



5 October 2020

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kent coastal town Festival asks people to rediscover the place they live, and imagine a future beyond the current global issues we are facing

- Folkestone's **#FestivalofLooking** presents *What's Happening, Exactly?* a weekend arts festival, contending with the momentous changes happening within Folkestone and across the world. Produced by **Folkestone Fringe** and hosted in partnership with **Urban Room Folkestone**, to celebrate the diversity of and connection to Folkestone.
- Running 15th – 18th October in venues across Folkestone: Brewery Tap UCA Project Space; Customs House; Payers Park, Urban Room Folkestone and online
- Celebrating **Black History Month** with insightful voices, the festival platforms discussions and workshops which explore the lived experiences of black men in the UK, interracial relationships and white privilege, and contextualises these important topics in the local landscape.
- Seeking to address further issues of **Isolation**, the Festival of Looking presents engaging, COVID secure workshops from local platforms [The AntiDiary](#) and [MySquare](#). Book onto events via [EventBrite](#), early booking is advised.

With events formed through the lens of Folkestone, The Festival Of Looking aims to explore and reflect on who we are, how we got here and where we are going, to challenge what we consider and accept as 'Normal'. We are taking an active stance against our circumstances, locally and globally, and asking: *What's Happening, Exactly?*

The festival is delivering hope and inspiration in a way that engages and showcases the best of the town. We are proud of our town and hope to create and nurture meaningful connections with residents and visitors that explore and challenge our ever-changing landscape.

Ends

For more information please visit the festival webpage here:

<https://folkestonefringe.com/festivals/festival-of-looking-magic-carpets-2020/>

Notes to editors

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About Urban Room Folkestone and Folkestone Fringe

Urban Room Folkestone (URF) is a physical space where people can go to understand, debate and get involved in the past, present and future of where they live, work and play. Part of the nationwide Urban Rooms Network, URF seeks to foster meaningful connections between people and place, using creative methods of engagement to encourage active participation in the future of our buildings, streets and neighbourhoods.

Folkestone Fringe is an organisation that was formed in response to the inaugural Folkestone Triennial in 2008 and aimed to take advantage of the international focus on the 14 week exhibition to raise the profile of artists living locally as well as visiting artists in relation to this wider regional and national audience. Since then we have been continuing on this mission to drive cultural change in the town and are proud to be a reference point for creativity within the community through our regular festivals and events that run throughout the year.

About MagiC Carpets

A four-year project led by Kaunas Biennial and funded by Creative Europe. The platform unites 15 cultural organisations, from the European Union and candidate countries, who are committed to working with emerging artists and curators by supporting them to develop new projects together. These projects are made in response to local situations and with local people.

The projects are designed to reveal local knowledge and hidden stories as a way to create a greater connection between people and place. For the third year of the project, Folkestone Fringe, in partnership with **Urban Room Folkestone** and its Festival of Looking, are working with **Mary Conroy**, nominated by **EVA International**, Ireland, and local artists **Craig Gell**, **Aida Silvestri**, **Leah Thorn**, **Lee Desai** and **Nico Dunsbee**. The outcomes of their projects will be presented here alongside a series of related projects.

Quote from Festival Curator, Georgie Scott:

'We are so excited to be presenting a Festival programme, especially in these uncertain times. We need now, more than ever, to feel connected and part of a community. This programme is a collaborative effort that has been brought together by a shared need to question, explore and navigate the situations in which we currently find ourselves as well as celebrate the importance and power of expression and creativity.'

I feel very lucky to be working within the context of Folkestone as it is an ever-inspiring place made up of a rich and diverse history, landscape and community which is constantly changing. This year, due to travel restrictions and lockdown, our relationship with our local environment has been changed dramatically, for the better or worse. Nevertheless, it is a time when we have had an altered perspective on our neighbourhoods and homes and how we live within them. These projects invite you to ask yourself: 'What's happening, exactly?'

We hope you enjoy the Festival of Looking and that it brings a sense of connection and belonging to all our visitors in these pressing times, in Folkestone and beyond!'

#FestivalofLooking #FolkestoneFringe #UrbanRoomFolkestone #MagiCCarpetsEU
#CreativeEurope #BlackHistoryMonthFolkestone #LetsCreate #ArtsCouncilEngland

This project has been made possible thanks to our supporters:
Folkestone Fringe, Urban Rooms Network, Live Art Development Agency, MagiC Carpets, Folkestone Town Council, Arts Council England, University for the Creative Arts, Creative Folkestone, EVA International, Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union

