nonchalant gargoyle waiting for his date to meet him under the clock?

15. 55 Thomas Street (former pub - The Gas Lamp)

More a will o' the wisp perhaps than an Angel with his gas-lamp lighting pole. It must be serving time.

16. Chapel Lane/Ogle Street

This old boot gargoyle is in desperate need of repair. Perhaps it should ask one of the city's angels to help mend its sole.

17. Dobbin St Lane, McKeever's Chemist

Even angels have to do the shopping. However, what is in the bag? Angel Delight of course!

18. Post Office, 26-28 Barrack Street

A modern Mercury takes to the air with his airmail letter wings and parcel. There is, of course, an additional charge for angel delivery!



19. 9 Mall West

A classic nose for this imperious door-knocker gargoye who has a Volkswagen beetle bonnet for a snout. Created from a child's rather well loved and discarded toy, found in the gutters of the city and given a new lease of life.

20. 6 Russell Street

An angel calling the ancient sounds of the area with her famous Loughnashade Iron Age trumpet, originally found in a lake at nearby Navan Fort.

21. Bank of Ireland, 11 English Street

Checking the true value of your money by giving it a good old-fashioned bite. That is how this gargoye is planning to get through times of recession.

22. Trimprint, 36 English Street

Proofreading the latest publications is a serious business... even for the editor of the Daily Gargoye. Or is he just the Printer's Devil enjoying the sun at lunch break?



For more information on the Angels and Gargoyles trail please scan

The information included in this publication is correct at time of print

