

CREATIVE HUB

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MARCH EDITION

Welcome to your monthly update on all things creative in Exeter. In our March edition we head outside and hear how walking has inspired our Right of Way and Creative Roaming events, talk about the importance of scratch nights with Beyond Face, and discover more about the making of the new paste up artwork in the Platform gallery.

What have you been up to this month?

Have a piece of creative news or an opportunity you'd like to be shared? Send us a message and we'll include what we can in future editions.

We have a new Instagram account!

Follow us @exeterphoenixcreativehub to get even more updates, stories and opportunities in Exeter.



Contents



News:

Hugh Frost: Umwelt

Beyond Face: A New Writing Scratch Night

Right of Way and Creative Roaming: Walking and Arts Practice

Two Short Nights Collaborations: The Pelican Project

Opportunities:

Film

Performance

Art

Courses

Events

Exhibitions

Hugh Frost: Umwelt



Cornwall based artist [Hugh Frost](#) has installed his piece **Umwelt** in the Platform gallery, our ever-evolving paste up space at Exeter Phoenix. We asked Hugh about his creative practice, which incorporates both his publishing work **Landfill Editions** and visual art that incorporates recurring symbols and languages.

Can you tell us about the symbols and elements that reoccur throughout your works?

The white silhouettes reference the reverse side of stickers and other graphic objects stuck on windows, as seen from the street. These forms hold significance for me in simultaneously acting as early compositional experiments, formative constellations of personal world or meaning making as well as being an interior facing form, with only an approximate outline projected outwards from one context to the experience of an external viewer. The title of this billboard work - Umwelt - comes from the ideas of the biologist

Jakob von Uexküll, that each organism has a unique sensory world, a term that has informed the expanded field of semiotics.

What was the process for creating your Platform piece? What was your experience of working at this scale?

The reverse silhouettes have been gathered as quick phone photos over the last few years, before knowing what they'd be used for but just from being drawn to them. Forms were later isolated from the photos using Adobe Illustrator, a vector graphics programme which works well for making large scale graphics as, unlike pixels, vectors can be scaled indefinitely, meaning small files can be blown up to billboard size sharply. Making the choice to work with vectors was useful as I was having trouble deciding on a direction for this since it's such an open project, and in the end the question of audience was more pressing than scale - the best use of a public platform - and considered something quite direct and text-led though in the end went for something a bit more open ended. One thing I realised after it went up was that the high contrast of stark white on the



previous layers of posters worked well, since it's a space people move through at speed and isn't a naturally lit area, so while I might have liked to include more subtle drawing, this was better suited to the space in the end.

Tell us about the work you do with Landfill Editions, is there an overlap between your practice and your publishing work?

I've been printing and publishing the work of other artists since 2010 through [Landfill Editions](#), using Riso printing mainly at first then moving on to offset litho for anthologies like Mould Map and collections of the work of Dutch author / illustrator Viktor Hachmang. I've published a couple of zines of my drawings through Landfill. Things have slowed down lately with other commitments, but I'll at least keep it quietly active to release new things now and again.

