



ARTS AND CULTURE

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

Creative
Review
2024-2025



Introduction

To reflect on the year past, global crises and conflicts loom large. Alongside political upheaval, technical advancements in AI are contributing to the rapid pace of change and heightening uncertainty about the future. It's a maelstrom out there.

In response, our best strategy is to focus on our sphere of control and make positive contributions where we can. For Arts and Culture, this means focussing on creative research and education practices, and supporting creative skills development. By enabling staff and students to bring their full creative potential to the problems at hand and brokering connections with the cultural sector and creative industries, we are providing vital assistance to the change makers.

Two examples of this principle in action are the Centre for Net Positive Health and Climate Solutions, funded by UK Research and Innovation, and *Leeside* Arts Commissions, funded by Natural England; both are building creative practices into working processes (see pages 16 and 23 for more information).

To scale our work and reach more people, we have also invested in the development of digital and analogue creative resources, and new training for early career academics (see pages 39, 40 and 43). Complex global challenges will continue, our role is to help our stakeholders weather the storm.



Image: Participants in a workshop at Challacombe Farm, led by Richard Chappell and Saili Katebe. Part of the *Leeside* project. Photograph © Emma Molony.

Find out more: <https://www.artsandcultureexeter.co.uk/arts-commission/leeside-arts-commission-challacombe-farm>

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Image: Pickle-making workshop as part of the *Food Citizenship: Researching belonging(s) and homemaking through food* Creative Fellowship. Read more on page 10.

Find out more at: <https://www.artsandcultureexeter.co.uk/creative-fellowship/-/food-citizenship-researching-belonging-s-and-homemaking-through-food>

Contributing to the University's Strategy 2030

In this review, we show how our projects and activities contribute to the University of Exeter's Strategy 2030.

We do this visually through icons you will find at the foot of the page for each project or activity. These icons represent the three elements in the Strategy's vision as follows:



Lead meaningful action
against the climate
emergency and ecological
crisis.



Make key breakthroughs to transform human health and wellbeing.



Lead the progress towards creating a fair, socially just and inclusive society.

Find out more about the University of Exeter's Strategy 2030 [here](#).

Arts and Culture Approaches

Arts and Culture has its own strategy, 2022-27, and we also show how our activity delivers against our strategic objectives. In summary, our key approaches are:

1. Learning and development

We will devise and support creative collaborations, bringing together staff, students and creative practitioners to encourage new ways of working, responding to Strategy 2030 themes of climate and environment, health and well-being, and social justice. We will support teaching and training that develops knowledge and skills in creative processes.

2. Promoting and championing

We will build a concentrated narrative for creative practice at the University through our tailored marketing and communications. We will tell the story of creative work at the University through events and activities, such as performances, screenings, workshops and festivals.

3. Networking and brokering

We will provide a combination of advice, brokering and signposting for our target audiences, both holding space for new creative networks and contributing to existing networks. We will create and support systems and resources that enhance community-building and cross-disciplinary collaborations.

Read the Arts and Culture Strategy 2022-27 [here](#).

SUPPORTING INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS



Image: Moraa Siekei (Environmental Science, University of Exeter) and Louis Perry (Illustration, Falmouth University) discovered a shared interest in mapping and cartography. They teamed up for the 2025 FX Creative Together --In the Company of Land and Sea. Find out more on page 18.

Creative Fellowships

This programme brings creative practitioners into a research group or project, encouraging a mutually beneficial exchange of ideas and world views. Usually, artists and academics experience an almost constant pressure to create outputs, so we have removed this expectation and created space for curiosity and enjoyment.

Often, these projects spark lasting collaborations, well beyond the seed funding of a 4-5 week programme.

2024 - 2025 saw Arts and Culture programme two Creative Fellowships, both based in Exeter.

Find out more about Arts and Culture Creative Fellowships [here](#).



Image: Creative Fellow, composer and musician Chris Hoban, with academic host Dr Laura Sangha.

Find out more about their Creative Fellowship:

<https://www.artsandcultureexeter.co.uk/creative-fellowship/will-as-windows-to-past-lives>

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Creative Fellowship:

Wills as Windows onto Past Lives

For this Creative Fellowship, Devon based composer, performer and lyricist Chris Hoban collaborated with Dr Laura Sangha in the History Department. Laura is one of a team of researchers at the University and The National Archives working on a Leverhulme Trust funded project *The Material Culture of Wills, England 1540-1790* which is using digital technology to transcribe 25,000 manuscript wills into digital format, so that they can be analysed, to understand changing attitudes to material culture in Early Modern England.

Chris and Laura worked together to creatively explore different dimensions of the project and to discover playful and experimental ways to present the source material. Chris wrote a regular blog during the Fellowship, and two events were held; a print-making workshop for staff and students, to create illustrations for ballad sheets, and a performance by Chris and Laura, telling the stories behind some of the wills, in words, and music composed by Chris. Members of the Student Folk Society accompanied Chris in the performance of his evocative songs.

Find out more about their Creative Fellowship [here](#).



Image: Arts and Culture Creative Fellow Chris Hoban and his academic host, Dr Laura Sangha present stories of some of the wills, through words and songs which Chris composed, to participants at the print workshop. Their prints were inspired by Chris's ballads.

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“Working with Chris has given me much greater appreciation for a key similarity between historical and creative acts, and made me more self-aware about how this process of transformation happens.

I have a greater understanding of ‘different ways of knowing the past’”

Dr Laura Sangha, Associate Professor of Early Modern History and Co-Investigator on the project *Material Culture of Wills England 1540-1790*.

Image: Section of a lino-cut print by Kit Barton, created during a print-making workshop during the Creative Fellowship between Chris Hoban and Dr Laura Sangha.

Creative Fellowship:

Food Citizenship: Researching belonging(s) and homemaking through food

For this Creative Fellowship, artist Carmen Wong collaborated with Dr Clemence Scalbert Yucel from the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies.

Together they creatively explored Clemence's research into Kurdish migration, belonging, and food citizenship in Devon.

They experimented through pickle workshops, food-making at community events and map-making with workshop participants, in order to explore new ways of researching belonging(s) and homemaking through food, and develop creative and participative research methods for engaging the community.

Find out more about their Creative Fellowship [here](#).



Image: Dr Clemence Scalbert-Yucel (left) and artist Carmen Wong (centre) at their pickle workshop with people from Exeter's Kurdish community in June 2025.

