

READ ABOUT NOTORIOUS PLAYWRIGHTS, A CHESHIRE AUTHOR, THE BIRTH OF ATOM AND LUNA | CREATE RECYCLED COASTERS, FELT BIRDS, DOODLE ART DECORATIONS | FEEL GOOD IN BODY AND MIND | FIND LIVE PERFORMANCES NEAR YOU | AND MUCH MORE....



AT HOME

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES
AND WHAT'S ON 2021





Cheshire Rural
Touring Arts

WELCOME TO CRTA'S At Home edition

Welcome to Cheshire Rural Touring Arts At Home, bringing stories, making activities and live show listings to your door.

Celebrating our local area and doing things close to, or at home has been important to all of us over the last 16 months. As we start to programme a number of live shows again across Cheshire, we wanted to reconnect with local communities and our audiences and reach out to people who have not come across rural touring before.

CRTA brings high quality professional theatre, music, dance, family and spoken word performances to rural venues in Cheshire. We are working with our wonderful volunteer promoters to offer a mix of live, online, indoor and outdoor shows from August to December. Check our listings (p8) for a show near you.

We have linked up with our partner rural touring scheme, Spot On Lancashire and Lancashire based, Hopeful & Glorious to bring you a range of craft and making activities to do at home, using materials that you may already have or are easy to find.

Why not style up your house or garden with doodle art plant pots (p4), or a quirky cork canine (p5). Repurpose a book or magazine into a junk diary for your keepsakes (p10) or use simple sewing to make colourful folk art felt birds (p11). Have a go at making a wooden bee coaster (p13) or transform an old book into a decorated bird cage. (p4)

Cheshire Dance share some of their wonderful Moving Moments activities specially designed to help us all move more at home and feel good. (p3)

For children and families, we have a very special story about Atom and Luna (p6), with beautiful whimsical illustrations. Join their Funnelwick Limb world online for more stories.

Cheshire Archives bring us an intriguing story about Samuel 'Maggoty' Johnson's absurd play (p12), celebrating the historical roots of live performance in Cheshire.

Cheshire author, Samuel Pollen is interviewed about his unforgettable and uplifting novel The Year I Didn't Eat which won the 2020 Lancashire Book of the Year award (p15) and to round off we have a poem from a young writer at Action Transport Theatre (p16) and our What's On performance guide (p8).

We have been able to bring these stories and activities to your door through our partnerships and funders. Many thanks to Spot On for their original idea, to Hopeful & Glorious (p16), our cover illustrator Sonny Ross, our CRTA promoters and all our contributors. We acknowledge support

from Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils, Arts Council England and the Cultural Recovery Fund.

If you enjoy reading At Home or doing any of the making or other activities, please email and let us know how you got on or send us some pictures of your creations.



For more information please contact:

Jen Henry and Anne Crabtree, Scheme Managers

 crt@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

 cheshireruraltouringarts.co.uk

Cover Illustration

Artist Sonny Ross was raised in Congleton. When he decided to become an illustrator, the Electric Picture House was a friendly space to get involved with local projects and develop the early skills he would need going forward. The Electric Picture House is a non-profit making artist cooperative and a regular venue for CRTA shows.

 sonnyross.com

CONTENTS

- 3 Moving Moments with Cheshire Dance
- 4 Design a doodle pot
- 4/5 A totally bonkers Trolley Dog
- 6 Tales of Atom and Luna
- 8 What's on this Summer and Autumn
- 10 Junk paper journals
- 11 Felt birds
- 12 Cheshire's forgotten playwright
- 13 Create your own coaster
- 14 Give your old books a new lease of life
- 15 An interview with author Samuel Pollen
- 16 That Night, poetry by Amelia Hughes
- 16 Hopeful & Glorious



Moving Moments Feel Good in Body and Mind

Cheshire
Dance

ACTIVITY 1: JUICY JOINTS



Sitting or standing tall - feet flat on the floor...

Make 4 circles with your shoulders.... your elbows... your arms.

Reach your arms forwards and open your chest towards the ceiling.

Make circles with your wrists and allow your arms to float in any direction you like - imagine you are a proud flamenco dancer on stage!

Imagine you have a hula hoop around your waist - circle your hips so that it doesn't fall down! Can you try 4 circles in one direction and 4 circles in the other?

Circle each ankle 4 times - notice how your knee, hip and whole leg join in the circles. Can you repeat this and make it even bigger?

Take a little walk on the spot - allow your arms to swing at your sides. Can you make the arm swings bigger, getting higher each time? Notice the way it feels in your torso. Can you feel a twist?

Let your arms reach upwards as you take a deep breath in... As you breathe out, let them fall and rest at your sides.

Can you repeat the whole sequence? Can you do it...

- To your favourite song?
- To the theme tune of your favourite TV programme?
- Faster? Slower... as if you were stuck in a pot of honey?
- With someone else? Teach it to a friend, a grandchild?

Dance is for everyone: young people, older adults, people with restricted mobility... and everyone in between. It has long been proven that dance, as an art form, has the ability to transform lives.

From boosting confidence and enhancing social skills in younger people, to preventing falls, reducing isolation and improving coordination, strength and balance in older adults – and of course, raising the spirits of everyone – dance provides creative experiences for both body and mind.

Working to dispel the misconception that dance is simply learning steps and styles, in this issue Cheshire Dance shares with us two activities from its Moving Moments initiative that show how dance is so much more than this. Cheshire Dance shows us that creative movement (whilst seated as well as standing) can support people to learn about their own bodies, their health and wellbeing.

Give yourself the space and time for you to just be YOU by trying out these two Moving Moments activities.

ACTIVITY 2: MOVING WITH BREATH

To find out more about Cheshire Dance, classes and 'dance at home' activities, visit

 cheshiredance.org

 Cheshire Dance

For each of the following, find a comfortable place to stand, sit or lie. If it feels good, allow your eyes to close...

- Place your hands on your ribs... breathe deeply. Notice your ribs expanding into your hands. Imagine your lungs as balloons inflating fully, taking up space.
- Imagine your breath as the sea... as waves... coming in and out with the tide. Feel the ebb and flow of your breath entering and leaving your body. Can you allow your worries to dissolve and be carried away by the sea?
- Notice the movement of your breath...
 - ... chest...
 - ... shoulders...
 - ... stomach...
 - ... rise and fall.

Breathing in, reach your arms out into space in any direction. Allow them to fall with the breath out. Repeat this...

- ... breathing in and opening...
- ... breathing out and closing.

Design a doodle pot



Amina is a visual artist & surface pattern designer. Her art is full of bright colours and influenced by nature.

