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MIRROR
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Plymouth
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Mon-Friday:
9am—5pm
Saturday:
9am—2pm

Opening times are subject to change

For more information please visit:
mirrorplymouth.com
@mirror_plymouth

MIRROR is a public gallery, events programme and online resource supported within Arts University Plymouth. MIRROR commissions new work and produces exhibitions, events, residencies, research and student-led projects, with a specific focus on enriching the careers of artists based within the South West region.

Our free public gallery is open to everyone to visit and we look forward to welcoming you to our space.

30/03/2023 — 27/05/2023

BRIDGE THE TAMAR

ARTISTS

RACHAEL ALLAIN

Severance, Threshold, Return
Film. Duration: 3mins 20secs

Severance, Threshold, Return, depicts the triadic phases of liminality experienced on a boat journey. Travelling on Plymouth Sound passing Drakes Island and then drifting into the Tamar River and under the Tamar Bridge. Liminality is the anthropological term for the study of experience, ritual and process. This film was made using 35 mm black and white transparency film, a hand cranked plastic camera and double exposure. The methods and processes involved during and after this journey all entailed uncertainty, encountering borders, edges and margins between counties, connected and separated by land, bridges and water. The film frames show sprocket holes on the left and right of the screen, numbers come in and out of focus, both recognisable and abstracted forms appear and disappear, filmed from multiple perspectives and viewpoints during a journey of discovery.

Rachael is an artist/researcher based in South Devon, UK. Rachael's practice-led research is made through a rigorous investigation and embodied phenomenological exploration of watery sites, often using artist residency as methodology.

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BRIDGETTE ASHTON

Wall of Wonder
2016-2017. Cardboard, glue, postal stamps, ink, wood, wheels

Twenty-one rocks constructed from cardboard have been posted from the artist's studio in Cornwall to MIRROR to form the 'Wall of Wonder'. The cardboard rocks reference the 19th century fake stone, Pulhamite, which was used widely in parks and gardens to form ornamental rockeries, caves and follies.

The rocks were previously shipped by post, train and plane to a South London gallery* where, at the close of the exhibition in 2017 they were bedecked with Catherine Wheels for a fiery finale. The remaining rocks were eventually transported by train back to Cornwall. Each rock retains evidence of its various travails with franked stamps, barcodes, previous addresses and traces of firework damage.

Bridgette Ashton's practice includes sculpture, ceramics, print, publications and participatory walks. Her scale-models, depictions and proposals employ a variety of approaches, retaining indications of materiality and means, on occasion alluding to the obsessiveness of the hobbyist.

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NICOLA BEALING

Long-distance Swimmer
2013. Oil on Linen. 152 x 121cm

A lonely, valiant figure. Eternally swimming and searching in vain for another living soul or a friendly shore - always just out of reach beyond the horizon

Nicola Bealing is a painter and printmaker based in Cornwall. Anchored in narrative, her work leans towards surreal unease and dark humour. Recent projects have been in response to literary texts which act as springboards to figurative imagery.

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SOVAY BERRIMAN

MESKLA | Brewyon Drudh Working Drawing II
2022. Watercolour, pencil, pastel on paper. 305 x 325mm

MESKLA | Brewyon Drudh (Mussel Gathering | Precious Fragments) is a multi-platform artwork that uses sculpture and conversation to explore contemporary Cornish cultural identity & its relationship with heritage, land and extraction industries, to include tourism.

The *MESKLA Working Drawings* are used as part of Berriman's making process - considering the different conversations that she has had and planning the sculptural aspects of the project. Through the drawings she think about representation, form, material, and the conceptual and practical balance of bringing unknowns together and of claiming space.

Resting Post, (Molluscs Hunt Wizards)
2017. Acrylic sheet, timber, cloth and copper

Resting Post is part of Sovay Berriman's *Molluscs Hunt Wizards* series of work 2013 - 2017. It is a modular sculpture in which the elements work together to remain in place, as a whole. It is about taking time, about not moving forward or back, about pausing, breathing and allowing time to pass.

Molluscs Hunt Wizards, draws links between landscape and personal narrative, looking at understandings of boundaries and markers, and where power comes from. Moments of experience, potential, and the rhythm and pace of transformation were considered in relation to the coastal experience of Cornwall and desert and plains landscapes beyond the artist's experience.

Evolution, and domestic and industrial use, of the natural environment, alongside performance platforms, dance floors and stages, inform the abstract and semi-fantastical structures and events Sovay builds. Sovay's work is rooted, however, in her experience of being Cornish, her culture's shifting identity, and the mutability yet power of a sense of place.

