

# CREATIVE HUB

## MAY 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?**

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# Contents

## News

**MA Curation exhibition: PHANTOM THREADS**

**A Q&A with Thresh & Bray Theatre**

**Bodies Borders Becoming: Exeter Pride Exhibition**

**Open Door Festival: A Q&A with Doohickie Productions**

## Opportunities

### Events

**Networking**

**Professional Development**

**Recommended events**



## **MA Curation exhibition: PHANTOM THREADS**

Each year, the University of Exeter's MA Curation students take over multiple venues across the city to present their curated exhibitions. PHANTOM THREADS is curated by Kaia Brushaber, Moyan Zhang, and Liv Pattimore and will be shown with Positive Light Projects at EP Sidwell Street, an Exeter Phoenix project space. We chatted to Liv from the Phantom Threads team to find out how they've been getting on ahead of the exhibition.

### **What are you curating for your end of year show and what was your interest in this theme?**

Phantom Threads is a curated collection of work by a group of women; some family, some local artists, some friends - all incredible craft work that is not valued as highly as 'art' because of its long-standing domestic connotations. We were interested in exhibiting this work because we wanted to challenge the (often misogynistically rooted) archetypes of what art is traditionally considered to be, and showcase how critically important matrilineal creation and craftivism is within the art world. We also wanted to showcase how unifying craft is, and even though global borders separate us, the commonality and community craft forges remains.

### **What are you looking forward to about the process and what have you learnt along the way so far?**

We are excited to have this opportunity to work with creatives that we have a deep appreciation for, and to see how the public will engage with the exhibition and its themes during (and after) its runtime. We have learnt about the value of open discussion and feedback from peers and members of the community we are working with, which has allowed us to look at Phantom Threads and its aims through multiple perspectives, understanding what elements of craft are important to people.

## What have you enjoyed most about being a student in Exeter and the creative scene here?

I enjoy the openness of the creative community here. It's easy to communicate with peers, receive feedback, and test ideas. This not only helps me deepen my curatorial thinking, but helps me experience curating as socially engaged. During this project, we've been able to deeply appreciate the power of women, the labour they have put in, and how different audiences experience

exhibitions. My studies enabled me to strike a balance between research and exploration crucial to developing my own curatorial approach. We have experienced a supportive environment, allowing us to continuously refine and realize our curatorial vision.



**Open 4th-14th of June 2026 at EP Sidwell Street, Positive Light Projects, as part of the University of Exeter's 2026 MA Curation shows 'REWORLDDING'**





## **A Q&A with Thresh & Bray Theatre**

Thresh & Bray Theatre are showing their work *The Dreaming*, an ensemble, multidisciplinary performance that navigates changing forms and landscapes, moving from source to sea. Rooted in Dartmoor, this immersive performance blends physical theatre, ritual, clowning, dance, music, storytelling, puppetry, poetry, and fashion into a vivid exploration of being human, now. We caught up with them to find out more about their practice!

### **You're based in the South West but was there anything unexpected that you encountered/learned while doing your place-based research here?**

Much of our show came from *Improvising in Nature*. The unexpected thing was how different our improv practices felt in different places and how directly the environment contributed to the art. At the seaside, the waves meant singing had to be different, on the River Dart, the granite boulders required completely different movement, on the beach we could just roll around but we needed to go carefully when wandering around a bog in the dark looking for the full moon! And all of that research informed the devising of the show. And also unexpectedly, a lot

of the show has come from in-between moments, being silly in between official rehearsals or research: making tea, travelling, going out for a walk when we were creatively stuck. Whenever we didn't know what to do, we went outside.

### **How have you merged all of the different creative artforms into your performance piece? What are the challenges/joys of working in a multidisciplinary way?**

We all come from different backgrounds with a variety of skills like storytelling, ritual, physical theater and clowning, music and costume, and we've focused on creating a relational container where we each feel safe to be able to bring our gifts to the table and lead the group in our various disciplines. In our improvisation practices, material would emerge and we'd explore what artform was going to bring it to life: movement, sound, story or some combination of a few of them. It's been a massive gift to be able to lead each other, to share and grow as a collective by leaning into the skills each of us brings to the group. We didn't set out to make a show necessarily, we set out to explore what it would be to regularly show up and explore/play and by doing so we've really built a strong container of trust, and the show emerged from that.

### **What brought you together as a collective and what do you enjoy about being based in the South West creative scene?**

In 2023 Alana put out a call for people who wanted to research wild theatre, making work in collaboration with nature rather than in a black box. The show would not exist without the magic and beauty of Devon; Dartmoor, the River Dart and the coast. And there's something about the spaciousness here both physically and creatively that isn't saturated- it's less competitive and fast-paced than urban creative scenes. That's given us the time and space to go deep, to focus on relationship building, and let something emerge rather than force it.

**Join us for [The Dreaming](#) on Fri 22 May, 7pm.**



## **Bodies Borders Becoming: Exeter Pride Exhibition**

For this year's Exeter Pride, artist Adam Garratt is curating an exhibition titled Bodies Bordered Becoming which will be on display at EP Sidwell Street ( Positive Light Projects) from 6 - 9 May. The exhibition includes work from five artists, featuring textiles, sculpture and drawings, plus archive material from Exeter Pride. We chatted with Adam to find out what he enjoys most about creating an exhibition!

### **What are the themes of the exhibition and what has been your approach to curating it?**

Bodies Borders Becoming is a queer exhibition by LGBTQ+ artists who live and work in Exeter. The exhibition explores themes of queer identity, intimacy and the act of making. I've been able to cherry pick the work from each artist's archive as I think together they will tell a story but also because I really like all of the work.

