



Avalon Development West Street

Galvanised, shaped, beaten and powered coated steel

The Avalon gate was designed and made by local artist Christian Funnell in 2007 and forms the entrance to the Avalon Development. The huge ornamental gates are made up of a central panel of botanical patterns and the head of a spiky pineapple that divides in two as the gate opens. On either side of the central panel are forged uprights creating a natural fence that is decorated with crab apples.

Funnell took inspiration from 'Avalon' the legendary Island featured in the Arthurian legend which was famous for its beautiful apples. He has used the pineapple, a highly revered fruit at this time in Early England to symbolise their desire for the exotic, a continual dreaming and wondering of far away places.

The overwhelming size and darkness of the gates also references 'The island of the dead' a painting by Arnold Böcklin in 1880, which in contrast evokes feelings of the dark, unknown at the point of approaching an Island.

Funnell enjoys bringing hand wrought objects to urban spaces and likes the way a suggestion or an idea can be brought to life within utilitarian objects such as gates. He trained as a painter and it is clear from his detailed artworks that his metal work is just an extension of this but on a mass scale canvas. Some of Funnell's other public artworks include the 'Taj gates' on Montpelier Road and the 'Airfix gate' at Pelham Terrace.

Leading up to the gates is a paved area designed by landscape architect Fiona Atkinson who has also worked on many public art projects in the city such as the paving on the nearby seafront.