

CASE STUDY

Structural Refurbishment

MAKERS

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PROJECT

The River

STRUCTURE

Public Realm Fountain

CLIENT

Birmingham City Council

CONTRACT



In 1993, Victoria Square, Birmingham was pedestrianised during a remodelling programme and an international design competition was held for a central water feature in the square which was won by Dhruva Mistry and cost £3.5 million. Mistry's winning design consists of four sets of works named; The River, Guardians, Youth and Eternity. It features a 1.75 tonne bronze statue of a woman 2.8 m tall, 2.5 m wide and 4 m long fondly known as the Floozie in the Jacuzzi as she sits in a pool of water which cascades down over the steps into the lower pool where statues of children and a fountain are sat.

Construction commenced in 1992 and was completed in 1994 when the square was officially reopened by Diana, Princess of Wales.

When in operation the water in the fountain flowed at a rate of 12,000 litres (3,000 gallons) per minute into the lower pool, but over the years the fountain required further works and renovations including installation of a multi coloured lighting system. Repairs were frequently required and in autumn 2013 the fountain had to be switched off after a major leak was identified. The fountain was then filled with soil and planted up with shrubbery and seasonal plants.

Birmingham had entered into the running for hosting the 2022 Commonwealth Games and so in January 2021 The River was in the mix for renovation to be up and running and in full flow in time for the Games.



Before



Before

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Before



Before



Before

CPC Civils were awarded by Birmingham City Council the Public Realm project, and so the fountain was emptied of its fauna and flora, and statues removed to allow for the preparation of repairs and renovation. Investigations took place to establish systemic problems within the structure of the fountain and then a set programme of refurbishment was scoped.

Makers were approached to carry out the concrete repairs to the internal face and base of the fountain to provide a solid smooth surface for the pool liner to be installed. The programme included all internal upstands and internal base of the fountains and the works had to be completed in the allotted timeframe during December 2021.

Providing a fully encapsulated working environment to enable the materials to be applied at the correct temperature. The application consisted of breaking back concrete to a solid base ensuring it was to 10mm minimum depth, preparing the steels and priming with one coat of Nitoprime Zinc Rich, once dry, the substrate was then wetted with clean water and any excess water was removed. We applied one coat of Nitobond HAR, and whilst tacky we hand placed the Renderoc HB repair mortar. A 2mm Fairing coat was applied to the cured mortar, this enabled a smooth finish to be achieved.

The clients pool lining subcontractor was then scheduled to install the waterproof liner, this gave the contractor the green light to start to re-install the monumental female figure representing the life force, known as the Floozie in the Jacuzzi.



After



After



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