This project was inspired by Amina's love of doodles and her interest in wellbeing arts. Creating doodles is a wonderful, fun, mindful activity for all the family and the perfect way to brighten up an old plant pot. If you want to know more about creating eye catching doodles and its wellbeing benefits, visit Amina's website or social media for updates on her next doodle art workshop aminasartdesign.co.uk

[amina.s_artanddesign](https://www.instagram.com/amina.s_artanddesign)

[@aminasartdesign](https://www.facebook.com/aminasartdesign)

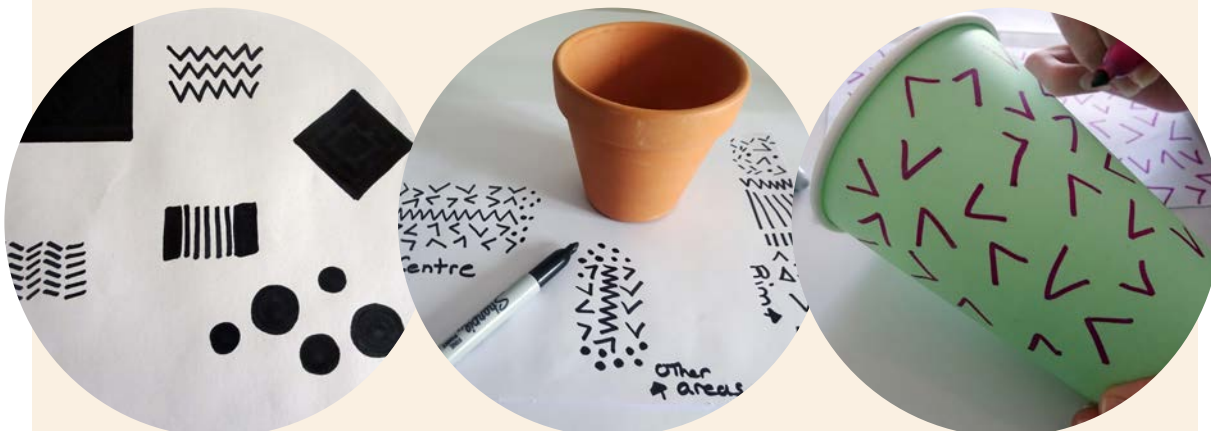
Etsy shop coming soon with greeting cards & notebooks

MATERIALS:

- Terracotta pot (great if it's from the garden)
- Sheets of A4 or A5 paper
- A black sharpie marker pen
- Coloured sharpies (if you have some lying about)
- A paper or a plastic cup (you can reuse a coffee cup) to practice on



INSTRUCTIONS



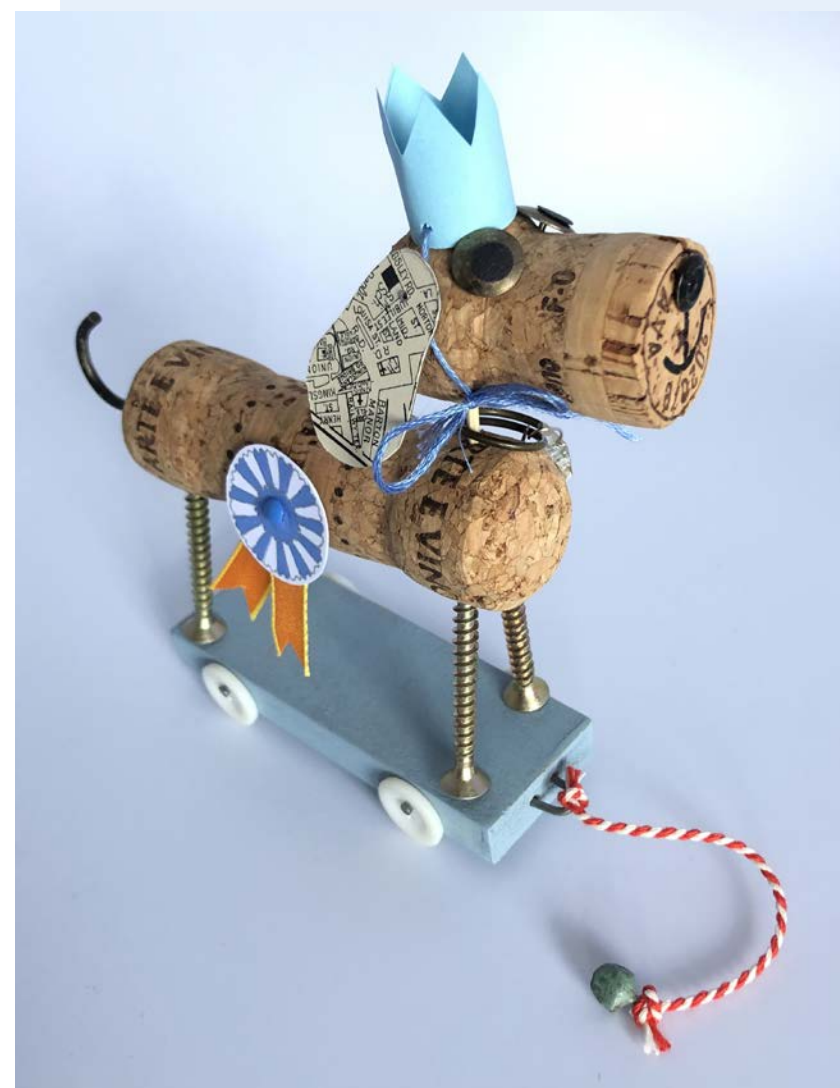
- 1 Think about your doodle design. This project is based on a geometric design, using shapes such as squares, circles, lines, zig-zags etc to create doodles.
- 2 Start doodling on paper first. Experiment using different shapes or stick with one shape. Have fun, creating new combinations of shapes and lines. Think about the overall design. Is it a repeat pattern, or something loose and abstract? Think about which shapes fit well together and how you might want to space them out.
- 3 Which areas of the pot would you like to doodle on? Take a look at the plant pot. Is it the whole pot, part of it or just the rim? How will the pattern you've come up with fit into this space?
- 4 Work out which colours to use. If you are using more than one colour, try a few different colour combinations out on paper. Light colours might not show up on the terracotta.
- 5 Practice on a paper cup to get used to the curves of the pot. You can skip this part if you are itching to get started on your plant pot!
- 6 Start doodling on the plant pot. Use your black sharpie or coloured sharpies to create your doodle design on your terracotta pot.



A totally bonkers Trolley Dog

Bonker*s Clutterbucks are a husband (Peter) and wife (Kate) team working in a diverse range of materials to produce hand cut and painted animal dummy boards, dioramas, 3D models and card modelling kits.