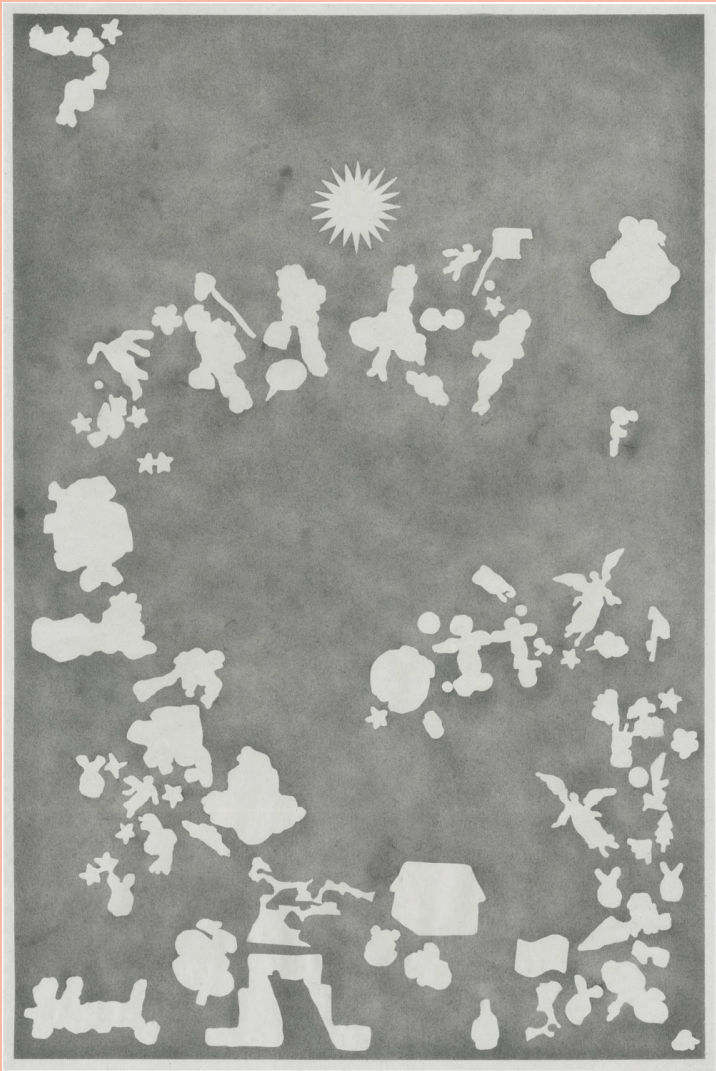


Image Credits: Hugh Frost

What advice would you give to aspiring artists in the South West?

Make community! Start a project space in someone's shed or a group zine. If you want to self publish your work, do it with others to build shared audiences and networks. Also, just personally figure out where is a good space for you to find focus. Most of the time I get more done drawing on the train than being in the studio, which shouldn't make sense, but with less distraction consistently seems to be the case.

[Umwelt](#) is open until 14 April.



Beyond Face: A New Writing Scratch Night



Established in 2015, **Beyond Face** are a South West based Theatre Company whose mission is providing opportunities for artists of the Global Majority to live, work and thrive in the South West theatre sector via our four strands of work; Regional Voices, Artist Development, Young People and Productions. We asked them what their New Writing Scratch Night is about and how you can get involved in the writing scene!

What is the importance of these scratch nights in the South West?

The South West is a huge region which is absolutely brimming with talent. All of the plays represented here for this event have been written by members of our Writers Group **We are Here to Write**. Members of the group are based across the region from Bournemouth to Bristol to Cornwall. These are writers telling urgent and regionally specific stories that deserve to be heard and

developed further. These scratch nights give them that opportunity to take their work from page to stage, develop their practice and introduce themselves to South West audiences.

What can the audience expect to experience at this event?

The audience can expect a series of very different short plays, stories exploring themes such as and different genres too, from magical realism to work which takes us back to 1940s Plymouth and verbatim plays which explore complex topics around race and social justice. These stories will take the audience through different time periods and places, harnessing the unique perspective of each writer. There will also be time to feedback to the writers and to find out more about the work **Beyond Face** does.

What advice can you give to aspiring writers wanting to get involved in the scene?

Most people offer the advice of just starting, get on and write but I would say that writing isn't just the action of sitting down at a table and writing. It is about absorbing information, observing people and behaviours and lots and lots of thinking. Consuming other content in multiple forms, forms that you might not necessarily gravitate towards will offer a useful alternative perspective. And find your community, talk to and reach out to other writers, provide that support system for yourself. And if you can't find one, create one!

Catch [Beyond Face: A New Writing Scratch Night](#) at Exeter Phoenix on Tue 05 Mar, 7.30pm



Right of Way and Creative Roaming: Walking and Arts Practice



Beth Bowden: Right Of Way | Credit Lidia Crisafulli

As Spring is just around the corner we start to explore themes of the outdoors and walking across our programme with two events inspired by nature and the South West landscapes.

