inspired by London 2012

Essex Legacy from the 2012 Games

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For a better quality of life

Journey to the Podium

A collection of art

inspired by the dedication, focus and sacrifice of elite Essex athletes in the lead up to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Essex County Council

In the build up to the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, Essex County Council's 2012 Legacy Team established the Team Essex Ambassador's Award which aimed to support and nurture local athletes who had been identified as having the potential to compete in the London 2012 games.

To celebrate and capture the achievements of these talented athletes, Essex County Council Arts Development Team and 2012 Legacy Team annually commissioned artists to 'Adopt an Athlete' and create artworks that marked their journey to the podium, or at least the 2012 Games. Over the past three years an eclectic range of work has been developed ranging from painting and sculpture to sound and video pieces. Journey to the Podium Collection encapsulates the essence of Essex's sporting personalities.

After the London 2012 Games the collection will be permanently on show in sporting and cultural venues across Essex, creating a fitting legacy to this once in a lifetime event.

Councillor Stephen Castle
Essex County Council
Cabinet Member for Education and the 2012 Games

Gary Sullivan, Chairman
Essex Strategic Board for the London 2012 Olympic Games & Paralympic Games

Alan Hockett

Photographer
Commissioned 2011

Practice shot

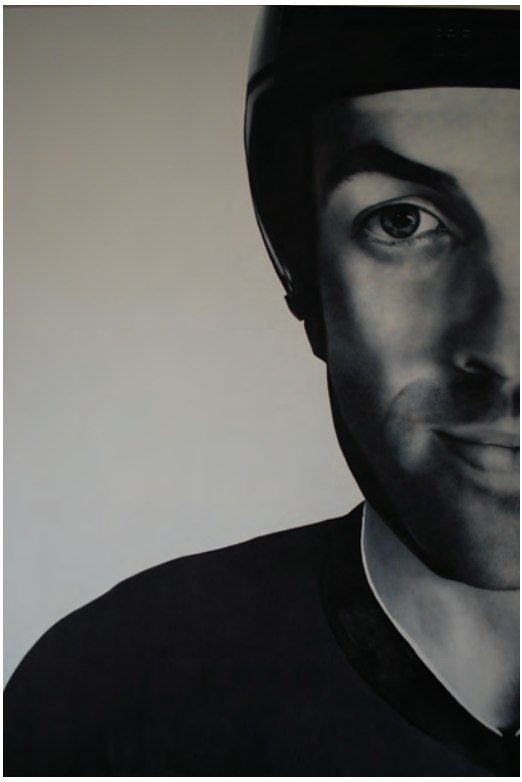
Alan and James collaborated in creating an image using a hand made pinhole camera. Using a ‘can’ that relates to James and a curved background, Alan created distorted images rich in emotion and tension, whilst still maintaining the essence of the original subject. The images effortlessly combine a twisted vision of the world, presented in a style reminiscent of the early days of photography and presented in a way that relates to shooting.

Athlete **James Huckle** Shooting

James’ first experience of shooting was with an old air rifle belonging to his father, when he was 14. At the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010 James achieved three Silver team medals and two Bronze individual medals.

Amy Rogers

Painter
Commissioned 2011



Alex Dowsett

Amy was paired with Alex Dowsett, cyclist for Team Sky. She approached the commission by meeting him at his house surrounded by his cycling kit and attending cycling events including the Tour of Britain to work out the best way to represent him. She wanted to produce a painting on a large scale and experiment with composition. Amy chose to paint only half of Alex's face as opposed to a full portrait, giving more impact.

Athlete **Alex Dowsett,** Cycling - Road

Alex specialises in road cycling gaining a Commonwealth Games Silver medal while representing England in 2011. He is a member of the Great Britain Cycling Team and the professional cycling team, Team Sky.

Anthony Lyscia

Sculptor
Commissioned 2011

Two Arms, One Goal

What struck Anthony after visiting power lifter Adam in his gym was that he lifted an entire weight of 140kgs from a straight arm locked position. After discussing with the athlete the importance of the slightest difference in weights (Adam once came second due to 500 grams between him and the winner) Anthony wanted to define the athlete through a decorative image containing his two arms and the two found weights from a disused gym.

Athlete **Adam Alderman**, Disability Power Lifting

Adam took up disability power lifting at the age of 13 and is the British Power lifting Champion and the World Dwarf Champion in the 48kg bodyweight class.

