

# **CREATIVE HUB**

## **OCTOBER EDITION**

Welcome to your monthly update on all things  
creative in Exeter!

### **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 on our  
social media channels and we'll include what we can  
in future editions.

### **Want more updates, opportunities and creative news?**

Follow us @exeterphoenixcreativehub on Instagram  
and Facebook.

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## **Exeter Contemporary Open Artist Spotlight: Nancy Singh**

Exeter Contemporary Open is an annual exhibition, selected from hundreds of entries from across the UK. This year's shortlist showcases the work of fourteen contemporary visual artists who work across painting, sculpture, photography and video. We asked some of the artists practicing across the South West about what they're looking forward to and found out more about their practices.

### **Tell us a bit about your practice**

My practice brings together photography, installation and film to explore questions of gender, identity, race and culture. I often work with memory and nostalgia, reimagining personal experiences in ways that connect to wider conversations about visibility and belonging. Relocating from North India to the UK has

shaped much of my perspective, as I move between feelings of being invisible or overexposed in different cultural contexts. Alongside exhibiting, I lecture in Fashion Communication at UWE Bristol, which allows me to bring research and creative practice into dialogue.

## **What are you most looking forward to about exhibiting in the Exeter Contemporary Open?**

I'm really looking forward to meeting new artists and being part of the Exeter art scene, which is such a vibrant space for ideas. Exhibitions like this are always exciting because you get to experience other artists' visions coming to life, and that in itself is a form of learning. I'm also curious to observe how audiences respond — their tastes, preferences, and questions often open up unexpected perspectives. Beyond that, I see it as a chance to make new friends in the industry, connect with our brilliant judges, and simply enjoy the experience of sharing work and networking in a supportive environment. Most of all, I feel honoured to be exhibiting at Exeter Phoenix — such a prestigious gallery with a reputation for supporting bold and innovative practices — and I'm thrilled to be sharing space with other artists in a setting that has such a strong cultural presence in the South West.

## **What advice would you give to artists developing their practice in the South West?**

I'd encourage emerging artists to use their early years as a space for risk — try out unfamiliar materials, test new processes, and don't be discouraged if something falls flat, because those moments often spark the most original ideas.





As your work grows, you'll also begin to recognise the threads that feel most authentic to you, and that's where your voice starts to take shape. When applying for grants or prizes, think carefully about where your practice sits, not every space is the right fit. I'd also suggest spending time in galleries and museums, not only to see what other artists are doing but to sharpen your sense of how your own work speaks to the present moment. And if the opportunities you're looking for aren't there yet, build them: start a collaboration, organise small exhibits and fairs, as there is so much talent and a very unique style of creators in the South West.

### **What's the best bit of work you've seen in the South West?**

What stands out to me most is less about one specific piece and more about the community of artists and creators that's really flourishing in the South West. Groups like Bristol Womxn's Mural Collective, CARGO Classroom, and Rising Arts Agency show how creativity here is tied to social change, freedom of expression, and reclaiming public space. There's so much talent here, and it feels important to hold onto it rather than see it drift to centres like London or Brighton. The real challenge and opportunity is to create more platforms within the region so artists can share their voices and continue to grow here.

[Exeter Contemporary Open](#) runs from Fri 12 Sep - Sat 01 Nov.



## **South West Short Film Commission Update**

Elinor Lower, our South West Short Film commissioned artist, shares some stills and an update on the process of making their film, Dawnbreaker.

Dawnbreaker follows post-menopausal recluse Gill who, ground down by years of ritual, is forced to begin the process of handing over her life's work to a sceptical child. That work? Ensuring the sun rises and sets, so the world doesn't end. Exploring the tensions between science and belief, the film explores what it means to have the foundational belief of your life tested, and what freedoms / joys / pains might be found in letting go. It will premiere at our 2026 Two Short Nights Film Festival in March.



“Considering the ambition of the film we’re trying to make, the production process has been a real baptism of fire, in the best possible way. I can feel the strides I’ve come on as a writer-director, and by the time the (unbelievably jam-packed) 2-day shoot was over the decision-making synapses in my brain had never been so tired! For many of us in the ‘dawnbreaker’ team who are still very new to making film (myself v v v much included), being able to try so many new things in such a compressed period of time has been invaluable. We have a cut starting to come together, a VFX artist noodling on a sunrise, and chats beginning about what the score / sound world etc might look like. Lots more to do, but thrilled with where we’ve got to so far.”







