

YNA Collective presents

YOUNG
NORFOLK
ARTS
FESTIVAL

8 - 12 July 2021
Festival Catalogue

Acknowledgements

The **Young Norfolk Arts Festival** is the annual celebration and culmination of the year round work of the **Young Norfolk Arts Trust**. The Trust could not do what it does without the huge and consistent support of its Partners, supporters, friends, associate artists and funders.

The Trust sends out a big thank you to all of those organisations and individuals and, of course, to the awesome YNAC 21. During this second year of enforced flexibility within our Festival programming and delivery, the Trust would like to give a special mention to:

Arts Council England, Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council, Norwich Arts Centre, Norwich University of the Arts, The Norwich 2040 Cultural Education Partnership and the National Centre for Writing.



**NORWICH
UNIVERSITY
OF THE ARTS**



N National Centre
for Writing



**Norwich
Arts
Centre.**

Content by
Young Norfolk
Arts Collective

Designed by
Rosalyn McLean

Launch Party
in association with
Young Norfolk Arts Collective

With a blended programme of live and in-person events, performances, exhibitions and workshops, alongside virtual events and programmes – all for free.

True to our ethos, the YNAF 2021 programme was created by young people for young people, with particular thanks to our YNA Collective and the young people we work with for their creativity and energy. Their inspiration runs throughout the Festival, whether that's themes of migration, LGBTQ+ and community through the City of Strangers audio trail, or reconnecting through the ReConnect ReDiscover ReEngage exhibition.

Take a look at some of our Festival highlights:

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ARTS

TOAST
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TOAST

TOAST Summer Party
in association with
the *National Centre for Writing*

The TOAST Live in the Garden featured poets **Ellie Reeves**, **Georgia Hardcastle** and was headlined by rapper and poet **Arji Manuelpillai**.

TOAST makes live poetry events and workshops with the best poets in the UK. Founded in 2016, they find the strongest voices in poetry and support their careers. Based in Norwich, their goal is to make entertaining, engaging events that bring new audiences and new poets together.

Through events and workshops they find, train and give a platform to poets whilst creating communities between artists and audiences.

To find out more about TOAST Poetry visit:
toastpoetry.com



Image of
Arji Manuelpillai
Headliner

Photography by
Tallulah Self

It's Coming Home

The captain of Denmark slipped it in
to roars of applause,
a man screamed "Southgate, you turn me on!"
This pub garden is full of Atomic
Kittens with their tops off
playing footsie under the tables
they're fanning each other
frisking freshly cut short back and sides
I realise this reminds me of Pride.

We didn't get one this year, or last.

Maybe I'm attaching my need for collective emotional release
onto the only available group when they display
the slightest homoerotic behaviour,
maybe their adoration boners for the England manager
have unceremoniously leapfrogged me out of isolation brain.

All I've done is let mushrooms grow.

I don't love football but I love
not being the most anxious person here –
There's a man crushing a pillow
against his head to stop the world spinning –
they're on the brink, I'm three pints in
thinking I might sleep through the night.

I'd like to believe this pitch is packed with pride over patriotism
I'd like to believe these vibes aren't dependant on fickle nationalism
it's gay the way Pride validates your right to unleash your every inch
it's gay in the open agreement that they're allowed to hug and kiss
and confess they think Gareth Southgate is hot
I'd like to say I can name this all gay
but it remains a word not fully reclaimed
so on we march in this evolving parade
why stop at the football pub doors
misconceptions flourish when we fester alone
I finally felt like I'd come home.