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A photograph of a group of people, including a woman in a hijab, working together at a table during a workshop. The image is overlaid with text.

“It was great to work with someone who understood flow, we were syncing and flowing well and not having these big expectations for outputs or outcome for the project and that felt really freeing.”

**Carmen Wong, Creative Fellow,
Food Citizenship: Researching
belonging(s) and homemaking
through food**

Image: Dr Clemence Scalbert Yucel with participants at on the pickle workshops organised during the Creative Fellowship with Carmen Wong.

FX Creative Exchange

2025

This programme supports collaborations between early career and emerging researchers from the University of Exeter, Cornwall and Falmouth University.

Following a record number of applications, this year's FX Creative Exchange brought together Dr Emmylou Rahtz, Research Fellow at the University of Exeter's European Centre for Environment and Human Health, Penryn, and Phyllida Bluemel, Lecturer in Illustration at Falmouth University. Their project, *Perspective Shifts*, explored the effect of scale and awe in nature, focusing on how individuals experience orientation in relation to the environment.

"It was inspiring to approach new methodologies that I never would have thought of without our conversations." Phyllida Bluemel

Working with six experts from across disciplines, the collaboration culminated in a co-authored illustrated publication that itself played with scale in both form and design.

Find out more about the collaboration [here](#).



Image: The publication *Where do you see yourself in the environment?* published by the participants in the FX Creative Exchange project 2024-2025.

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Arts Commission:

Reimaginings

The *AfroSea Collective*, a group of five female mixed-heritage artists based in Cornwall, were invited to come together and create space for dialogue and experimentation. After several creative meet-ups, the group decided to publish an anthology, *Library Obsura*, to help reshape and unlearn how we relate to knowledge, particularly the Western academic literary canon. A film accompanies the anthology, documenting the group's growing artistic partnership and support system as they navigate complex ideas around culture, belonging and identity.

The project was co-funded with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team in Cornwall, in the spirit of the gift of the Globe given to the University of Exeter by *The World Reimagined*. A sharing and publication launch is planned later in 2025.

“Thank you for the support and the funding from Arts and Culture and Exeter University that helped facilitate our gatherings over the last few months, time together has been a precious incubator for ideas and conversation.” - Caroline Deeds, *AfroSea* Artist

Find out more about *Reimaginings* [here](#).



Image: *AfroSea Collective*. Photograph © Libita Sibungu, Deep Recovery, 2023

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Impact Funding:

The Exeter Oracle

We brokered a new partnership between Associate Professor Emily Selove, IAIS and Director of the Centre for Magic and Esotericism, and Arts&Heritage, a leading cultural organisation that runs national artist-led initiatives. With our support, they were awarded £4,900 through the AHRC IAA (Arts and Humanities Research Council Impact Accelerator Account) Impact Cultivation Fund.

This funding enabled them to collaborate with artist duo, YARA + DAVINA, who had created ORACLES - a card deck and performance devised with local communities, commissioned by Dulwich Picture Gallery in London – and are looking to expand this format to a national programme. Working with MA Magic and Occult Science students, IAIS staff, and James Downs, Archivist of the University's Middle East Collections, the artists were able to test the viability of an 'Exeter Oracle', drawing on Arabic manuscripts and other materials from the University's Special Collections.

This brief project was well-received and has laid the foundations for future working and collaboration on large-scale grants.

Find out more about YARA + DAVINA [here](#).

Find out more about The Centre for Magic and Esotericism [here](#).



Image: YARA + DAVINA outside the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies (IAIS). ©Yara El-Sherbini.

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Displays in the Queen's Building

Arts and Culture programmed three exhibitions in 2024-25:

Term 1: *Lair of the Sea Worm: The ocean's hidden architects*. Works by artist Naomi Hart highlighted research on underwater invertebrates and the role they play in carbon storage, undertaken on the global research programme 'Convex Seascape Survey'. Also on view were magnified research images of benthic invertebrates by Dr Adam Porter, a University of Exeter Research Fellow on the Convex Seascape Survey.

Term 2: *Paper and Print*. This display documented a community-led research project run by Double Elephant Print Workshop in partnership with Professor Nicola Thomas, Head of Geography at the University of Exeter. Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, it featured research of the history of paper mills on the Exe and Culm rivers, by community volunteers. Also displayed were a sound story by Dr Ellen Wiles and embossed linocuts by Juliette Losq.

Term 3: *Shame in Medicine: The Lost Forest*. A display bringing together the artwork and audio from an award-winning ten-part documentary podcast series produced by *The Nocturnists* in collaboration with the *Shame and Medicine* project at the University of Exeter. A series of stunning artworks by Beppe Conti were displayed – created to accompany each podcast in the series. Listen to *The Nocturnists* podcasts [here](#).



Image: Artworks by Naomi Hart on display in the Queen's Building as part of the exhibition *Lair of the Sea Worm: The ocean's hidden architects*. Photograph © Emily Appleton

Find out more about the exhibition: <https://www.artsandcultureexeter.co.uk/news/new-exhibition-explores-underwater-invertebrates>

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Centre for Net Positive Health and Climate Solutions

Having supported the application process in 2023, Arts and Culture were delighted to celebrate the successful funding and official launch of the **Net+ Centre for Health and Climate Solutions** earlier this year.

With UKRI funding secured for five years, and with the support of Arts and Culture, the Centre will embed creative processes and arts-based methods throughout its climate change and health research, as well as its public engagement work. Plans include a programme of Creative Fellowships, Artist Residencies, Arts Commissions, and Capacity Building Training for staff and partners. The funding also includes a 0.2 FTE Cultural Producer role, dedicated to leading the delivery of this creative programme in partnership with cultural and creative organisations across the UK.

Annie Sheen has taken up this Cultural Producer role alongside her three days a week with Arts and Culture. Earlier this year, she collaborated with three Swindon-based artists to deliver creative sessions at the Centre's first Annual Meeting and worked with illustrator Caroline Pedler to produce three new artworks reflecting the Centre's key themes, ethos, and approaches.



Image: *Future Youth, Community Collaboration & Ethics of Care*. Illustrated by Caroline Pedler (2025)

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ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

FX Creative Together

Now in its third year, this unique, peer-led student internship programme pairs students from Falmouth University and University of Exeter (Penryn campus) to lead their own interdisciplinary project and co-produce a creative output based on their shared research interests.