Using lyrical movement and projections of the Coast Path, **RIGHT OF WAY** explores our intimate connection with the coastline, bodies of water and our heritage. Written whilst walking the South West Coast Path, it is an autobiographical and embodied reflection on disability, chronic illness and being a Young Carer.

In our Social[practice] series **Creative Roaming**, we will be heading out to Dawlish Warren to explore walking and gathering as inspiration for creative practices. This programme of events offers an alternative platform for artists and creative producers to meet and make together in a series of practical projects hosted by creative practitioners.

Our Performance Programmer and Visual Arts Programme Coordinator have asked Beth Bowden (Right of Way) and Erika Cann (Creative Roaming) about their practices, and how the outdoors has influenced the way that they make work.

How would you describe your approach to your practice in a few words?

EC: I explore our connection to place through the strata beneath our feet, exploring the material entanglements and fluidity between bodies and geologies. Situated in Devon, my work references the local geological landscapes, from the ancient granite tors of Dartmoor, to the ever-changing Jurassic Coastline.

BB: I am guided and rooted by the following values and aims, across my practice (theatre-making, facilitating, writing, directing):

1. To create research based, experimental, responsive theatre that centres social justice issues. More work about disability and access and women and natural landscapes and play, and joy.
2. To collaborate with a range of local partners to deliver embedded participation programmes that sit alongside live performance work. To work with generosity of spirit, radical joy and offer creative provision, workshops, and training opportunities to young people, communities and families.
3. To produce accessibility-led work, as integral to creative practice - breaking down inaccessible architecture, geography, pricing and etiquette in our own work and organisations we collaborate with.
4. Rooting our artistic identity and practice in the South West landscape, and in exploring space and place.



Erika Cann: Creative Roaming 1

How would you describe your relationship with the natural world and how crucial is it to your artistic practice?

EC: I have always loved the outdoors and have been a keen climber and hiker from a young age! I grew up in Devon, and feel lucky to have had access to a range of natural environments, such as Dartmoor National Park, and our beautiful coastlines.

As a result, my practice is driven by engaging with the outdoors; from heading out on a walk to find inspiration, to working with found natural materials, or answering questions through my work about our impact on the climate. In my work I aim to encourage people to see the natural world from perspectives of care, enjoyment, and a deep connection to place and nature, so that others can enjoy and explore the outdoors in the future too.

BB: Put simply: I was raised with a STRONG love for the outdoors. Most of my earliest memories are of my Grandpa, who was an avid Rambler, on walks in the Lake District teaching me how to read a map or about the specific species of plants and birds we could see. He, and my Granny, were driven by their love for walking, maps, the natural world, green finches, and climbing mountains. This strong bond with nature influenced their artistic practice throughout their lives, and was passed onto me by my mum, my aunts and my cousins. For me and us, the sea, the water, the hills, and the coastline hold a very significant space for creativity, connection and conversation. So, you could say that the natural world is pretty crucial to my identity, as well as who I am (or hope to be) artistically! I love to wild swim and to walk - and am always jumping at the chance to ground myself in nature. I often experience my best clarity of thought and creativity in the meditative state I fall into about 5 miles into a walk!

For example, natural landscapes were integral to the making of Right of Way - Right of Way a new play that explores disability, chronic

illness, and the experience of Young Carers - and I wrote it while walking the South West Coast Path! It was also formed through conversations with friends on walks, memories of swimming in the sea, talking about nature with my mum during COVID... so nature is the root of the work.

With the water by my side, I wrote about grief, decreasing benefits, cultural stereotypes of disability, applying for PIP (Personal Independence Payments), and COVID isolation. Infused by my lifelong experience of caring for both a parent and a sibling, the play I created during those walks wrestles with the anticipatory grief and pathways to joyfulness felt by many Young Carers.