Peter studied Fine Art Painting at Chelsea and Winchester School of Art while Kate studied Textile Design and Weaving at Huddersfield and Winchester. They formed Bonker*s Clutterbucks in 2011 and work from their studio at home in an old Corn Warehouse in the Rossendale Valley, Lancashire.



You can find them on Instagram, Etsy and their blog

[bonkersclutterbucks](https://www.instagram.com/bonkersclutterbucks)

[etsy.com/uk/shop/bonkersclutterbucks](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/bonkersclutterbucks)

bonkersclutterbucks.com

MATERIALS

For the Cork Dog

- Glue - PVA wood glue or UHU
- 3 Champagne / wine corks
- 4 Screws / nails at least 50mm long
- 1 Cup hook
- Cocktail sticks or wooden skewer
- 2 sewing pins
- 2 Carpet tacks or brass drawing pins
- Small tack or drawing pin
- 1 Metal ring or washer
- Small charm or bell
- Piece of card and off cuts of patterned card
- 2 Punched holes in black paper or 2 sequins and 2 black seed beads

Party Hat

- A strip of coloured paper 60mm x 22mm
 - 200mm length of embroidery type silk
- ## Rosette
- 2p coin
 - 5p coin
 - Small piece of coloured card
 - 60mm length of narrow ribbon
 - A brass split or brad pin

Trolley (For dog to stand on)

- Off cut of wood (roughly 110mm x 30mm x 10mm)
- Paint
- 4 Buttons roughly the same colour and size, at least 20mm wide
- 4 Escutcheon pins (brass dome headed pins)
- 1 “U” Shaped netting staple
- String
- Wooden bead or bell

INSTRUCTIONS

Prep — For the dog’s ears, glue some patterned paper or text to an offcut of card and leave to dry.

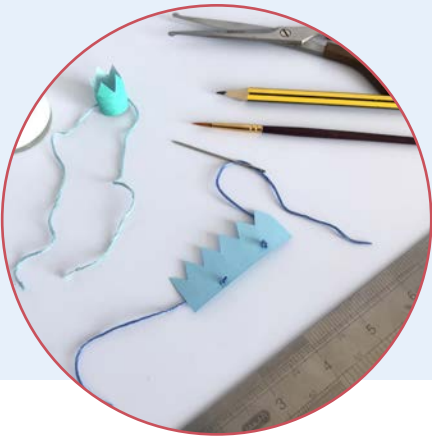
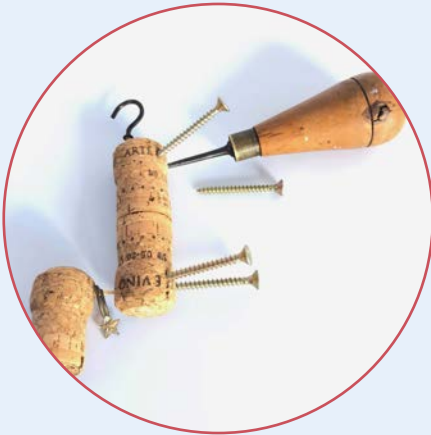


EQUIPMENT

- Scissors
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Small Hammer
- Black sharpie pen
- Sharp embroidery needle or scalpel
- Pin vice/small hand drill



- 1 Attach two corks end to end to form the dog’s body. Use a bradawl to make pilot holes in a triangular formation on the facing ends of two corks. Cut a cocktail stick into 3 pieces then poke the short sticks into one end of a cork. Put some glue on the opposite cork and sandwich them together. Use another shortened cocktail stick or wooden skewer for the dog’s neck. Before attaching the head to the body add a metal ring with a small charm or bell for a collar.
- 2 Use a bradawl to make pilot holes underneath the body for legs and one for its tail. Screw the tips of the screws into the cork making sure they’re secure and the dog is balanced when standing. Use a brass cup hook for its tail.
- 3 On the reverse of the pre-prepared patterned paper/card draw two pear shaped ears approximately 40mm x 24mm and cut out. Use the 2 sewing pins and some glue to attach these ears to the sides of the cork head. Make eyes using either hole-punched black paper pupils glued on to them. Alternatively, sequins and beads can be used to create pupils. Push the pins into the cork for eyes and a drawing pin for the nose. Use a black sharpie to draw the dog’s mouth.
- 4 Using the strip of coloured paper 60mm x 22cm, make a paper party hat. Draw the scallops out on the reverse of the paper and cut out. Glue the seam together. Using a sharp needle, make holes low down on each side for the chin strap. Tie a piece of fine embroidery thread to each side. This can either be tied together under the dog’s chin or tucked under the dog’s ears and wound around the pin. Cut off any excess thread.
- 5 To make a rosette out of coloured card, draw around a 2p and 5p coin and cut the two circles out. The 2p size will be the face of the rosette, the 5p size the reverse. Decorate the rosette or leave plain. Make a small hole in the centre of each card circle. Cut a 60mm length of narrow ribbon in half and cut a V out of two ends to prevent fraying. Stick the two blunt ends of the ribbon to the reverse of the 2p sized circle, in the centre and position the 5p sized piece of card on top centring it so that the ribbon is sandwiched in between with two ribbon tails. Push a brass split pin or brad type pin through the centre from the front to the back and push the pin into the side of the dog’s cork body.
- 6 To make the trolley, paint an off cut of wood (roughly 110mm x 30mm x 10mm in size). Select 4 buttons roughly the same size and colour and pre-drill pilot holes in the sides of the wood using a small hand drill or pin vice. Place an escutcheon pin through one of the buttonholes and hammer the buttons in place for wheels. Hammer a U shaped netting staple onto the front of the trolley. Tie on a string with a bead or bell on the end and pop Fido on top to complete the look!



THE GREAT OAK

MURRAY LACHLAN YOUNG

Trunk sap bow limb
branch twig leaf
Stretching, reaching
Out to the boundless sky

As above - so below
Roots deep-diving
into the lower realms
Watching waiting

Great grandmother oak.
Sensing feeling
For this
a special day

They are coming
Two young visitors
will come by night

But wait
we must go back
Nine hundred years

To begin with its own
great decrepit mother
ancient and wise
but frail and weakening
before the fateful storm

the winter storm that blew
her down as she
cast out her last
fresh green acorn brood

Into the ancient wood
into the black soil,
soil built from
ten thousand years

of leaf fall, twig fall
limb and branch,
trunk and root
to make a fertile bed

In that small wood
where one particular
tiny acorn sat
a long time ago

Germinating, moist and cold
Rain, snow and ice, thaw
Spring sprung, shell split

tap root dropped
pushed down
finding sustenance

To drive two new
baby leader leaves
pushing beneath
protective bramble thorn
then sprang the
the first two true oak leaves
softer than a baby's skin
clean as breath of arctic wind

sipping gently on
the sweetest soft spring sun
and distant possibilities
that one day, this tiny
green shoot might grow
to become a monumental
great grandmother oak
of its own