This year the programme supported six students to participate, coming from a wide range of disciplines including illustration and fine art to marine biology and environmental science. The programme was expertly coordinated by Nao Szulc, a third year student at Exeter who participated in the programme the year before.

The three projects used the FXPlus Archives and Special Collections as inspiration and were brought together in a temporary exhibition - *In The Company of Land and Sea* – hosted by the Environmental and Sustainability Institute and the Penryn Campus Library from July to September.

Watch a film by Sam Bestwick about their collaborations [here](#).

Thanks to the DEES and HASS Cornwall Departments for co-funding this programme and for the FX Plus Archives team for their amazing support to all the students.



Image: 2025 FX Creative Together participants. From left to right: Rose Jennings (Falmouth University), Amelia Thomas (University of Exeter), Joe Barton (University of Exeter), Erin Leahy (Falmouth University), Moraa Siekei (University of Exeter) and Louis Perry (Falmouth University). Photograph: © Nao Szulc

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Student Presence on Digital Platforms

In 2024-25 we offered several students the opportunity to write blogs for the Arts and Culture website and create social media content, giving them a platform to communicate their interests and activities to a wider audience.

We continued to support the MA Curation students, hosting three blogs about internship experiences at arts and culture organisations in the UK and abroad. See an example [here](#).

Alongside this, the students also took over our Instagram for a number of days in June to showcase and promote their final curated exhibitions.

We also hosted blogs from undergraduate student haiku competition winner [Joseph Bacon](#), FX Creative Together student co-ordinator [Nao Szulc](#), and PhD student [Giulia Nicolini](#) about her collaboration with the Seaweed Institute.

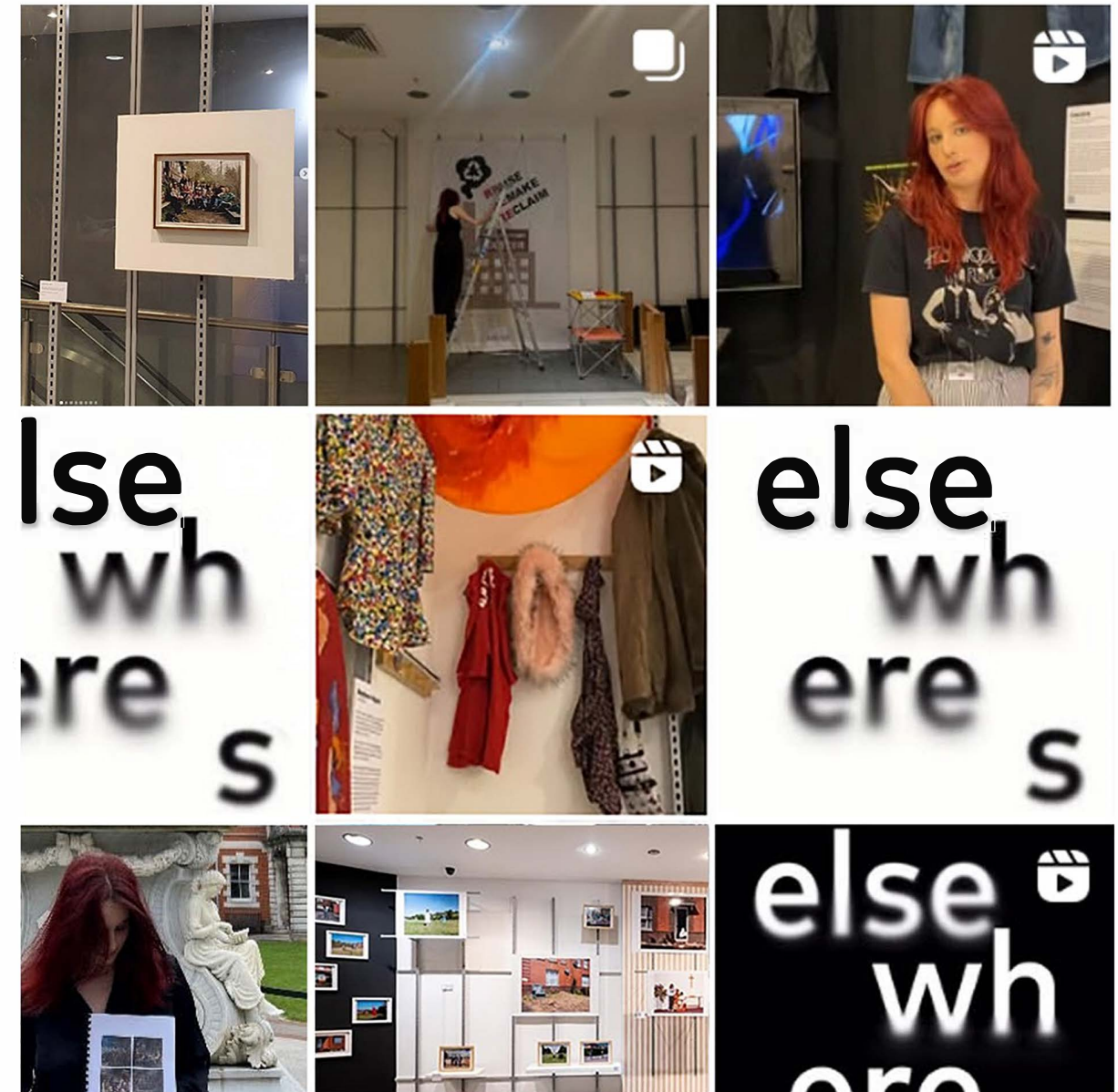


Image: Images from student's digital posts on Arts and Culture Instagram and website.
Photograph credit (bottom middle): Simon Tutty.

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Supporting Module Delivery

Everyone in the Arts and Culture team has culture sector expertise, enabling us to support a range of undergraduate and postgraduate modules. This includes:

- Facilitating seminars and workshops with Art History and Visual Culture students, working directly with the University's Fine Art Collection.
- Supporting The Art and History of Nursing module with guidance on exhibition planning and display.
- Delivering an annual workshop on Creative Commons (links between arts and medicine) for Medical Students, as part of their Medical Humanities Longitudinal module.
- Brokering a movement workshop, led by professional dancer Filipa Pereira Stubbs, for first year Engineering students.
- An online presentation for PG Dip Clinical Medicine students, introducing audience development principles and the mechanisms of visual communication.
- A Creative Group Sculpture workshop with the Penryn students taking part in the Grand Challenges week in June.



