

In the Footsteps of Hercules Light Night 2012
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Doing the Labours in order would require a lot of back-tracking, so the following route is a suggestion that encompasses all of them on a circular route, starting and ending with the Leeds City Museum.

Leeds City Museum (start point) The Mechanics Institute (1862, by Cuthbert Brodrick) has always been a place of education and, as the Civic Theatre from the mid 1900s to 2005, live performances.

During LightNight 2012 Hercules' mother, Alcmene, and the Young Hercules told stories about his life. There was an exhibition on ancient dress based around the costumes of the characters, including the Amazon Queen and Alcmene's undies. Costume-related material will appear on its own website in due course.

From the Leeds City Museum to Mandela Gardens cross Millennium Square. Note the temple-like Greco-Roman portico of the Civic Hall (1931-33, by E. Vincent Harris) with its Corinthian columns and also the carved keystone above the side window of a Roman victory monument - an empty suit of a dead enemy's armour hung on a tree. There were Roman forts in Adel and on the site of the Quarry Hill flats (1931-41 to 1978). Note also the golden owls by John Thorpe (2000), sacred birds of Athena, the Greek goddess of the city, wisdom, weaving and war, whom the Romans worshipped as Minerva and also recognised as the goddess of technology.



Mandela Gardens (Labour 7: Cretan Bull and Labour 2: Lernaean Hydra)

From Mandela Gardens you can see the Latin slogan Carpe Diem ("Seize the Day") which encourages us to make the most of every opportunity. Olive trees symbolise peace and were the sacred trees of the Greek goddess Athena, Hercules' patron goddess.

Town Hall (Labour 1: Nemean Lion)

The Town Hall (1852-8, by Cuthbert Brodrick) features a 10 column corinthian colonnade and classically-influenced architectural sculptures by

John Thomas (c.1858). As well as classically draped female figures embodying aspects of Leeds' culture and industry the Town Hall features Minerva (Roman goddess of wisdom, war, weaving and technology) and has carvings of fasces - the bundles of rods and axes carried by Roman magistrates as a sign that they could use corporal and capital

punishment - by the main doors. Hercules and Bacchus/Liber/Dionysus (the god of wine, theatre, fertility and rebirth), also by John Thomas (c.1858) appear on the Oxford Place side. The Town Hall Lions, sculpted in Portland stone, by William Day Keyworth of London, 1867.

From the Town Hall to Bond Court cross The Headrow and go down East Parade, noting Athenaeum House (1890, by William Bakewell) on the corner, with its classically draped personifications of the Arts. Go past Minerva House on the left to the junction with Infirmary Street. before turning, look opposite to the corner of St. Paul's Street and Atlas House (1910, by Perkins and

Bulmer), where a statue of Atlas (punished for fighting against the gods) by Thewlis and Co. holds up the heavens - or does he? Hercules once held up the heavens for Atlas, is he doing it now or not? Cross over Infirmary Street and turn left along it. The Yorkshire Penny Bank building (1893-4, by G. B. Bulmer) is the favourite perch of the eagle which pecked out Prometheus' liver (his punishment for stealing fire from the gods). On the way to fetch Cerberus from the Underworld Hercules freed Prometheus and deprived the eagle of its lunch. Cross back over Infirmary Street and turn left into Bond Court.

Bond Court (Labour 3: Keryneian Hind and Labour 9: Belt of the Amazon Queen)

Bond Court is a place of conquest with an international flavour. Leeds' shady petanque court has "Boules Player" (a bronze group by Roger Burnett, 2000) and tables for chess, bringing a bit of France and New York into Leeds.

City Square (Labour 11: Apples of the Hesperides)

"Morn" and "Eve" (1893-1903, Alfred Drury) as nymphs with torches appear as the Hesperides, daughters of Hesperus (the evening star) and granddaughters of Atlas. Note the Greek-key-bordered Majestyk, the former Majestic Cinema (1921, by Pascal J. Stienlet).

Boar Lane (Labour 4: Erymantheian Boar)

Boar Lane was once a route, like Swinegate, used for driving pigs to market. It is overlooked by a statue of Demeter/Ceres (goddess of the harvest

and spring) by Joseph Thewlis on the parapet of Flares, the former Yorkshire District Bank (1899, by G. W. Gwyther).

No. 1, City Square (Labour 6: Stymphalian Birds)

This building (1996-98, by architects Abbey Hanson Rowe) has a dramatic bronze sculpture of flying birds.

From No. 1, City Square to Lloyd's Bank, Park Row. Hermes/Mercury (god of messengers, merchants and thieves), who welcomed Hercules into Olympus as a god, can be seen wearing a winged hat on several buildings, including over the door of the former Post Office. (NB to get to Bond Court, turn left at the HSBC.)

Park Row, Lloyd's Bank (Labour 8: Horses of Diomedes)

The Lloyd's bank Northern HQ building (1972-77, by architects Abbey Hanson Rowe) commissioned "The Black Horse" (1976, by Peter Tysoe), a 4.2m high sculpture made of steel rods.

From Lloyd's Bank to The Light. No. 18 Park Row, the West Riding Union Bank (1900, by architects Oliver and Dodgshun), features Minerva with personifications of Africa and America, Justice, Health, Wealth and Victory by Joseph Thewlis. The Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Offices have classically draped figures by Thewlis and Co. (1909), including Commerce and Wisdom. There is a Greek-key border on the former Branch Bank of England building (1862-4, by P. C. Hardwick) on the corner of Park Row and The Headrow.

The Headrow, Entrance to The Light (Labour 5: Stables of Augeas)

This used to be Cross Fontaine Street but during the construction of the Headrow Buildings (1929-31, by Sir Reginald Blomfield) it was integrated into the scheme by a tall archway topped by Doric columns.

Victoria Gardens (Labour 10: Cattle of Geryon)

Created in 1936-37 by Leeds architect J. C. Proctor, Victoria Gardens used to be Centenary Street. The winged figure with bowed head by Ian Judd (1992) on the War Memorial could be Psyche, the personification of the soul; the Greeks and Romans believed that souls had wings.

Leeds City Museum (Labour 12: Cerberus)

The Ancient Worlds Gallery on the top floor displayed a number of artefacts from tombs that can tell us a great deal about how people lived in the ancient world. The aim of the museum is to bring the ancient world back to life.