



Promoting science through art – the *Chem-moo-stry* Project

ScotCHEM

WestCHEM

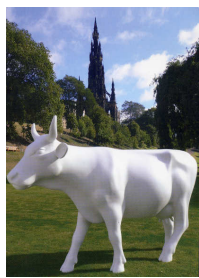
RSC | Advancing the Chemical Sciences



Gordon Barr & Andy Parkin, WestCHEM, Department of Chemistry,
University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom, G12 8QQ
Email: cow@chem-moo-stry.org

The general public perception of chemistry is that it is dull, old-fashioned and uninteresting.

The Parade



The **CowParade** is the largest public art event in the world and will be in Edinburgh this summer.

The idea behind CowParade is that artists are given a unusual canvas – a life-size 3-dimensional fibreglass cow – to decorate as they see fit.

The finished cows, numbering around a hundred, are then displayed on the streets of Edinburgh.

The Idea

We are sponsoring a cow to represent **Chemistry in Scotland**, which gives us a unique opportunity to showcase some of the best research being undertaken to a much more varied audience than we could ever hope to reach otherwise.

The cow should generate positive publicity across Scotland and beyond, reaching an international audience. It is a very conservative estimate to say that the cows will be seen by **tens of thousands** of people – the Chicago Visitor and Convention Bureau estimated that the CowParade attracted an additional 3 million visitors to the city when it was held there in 1999.



The Cow

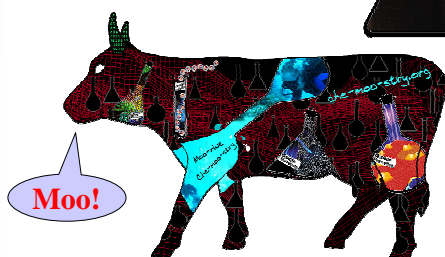
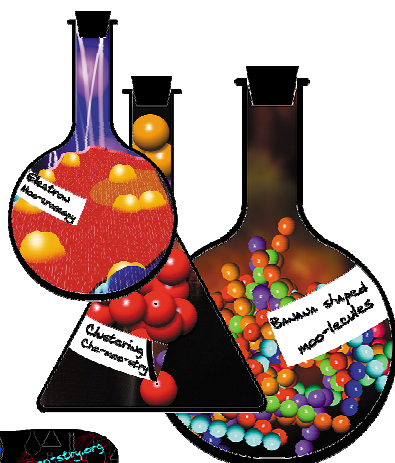
The final design for our cow is still under wraps, but will take the general approach of featuring several separate visual representations of different areas of **cutting edge research** against a backdrop of test tubes and glassware.



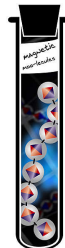
This will contrast the **modern chemical methods** with the public's traditional view of the subject, and also create a visual identity which from a distance will clearly say '**chemistry**' to the man in the street (literally!).

Although the cows cannot have any logos directly displayed on them, a plaque underneath each one states the name and sponsor.

Pictures and descriptions of the cow, and information about its sponsors, are noted in both a glossy companion book and a cowtrail map.



The Website



By including a web address as part of the name of our cow, we will have an opportunity encourage people to find out in more detail about the chemistry represented by having an accompanying website. The cow will be called **chem-moo-stry.org** and the website, at <http://chem-moo-stry.org> will have the tagline '*understand the science behind the cow*'. Visitors will be able to find out more about each part of the cow design, explaining the science that is being represented.

The Point

This would be the first time that the CowParade has been used to promote cutting-edge chemistry research and the **public understanding of science**.

By making a visually striking statement with our cow, we can begin to challenge the myth that science cannot be important and **cutting edge as well as fun**.

The publicity generated by this will be wide-ranging, and of interest to many organisations including the RSC, the Royal Institution and other public bodies.

We plan to milk this publicity for all it is worth!



Funding provided by:

Scottish Chemistry Departments (ScotCHEM) & the RSC

Likely Cow location:

Top of Leith Walk, Edinburgh

CowParade Dates:

15th May – 23rd July 2006.