And so it did
Slowly, slowly, slowly
year upon, year upon,
year upon, year



Explore Atom & Luna's journey through free audi-tales
and an AR game online now at funnelwicklimb.com

Instagram Twitter Facebook @FunnelwickLimb

One hundred two hundred
Old to a human
Yet still a child to its kind
Three hundred four hundred
finding its strength
Shifting transforming
Growing and growing
Five hundred six hundred
heart fully formed
seven hundred, eight hundred
nine hundred years
until there it stood
Great grey trunk moving
to a giant oak knuckle
Split into two trunks and
nine mighty oak bows
of grey, green, brown further up
Its climbing confusion
of limbs and branches
heading in every direction
became a maze of vaults
twists, spirals and gestures
ending in thick bunches
of deep battle-green leaves
leaves into colonies
(and so not leaves crowded in colonies)

and colonies into great
rocking mounds
(and so not slowly rocking mounds)
swaying gently
in the late summer breeze

A universe
home to all things
from the great to the small
to the bees

and birds and flowers
and there at the height
of its powers
in its great centre

opened a chamber,
two metres wide
Two meters high
A rough-hewn oaken room

Sweet-smelling and woody
walls lined with moss
Floor soft with leaves
busy spiders
Bees buzzing gently

And there in that oaken chamber
came babies – two human babies
Bright-eyed bouncing babies
gurgling
all arms and legs

wrapped in great dock leaves
soft with owl feathers
Babies – Identical twins

Left in the darkest of night
What will become of them?
Where did they come from?

Who was it left them?
Who will they be?
How will they live?
What will they see?

These infant visitors
Two baby girls
Oaken stepdaughters

The great grandmother oak tree
did not contemplate
any of these things
she merely looked

inward and said –

“Hmmm just what have we here?”

The Chronicles of Atom and Luna

The Chronicles of Atom and Luna were produced by Funnelwick Limb in association with Action Transport Theatre and Eastern Angles. Cheshire Rural Touring Arts are one of seven co-commissioning partners for Atom and Luna. Murray's previous show, The Mystery of the Raddlesham Mumps, visited both CRTA and Spot On venues.

Words by **Murray Lachlan Young**

Illustrations by **Bek Palmer**

 funnelwicklimb.com

What's On this Summer and Autumn



Cheshire Rural
Touring Arts

W

e are delighted to be able, once again, to offer a range of high quality shows in collaboration with our Cheshire volunteer promoters.

For your safety, all shows will be carefully managed and comply with prevailing coronavirus guidance and restrictions.

We look forward to welcoming you to a show near you, your support is much appreciated and needed.

To join our mailing list for brochures, e-newsletters or to go on your local promoter's email list email: crrta@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Please contact the host venue or CRTA if you have any access queries.

CheshireRuralTouringArts CheshireTouring

TO BOOK

ONLINE
BOOKING

All shows can be booked via our website where you will also find more information and a link to online booking for each show cheshiruraltouringarts.co.uk

You can call the venue direct if a promoter's phone number is provided next to the show listing.

Ticket prices range from £8 to £13 with lower prices for children's shows.



OUTDOOR FAMILY THEATRE

HALF A STRING PUPPET **The Lost Colour**

Join Malcolm Brushnell, a professional painter and amateur alchemist on his quest to find the pinkiest pink paint on the planet! A stunning puppetry and energy filled performance by award winning Half a String two metres up in the air on top of a van.

Saturday 7th August, 2pm
Lion Salt Works, CW9 6ES.
Tickets 01606 275 066

Sunday 8th August, 2pm
West Vale Park, Little Neston,
CH64 9XW. Tickets 0151 336 7729



OUTDOOR FAMILY THEATRE

EYE OF NEWT THEATRE ARTS **Cabinet of Curiosity**

The mysterious cabinet hides secrets within and will reward the curious. Hidden within the cabinet are treasure hunt clues, puzzles, vignettes, characters and surprises. Will you solve the puzzles and unveil the mysteries? Commissioned by Spot On Lancashire.

Friday 27th August, various performance times as part of Action Transport Theatre's arts & adventure trail in Whitby Park, Ellesmere Port

Info: actiontransporttheatre.org/
Portos-Peculiar-Playground



INDOOR THEATRE

PMAC PRODUCTIONS **Old Herbaceous**

Sown with seeds of gardening wisdom, this charming one man show recounts Herbert Pinnegars journey from orphan boy to legendary head gardener, 'Old Herbaceous', and tells of his friendship with the lady of the house, Mrs Charteris.

A humorous and touching portrayal of a single-minded yet gentle man with a passion for plants.

Friday 17th September, 7.30pm
Tarvin Community Centre, CH3 8LY.
Tickets 07824 545 448

Saturday 18th September, 7.30pm
Great Budworth Parish Hall,
CW9 6HL.
01606 891 019 / 01606 624 472



MUSIC

MAMBO JAMBO

Mambo Jambo, Pete and Frankie, are a unique acoustic roots duo, playing a joyous mash-up of styles and instruments and bringing together sounds from roots, world, folk and jazz, plus their own compositions. A fabulous musical treat of 'Musical Sunshine' is in store wherever they roll up, their tour bus packed to the brim with instruments.

Saturday 18th September, 7.30pm
The Electric Picture House,
Congleton, CW12 1QN.
Tickets 01260 270 908

ONLINE
BOOKING

All shows can be booked via our website cheshiruraltouringarts.co.uk

ONLINE
BOOKING



MUSIC

TRUCKSTOP HONEYMOON

Hollering with all their hearts over a five string banjo and a doghouse bass, Truckstop Honeymoon live the life they sing about. Touring across three continents with a truckload of songs, Katie and Mike West tell stories about the strangeness of everyday life. Their music combines elements of bluegrass, music hall jazz, and straight up rock'n'roll.

Friday 1st October, 8pm
Goostrey Village Hall, CW4 8PE.
Book online only at
www.goosfest.com from 06.09.21
Advance tickets only, no tickets on the door.

Saturday 9th October, 7.30pm
Upton-by-Chester Village Hall
CH2 1HX. Tickets 07712 611 616



RTDI DANCE

SONIA SABRI COMPANY

Same Same... But Different

'Same Same... But Different' is a new family show, mixing Kathak, Hip Hop dance, contemporary dance, hints of live music and physical storytelling. Inspired by the well-known Anglo-Asian phrase 'same, same... but different', meaning "Yes, something kind of similar, but not the exact same thing". Our 3 dancer-musicians conjure a magical atmosphere where we celebrate our individuality, diversity and the bonds which connect us all.

