

## Accessible Description – Gaia by Luke Jerram

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Hanging suspended among the trees is a replica of our planet, providing a view of Earth as it might be seen from space, floating in three dimensions. The large, inflated sphere is 7 metres in diameter, meaning the artwork is 1.8 million times smaller than the real Earth, with each centimetre describing 18km of the Earth's surface. Detailed, high resolution NASA photographic imagery has been printed onto the nylon surface of the sphere, offering a detached and objective view of our home planet, the detail of which is illuminated from within the structure.

Looking up at Gaia, some have experienced the 'overview effect', a term that author Frank White coined to describe the cognitive shift experienced by astronauts when viewing Earth from space. Common features include a feeling of awe for the planet, a profound understanding of the interconnection of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment.

As the viewer moves around the planet it's revealed that two-thirds, or the majority, of the Earth's surface is covered by its oceans, here reflected in a shade of ultra-marine blue. Creating rippling patterns above the blue, are wisps of white cloud.

Just one third of the planet's surface is shown to be land, including the continents, appearing here as small, isolated islands within the vast oceans, the continents themselves surrounded by even smaller specs of islands. The land masses are reflected in shades of green, brown and beige, some with more wisps of white cloud hovering above.

Standing below the Earth, looking up, the white ice of Antarctica stretches out in a near circle that reaches almost a metre in diameter. As the viewer moves around the planet, Africa is revealed to be the largest land mass, stretching along the north/south axis, from the southern tip of Europe seemingly reaching the outer tips of the South Pole, with an apparent thin strip of ocean in between. Next the Americas come into view, thinner than Africa, but again nearly stretching from pole to pole. The next land mass has Australia and New Zealand in the southern hemisphere, then Asia filling most of the southern hemisphere, with Europe filling the north.

The artwork also acts as a mirror to major events in society. A particularly observation is that the noticeable scale of the green of the Amazon rainforest is here revealed to have strips of beige ripped into it; a striking indication of the impact of the deforestation of the planet, as seen from space.

Gaia is accompanied by a specially made surround sound composition by BAFTA award winning Composer Dan Jones. The surround-sound music is 30 minutes long. There are voices, sounds and music to provide different feelings in the space. The soundtrack finishes with the voices of children, thoughts on climate change and calls to action.

This information is produced by Activate Performing Arts and aims to inform and support audiences planning to attend Inside Out Dorset 2021 events. There will be a dedicated Information Point if you have any questions on the day or you can contact us if you have any further questions or feedback.

## Contact Details

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We aim to respond to all access enquiries within 2 working days, but there may be a delay during the festival period 16<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021 whilst we are running the festival events.