TOAST Summer Party

Words by
Ellie Reeves
Live in the Garden



If I could go outside I wouldn't care nearly as much

The blue of this room is for a me
That never came back from university.
The shade is too royal, too matt, too proper
To appreciate the freedom of coming a cropper.
Dawn sky & a drunken walk home
An unread message on a cracked phone
A cold coffee in a baby blue flask
A tinder date in a medical mask
Rockabilly blue on bleach blonde hair
Faded green & stained jeans from lack of care
dehydrated brain but light as a cloud
Raining new opinions with no doubt they're profound
peppermint gum, blue tongue, I am solid,
I am here,
for proof, strangers make great souvenirs,
charcoal fingers from lit cigarettes
playing words like strings & people like puppets
placeholder faces left unchecked
heartbreakers' scars gleefully collect -
memories are steaming stories,
mistakes are the richest food
but if you really want to hold their attention
it must have eaten a part of you.
You learn people use the ocean to describe everything
You're better than that, won't admit the fact
It keeps creeping in
Algae, small fish, big fish, shark, BBQ
The shark doesn't know what the big fish knew
As a small fish a tank room was liberating
But algal blooms can be suffocating.
(For its size, and its salt) the sea can be hard to swallow
You swim strong but time leaves your cheeks hollow
no need to eat so quick, don't forget to chew
digest each passing shade of blue
and for my time, I have few complaints
but this wall really needs a fresh coat of paint.

TOAST Summer Party

TOAST
TOAST
TOAST

Words by
Ellie Reeves
Live in the Garden

Photography by
Tallulah Self

QUEER

STORIES



QUEER

STORIES

Queer Norfolk Stories
as part of
the *City of Stories*

The *Queer Norfolk Stories* audio trail celebrates the wonderful extraordinary ordinary lives of local LGBT+ people! You can listen to the audio trail throughout Norwich city centre using the ECHOES app and geolocated sound.

The project is part of the 2021 Young Norfolk Arts Festival and Norwich Pride Inspired, and is funded by Festival Bridge.



Scan the QR Code to visit ECHOES
and check out: #MovingItOn

YWN WNC

Young Norfolk Writing Competition in association with the *National Centre for Writing*

The winners of the 2021 *Young Norfolk Writing Competition* – Norfolk's largest annual creative writing competition for young people aged 11-18 – have been announced alongside the identities of the fifth Young Norfolk Laureates.

The annual competition, which celebrates creative writing in all its forms, is a partnership between the **National Centre for Writing** and **Young Norfolk Arts**. It received 348 entries in 2021 with nearly 200 students from 51 institutions in the region submitting their freshest, boldest work.

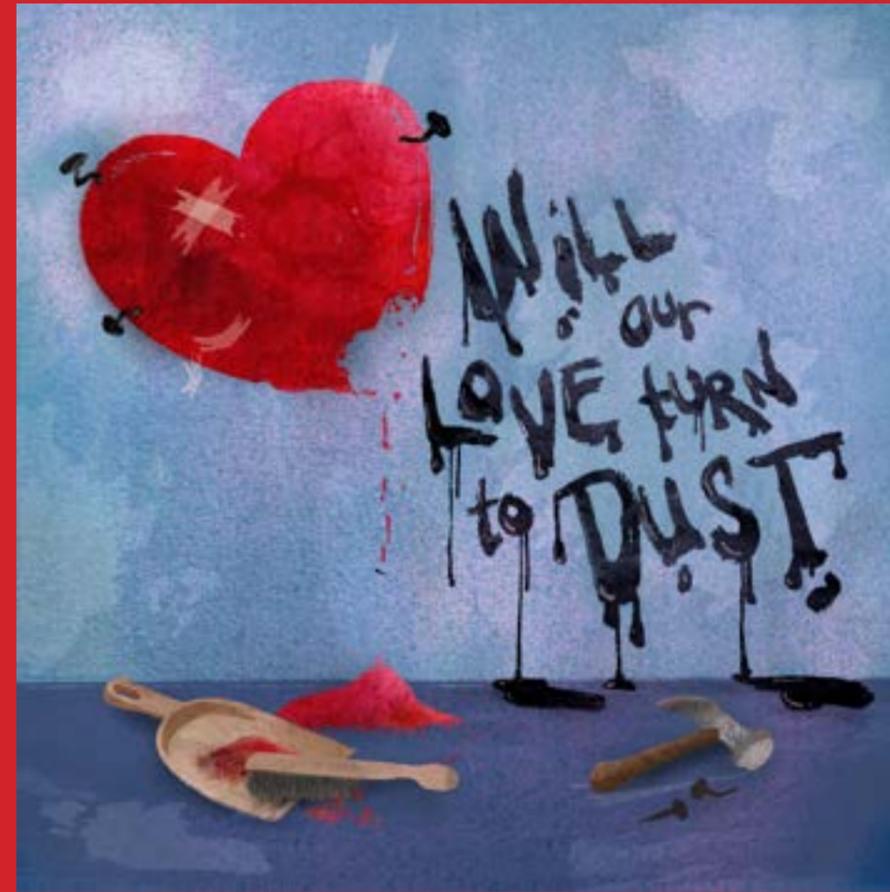
In celebration of the 2021 Young Norfolk Writing Competition and the breadth of young creative talent developing across the county hosted by **Young Norfolk Arts Festival**. It featured readings from the winning and highly commended writers, as well as a gallery of illustrations created by students at **Norwich University of the Arts** to complement the winning pieces.