Saturday 9th October
Neston Town Hall, CH64 9TR.
For a Neston school and local groups



MUSIC

GREEN MATTHEWS

A Brief History Of Music

'A Brief History Of Music' takes in 600 years of musical history in 90 minutes! Beginning in the Middle Ages and ending up in the 20th century (incorporating everything in between!), this fun and fast-moving show is a whistle-stop tour of Western musical history.

A live show and livestream

Saturday 16th October, 7.30pm
Little Budworth Jubilee Hall,
CW6 9BU. Tickets 01829 760 422
Tickets from venue only



MUSIC

GREEN MATTHEWS

Witty Ditties – 400 Years of Side-Splitting Song

Chris Green (piano, guitar, accordion) and Sophie Matthews (early woodwinds, flute, saxophone) bring you 4 centuries of chromatic comedy, ranging from bawdy Restoration ballads to stinging Sixties satire.

Featuring songs by Noël Coward, Tom Lehrer, Flanders and Swann, and a host of other lesser-known songwriters, this is a fun and fast-moving revue.

Sunday 17th October, 7.30pm
Mollington Backford and District
Village Hall, CH1 6NT.
Tickets 01244 851 678



RTDI DANCE

JOSHUA 'VENDETTA' NASH

Blacklist + Figleaf

A double bill of shows from one of the UK's leading Krump dancers. Krump: a form of street dance characterised by free, expressive, exaggerated, and highly energetic movement. It's the Rock and Roll or Heavy Metal of the Hip Hop world, a way of expressing difficult emotions, the ones that get you all twisted up inside.

Blacklist is an explosive piece asking how do we cope with inner conflict? Delving into brotherhood, isolation and friendship, explored through hip hop, krump and theatre.

Tuesday 9th November, 1.30pm
The Fallibroome Academy,
SK10 4AF. Tickets 01625 627 258



MUSIC

BOWJANGLES

Dracula in Space!

Award winning, internationally acclaimed quartet Bowjangles is an irreverent, anarchic group of genre spanners, bringing music, theatre and comedy together in a way you've never seen before.

In this brand new show for 2021, the intrepid foursome are blasting off into outer space to meet a mysterious benefactor whose proposition seems a little too good to be true.

Friday 12th November, 7.30pm
Tarvin Community Centre, CH3 8LY.
Tickets 07824 545 448

Sat 13th November, 7.30pm
Gawsworth Village Hall, SK11 9QY.
Tickets 01625 619 449



INDOOR THEATRE

PMAC PRODUCTIONS

The Scrooge Diaries

In this revelatory exclusive, Ebenezer Scrooge opens his Diary to expose the awful truth about Tiny Tim, the Fezziwigs, Jacob Marley... and that disgustingly jolly, gluttonous, consumer-driven Ghost of Christmas Present... as he reveals the truth behind a Christmas Carol and the vengeful, slanderous, upstart author of that novel

Saturday 28th November, 7.30pm
The Electric Picture House,
Congleton, CW12 1QN.
Tickets 01260 270 908



THEATRE/COMEDY

GEORGE EGG

Moveable Feast

Part stand-up comedy, part entertaining and absurd illustrated lecture, part cookery demonstration. On a stage set up like the interior of a garage, George makes three plates of delicious food using unconventional items and absurd methods. Watch him demonstrate how to cook with an engine, get the most from the car battery and even utilise the air-conditioning.

Three plates of gourmet food, cooked live in the most unconventional ways and with the opportunity to taste the results at the end.

Friday 2nd December, 7.30pm
St Marys Creative Space, Chester,
CH1 2DW. Tickets 07736 839 320

Saturday 3rd December, 7.30pm
Plumley Village Hall, WA16 0TR.
Tickets 01565 722 259

Junk Paper Journals





Capture your memories as you're out and about this summer



Rachel Crawshaw is a mixed media artist, crafter and owner of Mushroom Moon Designs, focusing on junk and art journals, mixed media art, collage and ephemera.

She is a member of the Blackburn artists society and has exhibited work at the Stewards Gallery and the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe. Rachel spends her days creating junk and art journals; painting, scribbling and designing digital paper kits. She is inspired by vintage items, the natural world, 'found objects' and loves to transform items that may be deemed as 'junk' into artwork.

You can find Rachel at:

-  mushroommoondesigns.com
-  [etsy.com/uk/shop/mushroommoondesigns](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/mushroommoondesigns)
-  [mushroommoondesigns](https://www.instagram.com/mushroommoondesigns)
-  [mushroommoondesigns](https://www.facebook.com/mushroommoondesigns)

MATERIALS

- 1 piece of thick paper or card (such as the cover of a magazine or some scrap card packaging) cut to size 20cm x 7cm for your cover
- 1 piece of thick paper or card in a contrasting colour or pattern cut to size 4cm x 6cm for your pocket
- 6 pieces of scrap paper (such as envelopes, junk mail, old book pages and paper bags) cut to size 18cm x 6cm. For a memory journal you could use leaflets from the places you have visited to make the pages of your book!
- Ruler
- Glue, double sided tape or staples
- Scissors or a paper cutter
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or string
- Small ephemera to decorate (such as tickets, paper clips, small photographs, buttons, stamps, leaves and bits of nature, pictures cut from magazines and leaflets etc.)

- 1 Cut your thick piece of card for your cover and six or more pieces of scrap paper for your pages to the correct size with scissors or a paper cutter. You can make your journal bigger or smaller if you like, just make sure that the cover is at least 1cm bigger all the way round than your inside pages.
- 2 Fold the card for your cover and the papers for your pages in half.
- 3 Using the folds as a guide, glue your papers and your cover together by putting a line of glue (or double sided tape) along the fold of each page, until all your pages and the cover are glued together by the spine. Alternatively you could staple the pages along the spine or even sew them together with a sewing machine! You now have your miniature journal.
- 4 When the glue is dry, close your journal and make a pocket for the front cover using the contrasting coloured card cut to size. Glue along three edges of the contrasting card sticking it to the front of your journal ensuring you leave a gap at the top for the opening to your pocket.
- 5 Punch a hole through the front and back cover of your journal near the open end. Tie a piece of ribbon or string through the hole.
- 6 Decorate your journal using ephemera. It's nice to personalise it with objects you love such as buttons, old stamps, your favourite photograph or ticket stubs from one of your adventures!

You can now use your journal. It is the perfect size to pop in your pocket when you go out adventuring. You can fill your journal with notes and memories, you can stick curious objects that you find in it such as interesting leaves or you could draw a little picture on every page reminding you of somewhere you have visited!