Ben Dearnley

Sculptor
Commissioned 2009

Leap of Faith

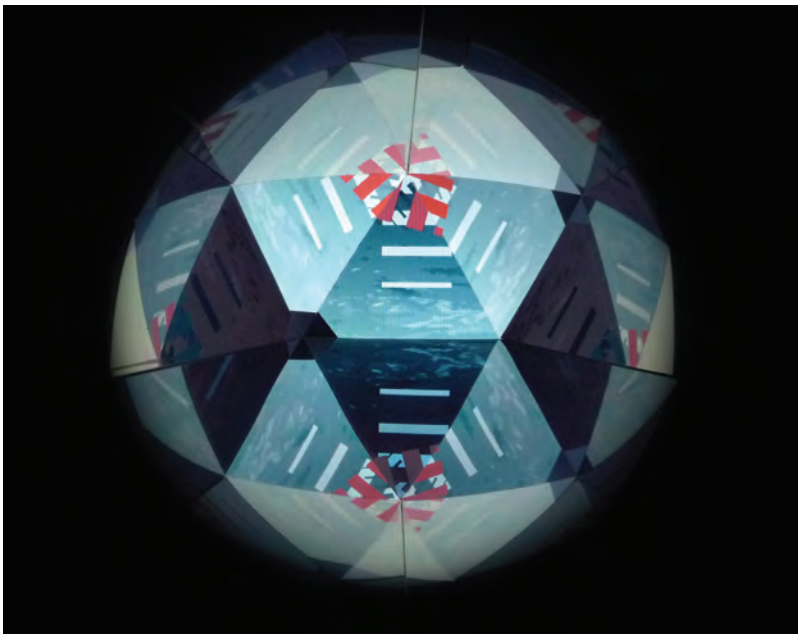
After time spent working with fencer Alex O Connell in training, artistic and teaching situations Ben Dearnley felt a deeper understanding for Alex's role as an Olympic fencer. They both worked with students from Shenfield High School. This experience proved to be inspirational for everyone and has moved Ben's practice into a new direction. He felt driven to find the figure within the stone, with light being the crucial element: reflecting the lightening quick nature of fencing.

Athlete **Alex O'Connell,** Fencing - Sabre

Alex started fencing at the age of 7 and since then has won just about every domestic title possible at Cadet, Junior and Senior levels. He was Team GB's sole fencing representative at the Beijing Olympic Games.

Damien Robinson

New and Mixed Media Artist
Commissioned 2010



Chimerascope

Inspired by Hannah's role as team tactician and the interdependent nature of the three-man Sonar crew, Damien developed the 'Chimerascope', reflecting and refracting her experiences of Hannah's training through a kaleidoscope of the shifting conditions and constant change that she manages.

Containing the core of the work within a decorated cabinet reflects the athlete's (often hidden) core of determination and perseverance.

Athlete **Hannah Stodel** Disability Sailing

At 2004 the Paralympic Games in Athens Hannah became the first British woman to sail at such an event finishing in sixth place, she then repeated this result in Beijing. In August she gained selection to represent Team GB at the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Dan Peppiatt

Sculptor
Commissioned 2011

Full Steam Ahead

When watching Alex compete there is very little to separate him from the bicycle. They move seamlessly together as if two parts of the same machine. The rhythmic drone of the turning wheels and the constant, tireless pumping action of the cyclists legs, driving the bicycle on, draw natural comparisons to a steam train. Using recycled bicycle and machine parts, 'Full Steam Ahead' seeks to reinterpret the relationship between man and bike.

Athlete **Alex Dowsett** Cycling - Road

Alex specialises in road cycling gaining a Commonwealth Games Silver medal while representing England in 2011. He is a member of the Great Britain Cycling Team and the professional cycling team, Team Sky.

David Shields

Photographer
Commissioned 2011

Body Mind Commitment

David's approach to the commission was to create three photographic montages showing different aspects of the dedication required to compete as a professional sportsman. The first montage was created by spending a day following Reiss and documenting a typical day in his life. The two other montages capture the mind and body required to perform as a world class gymnat. A limited edition book is also to be published documenting David's work with Reiss.