Image: *Dungeon Ghyll*, an oil painting by James Henry Crossland. One of the artworks in the University's Fine Art Collection used in the Art History and Visual Culture project on the theme of light in art in Term 2.

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Supporting Students' Career Development

This year, we were able to host an Art History and Visual Cultures student volunteer, Charlotte Dalglish, who researched a selection of artworks in the Fine Art Collection and wrote a [blogpost](#).

We were also joined by Liberal Arts student, Imogen Gurton, who spent a few weeks with us auditing our social media channels and helping develop a new suite of digital assets.

Student intern, Ella Bradbury, MA Curation: Contemporary Art and Cultural Management, joined us for six-weeks in Term 2, providing fantastic support on both programme delivery and digital communications, as well as writing for the Arts and Culture website.



Image: Ella Bradbury, MA Curation student, who undertook her MA Curation: Contemporary Art and Cultural Management internship with Arts and Culture.

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STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



Leeside Arts Commissions

Leeside was a research project funded by Natural England. It was divided into two phases: the first ran from January 2024, enabling us to run a scoping project and options appraisal; the second ran from November 2024 – July 2025, and comprised two large-scale arts commissions, one based in Devon at Challacombe Farm and one in Cornwall, responding to the Camel Estuary (see pages 24 and 25 for more information about each commission).

The purpose of the commissions was to trial alternative means of exploring how people value Protected Sites, particularly Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). We were excited for the opportunity to inform policy documents and case studies, providing creative methods in support of environmental sustainability narratives.

Phase two was skilfully led and delivered by Stephanie Allen, *Leeside* Project Manager, and Emma Molony, *Leeside* Project Co-ordinator, for Arts and Culture.



Image: Private screening of *Leeside* Arts Commission films for project partners, June 2025, hosted by Exeter Phoenix. Photo: © Emma Molony.

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Leeside:

Challacombe Farm

This commission was awarded to poet Saili Katebe and Devon-based choreographer Richard Chappell who developed *Challacombe Chronicled*, a new work that brought together dance and poetry, to respond to the farm's natural and cultural heritage.

Between April and June 2025, Saili and Richard co-delivered poetry and dance workshops at Exeter Phoenix, the Moor Imagination Centre in Buckfastleigh and at Challacombe Farm on Dartmoor.

They supported a community cast of all ages, both new to and with experience of dance and poetry to create their own written and choreographed responses to the landscape. Collaborating with filmmaker Daniel Martin, the team captured the choreographed pieces of poetry and dance, which can be viewed on the Arts and Culture website [here](#).

Huge thanks to Naomi Oakley and Mark Owen, owners of Challacombe Farm, for making us feel so welcome and sharing their incredible knowledge of the site.

Find out more about the commission [here](#).



Image: Richard Chappell and Saili Katebe with participants of the project at Challacombe Farm.
Photograph © Emma Molony

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Leaside:

Camel Estuary

This commission was awarded to filmmakers Xenia Glen and Antosh Wojcik of **Sleepwalker Studios**. They explored the Camel Estuary's cultural and environmental heritage in their film, *Camel Before The Storm*.

Xenia and Antosh engaged with local communities from Wadebridge, Rock, and Padstow, examining the site's ecological, historical, and social dynamics and learning its stories. They met with volunteers from Wadebridge Museum, member of Cornwall Birds at Walmsley Sanctuary, and specialists at Natural England (Becky Hughes, Senior Adviser on Landscapes and Nature Recovery Networks), and the University (Dr Dan Bloomfield, Nature Recovery and Food Systems, and James Scourse, Professor of Marine Science).

Camel Before The Storm explores the estuary through spoken word, documentary interviews, and experimental landscape visuals featuring thermal imaging, infrared cinematography, scannography, microscope photography, and animation provided by a collaboration with Saskia Tomlinson.

Find out more about the commission [here](#).



Image: Antosh and Xenia meeting with Wadebridge Museum volunteers.
Photograph © Emma Molony

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Global Webinar Series:

Indigenising Design

Consistent with the university's strategic commitment to social justice, this programme is our latest initiative to address decolonising design.

With generous support from British Council Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific, we were honoured to partner with Māori-led design agency, IDIA (Indigenising Design and Innovation Aotearoa), and London-based creative design consultancy, Concurrency, on a series of six global webinars. The first four were delivered in 2024/25.

Each webinar is hosted by IDIA and includes a panel of designers from around the world – Kenya, India, Sri Lanka, Australia, Mexico, to name a few . All webinars are recorded and available on the [project website](#) (with 600 post-event viewings at time of writing).

This year's webinars include:

- Indigenising Physical Spaces
- Decolonising Global Systems
- Indigenising Fashion and Entrepreneurship
- Indigenising Gaming and Storytelling



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Creative Arc: *FailSpace*

FailSpace has been adapted by Exeter-based theatre director, Katie Villa, into a regular programme for creatives based in city, supported by the Northcott Theatre.

We invited Katie and producer, Charlie Tapp, to create a series specifically for university staff. Over February and March 2025, three workshops were hosted by Exeter Phoenix. At each session, an ‘artist in the corner’ responded to the conversations, making new artwork in real time – a highwire display that playfully risked failure.

A fourth ‘MEGAFail’ brought together university staff with the established cultural strand. Hosted by Emmanuel Hall in St Thomas, 30 people attended for a highly interactive and enjoyable evening. The four supporting artists were poet Maya de Freitas, illustrator Moose Alain, comedian Will Adamsdale, and composer Andrew Armfield.

This project builds on the work of Leila Jancovich (University of Leeds), with David Stevenson (Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh), who created a framework and along with Lucy Wright and Malaika Cunningham a toolkit to support more honest and open conversations about failure.

This project is funded with the support of the Creative Arc Programme, an initiative funded by the University of Exeter, Exeter City Council and the UK government through the Shared Prosperity Fund, with additional support from Arts and Culture, University of Exeter.



Image: Illustration made in response to 18 March 2025 *FailSpace* © Moose Alain.
Photograph: Sarah Campbell

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Research Conference and Performance:

Aqueous Territories

Dr Camille Mathieu's (Art History and Visual Cultures) AHRC-funded research project, *Aqueous Territories: Learning from Louisiana's Colonial Histories and Watery Extremes* culminated in a multidisciplinary conference and evening performance at Exeter Phoenix.