Felt Birds

Ali Pickard is a 3D sculptor artist trained in metalwork with a varied artistic life including being part of a Women's Welding Collective and running recycled design projects for women in Mexico & Ecuador.

Ali used to make large scale furniture pieces and metal sculptures but now works on a smaller scale combining wood, metal, embroidery and automata movements.

Ali runs workshops and projects with community groups and schools using creativity and problem-solving skills.



We have 40 kits available with everything you need to make one of Ali's felt birds. If you would like one please contact CRTA via email crt@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk



MATERIALS

(provided in the pack)

- Scrap felt (2cm x 10cm squares)
- Skewer or similar size twig (Paint if wished)
- Embroidery threads
- Small beads/sequins/button to decorate
- Children's wooden block - approx 4cm (Paint if wished)
- Small piece scrap of card (10cm square)
- Fabric scraps for stuffing

TOOLS

(not provided in the pack)

- Scissors and needle
- Hot glue or PVA glue

INSTRUCTIONS



- 1 Make a simple bird template on card then cut out two bird shapes in felt. Cut a wing shape from a contrasting colour of felt. Use the photo example as a template or design your own. The photo example is 9cm from beak to tail. Any bigger and it tends to be too heavy.
- 2 Position the wing and a small button or bead for the eye on one of the bird shapes and sew on using bright embroidery thread. This will be the front of our felt bird. Leave the back plain.



- 3 Now embellish this bird shape with embroidery and sequins/beads. Don't worry about it all being neat and perfect, it's all about using different colours and shapes. Don't go too close to the edge as you'll need to sew it together.
- 4 Cut a smaller bird shape from card. This will go in the middle of the bird to give it stability. Glue the card shape onto a skewer or similar sized twig.




- 5 Sew the top of your two bird shapes together from beak to tail. Use blanket stitch around the edge. Look at a video online if you're not sure or use a simple running stitch. Now put the card shape on the skewer between the two felt bird shapes and sew round the rest, leaving an inch at the bottom to stuff your bird. Don't overstuff as you don't want to make it too top heavy. Finish sewing your bird.
- 6 Drill a small hole to fit your skewer into the centre of the wooden base and glue in place. Use a second-hand children's building block or cut a scrap of wood and paint. You could also make a base from polymer clay. Add a ribbon bow to finish off. If you prefer, you can add a ribbon to turn it into a hanging decoration instead.



You can find Ali at:

 curiousarty.com

 [curiousarty](https://www.facebook.com/curiousarty)



If you find yourself stuck with any of the makes in this magazine, then don't be afraid to check out YouTube! There's a whole world of tutorials on there!

Cheshire's forgotten playwright

A fascinating story
from the Cheshire
Archives collection

In 1729, a play by Samuel Johnson of Cheshire, was performed 29 times in one season at the Little Theatre in Haymarket, London. Audiences didn't know what to make of it - some saw it as genius, some nonsense, and others a satirical comedy. Despite this (or perhaps because of it), the play became the talk of the town. So popular was it that "Mere Hurlothrumbo" became a common phrase used to describe anything remotely inconsistent in the 18th Century.



*Musick, Love, War, Death, Madnes without Sham,
Done to the Life, by Persons of the Dram :
Scenes and Machines, descending and arising ;
Thunder and Lightning; ev'ry thing surprizing!*

The play was produced at a time when theatrical freedom and experimentation were being encouraged and audiences were receptive to new ideas by unknown playwrights. John Gay's 'The Beggars Opera' had premiered just the year before. The author also became famous for playing one of his characters - Lord Flame -

dancing, playing the fiddle and walking on stilts whilst wearing a black velvet suit and long white periwig on stage.

The story centres on a rebellion. Three noblemen and the King's general, Hurlothrumbo, plot to overthrow the kingdom by shooting guns from their rooftops to incite a riot. They succeed and the King is captured but swaps clothes with his brother-in-law, Theorbeo, in prison and escapes back to his troops. The rebels are defeated by the King's forces and an assortment of supernatural beings. All the rebels are generously pardoned but Hurlothrumbo is condemned to wear Harlequin's clothes as a reminder of his foolishness. Romantic intrigues run throughout between Lord Flame, the rebels, Princess Cademore and other ladies of the court.

Macclesfield St Michael's
baptism record, 1691 (ref:
P 85/1/1/4)



Not long after opening night, Johnson was encouraged to print the play by his friends and wealthy patrons. Just two weeks later, it was published with the financial backing of 112 subscriptions. The dedication to Lady Delves of Doddington Hall near Nantwich goes so far as saying, "if every pore in every body in Cheshire were a mouth,

they would all cry out aloud God save the Lady Delves!". It is adorned with woodblock illustrations of flowers, cherubs and birds at the beginning and end of each Act. A tongue-in-cheek epilogue was written by the Manchester poet, John Byrom. An original copy of Hurlothrumbo is held in Cheshire Archives & Local Studies in Chester. (ref: 013347)

Johnson was baptised in Macclesfield in 1691 but very little is known of his background and family. He became a dancing master, tutoring Manchester society ladies and their daughters, whilst composing Hurlothrumbo. He went to London in 1724 to join a group of 'Northern wits' who depended on this talent to make a living. After the success of Hurlothrumbo he produced five other plays, only one of which was printed. For a while he travelled from one country house to another, being employed as a jester-like entertainer at dinner tables and parties. Eventually, he retired to Gawsworth and died there in 1773 aged 82. He is buried in woods near Gawsworth New Hall where he resided for the last 30 years of his life. The locals nicknamed him 'Old Maggoty' and erected a stone slab above his tomb with a fitting epitaph:

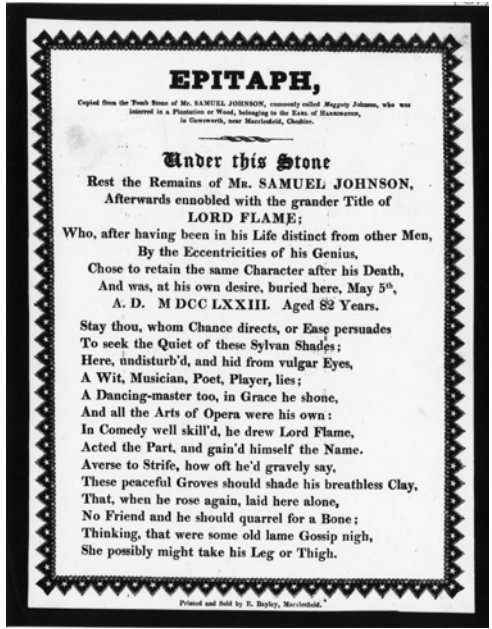
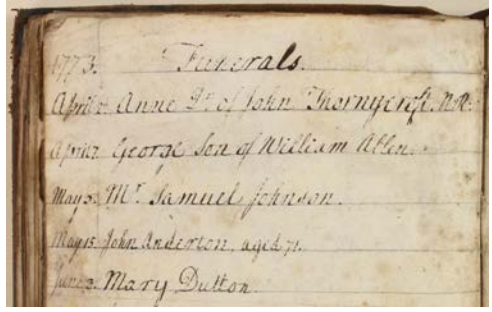
As for Hurlothrumbo's legacy, Byrom wrote - "So true a Stage, so fair a Play for Laughter, / There never was before nor ever will come after".