Right of Way is about reclaiming space and landscapes - whether that's the tree you can see from your bedroom window, or a cliff in North Devon. In times of extreme isolation, pain and grief, the natural landscape has offered me refuge, perspective and solace. During the performance, the stage is bathed in video projection images that I took during my walks, and it explores bodies moving through, between and against past, present and future SW landscapes. The



Beth Bowden: Right Of Way | Credit Lidia Crisafulli



aim is that the audience is transported from the dark performance space, and out into a specific SW landscape. To transport them to the perspective offered by wide-open fields, endless horizons and lapping waves I encountered on the journey...

I hope that the natural world remains infused in my work - not only in subject matter, but as an essential part of my creative practice. Only time will tell!

Do you use outdoor spaces to share your work with others?

EC: The Creative Roaming events are a way of sharing my creative experience and process with others, while also providing an opportunity for artists to meet each other in an environment that is open and welcoming. On the walks we share our observations and ideas with each other, which in turn open up discussions about our practices and relationships with the environment. I'm also interested in sharing the works I make in non-gallery settings and using outdoor spaces to provide unusual contexts for work, and would love to do more of this in the future!

BB: As a teenager, I used to perform with a fab devised company called

Acorn Music Theatre. We used to perform in found spaces, promenade in the outdoors, in barns, by rivers and sometimes in the snow! It was the most fantastic creative lesson so early on in my life, about the value of site specific places as performance space. I love the creativity offered, and accidental magic conjured up by working on the street, in a public space, on a beach, in a wood... I would love to continue this early influence, and take my work outside of traditional theatre spaces.

It's interesting because in *Right of Way* I talk about the tension between disability access and outdoor spaces. I would have loved to have done a performance of *RoW* on a cliff edge, exposed to the elements, but a lot of places that inspired the play are totally inaccessible locations. Accessibility is integral to our work - and performing in a space that feels as accessible to as many people as possible is important to us.

On our tour, we operate a relaxed performance space, the show is captioned, and we offer masks, ear defenders, and an Access Pack. We also try to infuse our performance space with pockets of the outdoors - pebbles from the beach, chalk, salt, water, and projected video. For now at least, outdoor spaces are infused into *Right of Way* through set, costume, content and form. Come watch it at the Exeter Phoenix and find out more..!

What advice would you give to other artists making work in the South West?

EC: Meet with others and be open and sharing about your practice! You will have so many interesting and inspiring conversations with other artists and you never know what it may lead to in the future. If you find meeting with others daunting, suggest going on a walk or visiting an exhibition together - having something else to do/discuss can make it feel less scary! Also, keep surrounding yourself with what drives the core of your practice and always aim to explore or experience new things - its a great way to continue to develop your practice and ideas.

BB: In the spirit of ignoring imposter syndrome, I'm going to try and offer an answer to this!

Central to my creative practice is collaboration and nurturing strong creative partnerships. So, what does that really mean in practice?

I met Suze, my Producer and Collaborator nearly 6 years ago now... This creative relationship has solidified my practice, and my artistic identity (both as an individual, but in partnership with her). She is the first person I go to when I have a new idea, and she offers balance, a new perspective, and an injection of creativity to all of our projects. Together, we always aim to test, devise and develop our work in playful, collaborative rooms - where any thoughts, ideas and pathways are welcomed. This - we find - makes the best work.

Thinking more broadly about Creative Partnerships - with our current project, Right of Way, we are headed on a 5 venue tour around the South West. This SW Tour would not be possible without the support of



Beth Bowden: Right Of Way | Credit Lidia Crisafulli

our fantastic Partner Organisations, including Arts & Culture Exeter, University of Exeter and South West Coast Path Association. We are also collaborating with Devon Young Carers (Westbank) to offer workshops to local Young Carers. These links have opened up a whole new network within the South West, including new audiences, and the project would not have been feasible at this scale without their continued commitment to support our work.

