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UNFAMILIAR LIGHT: THE PRODUCTION OF ENCHANTMENT

Abstract

This article makes an original contribution to tourism research by examining how enchantment is produced. Light installations are presented as storyscapes, crafted from technical metamorphoses and mythical, fairytale and folklore narratives. The findings uncover the importance of the creative praxis of designers, which infuses the peculiarly enchanting affective agency and presence of their installations. We demonstrate how the production of enchantment differs conceptually from other forms of tourism development by offering visitors disturbing, sublime, uncanny, unexpected experiences. This leads to a reappraisal of the imagineering of tourist enchantment as less programmed and more anarchic. The findings indicate how enchantment can defamiliarise and refresh intangible cultural heritage, opening up the possibility of new imaginative thresholds within the tourism industry.

Keywords: Enchantment, magical tourism, light installations, fairytale tourism, heritage tourism, storytelling.

INTRODUCTION

The term enchantment is frequently used in tourism studies, yet it remains under-theorised. We seek to address this gap at the centre of our theoretical knowledge, by exploring the production of enchantment, that is a force driving the tourist industry.

To understand the meaning of enchantment, we need first to explore the historical context of the concept's usage. During the Middle Ages, the term 'being enchanted' was used to describe how wonders such as folklore and fairytales evoke (delusional) sensation of delight (Saler, 2012, p.9). In contrast, the Enlightenment movement's rationality was said to free individuals from the 'enthrallment' of mysticism, superstition and enchantment (Bennett, 2001, p.171). Enchantment has frequently been referred to in the context of its antonym, disenchantment. In his polemical essay 'Science as a Vocation', Weber (1917) inferred that disenchantment is a result of empirical, objective modern bureaucracy and monotheism that is at odds with the mysticism of pre-modern, polytheistic belief systems: 'The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world' (p.155).

Explaining Weber's meaning in more detail, Saler argued that modern disenchantment is rooted in 'the loss of the overarching meanings, animistic connections, magical orientations, and spiritual explanations that had characterized the traditional world' (2012, p.8). Contemporary society increasingly compensates for this loss by producing illusory 'modern enchantments', including tourism, which act as distractions from the state of disenchantment and alienation (Holloway, 2010; Knudsen, Rickly, & Vidon, 2016; MacCannell, 1973; McEwan, 2008; Saler, 2001; 2012).

The consumption of enchantment has recently been explored (see Hartmann and Brunk, 2019; Houran, Lange & Laythe 2020; Lange, Houran & Tracey, 2021). However, the production of enchantment still remains a largely underdeveloped research area, last broadly addressed in tourism literature that investigates the appeal of culturally-themed Millennium visitor attractions (Richards 2001; Ritzer, 1999; Ritzer, 2010; Schneider, 1993). According to Ritzer, regenerated galleries, museums and art centres 'have an enchanted, sometimes even sacred, religious character for many people' (1999, p.8). Likewise, Richards observed that a 'magical doctrine' is practised in cultural tourism, emphasising how 'the enchantment of the consumer is necessary for the spell to work' (2001, p.59). Ritzer and Richards were

alluding to the imaginative theming of places. In the same vein, the creative reinvention of places by light festivals has been described as re-enchanting places by defamiliarising them (Edensor & Lorimer, 2017; Edensor & Sumartojo, 2017). However, these articles touch on but do not conceptualise the production of enchantment, which merits a more thorough examination in tourism studies.

Where it occurs, the production of enchantment in tourism could be argued to focus on the controlled staging and choreography of visitor experiences (Edensor, 2000, 2001; Rickly & McCabe, 2017). This trend is particularly evident in studies of theme parks like Walt Disney World, said to be purposefully designed to enchant consumers with fantasy (Baudrillard, 1981). The designers of Walt Disney World have been described as 'imagineers' who create 'pseudo-events' characterised by programming and standardisation (Richards, 2001, 2014; Ritzer, 1999). Analyses of imagineering include its commodification and distortion of history as it 'should have happened' and its pastiche histo-fantasy 'Disney reality' (Fjellman, 1992:60). These accounts also frame the production of enchantment as leading to the ethically-dubious, atmospherically-controlling, corporate aspects of Disneyfication. Yet the imagination and immanence involved in producing enchantment also deserve consideration.

As society embraces an increasingly enchanted modernity, the tourist industry is under pressure to generate novel fantasy magical locii (Lovell &Thurgill, 2021). The use of light festivals to generate illusions and reimagine spaces epitomises modern enchantment. Although the soullessness of technology was said by Weber to epitomise disenchantment, the sheer mystique of technology is enchanting in the sense that it can restore magic to the world (Bennett, 2001). Light festivals are a popular global phenomenon, ranging from one-off installations to biannual and annual festivals including Sydney's 'Vivid' and Lyon's 'Fête des Lumières' (Giordano & Ong, 2017; Mercer & Mayfield, 2015). So following Farrelly, Kock, & Josiassen's (2019) argument that the perspectives of the producers of authenticity are neglected in literature, this article focuses on the producers of enchantment, in this case the designers of light installations.

The light installations created by these designers range from conceptual art to literal, chronological re-interpretations of historic sites (Lovell, 2018; Lovell & Griffin, 2019; Vilaseca, 2014). But those centred on mythic, ghost, folklore and fairytale narratives speak most directly to the topic of enchantment. For example, fairy tales are intended to enchant children by absorbing their attention in order to communicate instructive morality lessons (Bettelheim, 1976). This is because psychological self-insights can result from unexpected, frightening glimpses of uncanny terror and danger that the story discloses, showing us 'what's really important in an unfamiliar light' (Larrington, 2015, p.9). Both Holloway (2010) and Houran, Lange & Laythe (2020) have contemplated enchantment in the context of ghost and paranormal tourism. Magical narratives accordingly add another dimension to the study of enchantment. The purpose of this work is therefore to examine how the designers of light installations featuring fantasy narratives produce enchantment.

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Before investigating the production of enchantment, we must first establish the sensations it aims to elicit from visitors. Bennett's (2001) seminal work on enchantment suggests that it relies on the unexpectedness, novelty and surprise of encounters with enchanting phenomena. Bennett suggests that what people experience during this encounter is a combination of sensations, including physical stillness (embodiment of experience) combined with mental 'exhilaration or acute sensory activity' (affect) (pp. 4-6). The affective sensations to which Bennet refers include uncanniness and sublimity.

