

PIONEERING SPECIES

After devastation comes . . . new life, renewed hope, a bud of opportunity. In the plant world the pioneering species is the first to grow in stark surroundings where previously there had been nothing.

The Victorian-built Tynemouth Station is home to and inspiration for **Pioneering Species**, a public art work which explores this theme. The Victorians pioneered and forged new advances in several industries. Influences for this artwork were taken directly from the Victorian era, including taxonomy of natural species, pinhole photography, the exploration of unusual species and botany.

Tynemouth Station is going through its own process of regeneration. In its heyday the station was described as the 'peak of advancement for internal horticulture'. Now on English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register, it seemed the station might lose its former glory. However, with the efforts of North Tyneside Council, Station Developments Limited and Friends of Tynemouth Station a vibrant cultural programme will contribute to the station's transformation.

This installation of lush plant life set wild in the dramatic shell of Tynemouth Station pays homage to the Victorians' innovation and vision. It celebrates the diversity of nature and looks forward to the modern day regeneration of the station. Using the practice of pinhole photography **rednile** has reintroduced and reinterpreted the botanical heritage of the station for a contemporary audience. As a result, the artists have created a public art and community engagement project which is a synthesis of heritage, art and botany.

Living foliage is set beside iconographic images of plants in this surprising botanical installation. The artists couple native plants with exotic species highlighting the movement and multi-cultural shifts that shape contemporary culture, making it difficult to ignore the station's proximity to the North Sea and the lands beyond.

In conjunction with researching and creating this artwork, visiting renowned botanical institutions and seeking inspiration from local parks and green spaces, **rednile** and artist Sarah Bayliss also delivered a community engagement programme. Working with North Tyneside Council's Fostering Service, local allotment groups and local gardening enthusiasts, the community programme has produced images which will be on display at the Health and Horticulture show at The Parks sports centre, North Shields in August 2009.

Pioneering Species explores the transformation from ruin to regeneration; from something to nothing to something new . . . and extraordinary.

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rednile Projects Ltd is an artist led initiative creatively directed by three artists Suzanne Hutton, Michael Branthwaite and Janine Goldsworthy. rednile are committed to engaging others in the exploration and enjoyment of art.

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