Grave of Johnson
(ref: c05018)

Copy of stone
epitaph (ref: c07763)

Gawsworth St James
burial record, 1773
(ref: P 193/4467/2)



Cheshire Archives and Local Studies identifies, collects and cares for archives and publications that are the evidence of Cheshire's communities lives past and present. The archives has in its care many thousands of records, some dating from as far back as the 12th century. These include family and estate collections, business and official/public records, schools and hospitals.

They provide access for all to these collections and make sure archives survive so that future generations will be able to do the same.

Visit cheshirearchives.org.uk to find out more about the service and explore their online resources such as over 30,000 historic photographs on the Cheshire Image Bank.

Create your own coaster

Ivy Upcycling are passionate about helping people be more conscious consumers and live a more sustainable, gentler life.

They take waste wood, fabric and small furniture pieces and create modern, practical and decorative items for homes and gardens. Everything made from fabric and wood is lovingly handmade by Jan working in her garden workshop, supported by her husband, and woodworking and woodturning Dad in his garage workshop.

Sign up for the Ivy Upcycling monthly newsletter or browse the latest products at www.ivyupcycling.co.uk

 [ivyupcycling](https://www.instagram.com/ivyupcycling)



We hope you enjoy making your coaster and we'd love to see you at a local market or online.

TOP TIP

- A paper napkin with a white, unpatterned background produces the best effect.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Sand your wood and seal it with a thin coat of varnish on both sides and allow to dry.



- 2 You'll find that there are normally 3 layers of tissue in a napkin and you want just one layer, with your motif on, to work with. Try making a tear on the edge to make splitting the layers easier or stick a small piece of sticky tape to the top and bottom layers and gently pull them apart.



- 3 Carefully tear around your motif as close to the edges as you can without damaging the graphic. It is important to tear not cut out the motif as this makes the edges blend in when you stick it down. Place it on your coaster.



- 4 Thin your PVA with a couple of drops of water to make it easier to work with. Starting at the centre of the graphic, very gently apply it, with a small brush, towards the outside torn edge. Repeat until all of the motif is covered in the PVA glue. Do not press too hard or 'over work' it or the motif will tear. You will find this easier as you practice.



- 5 Whilst the glue is still wet, place the cling film flat over the motif and gently smooth out the creases in the gluey graphic. Then carefully lift off the film. If there is still glue on the wood, away from the motif, carefully wipe it away. Wait for this to dry or use a hair dryer on a medium heat setting to speed up the drying process.

- 6 Finally add 2 more coats of varnish to seal and protect your coaster and add the little cork pads to base.

MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT LIST:

- Coaster sized log slice available from online marketplaces or your own seasoned log!
- Paper napkin with bee motif or other small motif of your choice that sits nicely on the wood
- PVA glue and small empty container or jar lid to mix
- Water based varnish - eg. Polyvine Wax Finish Flat Varnish
- Fine sandpaper
- Small soft water colour paint brush
- Larger brush for varnishing
- Small piece of cling film or thin plastic food bag
- Cork buttons for the base to protect your surfaces

Give old books a new lease of life



Kate Bufton creates intricate and fragile paper sculptures from pages of timeworn books. From geometric folded constructions to more delicately assembled paper vessels, she transforms this familiar medium from a carrier of text to an object of art. The process of repetition, seen throughout many of her pieces, enables her to enter a trance-like state, in which she finds her mind to be most creative.

MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT

- Old paperback book around 2cm thick
- Ribbon / lace for around the top
- Hessian / fabric
- Bird imagery from old books
- Buttons
- PVA glue
- Scissors

- 1 Remove the front and back covers of the paperback book and lay in front of you with the spine of the book to the left.
- 2 Fold the first page of the book – using your spine as a guide, fold the top right hand corner down to your spine – creating a big triangle.
- 3 Fold the outer edge of the page into the centre.
- 4 Turn this folded page over as though you are reading the book and continue to fold the rest of the pages.
- 5 The book's spine should slowly start to curve as you fold more pages in the book. It does get a bit tricky towards the end but always try to get your folds lined up to the spine.
- 6 Once all the pages are folded you are now ready to decorate your sculpture, apply PVA glue to the ribbon or lace that will go around the top of your book. Continue to use the PVA to stick the hessian, paper birds and buttons to the front of the sculpture.



You can find Kate at:

 katebufton.co.uk

 [booktransformations_](https://www.instagram.com/booktransformations_)

 [KateBuftonArtist](https://www.facebook.com/KateBuftonArtist)

 [buftonkate](https://twitter.com/buftonkate)

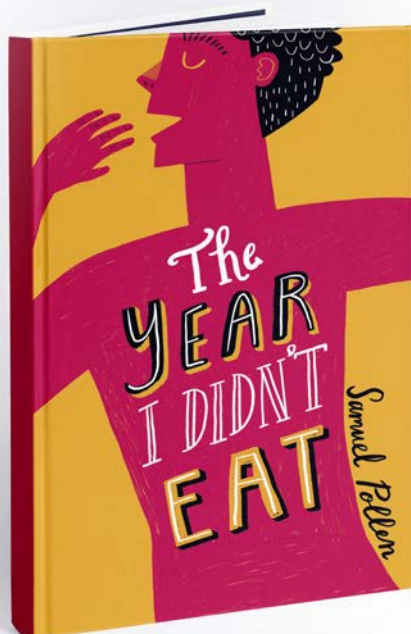
An Interview with Author, Samuel Pollen

Lancashire Libraries' Robin Crawshaw chats to 2020's Lancashire Book of the Year author

Cheshire author, Samuel Pollen's unforgettable and uplifting novel about a boy with anorexia, *The Year I Didn't Eat*, was the well deserved winner of the 2020 Lancashire Book of the Year award, as voted by Young Readers. Robin Crawshaw, caught up with Samuel to find out more.