Delving first into uncanniness, Freud (1940) refers to the *unheimlich* in the context of the Tales of Hoffman, citing the eeriness of the animation of a lifeless object, for example a doll (p.135). Similarly, light installations seem to give buildings animus. They are also said to re-enchant spaces by defamiliarising them (Edensor, 2015; Edensor & Sumarjojo, 2018) and thus embody the previously only-imagined, known-made-unknown aspects of the uncanny. Moving onto sublimity, in the *Critique of Judgement* Kant discusses the awe inspired by seemingly limitless and boundless natural phenomena like mountains or thunderstorms (2007 [1952] p.75). Sublimity encapsulates the sheer scale and inexplicability of some light installation atmospheric effects. The sublime is transcendental, the uncanny is instinctively disconcerting and both share the fearful pleasure of the unknown presence. We suggest that light installation designers intentionally produce the conditions that may induce these and other enchanting sensations.

Metamorphosis

Light designers use a number of techniques to produce enchantment. To clarify our discussion, we have broken these techniques down into three interlinked elements of metamorphosis, narrative and presence.

The metamorphosis of darkness using light is not a new phenomenon. Modern enchantments can be traced back to the eighteenth and nineteenth century phantasmagoria (terror theatre), involving magic lanterns and shadow-play (Benjamin, 1935). One of the earliest recognised lighting designers was the architect Bernard Eugene (Paul) Robert-Houdin. Robert-Houdin used ambient atmospherics (shadow, architectural lighting and music) to create the first Son et Lumière event at the fairytale Chateau de Chambord, France in 1952. He aimed to create 'a fairy world' constructed from 'all the fantasies allowed by modern technology' (Robert-Houdin, 1954, p.16).

The light installations in this study are staged in (and on) monumental civic buildings, cathedrals, castles and minsters. These buildings are meaningful structures of memory and their immense scale suggests fairytalesque affordances (Lovell, 2019; Nora, 1972). However, increasingly enchanted modernities make it harder to transform even historically resonant, storied structures into Robert-Houdin's unknown fairy worlds. This is because the producers of today's lightworks are in lockstep with consumers in their understanding about what ambient technology can achieve. So it is fundamentally harder to surprise today's consumers. Light installation designers are therefore increasingly under pressure to perform magic by 'manoeuvring the world' with ever-more seemingly impossible actions (Blanchot, 1981, pp. 87-88).

Light installation designers perform the seemingly impossible action of mutating structures and spaces by using projection mapping software (Torre, 2015). They first deploy 3D CAD software to survey architectural facades and remodel them as digital copies of the structural geometry. Precise architectural facsimiles are then digitally enhanced and projected back onto the building, animating the architectural extrusions of façades. Baudrillard (1981) described how trompe d'oeil (deceive the eye) illusions are designed to fascinate and seduce (and thus enchant). Visual trompe d'oeil effects are complemented with sleight-of-hand touches, such as the viscerally powerful ripping noises of bricks and stone swivelling. The resultant three-dimensional metamorphoses can make these installations seem 'metaphysically active' (Lovell & Griffin, 2019). In other words, the designers perform practical magic by suspending the laws of physics as buildings move. In doing so, they evoke the pre-modern sense of animus, central to enchantment.

Some authors have advised that the tourist industry should avoid creating the unsettling sensations of surreality when tourists encounter the previously only-imagined (Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher, 2010; McCabe & Rickly-Boyd, 2017). However, enchantment relies on unexpectedness. So the metamorphoses of light installations are *intended* to be surreal and disconcerting. Trompe d'oeil illusions manipulate depth perception, causing 'cognitive dissonance' in visitors, who know a building isn't moving, yet see it do so (Lovell & Griffin, 2019). Kant (2007, [1952]) describes the 'negative pleasure' of sublimity, describing the bewilderment when encountering phenomena that exceed the limits of thought. The pleasurable entrancing harmony between reason and imagination means that the magnitude of the unknown cannot be accounted for except by the supersensible (the spiritual, mystical or magical). Enchantment is said to evoke similarly bewildering simultaneous transcendental joy and environmental disorientation (Bennett, 2001; Drinkwater, Massullo, Dagnall, Laythe, Boone, & Houran, 2020; Schneider, 1993). So the trompe d'oeil metamorphoses of light installations are designed to produce a mesmerizingly disturbing, contradictory state that encapsulates enchanting experiences.

Narratives

The designers in this study build fantasy narrative content into these technical metamorphoses. They construct 'storyscapes', defined as 'consumption spaces with narratives as the focal object' (Chronis, Arnould & Hampton, 2012, p. 266). At their most affective, storyscapes are capable of inducing sensations of 'narrative transportation', a theory first devised to describe overwhelming consumer absorption in and elevation by the stories of advertising (Green, & Brock, 2000). Narrative transportation has been applied in tourism literature to describe how visitors to historic sites may experience sensations of travelling to the past (see Chronis, 2012; Lovell & Bull, 2017; Lovell, 2019; Rickly-Boyd, 2012). Similarly, the storyscapes produced by lighting designers are intended to mesmerise visitors, who may enter a childlike state of enchantment, letting go of the world. Light installations are also not as constrained by factual history as, perhaps, virtual reality reconstructions of historic sites. They can instead use poetic licence to interpret and refresh the form of fantasy narratives.

The works in this study intertwine local intangible cultural heritage with mythology, ghosts, folklore and fairytales. These fantasy narratives evoke enchantment through fear and unexpectedness. They reference symbols deeply rooted within our subconscious that we find peculiarly disturbing (Bettelheim, 1976). They include recurrent action, setting, character and prop motifs like witches, dragons, shape-shifting, broomsticks and castles (Thompson, 1977). While some motifs reflect particular cultural traditions, many are generally agreed to suggest potent cross-cultural meanings (Barthes, 1957; Bettelheim, 1976; Thompson, 1977). As the building-blocks of stories, motifs are constantly adapted and appropriated. Contemporary society has mainstreamed enchantment, with the result that monsters are familiar tropes on multiple media platforms (McEwan, 2008). Frequent exposure to fantasy motifs permeates tourist experiences to the extent that visitors to historic cities may perceive castles, gateways and monumental walls as fairytalesque, 'magi-heritage' landscapes (Lovell, 1019; Lovell & Thurgill, 2021). But according to Hannam & Ryan (2019), the authenticity of stories may actually be enhanced by mimesis (repetition). So the continuous adaptation and popularisation of the motifs central to fantasy narratives does not necessarily dilute their affective impact.

Consequently, light installation narratives are strangely familiar and capable of awakening the disquieting, mesmerising, subconscious meanings and uncanny sensations that characterise the production of enchantment.

Presence

Enchanting, sublime and uncanny sensations are said to involve encounters with *presence* (Bennett, 2001; Freud, 1940; Kant, 2007, [1952]). But light installations induce experiences through technology, a method also associated with absence. For example, Dogan and Kan (2020) propose that the use of virtual reality as an interpretation tool at historic sites recalls Derrida's paradox of 'absent presence.' In other words, the tools create only pale shadows of the vital past, emphasising its absence, of which mere traces remain. Light installations also create illusory casts and impressions of buildings and spaces, using trompe-d'oeil to conceal, reveal and supplement non-existence. In doing so, they choreograph absence and evoke presence.