For the full catalogue of writing visit:
nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk



Based on a poem by
Christabelle Kirkham
Winner of YNWC

Illustration by
Lauren Harris



Young Norfolk Writing Competition

Based on a poem by
Amy Griffiths
Winner of YNWC

Illustration by
August Abrahamsson

KAUR

KAUR

KAUR

Kaur

Beneath the floorboards, a baby gurgles blissfully. Chubby little palms reaching up to touch his sister's face, his nose wrinkles like soft silk sheets. The sister holds his hand, pressing it to her heart so he can feel the shy beat of the drums, syncopated against the steady brush of a broom above their heads.

Their hiding spot is cramped, and the air is dense – yet darkness seems to lull the noise of normal life into whispers. They trickle through the floorboard cracks in small droplets.

The girl is certain her older sister won't find her here. She will win the game.

An outburst of screams above tells a different story.

Footsteps thunder like atomic rain on the floors above. Plates are crashing; the gut-churning screech of dishes and pots being pushed aside make the little sister underneath wince. Her shaking palm flattens and she presses it softly against the board above her head.

"Mama?"

The replying voice is sharp; it cuts through the air, searing the throat of the speaker so that the words escape in mangled threads.

*"Stay where you are. Don't..." a quivering breath, –
"Don't move"*

The little girl begins to cry; snot streams down her lip, mingling with her saline tears to form a river that seeps down her top. She snivels – she's scared, and doesn't know why.

What's happening?

Her mother's panicked footsteps fade away- the screams do not, only becoming clearer by the second, tumbling through the air like a tsunami of fear. Deep voices begin to rise out from the shrill; 'grab the Sikhs; 'cut their hair'; 'find them all'. The little girl's heart hiccups, eyes stunned wide open; inky clouds swell around her pupils, staining their pure-white setting a filthy grey. They are talking about her – her mama, her papa, her sister, and....she looks down at the little baby cradled in her arms. Her chest begins to swell with a deep and powerful pride. She must protect him, all of him: his rich mahogany cheeks; those stubbed little plant-buds of finger; that smile, still glowing with a sickly-sweet innocence.

He is a gem, and she is his guard, shielding him from the corruptive light above.



Heavy footsteps return above and the little girl tilts up her head, ears pressed against the plywood as she scrutinises every movement.

Her lips are clamped shut.

She holds herself still – paralysed by the grip of terror. Looking into the deep pools of her brother's eyes, she focuses on nothing else but being completely and utterly silent. But then, her brother opens his jaw, his tongue emerges and traces his lips delicately.

Suddenly, his face begins to twist and contort. Eyes squinting, his mouth prepares to babble in the way that used to make his sister laugh.

It opens, stretching into a wide chasm – the girl's hand automatically swoops over to his lips. Hush. She adjusts her wrist so the baby can breathe through his button nose; but as she does so, her kara, her steel bangle that reminds her every day who she is, gently clicks against a tooth of his. Just a minute, momentarily tingle – but to her, it seems deafening.

They will find her.

Yet after a few moments in silence the footsteps recede. But nobody moved beneath – it's too risky, too soon. So the girl waits – counting the pattering footsteps of her heartbeat around her chest, mind clicking and adjusting as she considers what will be outside.

The screams and yells haven't ceased – but they are further away, or maybe fainter. They are white noise to the girl now; she knows what they mean, but her ears are numbed to their biting touch.