Arts and Culture partnered with Camille on the performance, which included poetry readings by Louisa Adjoa Parker, Linda Chavers, and John Wedgwood Clarke, followed by a musical set by Dan Mar Molinero Jazz Orchestra, an 18-piece ensemble.

As part of the research funding, Dan had travelled to Louisiana with the research group, and was commissioned to write new music, performed at the event.



Image: Atchafalaya Basin, LA, April 2024. © Camille Mathieu

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Matrescence

As part of Arts and Culture's ongoing commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Annie Sheen collaborated with theatre maker Rosanna Elliott and four cross-disciplinary academic colleagues to convene a creative and supportive online workshop for staff, exploring the journey of Matrescence—the transition into motherhood.

The session formed part of the University's first Gender Equality Conference in May 2025.

We are grateful to PhD candidate Amy Wilson, Professor Emma Pitchforth, Dr Victoria Salmon, and Dr Ellen Wiles for their invaluable contributions to what became an uplifting and insightful session, attended by 20 members of University staff.

The session also featured artworks by Ibby Lanfear, drawn from her 2015 collection *After the Idea; piece by piece*. Created during her University Artist Residency with the Mood Disorders Centre, these works explore the mental health challenges associated with maternity and the perinatal period.



Image: Word cloud comprising words attendees of *Matrescence* felt summed up the session.

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Arts and Culture

Community of Practice

We programme a termly online session for university colleagues to come together and explore all things creative. It is a supportive, informal gathering that has sparked new collaborations across the institution.

This year's line-up included:

Dr Harriet Hunt, Researcher at the European Centre for Environment and Human Health, a Collaborating Centre for the World Health Organization (WHO) and part of the University of Exeter Medical School.

Dr Nuoya Tan, Post-doctoral Research Fellow in Psychology and Knowledge Transfer Partnership Associate at the Department of Management.

Prof. Bryony Onciul, Chair in Museology and Heritage Studies (HASS Cornwall), and a Visiting Professor in Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Canada.

Dr Arun Sood, Lecturer in Global Pre-1800 Literatures at the Department of English and Creative Writing.

Dr Michael Flexer, Co-Director for Public Engagement at the Centre for Cultures and Environments of Health.

Dr Camille Mathieu, Senior Lecturer in History and Art History & Visual Culture in the Department of Languages, Cultures and Visual Studies.

Dr Emmylou Rahtz, Research Fellow at the European Centre for Environment and Human Health (ECEHH) in Penryn, and Phyllida Bluemel, Lecturer in Illustration at Falmouth University.



Image: Scriberia Ltd for Hunt, H. (2024) Beyond the Goldfish Bowl: communicating research creatively. [Dol:10.5281/zenodo.11283486](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11283486)

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FOSTERING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



Image: Everyday Creativity conference attendees at Cecil Sharp House in September. Mural by Ivon Hitchens. Photo: Sarah Campbell.

Arts Commission:

Tender Acts

The final phase of our Arts Commission programme, *Tender Acts*, concluded with a vibrant mix of student workshops, staff talks, public events, a documentary film, and a closing publication.

Working with five student societies and over 350 students, the artistic team, led by lead artists Georgia Gendall and Cat Bagg, collected recordings and sounds from across the Penryn campus. These recordings were crafted into three original dance tracks - soundtracks of the campus itself. The tracks premiered at a Silent Disco in the campus Library, where more than 80 attendees were invited to experience their campus surroundings in a completely new way.

Building on this work, the team concluded the project by developing an alternative campus guide, designed to capture and consolidate insights from a year of ongoing conversations with campus users. This final publication, *Tender Acts – provocations for a civic campus*, circles back to the original commission brief of 'Civic Joy', and includes contributions from staff and the artistic team. It reflects on 18 months of dialogue with students and staff and presents a series of "What If" provocations, inviting us to reimagine how civility might be understood and enacted across a University campus.



Image: Putting on headphones for the silent disco, the sounds created as part of the *Tender Acts* arts commission. Watch the video of the disco [here](#).

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New Artwork Acquired for the University

In October 2024, we marked the second acquisition from The World Reimagined globes series. *Uncertain Voyage*, by Nadiya Akingbule, can be found next to the rose trellis by the Margaret Rooms, Streatham campus.

The design on this globe explores an aspect of the complexity of Britain's relationship with Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean across generations, and the legacy of the Transatlantic Trade in Enslaved Africans on the UK's role and reputation in the world.

Led by HASS Operations and the BME Network, the launch was opened by representatives from the University and Arts and Culture, before we enjoyed live music from Suntou Susso, keynotes from Dave Samuels, Co-Director of Devon Windrush Group, and Faye Doris, Chair of the PPIE Advisory Group, and a screening and Q&A of *To Whom Does This Belong?*, a film co-developed by Museum X, Black Voices Cornwall, and Cornwall Museums Partnership.

The first globe, *A Dark Cloud*, by Caroline Daly, was launched at Penryn campus in July 2024.



Image: *Uncertain Voyage*, by Nadia Akingbule. Photograph © Jim Wileman.

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Development of new sculpture walk leaflet

Naome Glanville commissioned a new leaflet to enable students, staff and the public to follow a self-guided walk around the sculptures on the Streatham Campus.

It features an illustrated map and images of the sculptures, created by Devon-based designer Alex Baldwin. The clear, impactful design of the leaflet follows Arts and Culture's branding style.

A Sculpture Walk map for the Visually Impaired, focusing on eight easily-accessible sculptures, was also created this year. The design was developed with the input of professional staff at Exeter charity *In Focus*, which supports and educates young people with vision impairment and complex needs.

Access the Sculpture Walk and download the new leaflet [here](#).



Image: The new Sculpture Walk Leaflet. Design © Alex Baldwin

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I Remember: Exeter's Memory of the COVID-19 Pandemic

This project was led by Professor David Tollerton, Associate Professor in Memory Studies, as part of his ongoing research on how the impact of the pandemic is being marked by communities. Anyone could submit their memories for the audiobook and excerpts were read out by local leaders as part of Exeter's commemorations in March at Northernhay Gardens, marking five years since the nation went into lockdown.

