

Convergence: Heart Land

The varied and rich history, topography and people of Andover have inspired this body of new work by **twenty3 art collective**. The artists have spent the last six months visiting and developing work, uncovering the unique places, stories and experiences of the town as shared by the local community.

Each artist has made their own creative investigations, but all share a sense of connecting and responding to this unique place. Work references local Iron Age pottery, natural elements such as gravel, water and ash, and the physical movement of the community through the town. Making maps and visual records of the changing landscape has generated a shared understanding of what might otherwise go unnoticed or untold.

Similarly, conversations with local people have shown how much they care about this town, whether you grew up here or migrated more recently. Most striking is the wealth of community organisations working tirelessly to welcome, support and advocate for all those who need it.

twenty3 art collective (twenty3) is a multidisciplinary group of six artists who graduated together from the MA Fine Art degree at Arts University Bournemouth in 2023. The artists' practices draw on autobiographical, social, political, and environmental themes. Their work includes video, sculpture, drawing, installation, painting, photography, and digital.

Continues

twenty3 art collective artist statements 20260225

Sophie Firth is an interdisciplinary artist, interested in the stories that construct our identities. Her practice studies a sense of place, identity and the traces of intergenerational stories. Exploring the question often posed to her 'where are you from'?

Through a variety of techniques including print, weaving, drawing, cyanotype and photography she examines whether intergenerational experience is embodied in our hands, and if we have inherent forms of doing and making that help create our sense of identity and belonging. More recently her work looks at identity in connection with the local environment and the people within.

<https://sophiefirth.com>

<https://instagram.com/sophiefirth.art>

Richard Gregory is a visual artist focusing on drawing, installation, and digital work, supported by printmaking and photography. His work reflects on relationships between the human-made and nature, using landscape and objects as anchors for ideas about materiality, belonging and the significance of boundaries. Walking and loitering are his main ways of discovery, documenting through photography and mind-mapping. Drawing is part of his studio-focused methodology for both working things out and creating finished pieces, often with a skewed perspective or helicopter-view quality. The Test and Anton wetlands provide the central source materials of his research for Convergence: Heart Land.

<https://richardgregory.art>

<https://instagram.com/richardgregory>

West Dorset-based artist, **Jindra Jehu**, employs multiple disciplines, from drawing to sculpture and film, to explore human connections with the planet and the wider cosmos. Recent embodied drawings in naturally-sourced materials investigate concepts of presence and absence.

As part of her investigations into Andover's rich history, as a meeting place and centre of commerce, Jinny is producing a film of a collaborative drawing made with the local community on a market day. An accumulation of chalk footprints records the presence of the people of Andover and the Test Valley.

https://instagram.com/jindraejehu_

<https://jindrajehu.co.uk>

Continues

Zara McQueen is a visual artist using painting, drawing, photography, installation and sculpture to investigate human life. Her work is shaped by family narratives, relationships, concepts of home, migration and belonging. A background in social work and family therapy informs her practice. Borrowed from family systems theory, the signs and symbols of genograms* feature in her work.

She lives and works in North Dorset.

Andover is new to me – I am grateful for the warmth and openness of local people who have generously shared their stories and experiences. Zara McQueen

*A genogram is a diagram identifying family connections, patterns and behaviours.

<https://zara-mcqueen.co.uk>

https://instagram.com/zara_mcqueen

Stripping back the layers and wondering what's lying hidden beneath our feet, as she walks over Danebury Hill, now with its covering of magnificent beech, yew and other trees, **Sarah Moore** searches for remnants of previous lives in different times. She creates a small footprint of ancient lives and cultures in another landscape. These are expressed through painting and pottery, taking inspiration from Andover's Museum of the Iron Age collection of artefacts from Danebury and surrounding hill forts, and from observing the shapes in the land.

<https://instagram.com/sarahmoore.artist>

Hester Poole is a multi-disciplinary artist working in mixed media, printmaking and sculpture. Her work celebrates the everyday and often incorporates found or collected materials. She is fascinated by stories and family folklore and how we can share memories and histories through recipes, rituals and eating together. Collaborative working is a central aspect of her practice, whether this is with her immediate family, peers or the wider community.

For this exhibition, she has spent time baking, eating and discovering the memories and opinions of local people at the Andover Community Engage (ACE) Community Lounge.

<https://instagram.com/hesterpoole.art>

Ends