

RICHARD GRAY GALLERY

# The Telegraph

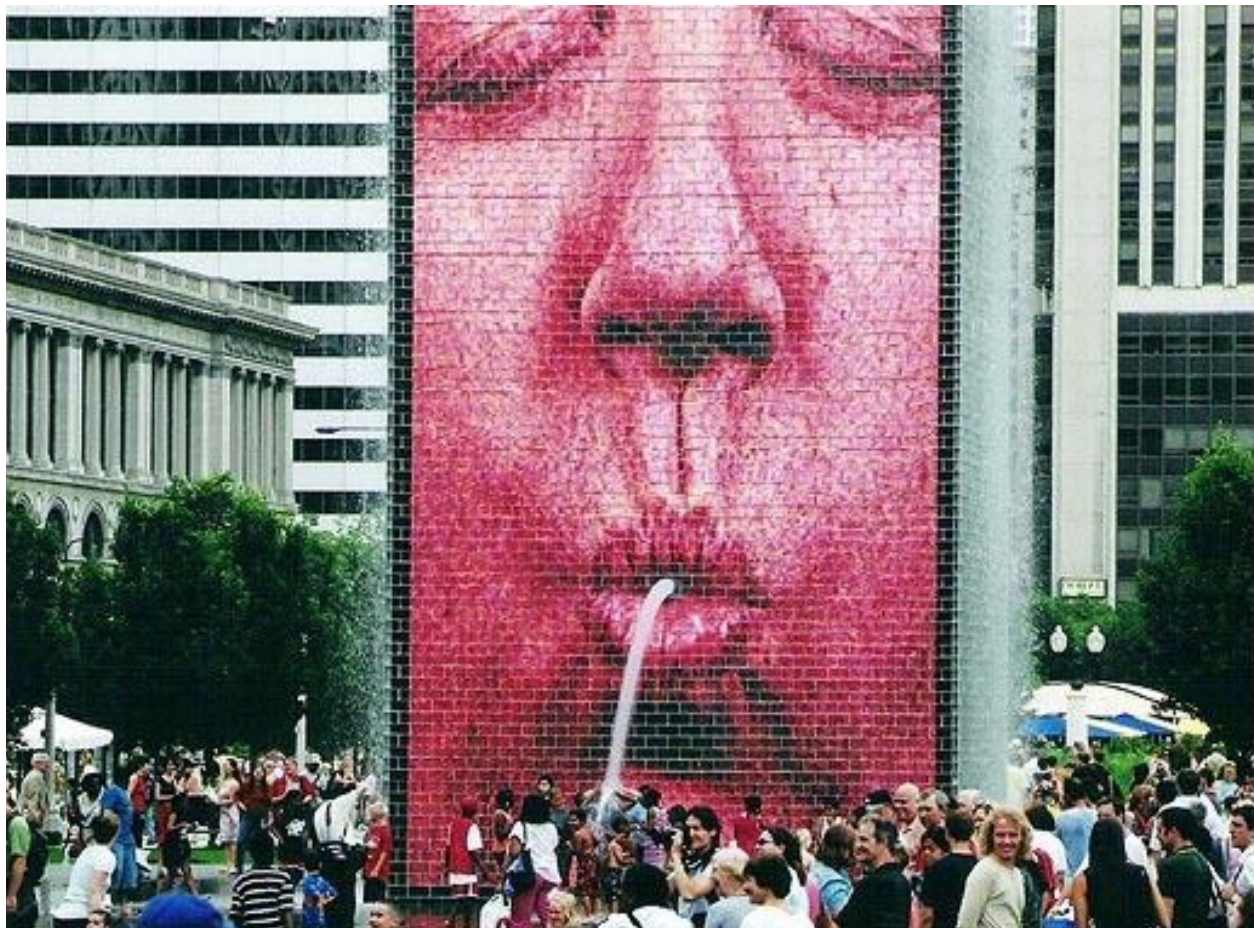
ART FEATURES

## Jaume Plensa: a profile

The Barcelona-based sculptor is best-known in the UK for his memorial to killed journalists, which rises above the BBC's Broadcasting House.



By Florence Waters  
7:00AM BST 12 Apr 2011



A fountain in Chicago created by Spanish artist Jaume Plensa, which uses the faces of local citizens to make it appear as though the water is gushing from between their lips Photo: WENN

**Jaume Plensa** may not be a household name, but the image of his work 'Breathing' is familiar to many from its daily appearance on the 10 O'clock news bulletin. The Catalan sculptor designed the white column of words which rises above the BBC Broadcasting House.



Jaume Plensa's Dialogue (2009) at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park Photo: JONTY WILDE



The unveiling of sculpture The Dream by Spanish artist Jaume Plensa. The sculpture was chosen by a group of local ex-miners and commissioned by St. Helens council as part of THE Big Art Project. Photo: Rii Schroer

Plensa's work typically references aspects of traditional memorial sculpture. He often chooses heavy materials such as marble and steel, which reflects the theme of permanence and memory in many of his works, and has made his work a popular choice for use in public spaces.

Major projects include his \$17 million 'Crown Fountain' in Chicago's Millennium Park (2004). The sculpture features the heads of 1,000 Chicagoans projected at random intervals onto two 16m high towers of glass, granite and stainless steel. The mouths, gargoyle-like, spout gushing arcs of water into the reflecting pool beneath.

Plensa also made 'Nomade' (2007), an 8-meter high figure on the seafront at Antibes, and 'World Voices' (2010), an installation which provides a dramatic entrance to Burj Khalifa in Dubai.

Besides his BBC memorial, Plensa is known in England for his 2008 work 'Dream', which rises more than 60 feet from the site of the former Sutton Manor Colliery near Liverpool. Fabricated in luminescent white marble and concrete, the elongated bust of a young girl with

her eyes closed is at odds with her surroundings. The surreal addition to the skyline, visible from the M62, has become a landmark site for the North West of England.

From today, the grounds of Yorkshire Sculpture Park will be dwarfed by the artist's giant heads, as the first major UK exhibition of his works opens. The show is co-funded by the Spanish government, and will feature new and recent works.

"Art should be an echo," Plensa once told the Wall Street Journal, "a feeling of your heart . . . a mirror, a container of memory."

The eerily lit polyester and marble heads of 'Dialogue, 2009' (pictured above) are among his works installed in the Gardens, where their vast, ghostly presence is at odds with the promise of the Spring blossoms.