The audiobook holds 113 memories, all anonymous, ranging from recollections from the beginning of the pandemic and ending when the vaccine became available. This includes the difficulties of not having childcare, working in the NHS and memories of those who died.

David contacted Arts and Culture to support this project – we met to feedback on the structure, helped promote the callout for contributors, and now host the audiobook on both our YouTube and Soundcloud channels. The full audiobook can be heard [here](#).



Image: Commemoration marking five years since the first COVID-19 lockdown, held at the memorial in Northernhay Gardens, March 2025. Photograph © Catherine Rees.

University Strategy 2030 Vision:



Arts and Culture Themes:

Learning and development
Promoting and championing
Networking and brokering

Contributing to Regional Cultural Initiatives

Participating in our creative communities is an important means of building connections back into the university.

In September, Sarah chaired a public Q&A with film director, Rebecca Coley, following the screening of her film, *Point of Change*, at Exeter Phoenix.

In January, Sarah supported a roundtable discussion, focusing on the work of exhibiting artist, Remi Rana Allen, with Exeter Phoenix curator, Matt Burrows, and staff in the Art History and Visual Cultures team. Chaired by Prof Stacey Hynd, Dean of Postgraduate Research and of the Doctoral College.

In March, Annie introduced the work of Arts and Culture to a networking meeting for arts organisations based in Cornwall, hosted by The Ladder and Creative Kernow. Annie has also attended a series of new culture sector meetings hosted at Hall for Cornwall

In April, Naome led a tour of the Sculpture Walk for members of the Exeter Civic Society.



Image: Exeter Phoenix, Bradninch Place, Exeter by Stephen Richards

University Strategy 2030 Vision:



Arts and Culture Themes:

Learning and development
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Contributing to National and International Cultural Initiatives

We take part in national and international networks to raise the creative profile of the university and ensure alignment with contemporary practices.

In September, Sarah co-presented a session on the new publication, *Creative Ruptions for Emergent Educational Futures*, with two of the editors, Dr Christopher Turner OBE and Dr Heather Wren (School of Education), at the AHRC Everyday Creativity Network conference, held at Cecil Sharpe House in London. Sarah co-authored one of the chapters in the book.

In June, Sarah moderated a full-day AI Innovation Lab as part of IJAD Dance Company's *OOTFest25 (UN)SEEN* at Riverside Studios, London. The workshop concluded a three-day festival, "conceived as a site for radical experimentation and dialogue at the intersection of embodiment, technology and artistic innovation".

In July, Sarah presented a paper, *Playing the System or Cheating Ourselves: The uneven road to transforming UK research culture*, at the annual Possibility Studies conference, held at Maynooth University, Ireland. This has led to new contacts with academics in the UK, France and Australia.



Image: Promotional material for *OOTFest25* © IJAD Dance Company.

University Strategy 2030 Vision:



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BUILDING CREATIVE CONFIDENCE

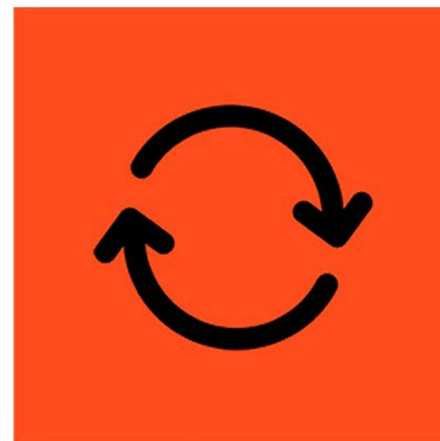
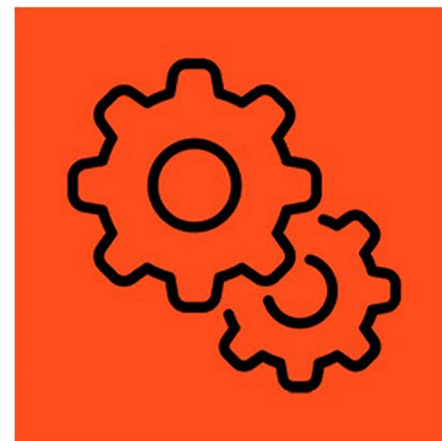
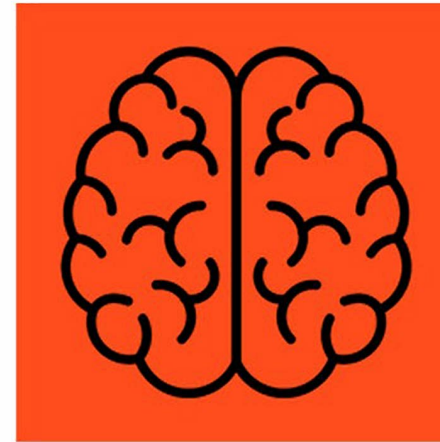


Image: Icons from Arts and Culture's *Get Creative* toolkit. Access the *Get Creative* toolkit on the Arts and Culture website [here](#).

Creative Skills Development for ECRs and PGRs

In collaboration with Peter O'Rourke, Researcher Development and Research Culture, and Clare Hearn, Exeter Business School, we have devised a new creative strand of skills development workshops for early career researchers (ECRs) and postgraduate researchers (PGRs) at the university.

In October, we ran our first in-person, half-day session (once at Streatham, once at Penryn), that focussed on the transdisciplinary creative skills of noticing, questioning and listening. 90% of attendees came away with greater awareness of creative processes, and 82% felt there was direct relevance to their professional research roles.

In June, we ran a shorter, online session on visual literacy, both to support those who may wish to enter the *Images of Research* photography competition, as well as those looking to improve their visual communication skills more generally.

We are currently planning full-day sessions on creative adaptability and flexibility, to run in the Autumn Term 2025/26.



Image: Suggested reading materials shared as part of October Creative Mindset workshop. Photograph: Sarah Campbell.