## **What is your favourite part of putting an exhibition together?**

I love getting the work into the space and bring it all together. I like to think about a visitors journey through an exhibition and how the work might be revealed as they pass through. There is also a real excitement in the transformation from installing the work to a finished show and there is a wonderful moment when the show arrives and you know its ready to go.

## **How do your arts practice and your curatorial practice feed into one another?**

When I make work for an exhibition I always think about the space it will take up and how someone might experience it. Often the curatorial needs are built into the work and when I can, I test my own work in a space. With other artists work I take a similar approach and think about how their work fits in a space and with the other works. Once in the space I'll be thinking about formal elements such as colour, scale and form to create a visual journey through the exhibition to keep viewers intrigued. I also like to explore ways to show work that might be surprising or unconventional.

## **The exhibition is open from 6 - 9 May, with the following opening times:**

**6th & 7th open 13:30-17:30**

**8th & 9th open 11:00-17:30**



## **Open Door Festival: A Q&A with Doohickie Productions**

Open Door Festival is a joint project between Doohickie Productions and Exeter Phoenix and has been created with the aim of platforming artists who may have previously been excluded from programming opportunities. Doohickie Productions was founded in 2023, by local theatre producers Matt Farley, Grace Plant and Sarah McCourt. We caught up with the team at Doohickie Productions to find out how the festival came about!

### **How did Open Door Festival come about and how did you get together to make it happen?**

Doohickie Productions has been championing South West emerging artists, stories and communities since 2023. We have produced multiple solo shows taking pieces from scratch nights through to multi show runs at Barnstaple Fringe, Exeter Phoenix and regional tours. Through this work it became clear just how difficult it was for some emerging artists just to get through the door. We wanted to create a platform where all emerging artists had an equal opportunity to experience having their work

programmed. In collaboration with Exeter Phoenix we are thrilled to be able to offer this opportunity which we hope will be the first of many.

## **What is the importance of platforming emerging artists?**

As emerging artists ourselves, we are passionate about supporting the development of a sustainable performance ecology, making it possible for artists to live and create work in the South West. Without meaningful opportunities we miss out on the stories and work of artists in this area, which are an essential part of our connection to our wider community.

As well as platforming emerging artists, we are keen to nurture local producers which is why we are excited to have two interns from University of Exeter working with us on this project.

## **What are you most looking forward to with this inaugural festival?**

It's difficult to pick one show or workshop that we are most looking forward to, as all the artists have worked so hard and have such unique ideas. However, what we can say is that it's incredibly exciting to share all this work with our audiences! The festival has taken over a year to plan, so we are excited to see the Phoenix come to life in May and to be offering our artists the platform they deserve. We've had some wonderful conversations with artists and community members so far in the planning stages, so we are really looking forward to welcoming this energy and buzz to Exeter Phoenix.

**Join us on Sun 17 May, all day for the inaugural [Open Door Festival](#).**

## **Two Short Nights Film Festival 2027: Short Film Submissions | Early Bird Deadline: Sun 31 May**

Submissions are now open for Two Short Nights Film Festival 2027 for short films from every genre including drama, animation, documentary, artists moving image, experimental and music videos. The 25th edition of Two Short Nights Film Festival will take place at Exeter Phoenix on Thu 04 Mar and Fri 05 Mar 2027.

[Find out more and apply](#)

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## **Exeter Contemporary Open, call for entries | Deadline 11.59pm, Sun 07 June**

Exeter Contemporary Open is an annual open submission exhibition, established in 2006 and hosted by Exeter Phoenix, a busy, multi-artform venue and contemporary art space situated in Exeter's historic city centre. The exhibition aims to provide an important national platform for contemporary visual art with an emphasis on supporting emerging talent alongside more established artists. The exhibition will run from 11 September – 31 October 2026 and is open to contemporary visual artists working in any media including painting, sculpture, photography, print, drawing, video, mixed and digital media.

[Find out more and apply](#)

# OPPORTUNITIES

## **Open Call-Out: Reclaim Scratch Performances | Deadline: 10am, Wednesday 06 May**

Exeter Northcott Scratch Night in collaboration with Exeter Phoenix offers South West based artists in need of an audience a chance to stretch their ideas and the opportunity to test their work in the Clifford Room at the Barnfield theatre, along with £150 to help develop their idea and a small amount of rehearsal space before the Scratch Night. Scratch Night will take place on Wednesday 17th June 2026, 7 – 9pm.

[Find out more and apply](#)

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## **Writing for Animation: A Storytelling Development Lab | Application deadline: Mon 11 May**

Four BFI NETWORK Hubs have teamed up with ScreenSkills Animation Fund to create this new lab for writers to develop, experiment and expand their skills and understanding of storytelling in animation. The lab will support up to 12 early-career writers already working in animation, or with the ambition to write for animation.

[Find out more and apply](#)

# OPPORTUNITIES

## Networking

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

[DOCLAB](#)

[Little Scratch Night](#)

## Professional Development

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

## Recommended Events

[Diaspora! 26](#) | 1-10 May, Bristol and South West Region

[Exeter Pride](#) | 09 May, city wide

[Artist's talk: Bruce Asbestos](#) | Sat 06 Jun, 12pm - 1pm

EVENTS

IN EXETER

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.



Illustrations by Darren Shaddick

Edited and copy written by Erika Cann

# CREATIVE HUB



exeter **phoenix**

BRADNINCH PLACE, GANDY STREET, EXETER, EX4 3LS01392 667080EXETERPHOENIX.ORG.UK