## **Exeter Contemporary Open Artist Spotlight: Andy Cluer**

As part of our series interviewing artists in the 2025 Exeter Contemporary Open who are based in the South West, we asked Devon based Andy Cluer to tell us more about his practice. Andy is also one of the three Joint Award winners from this year's exhibition!

### **Tell us a bit about your practice**

As a visual artist working across sound, sculpture, and drawing, my practice is deeply engaged with the relationship between environments and the human experience. I am particularly interested in how different spaces affect our perceptions, interactions, and emotional responses. Much of my work is dedicated to studying the subtle interplay between auditory and visual awareness, and how these sensory experiences shape the way we engage with the world around us.

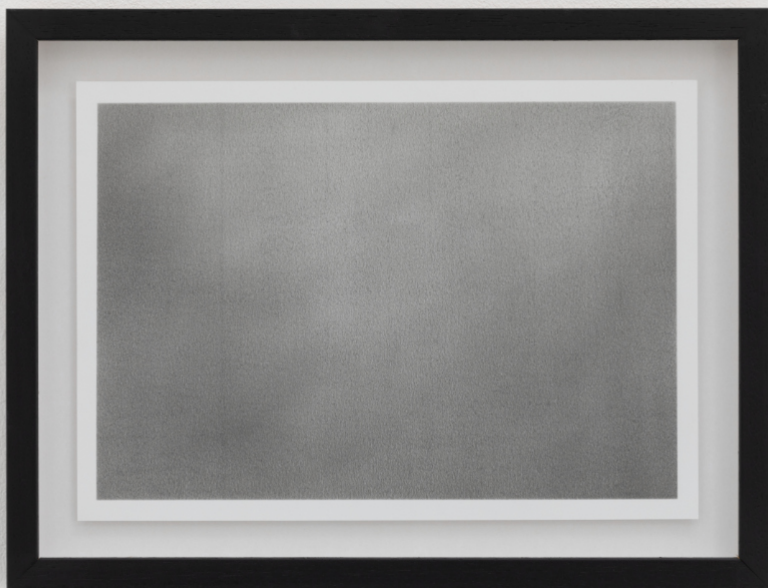
I often work in spaces that are isolated, as I find these environments particularly rich in stories and potential. Through these explorations, I aim to better understand how we perceive the spaces we occupy – how we move through them, how we imprint ourselves on them, and, conversely, how they imprint upon us. I'm also fascinated by how human presence has altered these environments over time, leaving traces that reveal a complex narrative about our interaction with the land.

As my practice has developed, I have come to discover that what I am finding in my research and these environments is my own identity.

In the works displayed in Exeter Contemporary Open, they explore the similarities and blurred boundaries I found through a series of walks across both Dartmoor and the Icelandic moorlands. The Moorland drawings are visual representations of the droning sounds I encountered across the two moorlands; Beneath the Uplands expands from these drawings, composing a series of layered field recordings from these same moorland locations to perform a continuous sound score which echoes the acoustic atmosphere I experienced.

### **What are you most looking forward to about exhibiting in the Exeter Contemporary Open?**

The Exeter Contemporary Open continues to be a landmark moment in the South West's and my cultural calendar. Each year, it offers a compelling opportunity to encounter the work of emerging



and established artists, and this year is no exception. The 2025 selection presents a rich variety of mediums and approaches, reflecting the breadth of contemporary practice today. I'm particularly looking forward to engaging with this dynamic group of artists and the dialogues their work invites.

**What advice would you give to artists developing their practice in the South West?**

One of the most valuable pieces of advice I received early in my career was that many people may have a 'degree', but not everyone has the experience. I've carried this wisdom with me throughout my practice, and it's proven true time and again. It pushed me to step outside of my comfort zone, and as an

introvert, this wasn't always easy. However, I've come to understand that being 'seen' and building connections is crucial – many of the opportunities I've had have come from networking and putting myself out there. Over time, I've cultivated a supportive group of peers I can turn to for advice and collaboration.

Believe in your practice and trust in the work you're developing. Authenticity and staying true to yourself and your vision is half the process. People will recognise the passion and commitment you put into your work and it will get you far. And, of course, apply for those opportunities.

### **What's the best bit of work you've seen in the South West?**

There have been many great artworks displayed across the South West, but Ryoji Ikeda's the radar [3 WUXGA version B], presented in Plymouth's Millennium Building, left a lasting impression on me. The integration of Ikeda's immersive audio-visual work within a historically significant space, briefly revived for this exhibition, deeply influenced my perceptiveness. It sharpened my understanding of how sound, visuals, and environment can intersect meaningfully, and continues to inform the development of my own practice.

[Exeter Contemporary Open](#) runs from Fri 12 Sep - Sat 01 Nov.