Their presence, in the form of 'affective atmospheres', has been well-documented in examples ranging from the Blackpool illuminations to the Northern Lights (Edensor, 2012; 2015; Edensor & Sumarjojo, 2018). Edensor's work follows Böhme's (2008, p.3) work on theatrical atmosphere as 'something which can come over us, into which we are drawn, which takes possession of us like an alien power'. We can interpret Böhme's statement to mean that atmosphere is a subsuming, sublime force or presence. Likewise, when encountering the supersensory presence of the sublime, Kant suggests that the mind surrenders the senses and 'abandons itself' to the imagination (2007, [1952] p.87). The notion of enchantment as a 'oneness with a transcendent power, agency, or Other' is also catalogued by Drinkwater et al. (2020, p. 3). Accordingly, although the ambient atmospherics of light installations are technically engineered, their presence can seem all-encompassing, transcendental and more-than-human.

The notion of presence and its link to enchantment has been addressed by Gell (1992) in the context of artworks. Gell researched the enchantment of the creative process, maintaining that when people encounter artworks they are strangely fascinated by the metamorphosis of raw materials into objects or performances that seem to possess an independent agency. To clarify, Gell reasons that the technical process of the artist is a magical form of transubstantiation, instilling artworks with an animus (spirit) that makes them enchanting to behold. Artists also marvel at the metamorphoses that arise as part of their technical skill and their sense of wonder suffuses their work. So rather than absent presence, a *present* presence further infuses light installations with enchanting possibilities.

Co-production

The previous section details how the production of enchantment can induce a childlike state in visitors, involving a surrendering of self to and external presence. But this article isn't arguing that the production of enchantment places entirely passive visitors under the spell of a dominant enchanter. Literature has long established the co-creation of tourist experiences (see Edensor, 2012; 2015; Edensor & Millington, 2014; Rickly & McCabe, 2017; Richards, 2014). Ambient atmospherics (lighting, music) can indeed be manipulated to create emotional states linked to brands, buying and also positive responses to environments such as heritage sites (Bonn, Joseph-Mathews, Dai, Hayes & Cave, 2007). But visitors can and do resist the effects of light installations, which are more than 'affective engineering' (Edensor, 2012, p.1108-1109). Also, visitors can choose whether to be enchanted; Holloway (2010) categorises ghost tourism as a modern enchantment in which tourists *knowingly* participate. Lastly, it is important to make the point that enchantment has also been conceptualised as "situational-enchantment", or highly relative, its affectiveness dependent on individual responses (Drinkwater et al. 2020).

So perhaps the production of enchantment is best understood by referring back to the characterisation of light installations as storyscapes. Hones (2012) considers the landscapes of novels as co-produced by the author and readers as happenings, or spatial events. Similarly, light designers create poetic thresholds. If visitors choose to cross them, transcendent

happenings can occur. Consequently, we propose that the production of enchantment is intended to act as the *departure point* for the imagination of visitors.

METHODOLOGY

Case study – four light installations

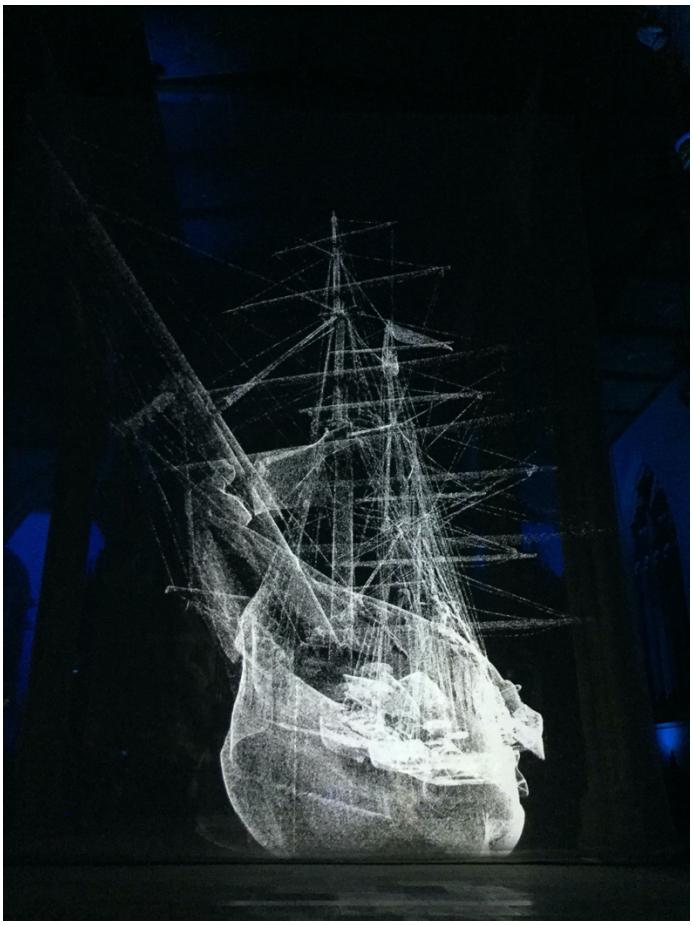
This research examined the production of enchantment in the context of light installations. In what follows, the four installations are presented.

Northern Lights, by designers The Projection Studio, took place at York Minster in June 2018 and from 24-31 October 2019, when it attracted 22,000 visitors during a 16-show run (Laycock, 2019). The installation was projected onto the nave ceiling and Great East Window, where the stained glass depicts the apocalypse (see Figure 1). The work articulates the stained glass windows, mixing Norse myths and Christian parables.

Figure 1 Angel Heralds. *Northern Lights.* Courtesy of Projection Studios.

The second installation is *The Ship of the Gods*, by Heinrich and Palmer, celebrating the Norse myth of the shape-shifting ship Skidbladnir. This piece was staged in Hull Minster in 2018, for the *Urban Legends: Northern Lights* illumination event, a legacy of the Hull City of Culture 2017 festival. According to the artists, *The Ship of the Gods* attracted 50,000 visitors (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 *The Ship of the Gods*. Courtesy of Heinrich and Palmer



The third example is *Oh the Night!* developed by collective Imitating the Dog, an amalgamation of Northern English and Finnish bedtime stories. The event was also part of the *Urban Legends: Northern Lights* event in Hull and was projected onto the Warren Building and Hull Maritime Museum (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 *Oh the Night!* Courtesy of Imitating the Dog.

Lastly, *Fool's Paradise* by design studio NOVAK mixed local, regional and universal folklore and fairytales. It was projected onto the façade of Durham Castle during the 2015 and 2019 Lumiere festivals. The 2015 festival attracted approximately 210,000 visitors, the majority of whom would have seen the installation which could be viewed from multiple locations in the city centre (Durham City Council, 2018) (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Fool's Paradise. Courtesy of Simon Williams and NOVAK.

