



MYELOMA UK GARDEN RHS CHELSEA

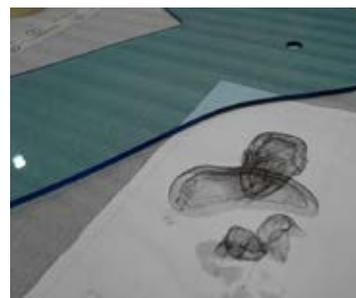


This was our third visit to RHS Chelsea. It's immensely rewarding to work on projects designed to be shown off in a beautiful garden setting. There's a theatrical element to show gardens that also plays to our strengths and experience, likewise the immovable deadline of the Show's opening and race to the horticultural equivalent of 'curtain up'. We've worked with award-winning garden designer and sculptor John Everiss before and it was a pleasure work with him to realise this sculpture for 2018's Myeloma UK Garden.



Design inspiration

Built up from a total of almost two hundred different layers of Arctic blue acrylic, the enormous translucent sculpted head made a huge impact at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Inspired by Myeloma UK supporter Peter King, it was created from a 3D scan of Peter's daughter, Gemma. The

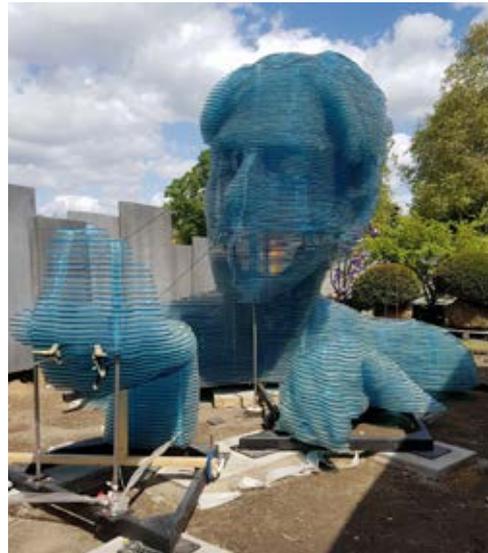




head, shoulders and hands represent the pivotal role of the carer in helping patients and families cope with diagnosis.

“Gemma’s left hand appears to be pushing away boulders, physical representations of plasma cells, from which the cancer arises, as well as symbols of the barriers and the obstacles people face in care when they suffer with myeloma.”

Myeloma UK



Manufacturing process

We began looking at John’s design early in the year. The process of drawing the 100’s of components began in mid-February, all parts being precisely nested to reduce waste during machining on our CNC flat-bed laser cutter. Highly accurate, this machine also works at high speed and importantly, produces exceptionally clean edges and corners. With the cut edges of the acrylic forming the sculptural shape, a clean finish was important and also intrinsic to the design.

Each layer was different, varying in size from 4.6m by 2.5m at the base of the shoulders, to a tiny 30mm by 50mm layer at the tip on one of the fingers. To facilitate transportation to site and overall manoeuvrability, the head was built in five sections, the heaviest weighing 1600kg. Each section was supported internally with stainless steel rods, while each layer of the specified Arctic blue acrylic was separated with clear acrylic spacers of 100mm diameter discs. A large steel base was made for the head section, with smaller base plates for each hand. Hidden platework between some of the more irregularly shaped or top-heavy zones provided additional stability.

Test build & installation



It took four weeks to assemble and test build the head and hands in one of our dedicated spaces. Not only is the head shape naturally top-heavy, but sheet acrylic is prone to deformation. Modelling during the design process built a partial picture of how the material might behave, but test building provided us with the precise information required for an efficient and safe installation on site.

The sculpture was delivered to Chelsea and installed by our crew. We manufactured lifting frames for each section to help with both crane lift and positioning within the confines of the Chelsea site, the base sections being bolted into place on concrete pads.

This was a delightful project to deliver. Working collaboratively with artists and designers draws on our unique mix of creative manufacturing skills and experience. The garden received a lot of media attention, raising the profile of the Myeloma UK charity and winning a much-deserved silver-gilt medal in the process.