## **The Severed Sun: Q+A**

The Severed Sun is a British Folk Horror directed by Two Short Nights Festival alumni Dean Puckett. We spoke to Dean, and producers Rebecca Wolff and Jude Goldrei about the process of making the film.

### **How has the South West landscape influenced your filmmaking?**

(Dean): The landscape and psychological impact of Devon and Cornwall, especially the moors, have played a huge role in my fiction over the years. There's something about this area that makes you believe in fantastical things. It's no surprise there's such a rich tradition of folklore and myth; it feels like the kind of place that invites those stories. Like with the moors, when you're surrounded by so much emptiness, your mind starts filling in the gaps. I'm slightly obsessed with The Reader's Digest Book of

Folklore, Myths and Legends of Great Britain, and in a way, I like to think that each of my ideas, both short and feature-length, could have their own little paragraph in the South West sections of a modern iteration .

## **What do you enjoy most about being a producer in the South West?**

(Rebecca): What I love about the South West is there's this amazing pool of talented creatives who are lovely to work with. I think there's something that comes from a slight outsider feeling that brings this positive resourcefulness to the work and a supportive network - from crew to institutions - to help get things made. I've always felt on the productions in the South West this huge feeling of collaborative artistry, we should bottle that, it's so special. On *The Severed Sun* we had the incredible support of Screen Cornwall and Falmouth University as well as our talented VFX company, Primary FX in Bristol. Without whom we would not have got this film made.

## **How has the team worked collaboratively on this project?**

(Jude): This was such a special project in terms of collaboration, because Dean, Rebecca and I share a love of horror, we are long term collaborators, and we brought on many of our trusted HoDs who we have worked with across all of our various short films over the years. We also brought on our wonderful trainees from Falmouth University, where Dean teaches. These close relationships meant there was a huge amount of trust in the team and everyone really wanted to be there- we had such a lovely atmosphere on set, which is always going to be a great thing for



creative collaboration. Between us we have shot a lot of films in the South West and North of England, so we had lots of amazing crew from both the South West and the North, which was brilliant!

As the film was low budget and a short shoot, Dean, Rebecca and I worked very closely together to find creative solutions and in-kind support to enable us to realise the film on the budget, and I think we shared the ability to communicate well and problem-solve with our whole team in a collaborative way. As producers, Rebecca and I had produced other films together and I think we are both all-rounders in general- we both work across development, financing, production, distribution etc. There is such an enormous amount of work to do on a feature, it can be very challenging at times, with so many decisions to make, both big and small. Having the support from each other to cover the workload and manage the decisions is something that keeps us both sane and gets us through it. We also always had the support of Dean too, and being such a strong team was so invaluable, and I think one of the most important things you need when making a film!

## **What were the biggest challenges/joys of filming out on the moors?**

We honestly had the best time, it was a huge challenge to film a feature in 12 days but we had a brilliant team and were very lucky that our location owner, Rupert Hanbury-Tenison was so supportive and resourceful, he worked on the film as our location manager as well and there really wasn't any challenge too big for him to solve. The challenges were we were working in very exposed conditions and rough terrain while up on the moors. Our 1st AD Jonny Dry is a trained mountain leader and he led the schedule with such calm grace, which helped us through tough conditions. We were lucky with the weather too...we had the only stretch of solid sun of the summer of 2023.

## **Could you tell us a fun fact about the film or process?**

I have two - firstly that through our collaboration with Falmouth our SFX were done by a team of Masters students who broke down the SFX into smaller team projects and each took ownership of one element. I loved that.

There was also a magical moment where the weather gods yet again shone on us. We were filming a quarry scene and we were just saying how amazing it would have been to have some smoke/fog and as if on cue from what had been a bright sunny day the fog rolled in to assist us. There were lots of moments like that where it felt like the elements were another department of our production taking the film to another level.

**The Severed Sun comes to Exeter Phoenix with a Q+A with Dean on [Fri 03 Oct](#)**



## Scratch Night Selected Artists

We are pleased to present the selected artists for our Scratch Night in partnership with Exeter Northcott! The October Scratch will take place on [Mon 13 Oct](#) at Exeter Phoenix, and runs during Exeter Northcott's Elevate Festival.

### **Just Be!: Alex King (writer) Awkward Pigeon Theatre Company (Performers and Director)**

Just Be! is a new comedy play written by Teignmouth based Alex King and performed by Exeter's own well renowned Awkward Pigeon Theatre Company. Told in real time over one evening, the show tells the story of new teacher James as he struggles to convey his passion for meditation to a reluctant group of students. Touching on themes of trauma, class, race, grief, disability, misinformation and eco-anxiety the show explores the power of groups and the complex nature of mindfulness.