Study Methods

This study of enchantment takes a qualitative approach in order to capture the socially constructed nature of the phenomenon. Our research question asks how light installation designers produce enchantment. Within this aim, our objectives are 1) to enquire how light installation designers magically metamorphose space; 2) how designers craft enchantment from narratives and 3) to what extent the imaginative imprint of the creative process of designers infuses the presence of light installations. The research aim and objective follows the approach of Edensor (2012; 2017) and Giordano & Ong (2017) who used mixed methods, including participant observation and semi-structured interviews with designers to investigate and interpret light festivals. In addition, the organisers, who were present at each showing of their work, also offered unique *in situ* insights into their impression of the experience of the audience (Mackellar, 2013).

Semi-structured interviews were held with light installation designers from August 2018-September 2021. Twelve face-to-face and Skype interviews were conducted with eight members of projection-mapping companies and two festival organisers. While the Skype interviews could be considered less effective than face to face versions, they still allowed us to note voice inflexion and non-verbal cues even when interviews were conducted via Zoom and Facetime (Lo Iacono, Symonds, & Brown, 2016). Thus, these interviews aimed to better understand the production of enchantment, by enquiring how the subject 'thinks, acts, feels and develops' (Brinkman 2013, p.1).

The interviews were conversational in tone and lasted between 5 hours and an hour and a half. They began with open questions taken from a topic guide, enquiring about practitioner history, current projects and the future of their artworks. Within this framework, we expanded upon our research question by specifically asking about their technical, narrative and creative processes, for example, "please tell us more about why you selected this particular fairytale for your work?" The aim was to encourage discursiveness, allowing us to identify the structures of belief under the surface (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2004, p.377). With very little prompting, the designers described each work in detail, returning to the importance of intricate levels of research, their creative development of this research, how they complemented its effects with technology and, interestingly, how these led to something "more" or "else".

Our approach could be said to be limited because the length of the paper constrained our ability to fully address sound design, although, as a participant commented that an element of sublimity is the harmony of sound and light. However, our interviews had revealed that the visual was paramount when they constructed their creative vision. It is

worth noting that soundtracks may be added later in the process of installation creation, often by a different artist.

A further limitation of the study could argued to be the small size of the sample, obtained from recent large-scale installation designers specialising in fantasy narrative content. But the choice of participants can be considered significant for the following reasons: 1) Heinrich and Palmer, The Projection Studio, NOVAK and Imitating the Dog each have decades of experience in their field; 2) The works considered in this piece have been encountered by significant numbers of tourists; 3) The lighting designers have displayed installations in a number of global events and festivals including the Fête des Lumières in Lyon and London Olympics and Paralympics; 5) They have been commissioned to light iconic structures including Buckingham Palace in countries as diverse as Oman and Bahrain. The findings illuminate the breadth of experience behind the craft of lighting design.

We also supplemented our data by travelling to Durham, York, Cheriton and London to experience their work of the designers, layering participant observation with our impressions of the installations. In addition, we held a symposium on the topic of lightworks in July 2020, where we were able to probe more deeply, gaining more meaningful insights. Altogether, 6200 words were examined, coded and analysed in NVivo. During the analysis, enchantment emerged as an overriding theme, with initial categories of metamorphosis and narrative.

Yet analysis is an iterative process. Words are considered in the context of our interactions with interview subjects. What we mean by this is that when designers described the imaginative aspects of the creative process, their voice inflexions changed in pitch and tempo. In other words, we noted paralanguage, or how a message is conveyed (Hargie, 2011). As interviewers we interpret our perception of the interviewee response, requiring nuanced levels of self-reflection (Hansen & Mossberg, 2017, p.265). Field note observations about non-verbal communications can enhance the thickness of data analysis (Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). For example, two designers reinforced our perception that the creative process is in itself enchanting by producing initial notes and storyboards (see Figure 7). While the number of these visual prompts was too small for meaningful evaluation, we will in future request these tangible snapshots and glimpses of the creative process in action to incorporate in our analysis. One of the designers commented on how the interview had retriggered the passion of creation, “otherwise we film the installations, then move onto the next and forget”.

These cues added to the body of data by identifying presence as a third analysis theme in addition to technical metamorphosis and narrative. The unfolding process of coding, analysis, reflection and re-coding also allowed sub-categories to surface, for example illusion, shape-shifting and animal motifs, distinct themes and sub-themes. Yet, as Thrift (2007) has pointed out, atmosphere is more than the sum of its parts. The analysis sometimes mesmerised us with fleeting insights, delight at the emergence of form and the reaching for the dizzying abstract magnitude of ungraspable ideas, unexpectedly immersing us in the enchantment of the research process.

FINDINGS

Metamorphosis

The enchantment of designers Our findings identified that the production of enchantment begins with the first encounter between lighting designers and the physical sites where they will stage their installations. The metamorphosis of place is startling and

immediate. For example, when The Projection Studio team first visited York Minster to plan *Northern Lights*, they described entering a sublime, hyperaware state. They mentioned how Bartolomeo da Bologna's metaphor that light shining through glass is an expression of the divine became apparent to them as the "spirit of place". They wanted to communicate the pre-modern 'spiritual explanations' of enchantment to contemporary audiences (Saler, 2001, p.695). In doing so they also articulated their desire to provide visitors with a sublime encounter:

> "The building itself is a reflection of perfection. You are now in God's space. For the commoner living in their mud hut this must have been so outside their everyday lives. You come into this space with the saturated colours and the glass and these massive pillars and we were trying to get *that* into the piece. The wonder of the perfection".

Similarly, when Imitating the Dog first saw the Warren building in Hull, they described how the building actively *changed itself* rather than their revisualizing it, establishing a sense of the intersubjectivity of place: "It transformed itself. We could see it as a ship". Heinrich and Palmer also commented that "we know how to engage with place, but then it surprises us and it changes".

Heinrich and Palmer were captivated by a vivid conceptualisation of Hull's seafaring past during their early research process which shaped their thinking.

> "There's a photograph in the Maritime Museum. Black and white, looking down. It's of Queen's Gardens and the water route from the river Hull all the way out through the centre of town and out through Prince's quay. So we had a sense of these ships coursing their way through the middle of the city. And also you've got these streets in Hull, they look like ships have actually gone down them, these thin, tall streets, so that was actually almost the image we had".

In contrast, the *Fool's Paradise* team felt iconoclastic when they first encountered the Durham Castle site: "The castle was the Prince Bishop's home. As Scotsmen straight away we wanted to transform it into the dwellings of the ordinary. That was the stepping-off point: the juxtaposition between grandeur and ordinary". They located the genius loci and substituted it with their own *fantasy* spirit of place replacing the sepia, dominant castle with a bright favela that provided the fairytale village setting (see Figure 9).

