



Neith Art & Sculpture
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Artist Biography

Neith Art & Sculpture is the collaborative practice of Kim Neith Thompson and Rob Neith Nicholson. For seventeen years we have designed and delivered permanent public artworks across the UK, creating durable sculptural installations that connect people with the histories, landscapes and communities of a place. Working primarily in sustainably sourced UK-grown timber, our projects combine material knowledge, thoughtful design and meaningful public engagement to produce artworks that are both visually distinctive and deeply rooted in their locations.

Our work frequently involves collaborative workshops with schools, young people and community groups, where non ability dependant engagement becomes a way of exploring people's relationships with their local environments. These sessions span a breath of differing techniques and media, with sustainability at the forefront, and help participants translate memories, observations and cultural knowledge into shared visual language that can inform the design of public artworks and place-based identities.

We design and deliver public artworks for a wide range of settings including parks, housing developments, heritage sites and healthcare environments. Many of our sculptures incorporate functional elements such as seating, trails or way-finding markers, encouraging people to pause, explore and engage more closely with their surroundings.

Within our practice Rob is a Producer and leads project delivery, overseeing research, stakeholder liaison, project management, technical design development, material sourcing and installation. He also directs the devising and delivery of our community engagement. Kim leads the sculptural carving and finishing of the works, translating research and engagement outcomes into the final sculptural forms. We work together on the development of concepts and design ideas. We manage full projects from early concept development through to fabrication, installation and evaluation.

Timber is central to our practice because it allows us to balance environmental responsibility with durability in the public realm. We select species such as English Oak and Western Red Cedar for their natural resistance to decay and their ability to weather well over time. Scientific research has shown that small pieces of untreated English Oak can last over 20 years. Oak was also used to make ships and so works in a maritime environment. Our understanding of grain orientation, structural stability and long-term weathering behaviour informs the way we design and construct each sculpture so that the work remains robust outdoors while ageing gracefully.

Environmental responsibility informs the way we work and live. We live off-grid and help manage a regenerative smallholding focused on increasing biodiversity. Our sculptures frequently make use of timber that might otherwise be treated as waste or biomass, and our practice prioritises low-impact methods including battery tools, hand tools, biodegradable lubricants and biocide-free timber treatments. Our engagement workshops also aim to be sustainable with materials that are often up-cycled, recycled or a waste product.

Over the past fifteen years we have delivered projects for organisations including Barratt Homes, Stonewater Ltd, the NHS, National Trust, English Heritage, National Parks and the BBC. We hold £15 million Public Liability and Product Liability insurance and £5 million Professional Indemnity insurance with Hiscox, and we both hold enhanced DBS checks. We are eligible to work in the UK and have Anti Slavery and Anti Bribery policies.

Practice Approach

Our work explores the relationship between people, place and the natural world. We create site-specific artworks that respond to the social histories, environmental conditions and lived experiences that shape a location.

Projects typically begin with research into the history of a site and conversations with the communities who inhabit it today. Community engagement forms a central part of our process. We design workshops that allow participants of all ages and abilities to contribute ideas, imagery and narratives through accessible creative activities such as printmaking, creative writing, clay work, or working with natural and recycled materials. These sessions frequently inform the symbolism and visual language of the final sculptures and the outcomes are often used directly.

Timber sits at the centre of our practice because it balances environmental responsibility with the durability required for permanent public artworks. When responsibly sourced it has a lower environmental impact than many construction materials while still offering longevity in outdoor settings. We select species known for their durability and design sculptures so that the material can weather naturally and age well over time.

Our practice is also shaped by our lived experiences. Both of us grew up in post-industrial communities shaped by mining and economic inequality. These backgrounds inform our interest in telling stories that are often overlooked – stories of working-class life, resilience, community and collective care. By grounding each project in the identity of its location we aim to create artworks that are visually striking while remaining meaningful to the people who encounter them.