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Resources that support creativity

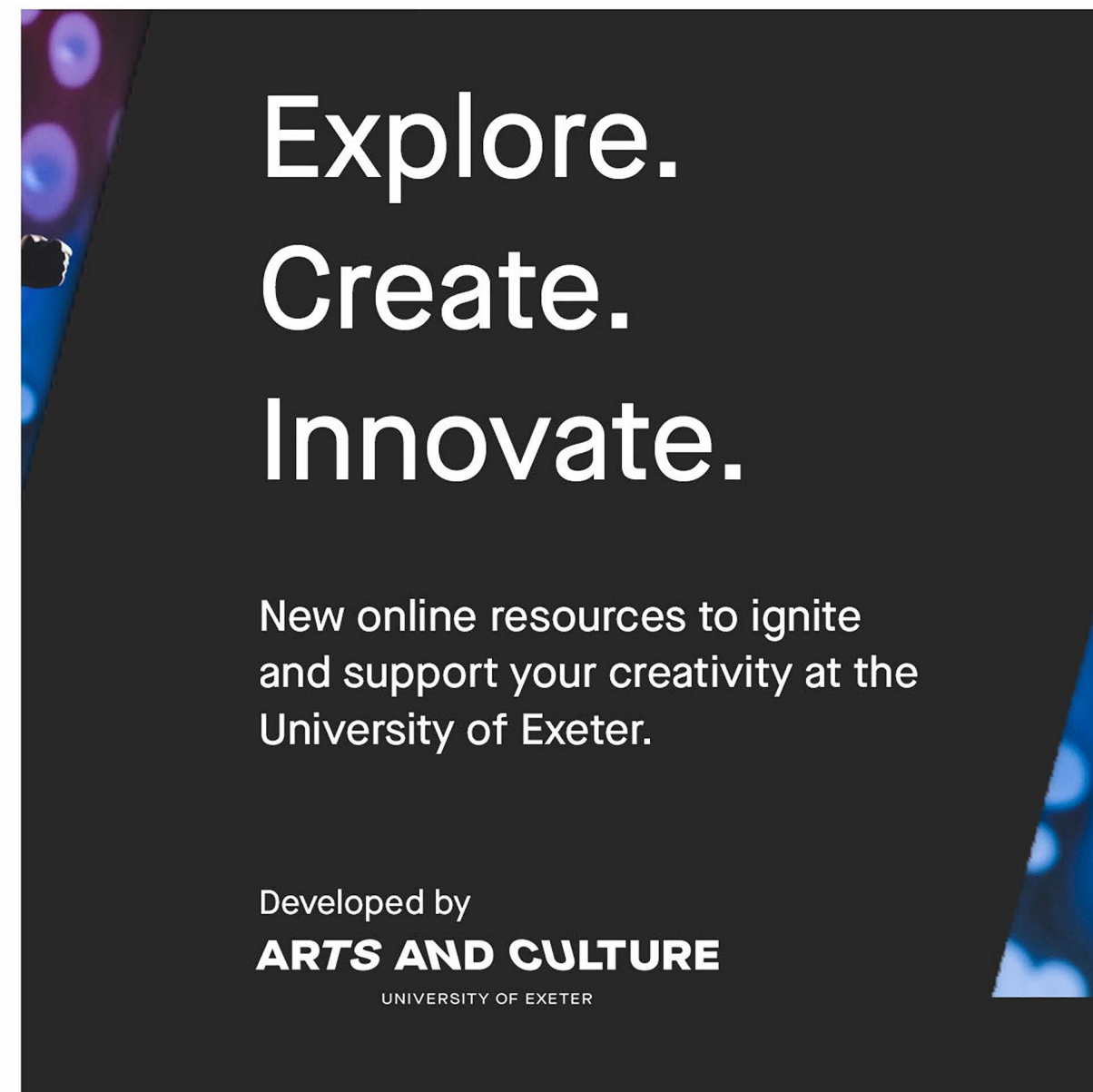
One of the objectives in our 2022-27 Arts and Culture Strategy is to 'build and support communities of creative practice' through 'guidance and resources'.

A lot of our work is time-intensive, relying on discussions with a member of our team. We have long wanted to scale our reach, and asynchronous resources are an effective means of doing so. However, developing relevant, quality content also requires time.

Over the past two years, we have prioritised the creation of a suite of targeted digital and print resources for staff and students, to help more people engage with creativity and to embed creative practices in their teaching, research and student experiences.

With over 1,600 views of our resources on the Arts and Culture website already, we have definitely tapped into a need for this kind of support.

The following pages introduce our new resources.



University Strategy 2030 Vision:



Arts and Culture Themes:

Learning and development
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Networking and brokering

Online Resources

Part 1 – *Get Creative*

Get Creative is a new online toolkit offering students and staff specialised guidance and practical support on planning and delivering creative projects at the University of Exeter.

The toolkit contains:

- A section on planning your creative project, playfully taking you through a series of questions on Purpose, People and Practitioners.
- A free downloadable Project Planning Canvas to help you structure your ideas.
- A collection of 'How-To-Guides' offering practical advice on things like planning exhibitions on the University campuses.

Access the *Get Creative* toolkit [here](#).



Image: Tom Jackson Greaves performs in *All that Glitters*, commissioned by Arts and Culture. Photograph: © Steve Tanner

University Strategy 2030 Vision:



Arts and Culture Themes:

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Online Resources

Part 2 – Signposting

Our four new signposting directories provide a gateway to creativity across the University's campuses and the surrounding areas of Devon and Cornwall.

Get Connected to interdisciplinary and creative networks, centres, and institutions at the University.

Get Inspired by interdisciplinary and creative research projects from across the University's campuses.

Get Involved with creative opportunities, discover discounts, and explore creative spaces on the University's campuses.

Get Learning with personal development opportunities and a wealth of other creative resources from across the University.



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Creativity Guide for University of Exeter Colleagues

This initiative was a direct response to the needs of staff. From countless conversations, we know our colleagues have an appetite for more creativity in how they deliver their roles, but they are not always sure where to start or how to integrate creative processes.

We commissioned Scriberia, specialists in strategic visual communications, to work with us and a project team of university staff from across the campuses, to develop a map-format guide, laying out an array of creative options for colleagues to explore at their own pace. A digital and accessible version were also created, and the guide is accompanied by an online collection of supplementary materials.

Access the supplementary materials [here](#).

The guide was developed through a series of workshops, both in-person and online, that ran April-July 2025. The guide is launched and disseminated to colleagues in Autumn 2025-26.



Image: Sarah Campbell launching the *Creativity Guide for University of Exeter Colleagues* in the University's Forum building.