All of the designers articulated their own transfixion when they began to defamiliarise the familiar. In other words, the production of enchantment began with the designers' enchantment with place.

Figure 9 The favela in *Fool's Paradise*, projected onto Durham castle with characters silhouetted. Courtesy of Simon Williams.

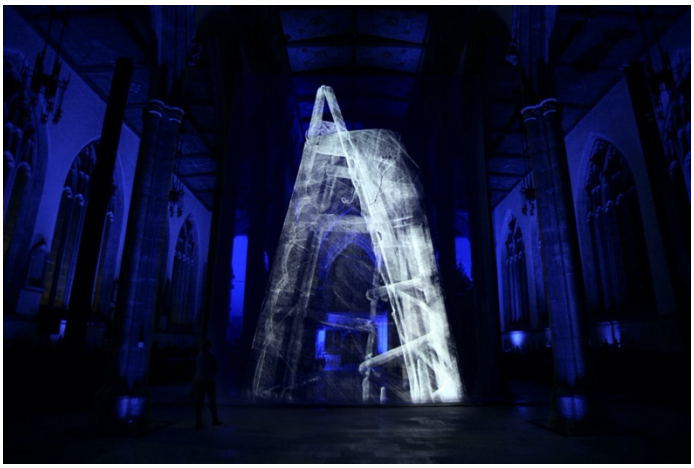
Illusions. Having reconceptualised the sites, designers created metamorphic illusions to transform the space. Instead of slickly sophisticated design techniques, NOVAK used hand-drawn, stop-motion effects in *Fool's Paradise* that epitomised the phantasmagorias evoked by magic lantern shows. A wolf moved jerkily like a shadow-puppet and the "Lambton Worm" slithered through the scene. They articulated the uncanniness that was identified by both Bennett and Bettelheim as a central component of enchantment contributing to an eerie sensation of uncanniness.

Heinrich and Palmer use Point Cloud scanning software to create their lightworks. They scan places or objects, then recreate three-dimensional film images which capture down the finest detail, for example the wallpaper on the wall. The installation *The Ship of the Gods* consisted of a film combining scans of the Arctic Corsair trawler; the Spurn Lightship and also models of ships found within Hull Maritime Museum and Hull and East Riding Museums. Combining the scans created perceptual confusion between models and full-size ships adding to the overall hyperreality of the film:

> "It's amazing having the scans of models and life-size ships. You can play around so much with scale. At times the Stern ship was bigger than the actual Stern ship".

Lighting made the voile screen on which the film of the scans was projected "appear to disappear". Consequently, spectral, three-dimensional ships floated up through the floor of Hull Minster to hover in the air, presenting visitors with illusory, unfathomable encounters with the supersensible (see Figure 10). Heinrich and Palmer stated that many of their visitors had worked on and recognised the Artic Corsair. They knew it but "had never seen it like that" thus it assumed a sublimely unknown form.

Figure 10 *The Ship of the Gods.* The invisible voile screen in Hull Minster. Courtesy of Heinrich and Palmer



Like Heinrich and Palmer, designers Imitating the Dog mixed scales in *Oh the Night*. They also used theatrical public participation, for example choirs and solo singers. In addition, actors were filmed on a green screen. The film, projection-mapping, hand-drawn amination and live performance coalesced in a peculiarly enchanting manner:

> "We film people on a human scale who interact with the building in some way. We also use live performers, which heightens the magic. This creates a perceptual confusion between real and filmed people and a place in between where everything melds. We are not transforming a space, but making a new place. A different world".

The Projection Studio also created situational dissonance by collapsing boundaries, transforming the ceiling of York Minster nave, "you can literally lift the roof away and show the sky and the sun setting and the stars coming out" (see Figure 11). The illusion of the sky inside revealed what Bachelard (1994, p.212) described as "this side" and "beyond" harmonising in sublime impossibility.

Figure 11 Northern Lights inside the Nave of York Minster. *Northern Lights.* Courtesy of Projection Studios.

Narrative Enchantment

Each of the designers took a different approach to narrative structure. Heinrich and Palmer's installation featured the ghostly apparitions of different ships floating up from the floor. NOVAK's piece segued through vignettes of characters and monsters scuttling through a favela-like village, under a rising moon, a scene segueing into a seascape. The Projection Studio's religio-fantasy narrative began with the parable of the sparrow told to Edwin of Northumbria, who built the first wooden church on the site of York Minster. The narrative then moved through a continuous crescendo of operatically dramatic events. Only Imitating the Dog presented a more traditional bedtime story narrative structure. None of the works provided more than the bare bones of event interpretation. This meant that the narratives were unexplained, offering the unexpectedness, twists and turns crucial to the enchanted absorption of the audience (Bettelheim, 1976).

Shape-shifting. Many of the narratives featured shape-shifting tropes. For example, NOVAK referenced the transformation of the Easington Witch into a hare. Heinrich and Palmer's piece centred on Skidbladnir, the magical shape-shifting ship that belonged to the Goddess Freya. According to The Edda (the Norse mythology compendium) the vessel can contain 500 men, or be folded up so small that it could be kept in a pocket (Faulkes, 1995, p. 96-7). Heinrich and Palmer draw a direct analogy between the mythological material and their own transformational skills:

> "So the brief was to find connections with Norse mythology or the north because of Hull's trading links with the Baltic, Scandinavia or the Arctic. So Anna found this story about the shape-shifting ship and we thought that's fine because that's exactly what we are about, the idea that something can shape-shift and it can transmute and it can change and it can change your sense of interpretation".

Motifs – Norse theming. All of the designers convey a sense of enchanted "pastness". For example, *Fool's Paradise* referenced the medieval feel with distorted versions of the fairytale knight and dragon motifs. The Projection Studio focused on the Viking heritage of York, playing with its iconic craftsmanship (see Figure 5).

> "Because of the Vikings we had a moment of turning it into Valhalla. We redecorated the inside with Viking patterns. It was very simple, but very pretty. It looked like lace, but when you look closely you see the patterns in it and the figures in it. That bit was the *Poetic Edda*".

Figure 5. Celtic Designs. *Northern Lights* in York Minster. Courtesy of Projection Studios.