Networks can always grow and shift - I personally find networking really difficult, but I always love to have a coffee with someone to chat and hear about their creative practice. For example, I met our Sound Designer and Composer for Right of Way, the incredible talent Joseff Harris, at a Creative Conference at the Eden project... Collaboration can come from unexpected places!

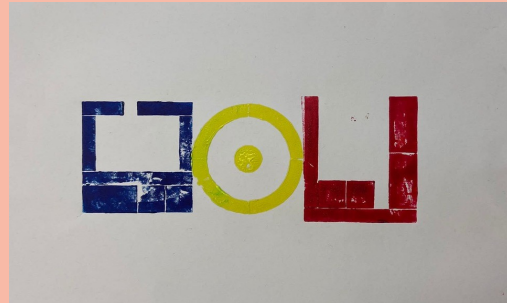
I won't pretend to be an expert - but I know that our work will continue to be strong, supported and connected through the networks we are building now.

Feeling inspired to connect with the outdoors? You can catch [Right Of Way](#) on Mon 11 Mar, 7.30pm, or join us at [Creative Roaming 3](#) which takes place on Sat 16 Mar, meeting at Dawlish Warren at 10.30am.

Two Short Nights Collaborations: The Pelican Project

The final Two Short Nights collaboration is with The Pelican Project, who watched some of the animated films from the festival and made phrases in response, using Lego prints and letterpress to create designs from them.

The Pelican Project are a collective of learning-disabled members, families, teachers and partner organisations. Their members are young people with a range of learning-disabilities and neurodiversity, at various stages of transition from school to adult life. Find out more about The Pelican Project [here](#)



“representing a clock moving trying to break free keyhole motif”

“reminds me of my mum lots of colour and atmosphere endless possibilities”



“thunder changed the mood”

“red motif representing blood and danger”

OPPORTUNITIES

ARTIST CALL OUT for The Exchange #4: An Exchange of Values |

Deadline Wed 13 Mar

Art Work Exeter are looking for 6 contemporary artworks in a range of media from South West artists to be part of The Exchange, our Spring 2024 programme at Exeter Custom House. Everything produced as part of this programme will be for sale, exchange or barter.

[Apply here](#)

OPEN CALL for b-side festival 2024 | Deadline 10 Mar

b-side is offering commission opportunities to create new artworks in any media for the next festival, b-side festival Sept 05 – 08 2024. Artworks should respond to the theme and can be responsive to Portland's heritage, culture, and geography.

Proposals can be for any amount up to £6,000 (there is an additional £1k budget for artists travel and accommodation, for both the Research & Development day(s) and for the Festival period) – we expect to commission across a range of contexts, concepts, and costs.

[Apply here](#)

Studio 10 Project Space: Exhibition Opportunity 2024-2025 | Deadline 31 Mar

East Quay would like to showcase your work in 2024-2025! We are looking for emerging artists to submit exhibition or installation proposals for exhibition in Studio 10 at East Quay. The theme of the Open Call is Climate and Change and we are accepting exhibition proposals from individuals, groups, and collectives working in all mediums.

[Find out more and apply here](#)



Image credit: Steve McCracken



Exeter Phoenix 25 doodle

Create a doodle for our birthday!

Exeter Phoenix is turning 25 this year and to celebrate we would like to showcase the creativity of our audience by sharing a wall of your doodles!

Draw our Phoenix 25 logo in your style (see example by artist Steve McCracken) and we'll share our favourites.

Deadline: 31 May | email your photos to:

holly.lawrence@exeterphoenix.org.uk



TWO SHORT NIGHTS COMMISSIONS | Deadline to apply: Wed 13 Mar*
Apply via the link in our bio.

Exeter Phoenix has launched our 2024 round of short film commissions. The commissioned films will receive a fee to realise their projects as well as in kind support to the value of £1500, which will contribute towards the production.

We are inviting application for 4 different strands this year.