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Fine Art Collection

This year saw the start of an ongoing project to make a selection of works from our collection available in the public domain on Wikimedia Commons images, following training from the [Glam-E Lab](#) team. This will provide accessibility to the collections for educational and enjoyment purposes. From January to July 2025, the images from the University's collection had over 25,000 views. You can see the images of the artworks on Wikimedia Commons [here](#).

We continue to research artworks for monthly blogs on the Arts and Culture website and you can now see images of, and read information about, over 60 of them [here](#).

A wide range of conservation works was carried out on our sculptures and their settings in 2024-25, to enhance access to them, and to ensure that they are maintained into the future. This included conservation and re-siting of the sculpture *Mariners Way II* by Edward Crumpton to enable wheelchair access, and cleaning and repainting the sculpture *Jauchzet* by Tom Grimsey.

This complemented a re-design of the leaflet of the Sculpture Walk on the Streatham Campus, which you can download from our [Sculpture Walk page](#) on the Arts and Culture website.

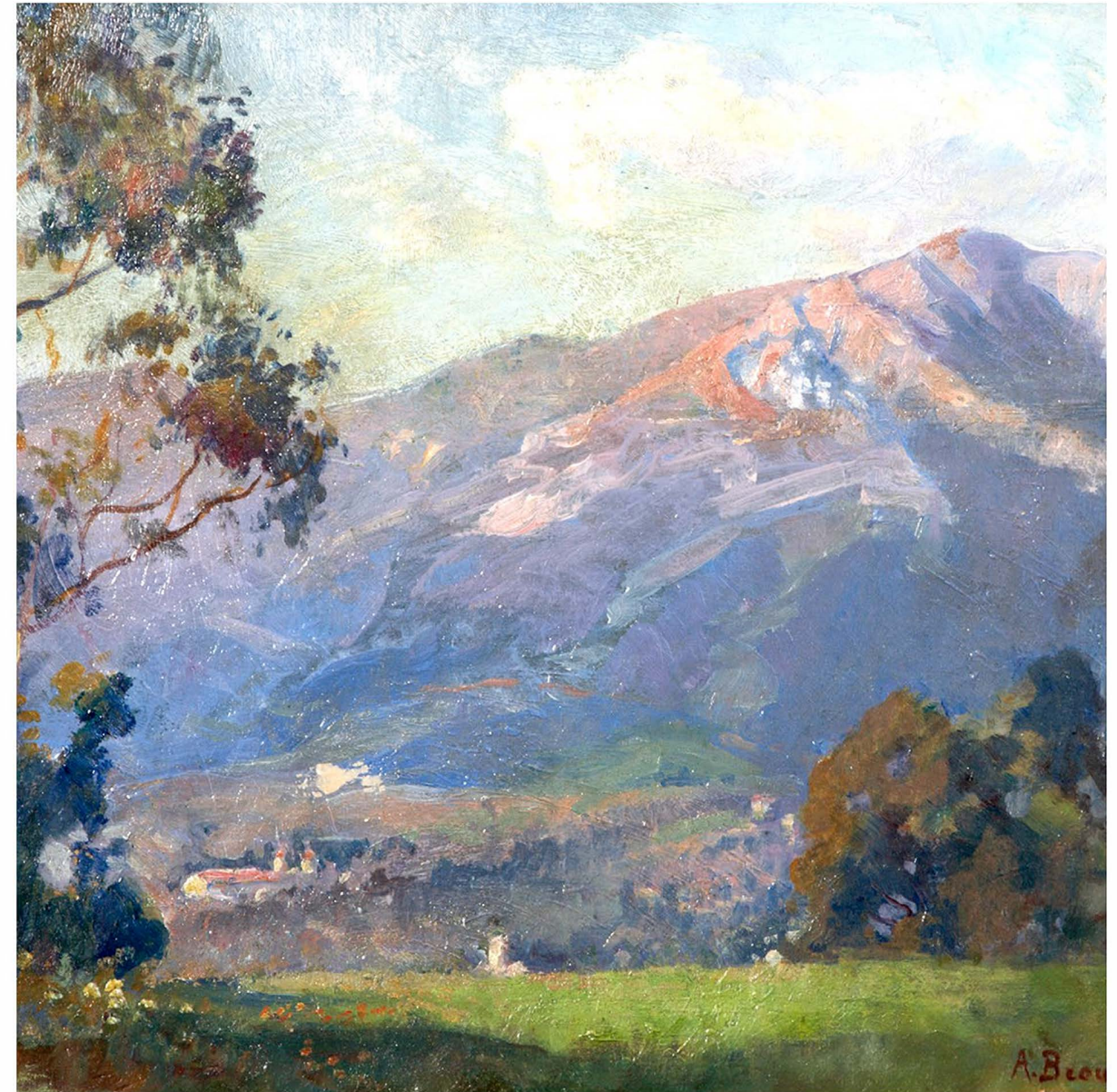


Image: *Mountain Scene* by Adolph Brougier, one of the artworks now accessible digitally on Wikimedia Commons [here](#).

University Strategy 2030 Vision:



Arts and Culture Themes:

Learning and development
Promoting and championing

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has collaborated with us over the past year; your energy and creativity are inspirational. Thank you also to the Arts and Culture Steering Group and Assurance Group for your valuable guidance and commitment to our programmes.

Closer to home, a special thanks to Steph Allen and Emma Molony who joined us for eight fast-paced months of Leaside Arts Commissions – it's been a huge pleasure working alongside you.

We must say farewell to our Academic Directors for Devon and Cornwall, John Wedgwood Clarke and Tim Cooper respectively – thank you very much for your time with us and your fantastic contributions.

Many thanks to Lucy Frears, who did sterling work as maternity cover for A&C in Penryn, and welcome back to Annie Sheen who returned in February as though she'd never been away. We were also thrilled to welcome Gemma Stuart into our team this year, to help us navigate the admin mountains.

And, of course, a huge thank you to Anna Bunt for her brilliant leadership in developing our new resources, and Naome Glanville for running multiple projects so gracefully and building fantastic new community connections.



Image: Linocut print by Emma Thompsett inspired by the song composed by Chris Hoban, *The Rings on My Fingers*, which he wrote during his Creative Fellowship with Dr Laura Sangha entitled *Wills as Windows onto Past Lives*. Find out more about their Creative Fellowship on page 8, or [click here](#).

Great ideas come from playing with possibilities.



University
of Exeter

www.artsandcultureexeter.co.uk

E: artsandculture@exeter.ac.uk

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