The Projection Studio worked with historians from the University of York to find speakers to read excerpts from work such as the *Poetic Edda* in Old English and Norse, in order to accentuate the historical accuracy of their installation. Their approach resembled that of other Viking heritage tourism producers in York, who used academic authentication as a product feature (Halewood & Hannam, 2001). An earnest approach to authenticating their sources, so clearly conveyed during their interviews, initially seems to differentiate their creative practice from Fjellman's view of Disney history or "Distory" (Fjellman, 1992, p.95). Yet both forms of imagineering ultimately apply a pastiche approach to their content. The Projection Studio took the Viking heritage and combined it with The Book of Revelations to create a combinatory mytho-biblical effect:

> "Then we went into Ragnarok, had a huge thunderstorm inside the building, the clouds coming across what appeared to be underneath the ceiling, then the ceiling being lit when the lightning flashed, then Genesis to Revelation in one leap. We had the lake of fire with the synod burning in it and the great red dragon and the seven-headed beast and St Wolfsgang".

Figure 6. Dragon and Beast. *Northern Lights* in York Minster. Courtesy of Projection Studios.

The Projection Studio's work is intended to maximise the layers of narrative to communicate the spellbinding, enchanting *effects* of past storytelling to contemporary audiences. They highlight elements said to evoke sublimity, including fear, the vertiginous scale of the building and simulated thunderstorms in order to recall the startling affectiveness of both oral recitations in Norse Halls and readings from *The Book of Revelations* in Cathedrals on past audiences (see Figure 6).

Motifs – Animals and Monsters. Three of the design companies used animal motifs to establish a more folkloric sense of place connected to simpler "magical expectations, and spiritual explanations" (Saler, 2001, p.695). *Fool's Paradise* added featured regionally familiar animal motifs including a spookily silhouetted wolf, ravens and a hare to their tale of the Lambton Worm. Bears and foxes dominated *Oh the Night!*. Imitating the Dog collected folkloric bedtime stories from Northern England and visited Finland to meet a storyteller, who told them traditional stories in the pub. His "weird" unsettling local story about a bear marrying a child reflecting the sheer peculiarity of enchantment. The meeting led to a doodle of the bear in a hotel room that "sparked the whole piece" (see Figure 7). The team then sifted through forty or fifty tales, combining five into a narrative about a bear, a fox, a seahorse and three children's quest for the ending of unfinished bedtime stories (see Figure 8). The

repetition of motifs is said to be fundamental to their perpetuation and the light installations presented a different mode of storytelling.

Figure 7. The doodle created after hearing the story of the bear from the storyteller in the pub in Finland. Courtesy of Imitating the Dog. Courtesy Simon Wainwright.

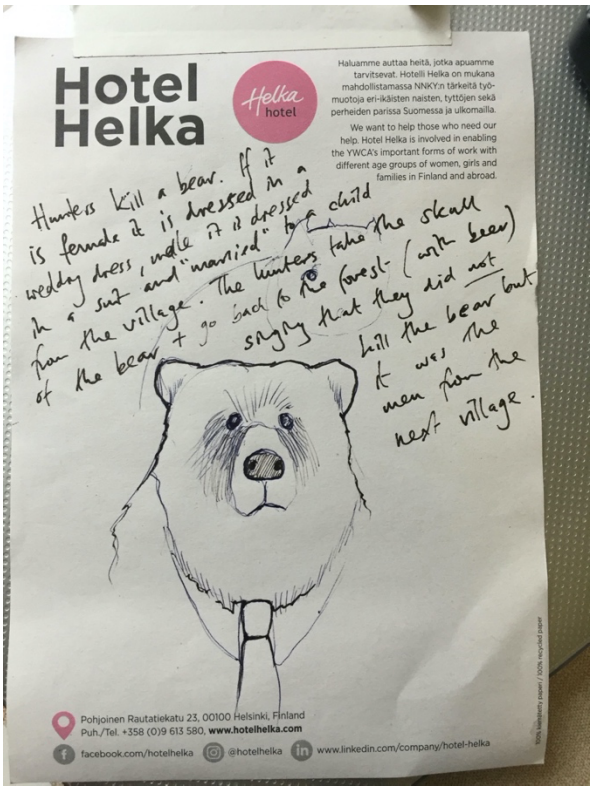


Figure 8. Storyboard of the bear in *Oh the Night!.* Courtesy of Simon Wainwright.

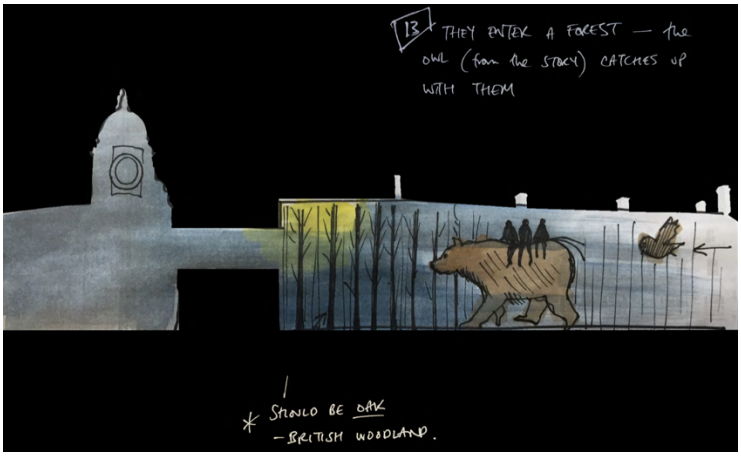
Bedtime and fairy stories are designed to enchant by scaring the audience with monster motifs. Northern Lights deployed mythical beast tropes, including dragons and griffins. NOVAK rooted the local intangible cultural heritage of the Lambton Worm in broader magical folklore:

> "Folklore became the backbone I suppose and very much the heart of that was the Lambton Worm. The Worm is one of the most famous pieces of Northeast folklore, set in the River Wear. The story revolves around John Lambton, the heir to the Lambton estate near Durham and his battle with a giant worm, or dragon, that had been terrorising the local villagers. As we discovered there are similar stories, you know it's not a million miles away from St George and the dragon. And from that we then started to research wider folklore of the local area, for example there's the Easington Hare, the story about the Easington Witch who could transform herself into her hare familiar, retold orally through different generations".

There have been multiple previous iterations of the Worm/dragon story, for example, *The Lair of the White Worm* by Bram Stoker. NOVAK described the excitement of local visitors who recognised the image of the Lambton Worm, now writ large on Durham Castle. Son et lumiere have reinforced the Catalonian sense of identity according to Vilaseca (2014). Using references to locally distinctive tales (like the Lambton Worm) also enhances the sense of place attachment for local visitors (Johnston, 1990; Dogan & Kan, 2020). The motifs of

folklore are continuously adapted but are also perennial and these stories can therefore resonate with tourists and locals (Barthes, 1957).

The light installation narratives offered new storytellers the next retellings of tales traditionally told in the dark, by firelight. Standing on Framwellgate Bridge on a freezing November night watching *Fool's Paradise* we experienced a strong sensation that was also summed up by a participant: "The resurgence of light festivals is about the rebirth of telling stories in the dark winter months to see us through until spring".



Presence.