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[@sovayberriman](http://sovayberriman.co.uk)

SAMUEL BESTWICK

Dowr Tamar / Great Water
2023. Film. Duration: 15mins, 9secs

The Tamar river, considered by many to mean 'Great water' in Cornish, divides the counties of Cornwall and Devon. Originating at Woolley Moor and ending at the Plymouth Sound, the Tamar travels over 60 miles with 22 bridges built to cross it. In focusing his lens on the progression of these bridges, Bestwick's film '*Dowr Tamar / Great Water*' captures the evolution of the Tamar river through history.

Created in tandem with local archive footage and a musical score composed by The Worm, the film catalogues humanity's technological development as well as our exploitation of the local landscape - In doing so, the work in turn questions our collective relationship with it. The film's chronological use of 8mm, 16mm and digital recording serves to mirror this progression through time. Though the film is firmly rooted in the South-West, its basis in environmentalism makes it applicable to all, now more than ever.

Samuel Bestwick is an artist and filmmaker currently based in Cornwall. Primarily employing the use of moving image, his practice explores narrative in conjunction with place and social history, often re-contextualising these ideas within a modern context.

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NAOMI FREARS

All Going Nowhere Together (Cars)
2018. Film. Duration: 3mins 35secs

One Sunday morning in September 2018, 40 cars arrives at a car park near Redruth. They tuned their radios to temporary FM radio (radio Nowhere) to hear Lovely by Wagon Christ (Luke Vibert). The cars (each one line a tiny nightclub) followed directions to park in simple choreographed sequence together.

19 years before this, two German artists visited the area to film favourite short car journeys chosen by artists with a soundtrack of their choice. Frears' dad had recently died, and she directed them to the car park at the top of town and asked them to park repeatedly. Lovely by Wagon Christ (Luke Vibert) was her chosen soundtrack. The music played nice and loud, the car moved a lot without really going anywhere at all, and for the first time since her father's death, Naomi felt elated.

Luke Vibert was a collaborator of this project resulting in a larger number of people experiencing the unexpected glee of all parking together while listening to his music in a confined space.

All Going Nowhere Together (Girls)
2018. Film. Duration: 3mins 35secs

Frears says: 'in this work we are inside on of the card with four young women - all artists. I don't think we are used to seeing how women behave in cars and I love how they interact with each other - including them missing the start of the performance'.

Frears' sees her practice as having various moving parts - like a peculiar body or machine that changes and expands as new people and ideas help to shape what she does. Naomi works across film and video as well as printmaking and painting.

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[@naomifrears](http://naomifrears.com)

SOPHIE INGRAM

Wet Concrete IV
2020. Screen print on paper.
490 x 600mm

This work is an expression of the process of learning to love where you are. Engaging in the place where you live, making it the place where you belong.

These compositions are built from layers of sketchbook work Sophie collected on excursions around the city during the first COVID-19 lockdown. She wanted to create something beautiful out of the things she had collected; rubbings of pavements, photographs of seaweed, drawings of buildings.

Sophie Ingram is interested in the identity of places, and the aesthetic and emotional experience of living or visiting particular locations. Sophie has worked across a variety of media with a particular focus in mark making, line drawing, collage and printing processes.

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[@sicprint](http://sophieabigailgram.weebly.com)

DEAN KNIGHT

Cellar
2022. MDF, expanding foam, polystyrene, air-drying clay, tile grout, texture medium, gesso, acrylic, oil, glitter, glitter glue, varnish, latex. 1000 x 700 x 500mm

Cellar (2022) references a screenshot from the video game 'Uncharted 4' (PS4), and is a still life of sorts. Whilst playing the game, Dean became interested in details and areas away from the main narrative of the game; seemingly mundane corners, often inaccessible by the avatar, and beyond meaningful interaction.

Dean Knight is interested in virtual, fictional spaces, how they function as a safer alternate reality. A tomb becomes a cellar, the narrative shifts. The term cellar alludes to underground queer culture, a historically marginalised community pushed outside of the mainstream. This use of video game imagery is also a reference to the Gaymer community, a subculture within a subculture. By reproducing and rendering these flat worlds in 3D, details are lost and added, the scene simplified or embellished.

The crude application of the materials highlights the construction or fictitious nature of the scene. The aesthetic language used is akin to sci-fi and horror. This is a direct reference to the idea of otherness, strangeness or queerness. *Cellar* contains bodily and grotesque elements, their rendering more akin to body horror or prop making. The work contains an ambiguous narrative that mirrors the queer experience; code switching and evading detection.

