

# CONFLUX

A UNION OF THE SACRED  
AND THE ANONYMOUS

**The biggest group of polychrome sculptures in this Cathedral since the Reformation.**

'Conflux' means a gathering together, especially of people, forces or things, which is exactly what you see here today. The 'sacred' refers to the Cathedral's medieval and classical sculpture, celebrating historically important men and women and the glories of faith. Henry's figures on the other hand depict the humanity of the contemporary secular man and pay homage to the anonymous and unknown. In the context of the Cathedral they present a modern updating of the pre-reformation tradition of displaying polychrome or painted figures.

Sean Henry studied at Bristol Polytechnic (1984–1987) and the University of California (1990/1), winning the Villiers David Prize in 1998. He created the critically acclaimed first permanent offshore sculpture in the UK, *Couple*, on the Northumberland coast. His work is represented by galleries and museums in England, Europe and America.

*"There is a feeling of gravitas, timelessness and indestructibility within the building that contrasts with the sense of fragile individuality that drives Sean's work"*  
Reverend Mark Bonney, Canon Treasurer, chairman of the Cathedral's Exhibitions Committee.

*"As incredible as this Cathedral is, it is nothing without its relationship to the lives of those who use and visit it. By placing my figures here I'm interested in memorialising the everyday - in drawing the viewer's attention to the significance of our own experience of the here and now"*  
Sean Henry.

[www.seanhenry.com](http://www.seanhenry.com)



23 July - 31 October 2011

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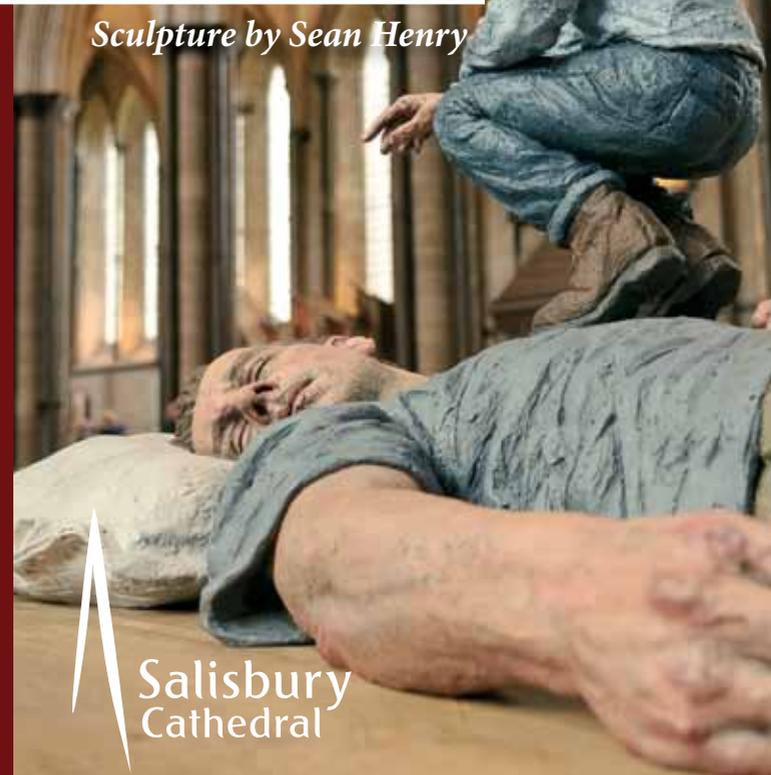
*Sculpture by Sean Henry*

*Exhibition curated by Jacqueline Creswell*

*Photography by Ash Mills*

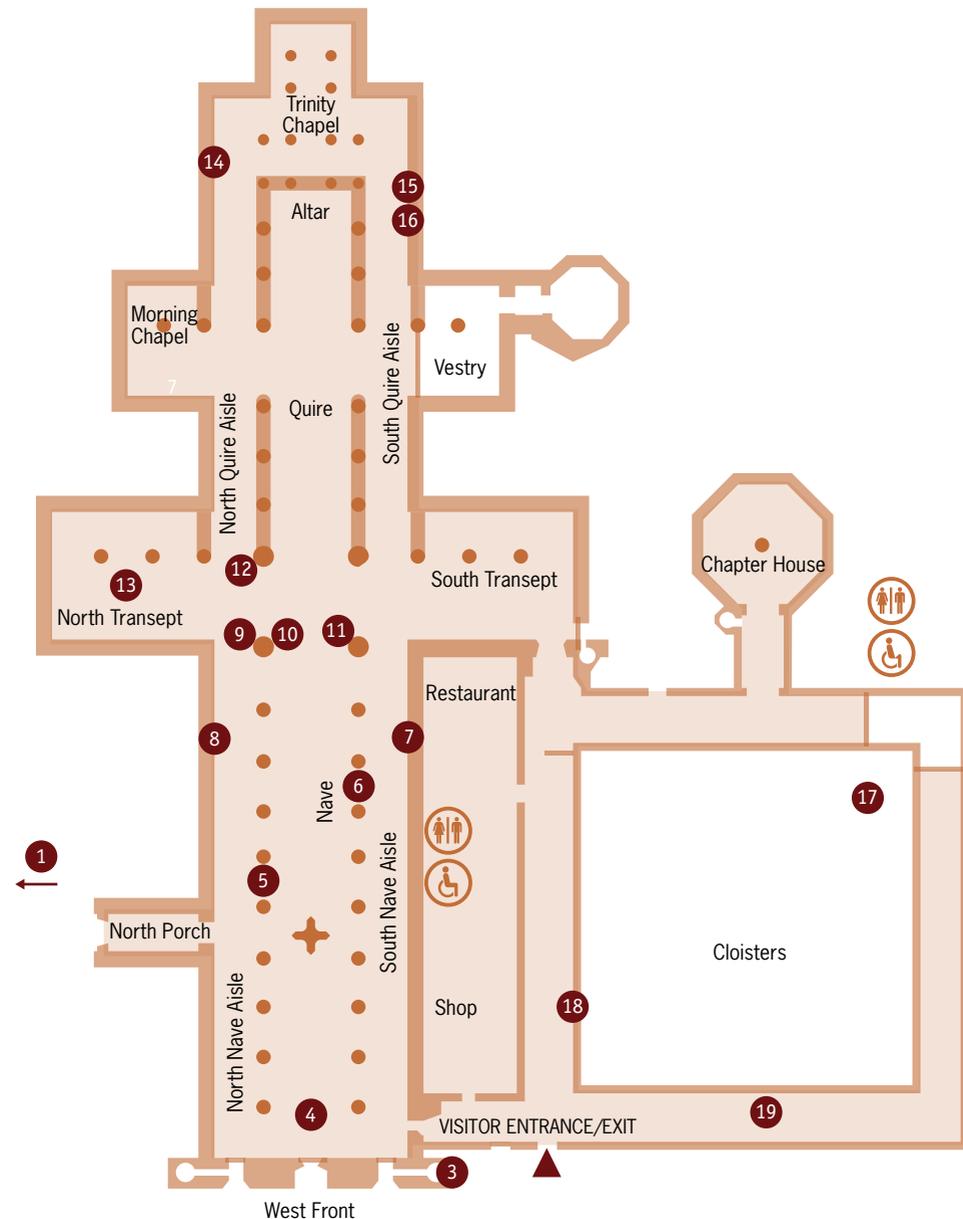
***Salisbury Cathedral's  
Arts Policy seeks to use  
visual art to inspire and  
allow contemplation  
of the Cathedral  
from a new  
perspective.***