### **Don't Swim Here (There's Sewage Water): Cut the Bull Theatre Company**

Don't Swim Here (There's Sewage Water) is a one-woman exploration of our, sometimes poisonous, relationship with the sea. Swapping sertraline for the sea, what begins as a pandemic hobby quickly becomes a battle with sewage, sexism, racism, and privatised water companies pocketing billions while polluting our coasts.



*Glitches in Time*

Photo Credit: Paul Blakemore

## **Bone Caves: Alex Robins & Jon Nash**

‘Bone Caves’ is an immersive and multi-sensory audio experience inspired by the historic findings at Cattedown Bone Caves in Plymouth; home to some of the oldest human remains found in the United Kingdom.

The show explores hidden history, our ancestors, environmental and species changes, the psychology of darkness, mythologies of the underground and ideas around deep time.

## **Glitches in Time: Tom Marshman**

Glitches in Time (working title) is a new solo performance in development exploring queer aging, digital exclusion, and the shifting idea of community. Through a mix of autobiographical storytelling, camp performance, and archival response, Tom opens up a conversation about desire, technology, and belonging.

Drawing on personal experience, including the absurdity of being banned from Grindr, Tom navigates mythologies of aging, the politics of visibility, and the glitches that occur when queer bodies meet digital worlds.

## **Take part in the Dead Poets Slam | Deadline Mon 13 Oct**

Six famous poets rise from the dead, brought to life by six contemporary artists. You'll battle it out in a chance to win everlasting life, plus a cash prize of £100.

Using a mixture of your own poetry, the work of your alias, and some stuff you make up on the night. Expect punches, pithy remarks and pure fire, in the ultimate graveyard smash.

Want to take part? To apply, and for the full list of rules, email Spork! on [sporkpoetry@gmail.com](mailto:sporkpoetry@gmail.com)

Just let us know: Where you're based Who you'd like to play, and why A couple of sentences about yourself & any previous experience.

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## **Complete the Visual Arts South West Artist and Arts Worker Survey**

If you're an artist, arts worker, producer, curator, technician, educator or freelancer working in the visual arts across the South West, this is your chance to be heard. The survey gathers essential data to push for better pay, improved access, and greater investment in our region. It also helps build a clearer picture of who's working here and what support is needed.

[Take part here](#)



## **The Burton at Bideford Ceramics Residency | Deadline: 10am, Mon 20 Oct**

The Burton at Bideford is delighted to announce an open call for our 6th Ceramics Residency. Bringing contemporary art into conversation with our historic collections, this residency provides a unique opportunity for an artist in the early stages of their career to explore and develop their practice.

[Find out more and apply here](#)

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## **Exeter Artnership Fundraising Workshops | Free fundraising workshops for arts, culture and heritage organisations and practitioners through the Exeter Artnership.**

This programme of FREE fundraising workshops is designed to support our creative community to develop skills, share knowledge and generate ideas to support the local cultural scene to thrive. We will learn together, bringing in fundraising experts and experience from across the country, so that we can all build resilience and sustainability, and nurture a culture of generosity, collaboration and trust within Exeter's vibrant cultural scene.

[Find out more](#)

# OPPORTUNITIES

## Networking

[Playwrights Cafe Exeter](#) | First Thursday of the month | Exeter Phoenix | £6 OTD

[DOCLAB](#) | Wed 08 Oct, 7 – 9pm

[We Animate on Tues](#) | A new monthly animation gathering!

[Exeter Film Collective](#) | First Wed of the month, 7pm - 9pm

[Little Scratch](#) | Wed 29 Oct, 5.30pm - 7.30pm

## Professional Development

South West Dance Hub | Second Fri of the month, 12.30pm - 2.30pm | [Find out more](#)

[Exeter Artnership](#) | Throughout Sep and Oct | Various venues across Exeter

## Recommended Events

Spork! The Not Dead Poets Society – last Tuesday of each month, 5:30pm – Exeter Library, free, drop-in.

[Scratch Night in collaboration with Exeter Northcott](#) | Mon 13 Oct, 7.30pm

[Exeter Contemporary Open exhibition tour](#) | Sat 18 Oct 2pm, Free (no booking required)

Scratching the Itch: shaping platforms for sharing work-in-progress | Mon 13 Oct, 6.30pm, The Workshop (Exeter Phoenix). *A pre-Scratch gathering to discuss how we might shape our Scratch Night offer in 2026. All welcome!*

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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# CREATIVE HUB



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