Working across sculpture, painting and drawing, Dean Knight constructs open ended narratives that intersperse the primitive, the comedic, the seductive and the grotesque. A self-conscious and tongue-in-cheek take on an obsessive and objectifying male artist is explored, along with the role of the gay man as clown or peripheral deviant.

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[@_deanknight](http://dean-knight.co.uk)

MOLLY ERIN MCCARTHY

Western Approach to Paradise 2019.
Film. Duration: 3min 25secs

Western Approach to Paradise is a love letter to a demolished footbridge told through fragments of data on a spaceship terminal. Using scans of debris, 3D modelled replications and archival content, the work creates a futuristic mythos for Plymouth's Western Approach footbridge and adjacent building.

Having grown up in the Cornish town Torpoint, Molly would often travel into Plymouth via Western Approach, gazing with wonder at the great glass fortress. When the bridge was announced for demolition it stirred up a lot of emotion in her, marking the beginning of my ongoing interest in how the environments we live within reflect us back to ourselves

Taking inspiration from The Baltic Sea anomaly conspiracy theory, *Western Approach to Paradise* imagines a future in which remnants of the bridge are discovered during a scavenging expedition to a post-climate collapse, oceanic Earth. The work returns a sense of tantalising mystery to the building, addressing anxieties around gentrification and societies obsession with 'development' by turning the shifting urban landscape of Plymouth into a site of untold possibility. *Western Approach to Paradise* has been exhibited in Aberdeen, London and Texas, but this is its first showing in Plymouth.

Molly Erin McCarthy works with 3D and digital media to create mysterious worlds and cryptic artefacts that exist somewhere between fact and fiction. Manifesting across sculpture, installation, digital and interactive mediums, McCarthy's practice explores themes of reality, progress and power, considering how we form, and are formed by, the physical and philosophical landscapes we reside in.

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RHYS MORGAN

Interior: Off Straight Street 2022.
Film. Duration: 5mins 35secs

Exploring the relationship between place and everyday queer experience, this work was conceived as an investigation of queer spaces in the vicinity of the Old Market, a often cited as the 'gay village' of Bristol. This echoes a history of queer communities being established in deindustrialised areas of other cities. This piece is intended as a starting point of a longer investigation into this history and how it operates with the often developer-driven, regeneration of city spaces; as well as a continuing decline in the number of queer spaces and the displacement of queer communities. Originally conceived in 2019, the development of the work was impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting lockdowns. This has meant that the work reflects ideas of the slow isolation and inevitable effect on queer experience which has taken place in this time. Rhys Morgan is an Artist and Producer based in Bristol, UK. His work often explores ideas around information and power structures and how this interacts with queer life.

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STEVEN PAIGE

Look
2009/ 2023. Digital photographic transparency, fluorescent strip lights. 841 x 1188mm

Look is an appropriated image taken from the cover of a classic young person's book about how to see and understand the world around you in an engaged and connected way. The image of optimism and positive social energy is startling – there is a serious and meaningful attempt to send a message of hope – seeking out new friends across borders, boundaries and communities.

Hello My Name Is
2011. Newspaper. 420 x 297mm

Hello My Name Is, is a response to the organising drive in artist-led culture. The artist spent time being part of a temporary secular community at Braziers Park estate in Oxford in 2011 and was inspired by its resource library. The newspaper draws upon the idea of the socialising energy of education and the generous and cohesive community, pitfalls and all.

Steven Paige's approach to creating works, be it performative, installation, moving image, photography, or print is to reconcile his dual Anglo-American heritage through a queer and discursive lens, drawn from archival encounters and histories, real and imagined.

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BEN SANDERSON

05/08/2021
2021. ink, watercolour, acrylic, monotype, charcoal and oil on canvas. 1750 x 2100mm

This piece is built from years of attempted works offcuts and scraps. When watching the garden, it often became a metaphor for society. A well-kept edge, a ditch, weeds, a wildflower, the potted, the garden flower. Since Ben Sanderson's time at Trebah Gardens on the Helford River during his residency, Ben has become fascinated by the garden's edge, and the ways that rogue, uncultivated, uninvited species meet and mix with the carefully selected ones.

Systems of power and oppression are echoed in the garden; naming, categorising, cultivating, displacing, collecting, weeding. The flowers in the work aren't meant to be garden flowers, they are the ones that live in the cracks of the pavement and that are crawling up the walls.

Ben works in painting, drawing and textiles, often returning to existing pieces and transforming them: monotypes on paper are developed and echoed in printed elements that appear on canvas; canvas sewn and patched back together or mulched to become rag paper, which in turn becomes a ground for new painting.

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