Certain techniques seemed to give the installations the agency and presence so central to enchantment. Heinrich and Palmer remarked that they "dust" the space with light and deliberately slow the pace of their work, allowing their imaginative imprint to infuse their installations:

> "There's an element of melancholy about them [the installations] and time passing, all these things flowed through it. Have you ever been in the mountains and you see clouds scudding across and the you see cloud shadows crossing the mountains around you? It's almost like you get a sense of things passing through a place when we've been working with these Point Clouds".

The physical absence of designers also preserves the spell of non-mediation, evoking Böhme's (2008, p. 3) description of atmosphere as a subsuming "alien power". NOVAK concealed their *Fool's Paradise* projection equipment out of public view under the Framwellgate bridge by the River Wear to accentuate the "magic". Imitating the Dog similarly hid projectors to preserve the impression of the "lack of authorship". They also didn't allow visitors to get too close to the installation, which would "destroy the magic" by reducing impressions of intersubjectivity.

Spellbinding Yet beyond technique, the designers also note and absorb the effect of their work on visitors (see Figure 12). While their understanding of visitor experiences must be purely speculative, they can read the affective mood of the audience. One participant described the reaction of the crowd as "visceral". For example, during the performances of *Oh the Night!,* observers were so caught up in the story that they reacted strongly when children (actually real-scale filmed children) seemed to climb out of second-floor windows.

Figure 12 Enchantment at *Oh the Night!* Courtesy of Imitating the Dog.

Enchantment can be detected through an abrupt physical stillness combined with a mental hyperawareness (Bennett, 2001). Heinrich and Palmer observed how visitors to *The Ship of the Gods* were spellbound by the strange fascination of the real-unreal:

> "Their first inclination would be to come into the building and stand, not really close to the screen, but kind of you know they'd just stop in their tracks. Because they knew it wasn't CGI, they didn't quite know what it was, they knew it was from a real thing and yet not real. So all these contradictions mesmerised people".

The presence of the work "stopped people in their tracks". Heinrich and Palmer noticed how visitors repeatedly watched the film, transfixed:

> "People would go in and sit down. Whole families. They'd sit there and watch it 3 or 4 times I mean it's 20 minutes long, so they were there for an hour and a half easily".

They remarked that part of the fascination is that visitors "couldn't work out how the magic was done". Their mesmerisation could be attributed to Kant's concept of the negative pleasure of encountering the supersensory. The Projection Studio described the effect of their installation as immersive: "You're not just reading it, you're in it. You're within the mood". Similarly, Heinrich and Palmer also discussed visitors "stepping into" the work. The suggestion is that visitors encounter a threshold over which they may step into an enchanted place. For example, the final section of the *The Ship of the Gods* film showed a scan of an empty Hull Minster. Heinrich and Palmer remarked that this absent ghostly space overlaid the real-time Minster "fusing" in the mind, drawing attention to the poetics and reverberations of *present space*:

> "Light installations, particularly projections, seem to be especially prone to being there and not there at the same time; in parallel with but also interwoven into the fabric of a site".

At the end of the performance of *Northern Lights*, we observed an approximately 10-second, silent pause before the visitors began to clap, a striking, silent emptiness after the crescendo of effects and before the applause. Other designers had also noted this "suspension" or "stunned silence". As if the breaking of the spell meant a return to temporal-spatial boundaries, a return to the absence of enchantment.

DISCUSSION

The first point to make about the findings is that designers experience enchantment themselves as an initial aspect of its production. They first encounter the sites of their installations as a as the transcendental "spirit of place". Imitating the Dog envisioned the Warren Building in Hull as a ship and their installation transmuted the space into a giant storybook. The Projection Studio turned their sublime encounter with the spirituality York Minster into approximations of Valhalla and Ragnarok. Heinrich and Palmer imagined the Hull streets as shipping canals and transmuted the Minster into a spectral memory of fishing heritage. Their impulse to remake Durham Castle into the dwellings of the ordinary, led NOVAK to create a favela. Then when designers set up the installations they align projection and acoustics, in a sublimely harmonious act, often alone in the venue, re-enchanting themselves with the *fantasy spirit* of place (see figure 13). Their metamorphoses create thresholds to the imagination, should visitors choose to enter.

The article portrays light installations as enchanting storyscapes. Designers located and curated locally distinctive sources of folklore, and emic, site-specific references. Curiosity led The Projection Studio to locate the Norse *Poetic Edda* spoken in the original tongue and NOVAK to track down a traditional storyteller in a pub in Finland. In doing so they were authenticating fantasy. This approach enriches their storyscapes with the multiple voices and presence of oral storytellers. Like skills passing from the hand to the hand of craftsmen, tales are passed from the voice to the voice of storytellers, each of whom appropriates the material and adds their creative trace to the work in turn. The underlying sense of lineage in fairytales and myths enchants the storyscapes still further through the multiple twists of retellings.

Enchantment is unexpected, it does not involve settling into familiar comfort or, as some authors have stated, avoiding the surreal. Instead, in addition to metamorphic illusions, designers deploy a variety of destabilisation techniques throughout their work to surprise installation visitors. They discomfort visitors with motifs including talking animals and monsters and manipulate the medium: The Projection Studio treated the passages of Old English and Norse spoken text like "music" (see Figure 13). They also use intertextual twists, forming "a collage of references from different folklore". For example, NOVAK mixed local folklore with familiar fairytales and The Projection Studio blended Christian and Norse mythologies. The peculiar fascination of enchantment stems from these fused elements, which are presented unexpectedly, in an eerily unfamiliar light.

Figure 13 Synthesising voices like music on *Northern Lights* in York Minster. Courtesy of The Projection Studio.

The concealment of projection equipment, lack of public explanation and authorship implies that designers intentionally enchant visitors with the illusion of the intersubjective presence of space. The installations could be said to embody new genii lorocum, new spirits of place. They also deliberately engineer the uncertainty of "perceptual confusion" creating the possibility of potential encounters with the supersensible. Otherworldliness also infused the interviews as designers spoke of the "extraordinary" and "magical" . The findings thus affirm Gell's (1992) hypothesis that the animus of artworks is permeated with creative presence, or *presences*, as "interwoven with the fabric of the site" as the patterns generated by The Projection Studio.

The findings imply that lighting designers take a different approach to imagineering enchantment. According to Fjellman (1992), Disney corporate efficiency principles and narratives are problematic, not least because they emphasise romance and *defuse* anarchy with humour and nostalgia (p.95). Lighting designers have the artistic leeway to *infuse* their work with narrative anarchy, for example by transforming Durham Castle into a favela through which the Lambton Worm grotesquely wove. Unlike Disney, the approach by designers to potentially nostalgic subjects, for example, the loss of Hull's fishing industry, is presented in an uncertain, spectral form rather than a sentimentalised version. In fact, the designers explicitly resisted notions that they re-enacted the past in their work. Instead, Heinrich and Palmer categorised their approach as "slippery. One foot in one world and one in another", or "a place in between where everything melds". Rather than clearly re-enacting or reappropriating a sense of "pastness", or even the timelessness of enchantment, Heinrich and Palmer's perceptions of time was that time was a presence that travelled across the work "like the shadows of clouds".