We have all spent a lot of time at home over the past few months. Working from home seems to suit Samuel. He thinks that a lot of people become writers "partly because they can just sit at a desk and they don't have to talk to anybody." As well as being an award winning author, Samuel is also a professional copywriter - both things that he can do from home. "I've been able to live my life reasonably normally but it can get boring. The best case for anyone, this past year, is that it's been quite boring."

Samuel spends most of his time writing copy for companies and websites. He is good at it and enjoys what he does "writing a book was [the next] natural thing to do." Samuel muses about all the half written ideas on the computers of aspiring novelists but *The Year I Didn't Eat* was "the first book I've tried to write in a concerted way." He feels that he had something to say that hadn't been said before. In this case it was something very personal. Like Max, the hero of the novel, Samuel had a teenage eating disorder. This is not a memoir. "I wanted it to feel true and authentic but Max's experience isn't my experience." Samuel is keen to point out that it has been 15 years since he's had anorexia. This message was a motivation for writing the book. "It's important, when you're going through something like that, to know that other people do recover." Recalling elements from a long time past was a challenge but when writing about mental health, Samuel feels "you need a certain amount of distance in a way that makes it safe for you."



You want to write a book that you would have read when you were going through something like that.



Photo: Jamie Drew

Samuel believes that there is real value in writing about something that you know well, "because you can make it more credible and authentic." With a book like this, that addresses a mental health issue, "you want to write a book that you would have read when you were going through something like that." "When people write historical fiction they research it in massive amounts of detail and then they take most of that away because if you write a book that has all those facts... it becomes baggy and uninteresting to read." He feels that getting the level of detail right is really hard. It's also important to be sensitive, especially when writing about "experiences that you've not been through yourself." Samuel was writing about something he had been through but he was aware, even then that "I'm one person who's been through an eating disorder, other people have had tougher and different experiences." He needed to approach this diversity in the topic sensitively.

What is the process of getting a book published? "Slow!" As a copywriter Samuel's writing can often be public the next day. "Once you've written a book you're talking about a minimum of a year and often two years or more before the book actually exists." Samuel gave his book to his agent but before it even went to the publishers, it had to go through an editing process. "Once someone wants to publish it you maybe go through that process twice more." He describes being slightly defensive at first "but then people say things and point out problems and you go, 'oh yeah, that's fair'."

Once published, getting recognition was lovely. The Lancashire Book of the Year award was "super lovely because [the recognition] came from my readers."

The Year I Didn't Eat is available from your local library, all good book sellers and as an eBook. Did you know that you can borrow eBooks from your library? Search online or ask your librarian for details.

You can see a full video version of this interview at <https://my.nicheacademy.com/lancashirereadingjourney/course/22810>

ONCE YOU'VE READ THE YEAR I DIDN'T EAT, SAMUEL HAS GIVEN US THREE RECOMMENDATIONS OF WHAT TO LOOK AT NEXT:

And The Stars Were Burning Brightly – Danielle Jawando
A powerful book about suicide and mental health from a talented Manchester-based author.

Am I Normal Yet? – Holly Bourne
All of Holly's books are great, but this one – about a girl living with OCD – is particularly touching (and funny).

Where'd You Go, Bernadette – Maria Semple
An offbeat family comedy, in which Bee Branch tries to track down her missing mother.

That Night

Heart pounding. Head throbbing. Hands clenching.
Legs trembling. Hair pulling. Foot tapping.
Deep breath in. Eyes closed. Darkness.
Deep breath out. Eyes open. Colour.
Lights. People. People dancing. Focus. The stage. The person on the stage.
The way they move. The way they hold the microphone.
The way they close their eyes when they sing.
The way their head nods to the beat of the drum.
The drum. The slow, steady, repetitive beat of the drum.
The way your heart slowly begins to match the drum's rhythm.
The way your breathing becomes less urgent and more natural.
Deep breath in. Eyes closed.
Darkness. Deep breath out. Eyes open.
The half-full cup of alcohol in your hand.
The warmth you feel when it slides down your throat and enters your body.
The sudden burst of confidence it gives you.
Another sip.
And another.
And another.
The plastic cup now empty. You drop it.
The busy thoughts in your mind clearing.
The worry and insecurity you feel subsiding.
Deep breath in. Eyes closed. Darkness. Deep breath out.
Eyes open.
You walk, willing your feet
not to betray you.

Amelia Hughes

Poetry from Action Transport Theatre's Young Writers Group

**ACTION
TRANSPORT
THEATRE**

16 year old Amelia Hughes is from Action Transport Theatre's Young Writers Group. She is passionate about writing because it enables her to express her emotions. 'Writing has been my best friend and has been through thick and thin with me.'

The group is for young people aged 13-17 who meet every week for writing and social activities. Participants get to write stories, scenes from plays, monologues, poems, whatever floats their boat. It is led by Action Transport Theatre's award winning Associate Writer, Kevin Dyer, supported by Ginni Manning and Laura Duncalf.

More details, including a video of 'Love Letters to the Town' - a young writers' project from Summer 2020, can be found at

actiontransporttheatre.org/youngwriters

Hopeful & Glorious

CTRA has teamed up with Hopeful & Glorious in order to bring the fabulous makes to this edition of At Home.

When not working with us, they create great quality events for artists, makers and designers from across the North. We caught up with founder, Heather Fox, to find out more about what they do.

We wanted to know why Heather founded Hopeful & Glorious back in 2014. She told us that as a maker herself she was looking for places to market her work, "There were not enough events in the area that focused on handmade work". Hopeful & Glorious curates events that bring together professional makers. Heather has kept the bar really high with each event having a wide range of handmade products available. "People may be using traditional techniques but with a contemporary and sometimes surprising twist" she tells us. "Something handmade means so much more than something mass produced" and people are often surprised to find that it doesn't cost any more.

Hopeful & Glorious works on the principle that the "events need to be enjoyable to both makers and visitors", that way, everyone has a positive experience.



Heather loves the process of making and is keen to support people in trying new techniques and ideas such as those found in At Home. Workshops and 'how to' videos are also an important part of the online events that Hopeful & Glorious have developed since the start of the pandemic. "We hope to be back live again at Lytham Hall in November" she tells us but in the meantime you can subscribe to their quarterly newsletter at hopefulandglorious.co.uk or follow them on facebook, twitter and instagram.



Events need to
be enjoyable
to both makers
and visitors



hopefulandglorious.co.uk

[hopefulglorious](https://www.instagram.com/hopefulglorious)

[hopefulandglorious](https://www.facebook.com/hopefulandglorious)

[hopefulglorious](https://www.twitter.com/hopefulglorious)



CRTA is part of the Cheshire/Lancashire Rural Touring Partnership which is one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations. It is also a 'Shared Service' between Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils.

cheshireruraltouringarts.co.uk

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