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Salisbury  
Cathedral

# Sculpture locations and descriptions



- 1 **Folly (The Other Self) (2007-2011)** A man sleeps in bed within a steel building, whilst another version of himself stands; we see him again as a drawing on the wall. The viewer is invited to enter this surreal theatre, walk through the work and contemplate the significance of a life lived.
- 2 **Walking Woman (2008)** The figure of a woman strides purposefully towards the Cathedral - dressed in black, her enlarged scale and feeling of movement is heightened by the location the artist has chosen for this work.
- 3 **Man with Cup (2008)** The height at which this figure is shown and his pose, holding something in his hand, brings to mind images of saints presenting their attributes, but instead he offers a simple coffee cup.
- 4 **Italia (2004)** A man stands with raised hands, one lightly clasping the other. This unusual gesture gives this otherwise poised standing figure an air of vulnerability.
- 5 **Man Lying on His Side (2000)** A businessman wearing a suit reclines with his head on a briefcase. His bare feet are in contrast to his formal clothing and encourage the viewer's engagement.
- 6 **Lying Man (1999)** A man sleeps with his head resting on a pillow, while his younger self crouches on his chest, seemingly disturbed by the presence of the viewer.
- 7 **One Step Forward (2004)** This man's kneepads and arm support are presented as heroic beacons of vulnerability, enhancing the sense of struggle shown on his face. He has an air of pathos that invites us to provide the missing second part of the title... 'Two Steps Back'.
- 8 **Man Looking Up (2008)** The upward gaze of this half life-size figure raises interesting questions. In glancing up, he both avoids the gaze of the viewer and appears distracted by his thoughts.
- 9 **The Duke of Milan (1999)** This figure is almost obscured by his clothing, which falls in Renaissance-like folds. Both Renaissance sculptures and the year's fashions in Milan were among the influences for this work.
- 10 **Untitled (Blue Jeans) (2010)** A man stands cupping his chin in a posture of contemplation. There is a sense of internal strength and stillness to this physically striking character – he does not appear troubled by his thoughts.
- 11 **Nobody's Wedding (2000)** A young man in contemporary dress, this sculpture is deliberately ambiguous as reflected by the title. His clothes, with cap pulled down low, appear to shield him from the outside world.
- 12 **Man of Honour (1999)** This inscrutable figure is named after the Sicilian phrase used to describe Cosa Nostra men. Depicted in workman's clothes, the artist encourages us to question who the real men of honour are.
- 13 **Sic Transit Gloria Mundi (1999/2011)** Two figures are separated by a flight of steps; from some angles the higher figure appears slightly superior as he gazes down on the second man, but who is more self-aware?
- 14 **John (Standing) (2009)** This man's worn clothes and appearance pose questions about his identity and status. The artist has imbued this figure with an intensity and strength of personality that is at odds with its small scale.
- 15 **Man and Child (2001)** This work was made soon after the artist had his son. The use of blue and white and the way in which the baby faces out to the audience allude to traditional depictions of mother and child.
- 16 **Seated Man (2011)** Related in part to the sculpture of *John (Standing)*, this *Seated Man* follows a long tradition of seated figures. Resolute in face and mind, he is the prototype for work No16 *The Indifferent Sky*.
- 17 **The Indifferent Sky (2011)** A man dressed in simple clothes sits alone. He displays an intensity and sense of internal struggle that is reinforced by the rusted steel bench, tapering towards the ground, on which he sits.
- 18 **Standing Woman (2010)** A young woman stands motionless but contemplative and alert. She is reduced in scale to 61% of her normal height - the 'golden ratio' – confusing the encounter with memories of childhood.
- 19 **Standing Man (2007)** An older man stands with his hands clasped behind his back, gazing down with an air of contemplation that is suggestive of a private world quite apart from his immediate surroundings.