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Forest of Imagination stages festival of creativity with the Holburne Museum



Thousands of Bath residents and visitors enjoyed a magical weekend of creativity when pop-up contemporary arts festival [Forest of Imagination](#) was staged at The Holburne Museum last weekend.

The award-winning arts event returned to the city on 20-24 June 2019 with a multi-sensory array of outdoor and participatory art installations, workshops and sculptures in the museum grounds and Sydney Gardens.

Running for its sixth consecutive year, 2019's event celebrated the theme 'Life-Line' - lifelong inspiration from nature. The event also aimed to cover a variety of topical issues in a fun and engaging way including climate change, plastic waste, ecosystems, biodiversity, and wellbeing.

Highlights for visitors included a 3D soundscape by Heaven 17's Martyn Ware; a nature-inspired virtual reality (VR) experience by Anthony Head; and story-telling workshops with children's art charity The House of Fairy Tales.

Matt Leece and Ray Clarke's 'B Lab' was buzzing with crowds exploring a trail of experiments and puzzles about bees and their vital role in our ecosystems.

A temporary summer pavilion, designed by architects Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios with Buro Happold, housed a full programme of performance arts and talks, featuring Children's Laureate Lauren Child, activist Bob and Roberta Smith and Turner-prize winning artist Sir Richard Long.

The main entrance to the Holburne was transformed by a giant, oak-built beacon or 'portal' designed by Piers Taylor and Charley Brentnall. This was framed by a symmetrical 'Forest' of local trees which was organised by landscape architect Grant Associates. The firm also provided a 'Pine Forest' to create the setting for the Wicked Weather Watch stories on climate change.

Artists Jess Palmer, Clare Day and Alison Harper also contributed to the event.

In all, over 50 local organisations and companies, and 20 schools collaborated to stage Forest of Imagination 2019. The event was made possible thanks to generous funding by Arts Council England, Grant Associates, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Bath Spa University, Herman Miller Cares, Bath BID, Comino Foundation, Kaleidoscope Collection, Trevor Osborne Foundation and a host of local businesses. The lead creative partners behind the initiative are Grant Associates, 5x5x5=creativity, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and Bath Spa University.

"Forest 2019 was all about celebrating the never-ending power of the natural world to spark our imagination. We also wanted to demonstrate that the connection between people, nature and creativity can be made in a city setting. It's been wonderful to achieve these aims in partnership with the Holburne Museum, shining a spotlight on its beautiful grounds and Sydney Gardens."

— Andrew Grant, Director at Grant Associates

“It has been an absolute delight to see so many people of all ages and backgrounds come together and experience Forest 2019. This year we offered our most inclusive, programme to date, taking full advantage of the pavilion as a ‘House of Imagination’ for performances, workshops and talks and the Holburne’s fantastic facilities. We hope everyone enjoyed celebrating the importance of creativity in all of our lives.”

— Penny Hay, Director of Research, 5x5x5=creativity (now House of Imagination) and Research Fellow, Centre for Cultural and Creative Industries, Bath Spa University









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