Athlete **Reiss Beckford,** Gymnastics - Artistic

Reiss started gymnastics at the age of 6 and has numerous championship titles and podium places to his name with one of his key highlights for 2010 achieving three Silver medals when representing England at the Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

Elaine Tribley

Multi Media Artist
Commissioned 2009

Olympia the Athlete

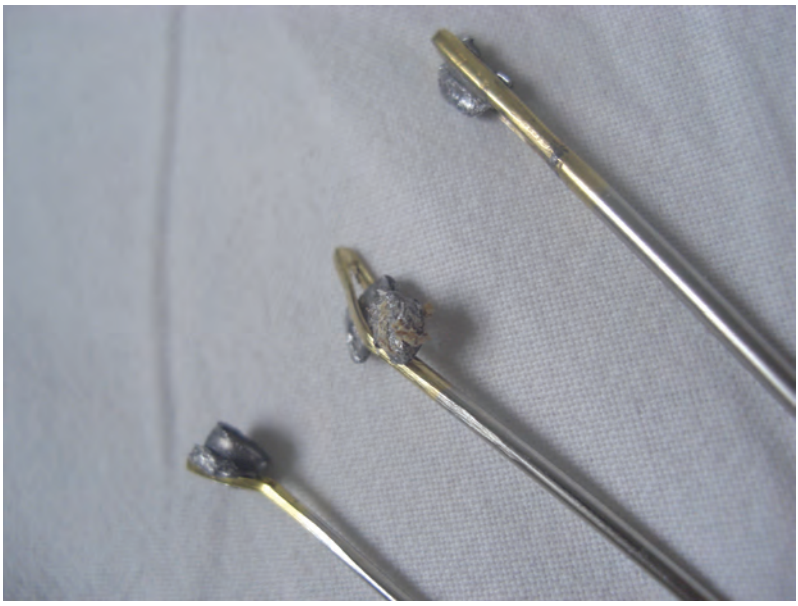
Originally Elaine envisaged working with the idea of 'objects of sport' However as she began to work with wheel chair racer Anne Wafula Strike, it became more important to capture the essence of Anne within portraiture. Elaine found Anne's story so rich and her journey to this point in her life so inspirational, that consequently this also manifested into keeping a blog and artist book reflecting the relationships between artist and sportswoman. www.a-n.co.uk/artists_talking/projects/single/567924

Athlete **Anne Wafula Strike** Athletics - Wheelchair Racing

Anne is an experienced wheelchair racer, specifically a sprinter who usually competes in the 100m, 200m, and 400m.

Helen Morse Palmer

Live Artist
Commissioned 2010



The Collection

The first time Helen met James Huckle they talked for nine hours straight about guns, live art and shooting. During this time they grew increasingly animated by the quantity of common ground between their seemingly disparate practices. Utilising this common ground has been key to the commission. The work produced is the result of a series of live art experiments, devised in response to this initial discussion, using James' technical skill under Helen's creative instruction.

Athlete James Huckle Shooting

James first experience of shooting was with an old air rifle belonging to his father, when he was 14. At the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010 James achieved three Silver team medals and two Bronze individual medals.

Jacqueline Davies

Textile Artist
Commissioned 2011

It's My Bag

Jaqueline has drawn on the glamour of being an international sports woman with this super hero style silver flake kit bag. Take a peek inside and you'll find a more personal narrative. There is even a cheeky nod to Chloe's team nickname Ginger Rogers which she gained from having fast, dancing feet on the pitch. The upcycled handle was shaped from Chloe's old wooden sticks. Its My Bag depicts *It's my passion*.

Athlete **Chloe Rogers** Hockey

Chloe is a current member of the GB squad. At the age of 26 and with 139 international caps to date, Chloe has competed in all major hockey tournaments since 2006 including the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games where the team finished sixth.

Karen Jones

Illustrator
Commissioned 2011

Excel

This portrait of the talented and beautiful sabre fencer Chrystall Nicoll takes its influences from a number of sources. The artist Karen Jones wanted to create a positive, feminine, 21st century image – curiously, to do this she looked back in to the history of iconic female Britons and a powerful image formed in the creative process.
Karen Jones has always been inspired by words. EXCEL appears as a reference to the venue where Chrystall will compete in the Olympics – but equally important to the artist is the implication of this word and its definition.

Athlete **Chrystall Nicoll** Fencing - Sabre

Chrystall has been fencing for 15 years, specialising in Sabre. She has competed in many British, European and World Championships and has been the British Champion three times.