She counts until she can count no more; before she knows it her hands have reached up, easing open the boards, baby still in her lap. Light blares in, stinging her eyes with waspish fury. She shifts the baby off her knee, and crawls back into the world again. It's a weird world to her now, though – off-kilter and submerged in a sinister kind of stillness. She creeps forward and peers outside, but her head whips back almost immediately.

And she begins to sob, eyes swimming with pictures of bodies and thick, red blood.

Blurry eyes look down at her hiding spot, as she stares helplessly at her brother. But just for that moment, she hates him for what she sees.

Beneath the floorboards, the baby gurgles blissfully.

Words by
Mimi Ronson
Young Norfolk Laureate

Illustration by
Tricia Mercer-David



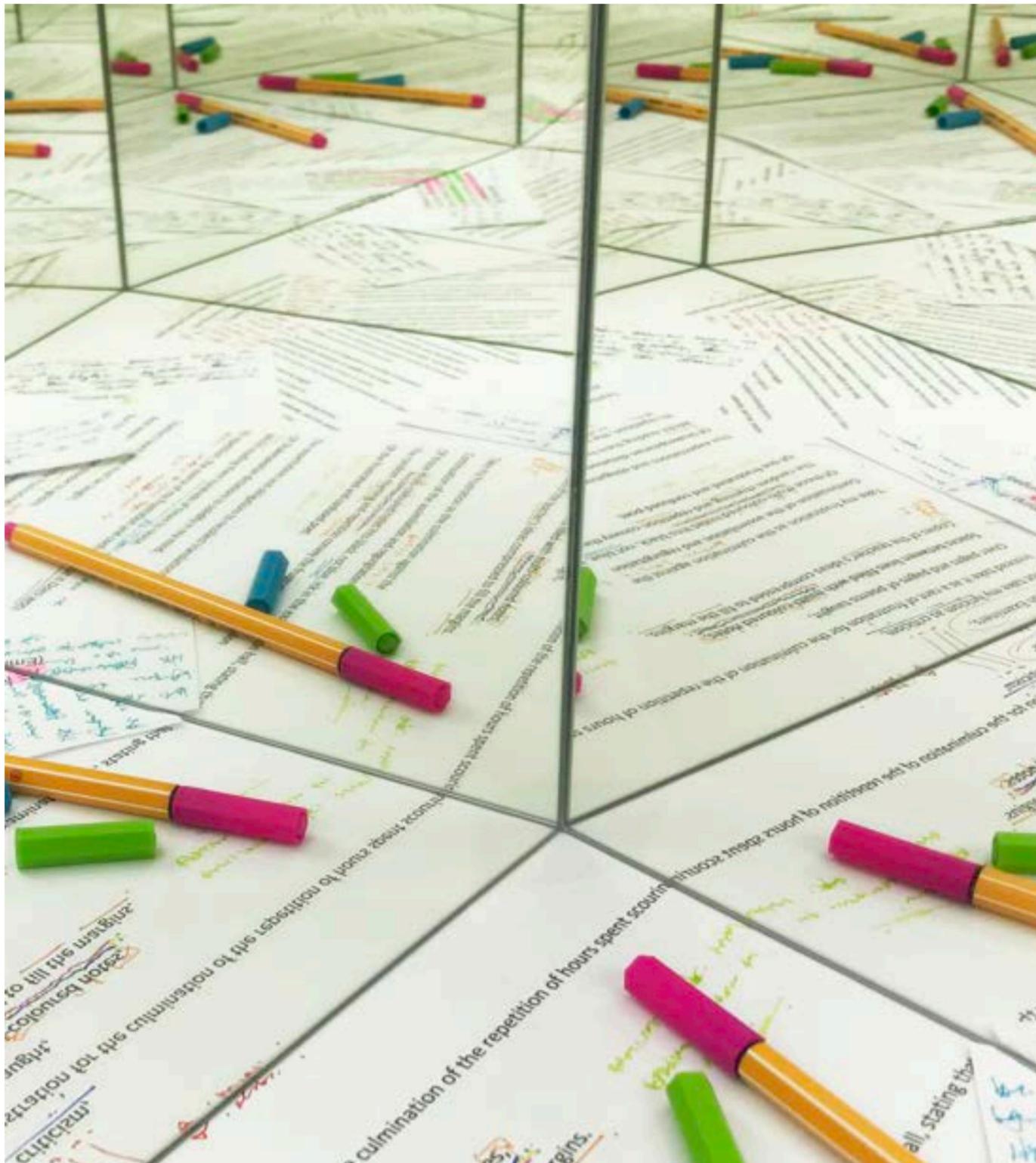
Lunatic



Young Norfolk Writing Competition

Based on a poem by
Florence Bullion
Winner of YNWC

Illustration by
Maya Chessman



Words by
Oliver Campbell
Winner of YNWC

Installation by
Jo Dunlop

Poetry, I Think

Dear English Examiners,
Do not take my lyricism as criticism,
Instead take it as a rant of frustration for the culmination of the repetition of
hours spent scouring
Over pages and pages of poems taught,
Spaces between lines filled with multi-coloured notes,
Copies of the teacher's ideas compressed to fill the margins.

Take my frustration as the culmination against the
Continuation of the assimilation and regurgitation
Of those multi-coloured notes into black, not blue, ink in the examination hall,
stating that,
The random rhyming and repetition convey the frustration
and confusion
Of the frustrated and confused poet.

The expectations and obligations to recollect translations
Of Shakespearian dictations to solidify in my mind,
Whilst reading them hundreds of times to revise.
Its repetition, the source of my frustration and confusion.
