

# National Space Centre



Leicester's National Space Centre (NSC) is a £52 million Millennium Landmark Project which opened in 2001. It is the UK's largest visitor attraction dedicated to space science and astronomy, and focuses on how past experiences of space science and exploration will affect our future understanding and activities.

The all-new NSC building - designed by London architects Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners - features a 41 metre-high semi-transparent tower which houses huge rockets, together with the main body of the building which is full of hands-on interactive exhibits, satellites, space capsules, a planetarium and theatre.

The task of creating and developing the exhibition fell to interpretative designers Haley Sharpe.

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Their proposals had to fit within the context of creating a unique new attraction, which would help to broaden visitors' knowledge of space exploration and astronomy. The Centre would therefore have to be a futuristic, space-



like environment that was both inviting and interactive.

It was also important to create different 'moods' throughout the NSC which



reflected the specific appeal of each attraction.

The diversity of the Amtico product range was central to the concept of differentiating each area within the



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Centre and emphasising to visitors that they were entering a different 'zone'.

"The use of contrasting colours and textures complemented the overall lighting and colour schemes perfectly,"



said Haley Sharpe Project Manager Ron Watson.

"A good example is the three-dimensional effect of Amtico's Iced Glass," said Ron, "which featured extensively over a 175m<sup>2</sup> area, as did the stunningly modern Micro Metal Quicksilver which was laid over 130m<sup>2</sup>."

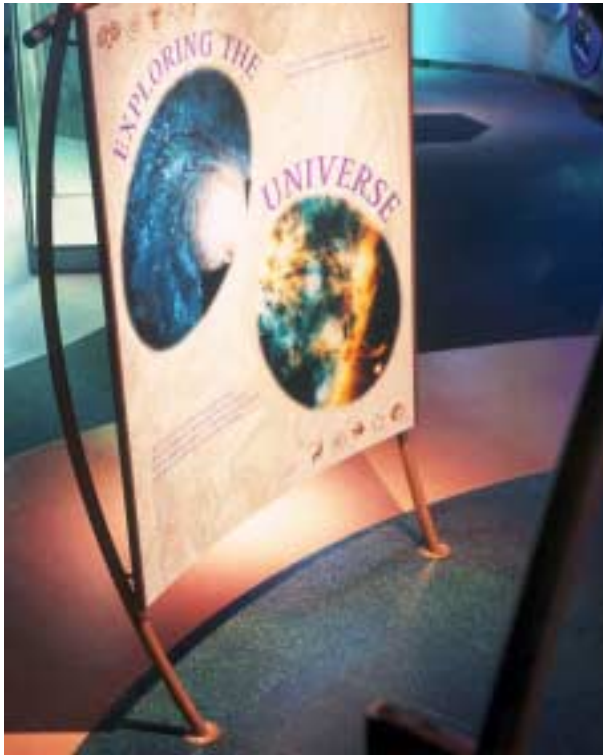
"Clever effects were achieved by introducing Marcasite, Lunar Purple and



Silver, Florentine Blue Marble and Stardust Black at relevant points, whilst specific flooring design features such as the solar system used exciting products like 'Cherry Wave' for visual drama and contrast."

At a venue which has proved every bit as popular as the space experts at Leicester University said it would be, the choice of Amtico Flooring has been thoroughly vindicated.

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As Ron Watson says:

"The National Space Centre is a deservedly popular project, and with thousands of people walking around for up to three hours per visit, the flooring needed to be durable.



"Our previous experience of Amtico told us that it would be ideal for this project - yes, because it's durable, but also because we know it'll stay looking good for light years to come!"



Design: Haley Sharpe, Leicester

Amtico Products: GL02, GZ22,  
MR30, NM97, JW539, LR31, LR81

Contractor: Colin Branson, London

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