Selected Public Art Commissions

“Guardian of the Orchard”, Canons Gate Community Orchard, Harlow- Harlow Town Council and Harlow Creates
May 2025 - Sept 2026
Project Budget £15,000

We used our experience of living in, and managing, an orchard to introduce over 300 children to ideas of biodiversity, ecosystems and how plants, animals and fungi connect and create community. The children explored apples in a mindful way and used them to create small sculpture. Following on from these concepts they then considered the idea of “guardianship” and feeling safe. This led to them creating sculptures of a “Guardian of the Orchard” from waste cardboard. We chose a design, from a shortlist of 12, to inspire a sculpture for a newly created Community Orchard.

Our design, based on the children’s idea, was of motherhood and protection. It depicted a Mother with her four children, including a babe in arms. The children were mixed race. The finished work also asks questions surrounding multi-culturalism and modern families. It is really important for us as artists to portray both female figures and people of colour due to the imbalance in public art that depicts these demographics.

The finished sculpture incorporates a QR code that links to short documentary about the project and the creation of the sculpture. This adds another layer and interpretation for the work.

“Welcome Project”, Alexandra Hospital, Redditch - Reimagine Redditch and Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
October 2025 – March 2026
Project Budget £20,000

This project created a permanent sculpture for Alexandra Hospital exploring the relationship between the hospital, its staff and the surrounding community. Working with Reimagine Redditch and Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, we developed a programme of engagement with hospital staff and local residents using an accessible printmaking process producing intaglio prints on upcycled tetrapak cartons printed using a second-hand pasta machine. The open and exploratory nature of the workshops encouraged participants to reflect on their experiences of the hospital and its role within the community. Approximately 70 participants contributed imagery and narratives centred around themes of care, friendship, connectedness and community. These responses informed the concept and visual language of the final sculpture. The completed artwork was carved from UK-grown oak and western red cedar, selected for their natural durability in outdoor environments. The sculpture features eight large figurative hands carved from the real hands of hospital staff. From one viewpoint the hands resolve into a circular “circle of care”, symbolising the collective effort involved in healthcare. Alongside the sculpture we produced an audio interpretation post featuring edited recordings of staff voices and a digital exhibition showing the sculpting process and workshop outcomes displayed on the hospital’s internal screens. Rob co-produced the project with Reimagine Redditch and we contributed to the evaluation of the project alongside an external evaluator.

“Horseplay”, Newmarket - Discover Newmarket, Newmarket Town Council and Love Newmarket BID
March – July 2025
Project Budget £15,000

Horseplay is a public art trail of eight timber sculptures installed across Newmarket town centre as part of the town’s Summer of Play programme. Developed for Discover Newmarket in partnership with Newmarket Town Council and Love Newmarket BID, the project responded to the theme “Horseplay” and Newmarket’s identity as the home of British horse racing. We created a sculptural concept based on chess pieces incorporating heraldic symbolism, with each sculpture carved from sustainably sourced UK-grown timber chosen for its durability in outdoor environments. Community engagement formed a central part of the project. Workshops with schools and local community groups engaged over 100 participants, who created symbolic designs reflecting their lives and connections to the town. These motifs informed the carving of three Pawn sculptures, embedding community authorship within the final artworks. Each sculpture incorporates an eighteen-character motto referencing the naming traditions of racehorses and is accompanied by interpretation accessed through QR codes. Installed across key locations in the town centre, the trail encourages visitors and families to explore the area while engaging with the symbolism and detail of the carvings.

“Reclaim”, Earl’s Park, Chesterfield - Avant Homes and Junction Arts
November 2024 – April 2025
Project Budget £8,000

Reclaim is a site-specific sculpture created for a housing development built on the site of a former colliery. Working with Junction Arts and Avant Homes, we led creative sessions with local schoolchildren exploring the relationship between the area’s mining heritage and the natural regeneration of the

landscape. Participants produced clay reliefs and collages responding to themes of coal, landscape and renewal.

These ideas informed the final sculpture – a large carved sequoia form that resembles a pit stack when viewed from the side and resolves into the form of a tree when viewed from above. Installed at a key entrance to the development, the sculpture symbolises the transition from industrial extraction to ecological renewal while also functioning as a bench for residents.

Wilbur Close, Nottingham - Stonewater Ltd
September 2022 – August 2024
Project Budget £17,500

This project created a functional public sculpture responding to the area's Framework Knitting heritage.