But it *Does* work.

Teachers teach what must be taught,
And some students can choose to ignore,
But the ones who listen to the frustratingly confusing poetry,
Like me, write those multi-coloured notes, patiently,
and see, poetry,
Because apparently, I'm a poet and I didn't even realise
I was rhyming those words into lines and stanzas
and, well, poetry.

And as I sat at my heavily graffitied desk, procrastinating,
Staring at artwork etched into it's surface by artist who,
It seems, did not care for the words of Wordsworth
And Blake. Quotes and ideas swirl around my mind,
Battering down any hopes of free time,
As the exams loom over me, in its shadow I sit,
Memorizing the random rhymes and repetition that convey
The frustration and confusion of the frustrated and confused poet,

Only to vomit out essays consisting of
Long words, quotes and bullshit onto lined paper,
No multi-coloured notes allowed in the dead silence
Of the examination hall, and to emerge to a sigh of relief, to discuss its difficulty
With friends, students and mates.

And, hence, therefore, in conclusion,
Imagine if this poem was to be taught
To other frustrated and confused, frustratedly confused students,
Memorizing that, obviously, the random rhyming and repetition do convey the
Frustration and confusion of the frustrated and confused poet.
Imagine that irony. Ay Teach.

LOST RIVER STAGE

Lost River Stage
in association with
Norwich Arts Centre



For the virtual Lost River Stage visit:
youngnorfolkarts.org.uk

Photography by
Tallulah Self



LOST
LOST
LOST

RE- RE- RE-

ReConnect, ReEngage, ReDiscover
curated by
Young Norfolk Arts Collective

An exhibition inspired by the experiences of young people in Norfolk, returning to friends, family, nature, community and the city as lockdown eases.

YNA Collective selected works by artists aged 11 to 25 through an open call and artist commission call out.