This discussion centres on how the designers produce enchantment, so any of their observations about its consumption by visitors to their installations is speculative. Having said that, they observed (and were enchanted by) the physical transfixion of visitors, creating sensations of co-enchantment. At the installations that we visited, both we and the designers observed how the audience resisted the end of the installation, pausing before clapping. We accounted for this by reflecting that light installations have a brief life-span. So the production of enchantment involves 'its own weight constantly threatening to send us back, no longer to the absent thing, but to its absence as a presence' (Blanchot, 1981, p.88). As modern enchantments, the ending of light installations must ultimately be resisted as the signifier of our return to the absence of enchantment in daily life.

The distinctive qualities of the production of enchantment by light installation designers are listed in the table below (see Table 1).

Table 1: The production of enchantment by light installation designers.

Distinctive qualities	**Techniques**	**Experiential possibilities**
Surreal: accessing symbols of the sub-conscious and inverting the laws of physics.	*Metamorphic illusions: trompe d'oeil; inside/outside; recreating awesome man-made natural phenomena.*	*Sublimity: cognitive dissonance; negative pleasure; uncertainty; overwhelming scale, environmental disruption.*
Anarchic: the chaos and violence of fairytales is not suppressed or heritage sentimentalised.	*Technical illusions: mixing multi-media; intermixed scale; jerky, eerie animation; hand-drawn effects; shadow-play;*	*Uncanniness: the defamiliarised familiar; the eeriness of distortion.*

Distinctive qualities	**Techniques**	**Experiential possibilities**
Storyscapes: authenticated local cultural heritage narratives act as jumping-off point for intertextuality and new iterations of stories and motifs.	*Narrative inter-textuality; ghost stories; fairytales; mythology; bedtime stories; local and international folklore; religious parables; spiritual references.*	*Physical transfixion: mesmerising contradictions; taken by surprise, stopped in tracks, timelessness.*
New worlds: tangible and intangible cultural heritage fuse with a fantasy spirit of place.	*Archetypal motifs: witches, animals; monsters; shape-shifting.*	*Disturbing: inverted suspension of laws of physics. Frightening: fairytale grotesquery.*
Unexpectedness: plot twists and disruptive metamorphic illusions create thresholds to the imagination where happenings can occur.	*Presence: Slowing the speed; hiding equipment to accentuate illusion of agency and intersubjectivity; using lighting to create spectral effects.*	*Presence: encountering a mystical, subsuming atmospheric, affective and imaginative agency.*
Defamiliarisation: Shape-shifting place and time.		*Pause after ending: transfixed unwillingness to leave enchanted state.*
Transubstantiation: the work embodies the wonder and imagination of the artist.		

CONCLUSION

This article has initiated an unfolding discussion about the production of enchantment. Our account makes an original contribution to tourism studies by establishing the ways in which enchantment conceptually differs from other forms of tourism development. Literature from the fields of art and cultural studies has led us propose that the production of enchantment is distinctive in its aim to deliberately fascinate tourists with unsettling dissonance, uncanniness and sublimity. Its peculiar disruptiveness is designed to create a state of uncertainty, taking visitors to imaginative thresholds to the supersensible. As songwriter Leonard Cohen (1992) put it: “There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in”. Creating openings requires destabilisation.

In one sense, the production of enchantment is a paradox, because it involves knowingly and deliberately creating an affective experience that others do not want to encounter knowingly and deliberately. So enchantment is reliant on unexpectedness. The metamorphic effects used by light installation designers are surprising mixes of media and scale, mutating structures into peculiarly enchanting phantasmagoria which are capable of embodying the intersubjectivity of magic.

However, the novelty of light installations is not necessarily reliant on technological effects. An additional original perspective of our work is to discuss how, as storyscapes, light installations produce enchantment from metamorphosis, narrative and presence. Lighting designers absorb visitors in the atmosphere of pre-modern tales told around the winter fire, recalling the animism that Weber stated was lost from the disenchanted world. Monsters exist in the margins of illuminated manuscripts, or are typically concealed in the joints between the

Romanesque architectural elements of cathedrals (Frascari, 1991). As storytellers lighting designers tease the forgotten memories of the genii locorum, the spirits and monsters, out from the margins of the folkloric imagination. Places can be endlessly reinscribed with both the lost motifs of the past and with the narrative twists of new mythologies. If the tourist industry desires to enchant visitors (and avoid Disneyfication) then the imagineering of storyscapes should emphasise, rather than avoid, the unexpected, anarchic and surreal elements of intangible cultural heritage.

It is important to add that enchantment is not produced on one note. This article presents works including an awesome, spectacular epic, an eerily uncanny dreamscape, a sublime, spectral apparition and a magical bedtime tale. The variety of conceptual and narrative-based installations in the lighting industry alone is indicative of the diversity of modern enchantments. Also, we observe installations which are staged in historic environments. New research could address how enchantment is produced in a variety of locations, for example, the Ballroom Luminoso installation in San Antonia, Texas, celebrating Hispanic imagery in a highway underpass. In addition, the affective qualities of less narrative-centred light enchantment merits further enquiry, for example the focus of a spotlight on a hitherto-overlooked statue.

Examining the production of enchantment necessarily raises questions about its consumption. For example, light festivals have been critiqued as rendering visitors passive (Mercer & Mayfield, 2015). Introducing the notion of enchantment brings this hypothesis into question. Rather than passive, visitors may be transfixed by the negative pleasure of encountering the supersensory. A further point about consumption is that since the Middle Ages, enchantment has been said to be enthralling. The highs of encountering enchanting phenomena are addictively temporary, however new studies could examine visitor perceptions of the lingering imprint of enchantment on places after the light installation ends. These future studies of the consumption of enchantment could potentially enrich our appreciation of tourist experiences.

In conclusion, this study has followed Gell (1992) by elevating the importance of creative praxis in the production of enchantment in tourism. Perceiving the artistic process as a form of transubstantiation further illuminates the unknown, mystical aspects of enchantment. Designers are shape-shifters, transmuting light, sound, story and place into lightworks. They clearly articulate that they find the creative process viscerally enchanting. As a result, their work is imbued with affective sensations and it gains further agency. The animus of artworks is permeated with the creative presences of architects, stonemasons and other, past storytellers, all as intertwined as Celtic knots. A new understanding of the production of enchantment may similarly finely re-attune the tourist industry to the undiscovered stories, poetics and reverberations of places.

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