Research and workshops with a local school explored the working lives of framework knitters and the difficult conditions they experienced. Participants produced drawings and sculptural responses imagining the experiences of workers.

The final installation features a series of timber benches inspired by the simple wooden planks used by knitters as seats at their machines, including a life-size carved figure of a knitter seated at one of the benches. An engraved poem tells the story of the trade and the design also incorporates Wilbur the cat, a well-known local character referenced during the workshops.

Bitham Park, Wiltshire - Barratt Homes
September 2021 – December 2023
Project Budget £15,000

A sculptural bench was created for this housing development responding to the nearby White Horse hill figure and the historic battle associated with the site.

Workshops with local school pupils explored Viking and Anglo-Saxon art and symbolism. Participants developed designs and maquettes which informed the final sculptural work.

The completed piece is a large timber bench shaped like the Viking rune for horse and engraved with battle scenes interpreted in both Viking and Anglo-Saxon artistic styles.

Tatchbury Mount Hospital, Hampshire - New Forest National Park and NHS
December 2020 – April 2022
Project Budget £6,500

A series of sculptural marker posts and a contemplative bench were installed across the grounds of Tatchbury Mount Hospital to encourage patients and staff to engage with the surrounding landscape.

Workshops exploring land art and nature observation informed the designs. Each marker post is engraved with imagery connected to nearby aspects of the landscape and includes a viewing aperture directing attention toward specific natural features.

The trail creates small moments of discovery throughout the grounds and encourages visitors to slow down and observe the natural environment.

Naomi Close, Dorset - Stonewater Ltd
October 2019 – August 2020
Project Budget £15,000

This project created a series of sculptural benches for a housing development celebrating the life of a local resident.

Working closely with the family, the design drew inspiration from themes in The Lion King, interpreted carefully to avoid copyright infringement. The benches provide informal seating spaces while acting as a memorial within the development.

The project attracted local media attention and included interviews with BBC Radio.

Glamis Castle, Glamis, Scotland
February – July 2017
Project Budget £25,000

A sculptural trail of life-size timber figures was created within the gardens of Glamis Castle, ancestral home of the Queen Mother.

The sculptures depict scenes from Shakespeare's Macbeth, a play closely associated with the castle's history, and were positioned throughout the Pinetum to guide visitors through the landscape and encourage movement through the gardens.

Alongside the installation we delivered three workshops with local schools, introducing pupils to carving and storytelling through sculpture.

The project generated national press coverage and contributed to a reported 50 percent increase in visitor numbers to the castle gardens.

Ty Mawr Country Park Welcome Project, Wrexham - Wrexham Town Council
June – November 2015
Project Budget £30,000

We were commissioned to create a series of permanent public artworks across Ty Mawr Country Park on the banks of the River Dee.

The project involved designing and installing multiple sculptural elements across the landscape to improve visitor orientation and interpret the site's wildlife and heritage.

We led an extensive engagement programme involving three schools and two community groups including guided nature walks and creative workshops exploring the landscape. Over 100 people in total. Participants produced clay sculptures and prints using materials gathered during the walks.

The completed installation included wildlife way-markers, carved signage and a 300-foot wave installation of spaced oak posts engraved with silhouettes of local fauna forming a permeable boundary between the country park and adjacent municipal playing fields.

A sculptural bench inspired by the nearby UNESCO World Heritage aqueduct created a focal point encouraging visitors to pause and engage with the surrounding landscape.

Referees

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Testimonials

"In my 30-year career I have been involved in many amazing projects and initiatives and met some wonderful people. This project is way up there on the top of my list. The sculptures alone are magnificent but the heraldic symbols and mottos made the whole project outstanding."

Tracey Harding, Discover Newmarket

"Rob's professionalism, planning and communication have been excellent. His calm, knowledgeable approach with children has been amazing. Neith Art & Sculpture have been a pleasure to work with."

Harlow Creates

“Rob and Kim delivered a powerful, locally distinctive piece on time and on budget. Their workshops were meaningful and gave the community ownership of the final sculpture.”
Nathan Hamer, Junction Arts