1 x Devon Short Film Commission

1 x South West Short Film Commission

1x Artist Moving Image Commission

1 x Micro Short Film Commission

[Find out more and apply here](#)

*Artist Moving Image Deadline: Wed 20 Mar

Co-Creation in Dance Practice – Professional Development Workshop

As part of our Continued Professional Development Series Pavilion Dance South West are offering this one day dance practice workshop for early to mid-career dance artists currently working with co-creation in local communities, or for those that are looking to integrate this into their practice.

[Register your interest here](#)

Expression of Interest: Sweet Beef Theatre Workshop | Deadline: 01 Apr

Sweet Beef Theatre, a London based theatre company, are offering FREE creative workshops on 4th June 2024 alongside performances of our show I HATE IT HERE at Exeter Phoenix. I HATE IT HERE is a show about zero hours contracts and instability. We'd be really grateful if you could [fill out this short survey](#) so that we can make sure the workshop works for as many people as possible.

Part of the Main: Callout for QLab Instructors | Deadline 01 March

Following a successful Arts Council England grant, Part of the Main Productions is seeking three experienced Sound Designers to deliver workshops on QLab for Sound Design. These workshops fall under our 'Part of the Grid' series of workshops aimed at providing theatre freelancers with practical and affordable training.

They are seeking instructors local to Exeter Phoenix, to deliver a workshop on March 23. Instructors will be paid a fee of £250 for their preparation and delivery of the workshop.

[Find out more and apply](#)

UK Green Film Network Launch | Sign up now!

Exeter Phoenix is very excited to have launched the UK Green Film Network - a collaboration between Studio 74, Exeter Phoenix and a number of other cinemas across the UK. The UKGFN has the goal of encouraging more cinemas to show environmental films and encourage civilised discussion. Look out for some additional Green Phoenix Programme events in the coming months.

[Find out more and register here](#)

Doorstep Arts Scratch Bursaries 2024 | Deadline 04 April

Doorstep Arts and Villages in Action are offering two bursary opportunities in 2024 to support the development of original theatre for young audiences in Devon. They will provide support for exciting ideas for performances which honour children's creative and critical potential, and for artists who are making work which respects children & young people's intelligence, capacity and active agency.

[Apply here](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

Events



- [Art display by Janet Sainsbury](#) – An International Women's Day Celebration | Sat 09 Mar, 11am – 3pm | RAMM
- [Dreadnought: Occupy the Airwaves](#) | Fri 08 Mar | Exeter Phoenix
- [DOCLAB](#) | Tue 12 Mar, 7pm – 9.30pm | Exeter Phoenix
- [Beyond Face New Writing Scratch Night](#) | Tue 05 Mar, 7.30pm
- [Actors: How to Care for them in 5 Easy Steps](#) | Wed 27 Mar, 7pm | Exeter Phoenix
- [Social \[practice\]: Creative Roaming 3](#) | Sat 16 Mar, 10.30am | Meeting at Dawlish Warren
- [Part of the Grid: Artist Training Workshops](#) | Sat 23 Mar | Exeter Phoenix
- [THE EXCHANGE #2. A Thought Exchange](#) | Thu 07 Mar, 7pm – 9.30pm | Exeter Customs House
- [Best of Iris Prize](#) | Tue 19 Mar, 6.15pm | Exeter Phoenix | £1 off with the code SHORT74

Exhibitions

- [Natasha MacVoy: Eye Witness](#) | 17 Feb – 13 Apr | Exeter Phoenix
- [Artist Rooms: Bill Viola](#) | 27 Jan – 02 Jun | RAMM
- [Ben Sanderson: Ouroboros](#) | 19 Jan – 22 Mar | MIRROR
- [John Akomfrah: Arcadia](#) | 30 Nov – 02 Jun | The Box
- [Oliver Frank Chanarin: A Perfect Sentence](#) | 26 Jan – 23 Mar | KARST

Have a piece of creative news or an opportunity you'd like to be shared? Send us a message on the [Creative Hub Facebook page](#) and we'll include what we can in future editions.



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