Les Bicknell

Book Artist
Commissioned 2011

Boccia

Les Bicknell works with the book; a form that enables the dissemination of ideas to many yet simultaneously gives an individual a personal connection to those ideas through the 'object' held in the hand. He set out to connect the audience to the experience of Boccia and went onto make a piece with a functionality that mirrors the initial simplicity of the sport; but when handled reveals the complexity and gamesmanship which is embedded within the game play.

Athlete **Daniel Bentley** Boccia

Daniel has been playing Boccia since the age of 16 and was selected for Team GB in 2006 and the Beijing Paralympics in 2008 where he won a Team Gold Medal. He has already been selected for London 2012 in the Men's Boccia singles.

Lisa Temple Cox

Mixed Media Artist
Commissioned 2010

Postcards

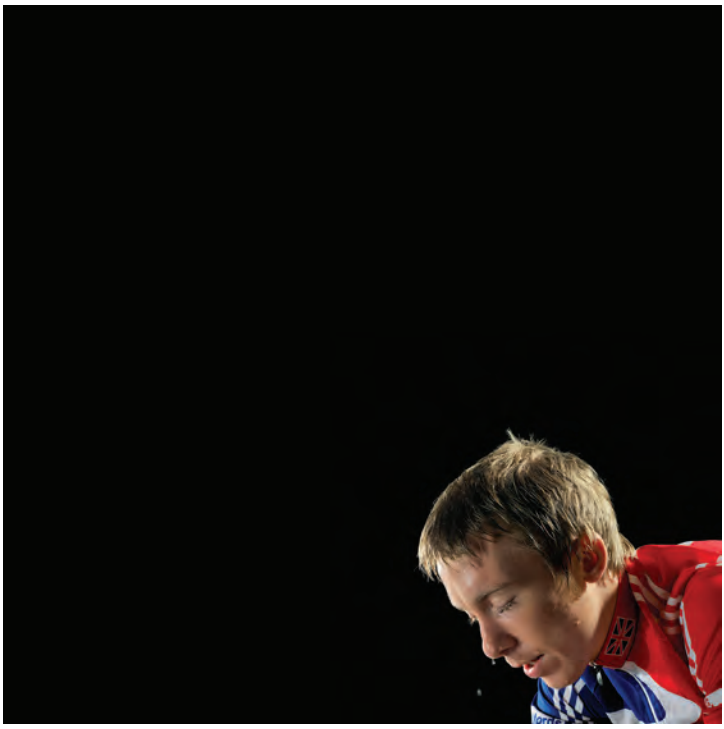
Lisa wanted to track Emma's journey through life as well as her athletic progress. To this end Lisa created a series of postcards and mailed them to Emma so that these small works of art would be postmarked and dated. By placing them in the postal system the postcards have been on a journey of their own around Essex and have already been public works of art before they made it into the gallery.

Athlete **Emma Hollis** Disability Swimming

Emma started swimming at the age of four and has since competed in numerous British, European and World competitions recently claiming two world records in 2011, in the S8 800 metres freestyle and S8 400 metres individual medley.

Marc Burden

Photographer
Commissioned 2009



Intervals 3 and 9

Marc's practice is primarily concerned with investigating the fleeting moments when our outward façade is dropped and we are briefly vulnerable to the gaze of the world. Sport is one of the arenas in life when this outward mask is most in evidence. A shield of impregnability and focus to those around, his pieces attempt to pierce this in the moments of the athlete's sacrifice and physical exhaustion .

Athlete **Russell Hampton** Cycling – Road

Russell is an experienced cyclist and former GB Academy rider, who will compete for the professional cycling team, Team Raleigh in 2012.

Mark Orbell

Painter
Commissioned 2009

Realisation

Mark was excited to be given the opportunity to contribute to such an unusual arts project. His aim is to portray the athlete Sarah Claxton in ways that the public wouldn't normally see her, but at the same time draw out her personality.

