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TIME TO REFLECT

Daisy Dumas finds art and nature converge in two new London projects



This artist's impression shows Aluna, a tidal-powered moon clock due to be unveiled in 2012 alongside the Thames

CLOCK WISE

■ In a world dictated by clocks and watches, East London artist Laura Williams swims against the tide. She sought a slower, more natural way of measuring time. “How can we help people to slow down enough to connect with each other and the Earth?” Williams’ answer, inspired by the Kogi people of Colombia, was Aluna, the world’s first tidal-powered moon clock.

Eight years and £1.8 million later (with a further £4 million needed), the Aluna project looks set to transform a be-draggled stretch of Greenwich

riverfront and time-keeping, forever. At over 40 metres in diameter – larger than Stonehenge – the grand-daddy of lunar monuments is made up of three static concentric rings of glowing recycled glass. They represent three distinct cycles: the lunar month, the lunar day and the tide.

Fiendish algorithms control the flow of illumination, powered by tidal energy, so that a full moon is artistically captured as a fully-lit outer ring. So by looking at how each ring is illuminated, you can follow the

moon’s movements, its current phase and the ebb and flow of the tides. This animation of light is called Alunatime.

The project’s benefactors hope that after it opens in 2012 Aluna’s gentle grace and sweeping ribbons of light will reconnect generations to come with the Earth’s natural rhythms and to its life, culture and biodiversity.

“We’re rushing on the way to nowhere,” says Williams. “Aluna is about looking up, looking around and seeing a bigger picture.” alunatime.org ►