



**HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE:** Katya Filmus and Chris Blade with one of her creations.

A SCULPTOR has been hands on in creating eye-catching art works for ill children.

Katya Filmus has fashioned a series of 27 cast glass panels from her studio at the National Glass Centre, in Sunderland, which will go on display at the Great North Children's Hospital at Newcastle's RVI.

The new glass sculptures will eventually be displayed over three floors and use handprints from 22 patients aged between three and 15.

Handprints of consultants, nurses, other hospital staff and Katya and her fiancé Chris, who is senior manager at the National Glass Centre, will also be immortalised in the works.

**By KATY WHEELER**

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Sir Leonard Fenwick, chief executive of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, says art-work is important as a way to create a more welcoming and unthreatening environment for children and their families when they come to the Great North Children's Hospital.

"The old traditional image of a hospital is often one of an intimidating, frightening, sometimes boring place, particularly for younger patients," he said.

"It has long been my ambition to change that image by striving to create a modern hospital environment which is bright and welcoming.

"The Great North Children's Hospital is designed to feel as different from a traditional hospital as possible, allowing children and their families to feel more at ease at what can often be an emotionally stressful and tiring time.

"The wonderful glass artwork, conceived and made for the hospital by the exceptional Katya Filmus, is part of this vision."

Each of the three sets of nine panels has been cast in a different colour glass.

The first is a copper blue, while the second and third will be made using glass which changes colour under different types of light.

One of Israel's foremost glass artists, Katya moved to Wearside in 2009 and has forged a career with various specialist commissions.

For the Great North Children's Hospital project, Katya used lead crystal melted in a kiln and poured into heat-resistant moulds containing the impressions of the hands of children and staff at the hospital.

The hands were juxtaposed against three-dimensional text cast into the rear surface of the glass panels taken from get well messages sent to young patients at the hospital.

The whole process has taken Katya seven months to complete.

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# Handy Katya helping children



**POURING OVER HER WORK:** Katya begins to create.