

Meadows of Bath's Skyline to host Forest of Imagination 2017

Pop-up contemporary arts event to be held at Bushey Norwood, 30 June - 2 July 2017

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SUMMARY

Bath-based contemporary arts event Forest of Imagination is to sprout up again on Friday 30th June – Sunday 2nd July 2017 – connecting people to nature in all kinds of imaginative ways. This year's event is being held at Bushey Norwood, the National Trust-owned ancient meadows behind the University of Bath that make up part of Bath's hugely popular Skyline Walk.

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Organisers are working in partnership with The National Trust to transform the Iron Age landscape of Bushey Norwood into a kaleidoscope of playful installations, art trails and workshops with a special emphasis on activities for children and young people.

Centred round the core theme of 'Forest on the Edge', [Forest of Imagination 2017](#) will offer a trail of fantastical and sensory artworks that link Bushey Norwood's ancient landscape to the fringes of urban Bath. Open from 10am to 6pm each day, Forest of Imagination is free to all.

Highlights at this year's event will include Aerocene, an air-fuelled sculpture by the globally acclaimed Argentinian artist Tomas Saraceno; soundscapes by musician Martyn Ware of Illustrious and the hit band Heaven 17; and an augmented reality 'Giant Ant' experience created by artist Anthony Head with Bristol Zoo and House of Fairytales.

Returning to Bath for the fourth consecutive year, Forest of Imagination 2017 will run in parallel with the inaugural [International Festival of Childhood](#), which opens on Thursday 29th June at The Edge – an arts and creativity hub within the University of Bath adjacent to Bushey Norwood.

A 'home grown' event, Forest of Imagination was co-founded by Bath based landscape architect Andrew Grant of Grant Associates, whose work on the iconic Gardens by the Bay recently featured in Planet Earth 2 - the BBC's most watched natural history programme to date.

Grant Associates is part of a collective of local companies and creatives who co-design the event including arts charity 5x5x5=creativity, award-winning architects Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and children's art charity The House of Fairy Tales. Forest of Imagination 2017 has been made possible thanks to generous funding from Arts Council England and Herman Miller Cares, together with the support of a host of other local businesses.

Forest of Imagination 2016 was based in and around Bath Abbey and welcomed over 10,000 visitors. To find out more about 2017's event, or to volunteer much-needed time to help with marshalling and activities, please visit: www.forestofimagination.org.uk

Andrew Grant, Director, Grant Associates, comments: "Bushy Norwood is the inverse of Forest 2016 – rather than taking the forest to the city, we are literally taking the city to the forest edge, creating a place that is animated with installations and possibilities."

"Our aim is to offer an engaging and thought provoking series of experiences for all ages but with an emphasis on children and their connection with the natural environment. The National Trust is a key partner in this year's event and this project will be a real focus for their own promotion for active engagement of children in the countryside."

Penny Hay, Co-founder of Forest of Imagination (Director, 5x5x5=creativity and Senior Lecturer at Bath Spa University), comments: "Forest of Imagination will involve innovative, immersive and playful experiences for everyone - it will be a place of serious creative play. Taking place alongside the Festival of Childhood, we will celebrate the wonder of childhood."

"There is an urgent need to re-imagine our concept of childhood and the importance of nature and creativity in all of our lives. This is why we work with artists and designers who live out these creative habits of mind daily. We are working with wonderful international as well as local artists - Tomas Saraceno, Martyn Ware, Anthony Head, Alison Harper, Edwina Bridgeman, Jess Palmer as well as staff and students from both Universities."

ENDS

Forest of Imagination

Forest of Imagination is a contemporary arts event transforming spaces in Bath each year into a magical forest to showcase the city's often hidden creativity with a series of artworks and temporary architectural structures. 2017 sees the event brought to Bath in association with The National Trust, which owns this year's main venue Bushey Norwood. Meanwhile the House of Imagination brings a playful programme of workshops and events. Forest of the Imagination is created in partnership with

5x5x5=creativity, Grant Associates, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Bath Spa University.

www.forestofimagination.com

5x5x5=creativity

5x5x5=creativity, is an arts-based action research organisation with charitable status that supports children and young people in their exploration and expression of ideas, helping them develop creative skills for life. www.5x5x5creativity.org.uk

Grant Associates

Grant Associates is a British Landscape Architecture consultancy specialising in creative, visionary design of both urban and rural environments worldwide, working with some of the world's leading architects and designers. www.grant-associates.uk.com

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios is an award winning practice with an international reputation for design quality, for pioneering environmental expertise and a radical architectural approach.

www.fcbstudios.com

Bath Spa University

Three schools from Bath Spa University are collaborating for the Forest of Imagination - The School of Art and Design, Education, and Humanities and Cultural Industries. Recognised as one of the UK's top creative universities in the *Which?* University Student Survey, Bath Spa University is a leading university for creativity, culture and enterprise, offering a wide range of creative degree courses across visual arts and design, heritage and publishing, and education. www.bathspa.ac.uk

International Festival of Childhood

The inaugural International Festival of Childhood, 29th June -2nd July 2017, will see an international gathering of leading thinkers sharing their ideas and concerns about contemporary childhood. It will be held at Edge Arts at University of Bath, with a live stream keynote from Sir Ken Robinson, an international authority on creativity and innovation in education and business, and Patron of 5x5x5=creativity. www.festivalofchildhood.com




RELEVANT LINKS

 Forest of imagination

<http://www.forestofimagination.com>

 **Grant Associates**

<http://www.grant-associates.uk.com>

 **5x5x5=creativity**

<http://www.5x5x5creativity.org.uk>

 **International Festival of Childhood**

<http://www.festivalofchildhood.com>

QUOTES

"“Bushy Norwood is the inverse of Forest 2016 – rather than taking the forest to the city, we are literally taking the city to the forest edge, creating a place that is animated with installations and possibilities. “Our aim is to offer an engaging and thought provoking series of experiences for all ages but with an emphasis on children and their connection with the natural environment. The National Trust is a key partner in this year’s event and this project will be a real focus for their own promotion for active engagement of children in the countryside.””

— Andrew Grant, Director of Grant Associates

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— Penny Hay, Director of 5x5x5=creativity and Senior Lecturer at Bath Spa University

IMAGES







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ABOUT FOREST OF IMAGINATION

Forest of Imagination is a four-day participatory, contemporary arts event and creative learning programme for all ages. From **Friday 3 June – Monday 6 June 2016** the spaces around Bath Abbey will be radically transformed into an innovative and inspiring place for contemporary creativity and intuitive play, providing an immersive experience for all.



Forest of Imaginationnewsroom