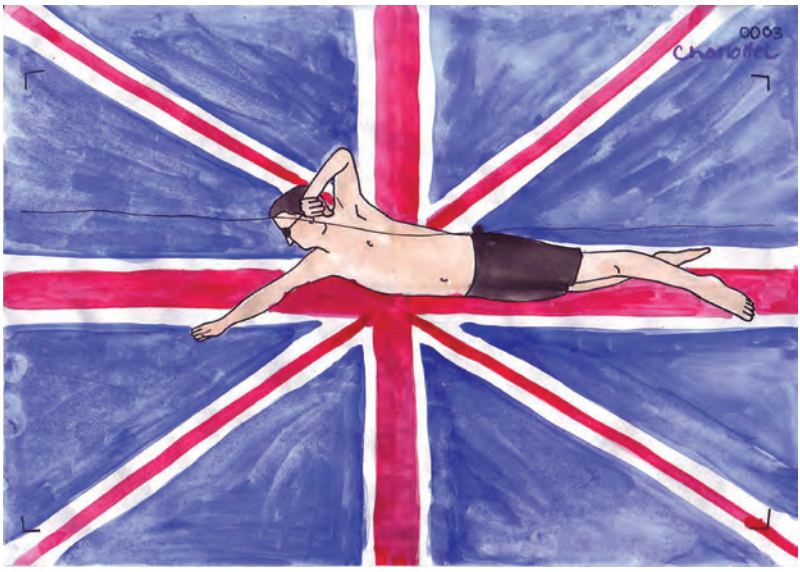
He wants the viewer to see Sarah through his eyes and hopefully if successful provide the viewer with a feeling of empathy.

Athlete **Sarah Claxton** Athletics - 100m Hurdles

Sarah is an experienced GB and England athlete, specialising in the 100 metres hurdles. She represented Team GB at the Beijing Olympic Games where she reached the 100 metre hurdles final.

Paul Heard

Animator
Commissioned 2009



The Swimmer

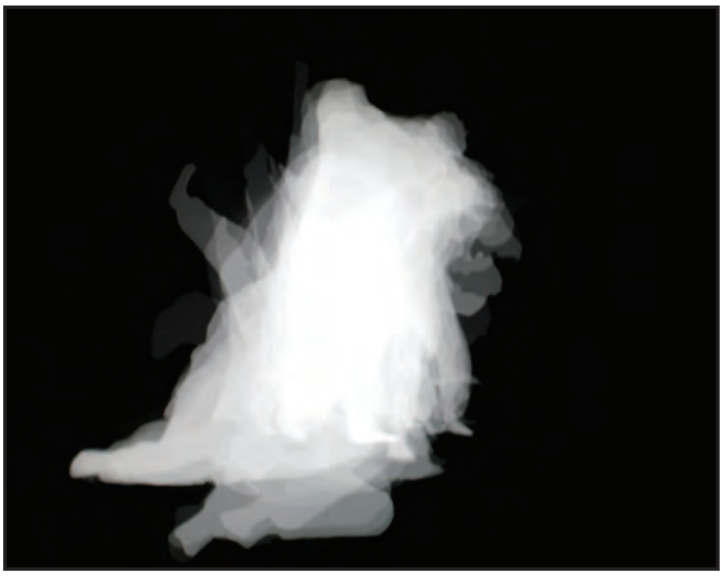
For this commission Paul chose to communicate the fluidity and rhythm of the swimmer Ryan Crouch by breaking down his movement into individual frames to create an animated cycle. He then reproduced the images and asked pupils at St Martin's School, Brentwood to artwork them, before re-sequencing them to make the finished film.

Athlete **Ryan Crouch** Disability Swimming

Ryan started swimming at 11 years of age and is currently part of the British Disability Swimming 2011/2012 Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS).

Rob Smith

Animator
Commissioned 2010



Player

Rob's approach to the commission began with the complex physical movements of Judo throws. Each throw is a set of actions designed to take an opponent off balance and land them on their back within an instant. Having worked with Faith it became apparent through the continuous repetition in training that these moves have become reflex but at the same time these athletes have an acute awareness of their movements and are able to stop, repeat and analyse their every move.

Athlete **Faith Pitman** Judo

Faith has been competing since the age of 11, including British, European and World competitions narrowly missing out on automatic qualification for the Olympic Games in Beijing.

Ron Suffield

Photographer
Commissioned 2009

The Boys

When Ron was given his athletes for this commission he realised that initial thoughts of approach went right out the window. Twin brothers who race walked proved quite challenge. After meeting Daniel and Dominic he realised he wanted to avoid the cliché twin imagery and represent them as individuals. Talking to them about race walking he discovered surprising facts he wanted to present and surprise the viewer. The question then was how best to achieve this aim?

Athletes **Dominic and Daniel King** Athletics - Race Walking

Twin brothers Dominic and Daniel King have competed in many British, European and World races and are currently ranked 1st and 4th in their sport in the UK respectively.

