



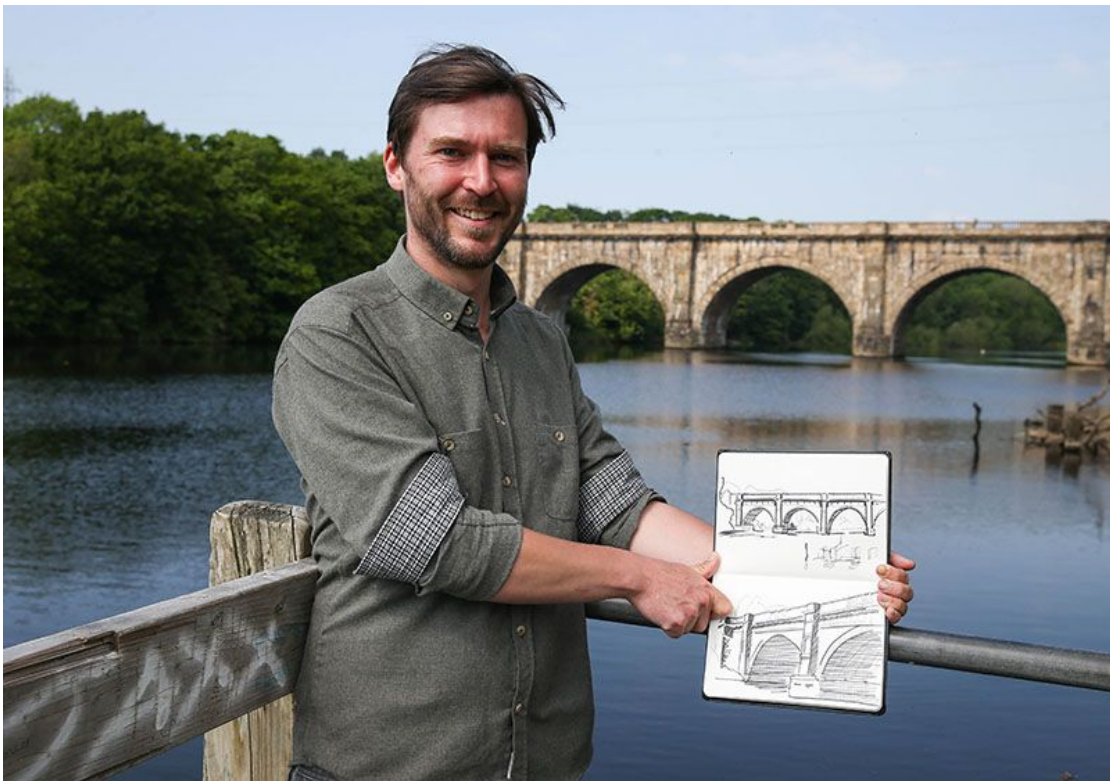
PRESS RELEASE

Issued: 5 October 2017

WORLD'S FIRST CANAL COMIC BOOK LAUNCHED ON LANCASTER CANAL

The world's first canal comic book, inspired by the Lancaster Canal, is to be launched at the Lakes International Comic Arts Festival in Kendal on Friday 13 October.

Commissioned by the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership (LCRP), the 40 page book '*The Lanky*', by Manchester artist Oliver East, captures people and places along a 27 mile route from Kendal to Lancaster.



Manchester artist Oliver East creates the world's first canal comic book on Lancaster Canal

Funded by a £15,000 Arts Council England National Lottery grant, the project also hopes to inspire a new generation of artists by hosting comic workshops

at three primary schools in Holme, Stramongate in Kendal and Christchurch in Lancaster.

MEDIA INVITATION

1. School Event: School comic workshop at Christchurch Primary School, Lancaster.

A chance to see artist Oliver East take pupils sketching by canal.

Time: Wednesday 11 October, 11am

Place: Christchurch Primary School, Highfield, Derwent Road, Lancaster LA1 3ES

2. Join guided walk along the Lancaster Canal, Sedgwick to Kendal. Oliver East will be encouraging visitors to walk and draw in comic style. (Two hour trip including minibus ride)

Time: Friday 13 October, 1.30pm

Place: Meet at K Shoe Village car park, Kendal.

Please confirm in advance. Media contact: Lynn Pegler 07783 686246

Email: lynn@peglercommunications.co.uk

The major driving force energising the partnership is the potential of the Lancaster Canal to create new opportunities for leisure, tourism and economic development in South Cumbria and Lancashire.

Charities and local authorities making up LCRP include the Canal & River Trust, Cumbria County Council, Inland Waterways Association, Kendal Town Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster Canal Trust, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council.

Partnership chair Audrey Smith said: “This project is a great way to shine a fresh light on a historic waterway. The comic book celebrates the heritage of the Lancaster Canal in a unique and exciting way, increasing awareness of the canal and promoting the development of the new towpath trail.

“Artist Oliver East has done a marvellous job of collecting stories and weaving them into a comic book interpretation of the canal. *The Lanky* promises tales of unpopular navvies, skinny dipping antics, secret Sunday sails and hardy old canal characters. We’re hoping it will entice a new audience of visitors to the wonderful waterway.”

Oliver has reinterpreted anecdotes and historical facts in his comic book style to bring to life two centuries of the 'Black and White Canal'. Sketching on the move, he has walked the canal towpath between Kendal and Lancaster several times over recent months, collecting stories about local people and places.

Oliver explained: "*The Lanky* is a fictional work inspired by facts and stories, not a history book or a guidebook, and with an element of poetry within each panel, echoing the movement of walking. I prefer to draw directly from real life unlike many other comic book artists - there's more life in a line created in the field.

"The comic's narrative interweaves different periods of history, looking at life on the canal from the viewpoint of a variety of characters, starting at the grand opening of the canal 200 years ago to the present day. People visiting the Lancaster Canal will recognise scenes in the book from real life, including landmarks such as Hincaster Tunnel and Lune Aqueduct."

For more information about the Canal Comic Book project, check out the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership website:

www.lancastercanalregenerationpartnership.wordpress.com.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

For more information, please contact:

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On behalf of the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership

Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership is a dedicated partnership of local authorities and charities, committed to celebrating, promoting and delivering the regeneration of the Lancaster canal and its communities. Its members include: Canal & River Trust, Cumbria County Council, Inland Waterways Association, Kendal Town Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster Canal Trust, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council.

The Lakes International Comic Art Festival (13-15 October 2017) is the only event of its kind in the UK taking over the whole town of Kendal, on the edge of the Lake District, Cumbria for a weekend each October. Celebrating the amazing world of comic artists, creators and writers, it brings the biggest names in comic art to

Cumbria with over 70 special guests from across the comic world.

www.comicartfestival.com / @comicartfest

Oliver East

@olivereast – twitter & Instagram

Olivereast.com – portfolio

Patreon.com/olivereast – blog about process of book

Brief History of the Lancaster Canal

The Preston – Tewitfield section of the Lancaster Canal was officially opened on 22 November 1797, with the Tewitfield section finally linking to Kendal in 1819. The working life of the canal lasted for about 125 years, bringing prosperity to Kendal, Lancaster and the communities along its route. It was known as the 'Black and White Canal' due to its main cargos – importing coal and exporting limestone and slate from the Westmorland and Lancashire quarries.

The arrival of the railways to Kendal in the 1840s signalled the start of a slow decline in traffic and the last barge load of coal was delivered to Kendal in 1944. The Canal Head in Kendal started to be filled in from 1947 but the major death blow was dealt in the 1960s when the M6 motorway was constructed, severing the canal route in several places.

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