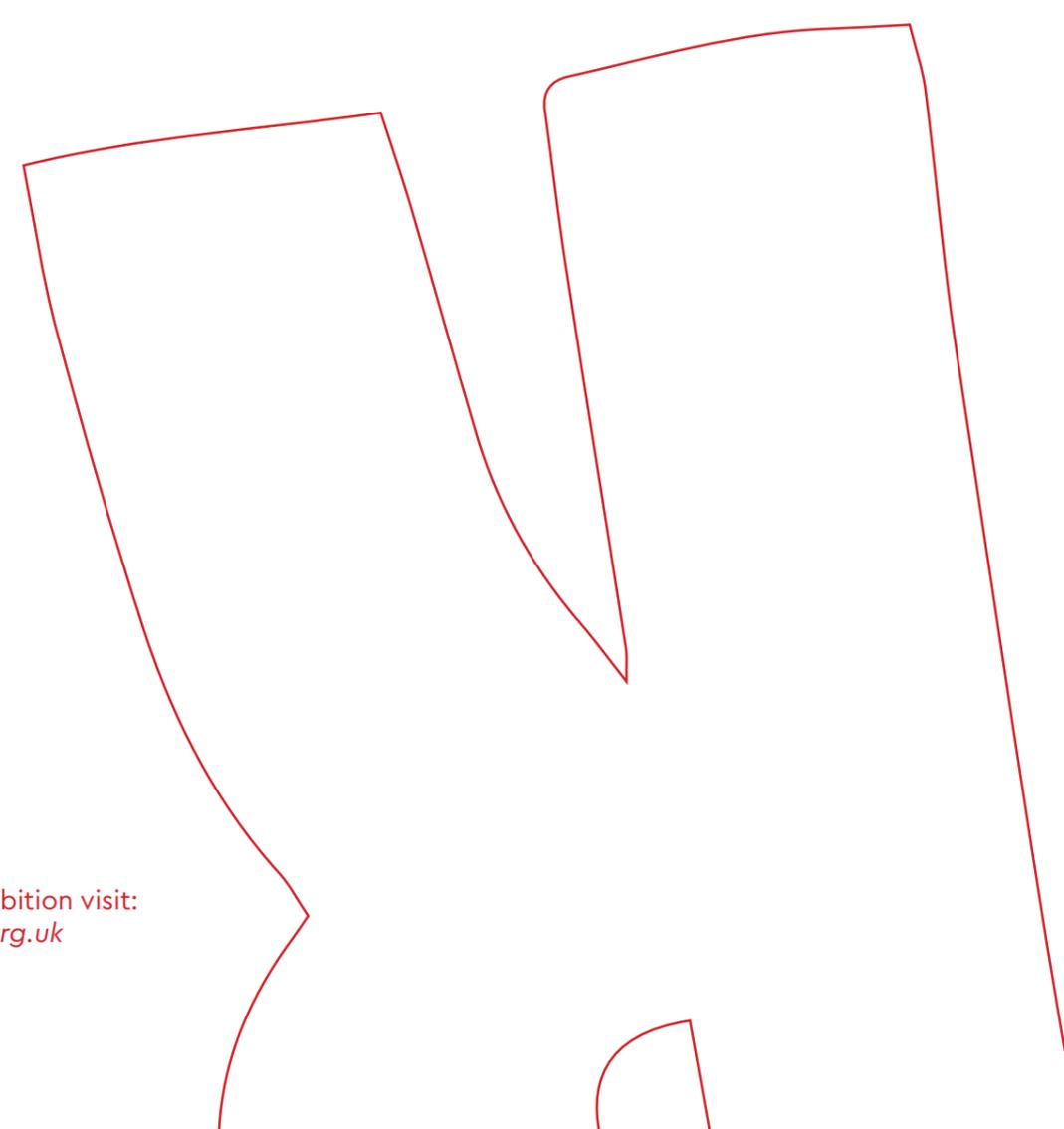
The work embeds and explores the definitions of what **ReConnect**, **ReDiscover** and **ReEngage** mean to them:

ReConnect: *Connect back together and re-establish a bond of communication, emotion, community and place.*

ReDiscover: *To find something lost or forgotten once again.*

ReEngage: *Attract and re-establish a meaningful contact, or involvement, of someone or something.*

