

Families flock to Forest of Imagination 2017

05 JULY 2017, BATH, UK

SUMMARY

Forest of Imagination 2017 attracts thousands of visitors to meadows of Bushey Norwood, part of Bath's Skyline Walk, to experience its fantastical forests, art trails and innovative sculptures.

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The free, pop-up contemporary arts event took place 29th June – 2nd July 2017 and saw The National Trust-owned meadow at Bushey Norwood transformed into a colourful tapestry of creative workshops and immersive artworks.

Highlights of the nature-inspired event included the successful launch of 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, Media Grand and The House of Fairy Tales.

'Forest on the edge' had a special emphasis on activities for children and young people, the event was centred round the core theme of 'Where we feel at home', with the aim of linking Bushey Norwood's ancient, Iron Age landscape to the fringes of urban Bath.

2017 represents the fourth consecutive year the ever popular Forest of Imagination has taken place in Bath. This year's event was aligned with Re-Imagining Childhood seminar and creative workshops, also held at The Edge – an arts and creativity hub within the University of Bath adjacent to Bushey Norwood. The National Trust' Indoors Outdoors' installation delighted families whilst 5 bespoke timber structures designed by students from University of Bath and Carpenter Oak and Woodland created local landmarks in the landscape and venues for multiple artist workshops.

Forest of Imagination is the brainchild of a collective of local companies and creatives who co-design and organise the event, including landscape architects Grant Associates, arts charity 5x5x5=creativity, architects Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and Bath Spa University.

Forest of Imagination 2017 was 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.

Andrew Grant, Director, Grant Associates, comments: "Forest of Imagination is about exploring our

connection with nature. By offering art installations from a range of disciplines from visual art and music through to landscape architecture, virtual reality, technology and science, we aim to create immersive experiences that truly ignite the imagination.

"Bushey Norwood proved the perfect place for linking the city of Bath to the forest edge. The landscape's ancient trees, wooded dells and meadows all called for exploration. Many visitors to the event have remarked on how the beautiful walks between the installations were an integral part of the creative Forest experience. The whole event became one great 'thinking path' of exploration.

"On behalf of the event organisers, I would like to thank all those who came to visit over the weekend and hope they enjoyed discovering this lesser known part of Bath in its full summer glory."

Penny Hay, Co-founder of Forest of Imagination (Director, 5x5x5=creativity and Senior Lecturer at Bath Spa University), comments: "It was wonderful to see so many families take ownership of the Forest this year, setting up camps and picnics under the old oaks of Bushey Norwood. Our aim is to encourage people of all ages to experience Forest of Imagination, but our alignment with the Re-Imagining Childhood seminar this year placed a special focus about the world we are creating for, and with, our children. We were delighted that David Almond and Sir Ken Robinson gave such passionate speeches – children's imagination will save the world.

"Our successful Aerocene launch was a wonderful highlight for 2017. As a multi-disciplinary artist, drawing from nature, architecture, engineering, the visual arts, science and astronomy, Tomas Saraceno demonstrates how learning transcends any one subject - a key theme for Forest of Imagination."

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

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, Institute for Education, and College of Liberal Arts. 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

Re-Imagining Childhood

Re-Imagining Childhood, 29th June -2nd July 2017, saw an international gathering of leading thinkers sharing their ideas and concerns about contemporary childhood over a series of workshops. The seminar was held at The Edge, an arts hub at the 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.5x5x5creativity.org.uk



RELEVANT LINKS




Forest of Imagination

<http://www.forestofimagination.org.uk/>



Grant Associates

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

 5x5x5=creativity
<https://5x5x5creativity.org.uk/>

 Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios
<https://fcbstudios.com/>

QUOTES

"Forest of Imagination is about exploring our connection with nature. By offering art installations from a range of disciplines from visual art and music through to landscape architecture, virtual reality, technology and science, we aim to create immersive experiences that truly ignite the imagination. Bushey Norwood proved the perfect place for linking the city of Bath to the forest edge. The landscape's ancient trees, wooded dells and meadows all called for exploration. Many visitors to the event have remarked on how the beautiful walks between the installations were an integral part of the creative Forest experience. There whole event became one great 'thinking path' of exploration. On behalf of the event organisers, I would like to thank all those who came to visit over the weekend and hope they enjoyed discovering this lesser known part of Bath in its full summer glory."

— Andrew Grant, co-founder of Forest of Imagination and Director at Grant Associates

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— Penny Hay, Co-founder of Forest of Imagination (Director, 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