Stuart Bowditch

Sound Artist
Commissioned 2010

First Flight

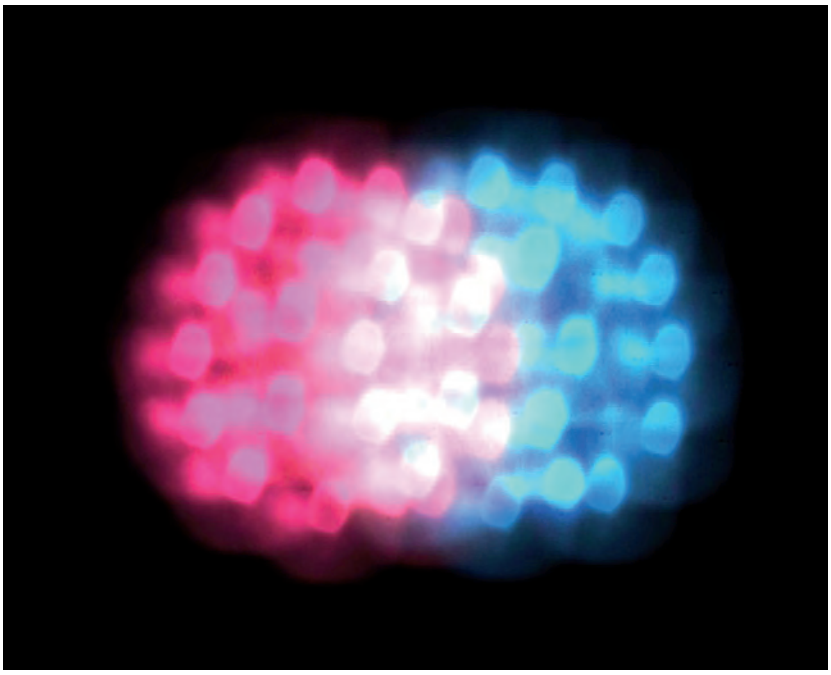
Stuart's interest in everyday sounds, rhythm and place, led him to working with Powerlifting Paralympian Adam Alderman. He was particularly drawn to the equipment Adam uses, the metallic construction and weight, the repetition of mechanical apparatus and the synergies between these and every day life routines. The personal drive of training and competition, the push to grow and to do better was familiar to the artist.

Athlete **Adam Alderman**, Disability Power Lifting

Adam took up disability power lifting at the age of 13 and is the British Power lifting Champion and the World Dwarf Champion in the 48kg bodyweight class.

Tim Skinner

Sound Artist
Commissioned 2009



Bully

Spending an afternoon with Chloe, Tim set about recording various sounds generated through playing hockey. Subsequently these sounds were used to form a pure sonic landscape. After this he explored the hockey sounds' own aesthetic identity, experimenting with a donated hockey stick from Chloe and a contact microphone (records internal sounds). He then looked at visually recording the sounds' ability to manipulate water.

Athlete **Chloe Rogers** Hockey

Chloe is a current member of the GB squad. At the age of 26 and with 139 international caps to date, Chloe has competed in all major hockey tournaments since 2006 including the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games where the team finished sixth.

Toni McGreachan

Painting
Commissioned 2011

Con Brio

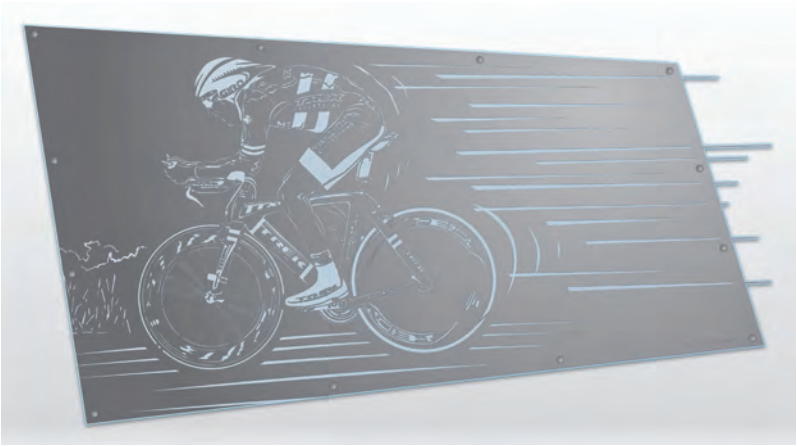
Toni McGreachan focused on making a painting that expressed Emma Hollis's professional life as a swimmer for Great Britain and was a recognisable portrait of her. She worked with Emma in a variety of swimming environments including attending a training session, a gala and at an outside swimming pool. She became familiar with the different elements of Emma's personality and swimming world which culminated in a series of paintings.