To explore the exhibition visit:
youngnorfolkarts.org.uk



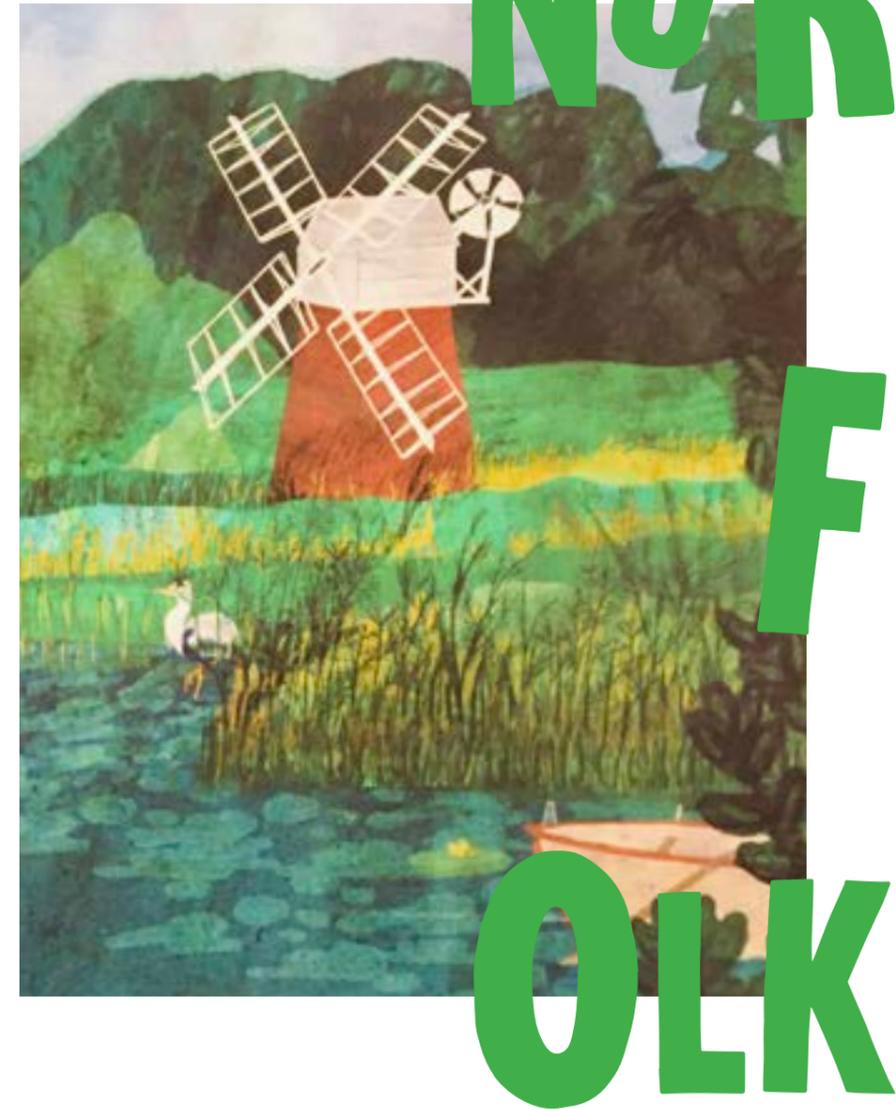


About the Art

"Within my piece I focused on reconnecting with nature throughout the pandemic, taking inspiration from the 'Lound Lakes Nature Reserve' and the 'Norfolk Broads'.

The textures included within the piece were heavily influenced by my experience visiting and photographing these locations."

ReConnect, ReEngage, ReDiscover



Tranquility
Digital Collage
2021

Illustration by
Jess Weg



About the Art

"I am an illustrator and printmaker based in Norwich. I draw inspiration from my mixed cultural heritage, celebrating diversity and identity is important in my practice.

'Connect' shows me embracing a loved one and aims to demonstrate the sense of relief we're feeling as we come out of lockdown and are able to do simple things such as hug each other again. It has been a tough year, and I am grateful for the people I love near and far. I am looking forward to being able to connect once more with people, nature and my community."

ReConnect, ReEngage, ReDiscover



Connect
Lino Print
2021

Illustration by
Tricia Mercer-David



About the Art

'Prophecies' is an audio work about the future. Maddie has interviewed Dr Jane Hedges (the Very Reverend Dean of Norwich Cathedral), Penny Francis (a psychic medium), Vonnie Spooner (a spirit guide) and a group of 7 year olds from Earl Soham Primary School to ask them what the future looks like.

"Harnessing a range of voices, 'Prophecies' will invite listeners into a moment of intimacy with each speaker and open a space for reconnecting with dreaming.

The past year has plunged many into survival mode and 'Prophecies' pushes us to be curious again. Religious spaces are a place people often look to for answers and hope, and as such, being set in the Cathedral grounds, the short trail can act like a modern pilgrimage."

ReConnect, ReEngage, ReDiscover



Prophecies
Audio Piece
2021

Illustration by
Maddie Exton

YOUNG

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