Athlete **Emma Hollis** Disability Swimming

Emma started swimming at the age of four and has since competed in numerous British, European and World competitions recently claiming two world records in 2011, in the S8 800 metres freestyle and S8 400 metres individual medley.

Valerie Osment

Artist
Commissioned 2010



Trial

Working with the concept of the visual poetry of athletic movement and symbolically created in steel to reflect his strength, focus, drive and dedicated disciplined nature, 'Time Trial' portrays cyclist Alex Dowsett competing in the event he excels at. A multitude of interacting lines and shapes creates the cut-out imagery, the abstracted figure identified from the vinyl text that reveals a glimpse into Alex's life and character.

Athlete **Alex Dowsett,** Cycling - Road

Alex specialises in road cycling gaining a Commonwealth Games Silver medal while representing England in 2011. He is a member of the Great Britain Cycling Team and the professional cycling team, Team Sky

Wei Ong (aka Silent Hobo)

Graphic Illustrator
Commissioned 2009

Southenders

Wei wanted to portray basketball player Franky as the athlete and as the teenager. From the start he has always been fascinated with how seemingly normal people can turn out to be really most gifted. Unless someone has celebrity status, athletes and community leaders etc can often go unmissed. He wanted to represent the two sides of the coin of an athlete in their arena and as a person hanging out doing what they do outside of their sport.

Athlete **Francesca Whitby** Basketball

Francesca is a past member of the England Under 16 and Under 18 Team, where she competed in the European Championships.

Essex County Council would like to thank the following partners for housing Journey to the Podium exhibition.

2009 The Weston Homes Community Stadium, Colchester

2010 The Gibberd Gallery, Harlow

2011 Basildon Sporting Village, Basildon
Rayleigh Windmill, Rayleigh
Hadleigh Old Fire Station, Hadleigh

2012 Beecroft Art Gallery, Southend
Houses of Parliament, London -
Arts in Parliament programme 2012

An annual art commission sponsored by Essex County Council
Houses of Parliament – Arts in Parliament programme2012

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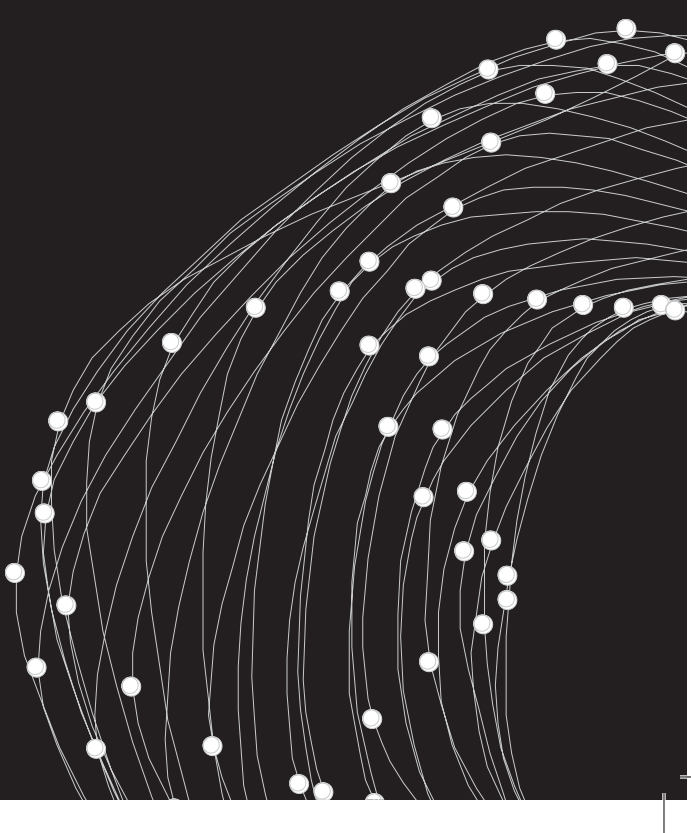
The Team Essex Ambassador's Award and the Journey to the Podium project have been accredited with the London 2012 inspire mark.



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Published January 2012

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