

INSIDE OUT DORSET

Christchurch Overview for Christchurch Town Council

March 2021



Produced by Activate:



Who We Are

Activate works with artists to create extraordinary experiences in Dorset and across the UK – touching the lives of as many people as we can. We produce programmes that change lives, create unforgettable memories and celebrate our unique part of the world. Based in Dorset for nearly 30 years as a charitable company and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, we are an ambitious, hard-working and committed organisation, delivering social justice through the arts and maintaining the rich talent and venue development that supports the county.

We are a trusted local organisation and have delivered large scale projects to put Dorset on the map, such as Pages of the Sea with 14-18NOW in 2018, and most recently as the lead partner in a consortium producing Dorset Moon to mark the 50th anniversary of the Moon landing. Over the last 15 years we have expanded our reach and work in numerous national and European partnerships, touring and presenting work, whilst delivering a programme in Dorset where we are rooted in this distinctive place.

Inside Out Dorset (IOD) is the name of a biennial festival produced by Activate and specialises in land-based performance. Since 2005 our Inside Out Dorset festival has presented high quality large-scale outdoor arts events to hundreds of thousands of people, attracted European funding and supported hundreds of UK artists' and freelance practitioners' development through our commissioning, festival outreach and CPD programmes. The creation of performance in the outdoor realm is at the heart of the organisation's mission, animating the unique landscapes of Dorset and building links with local communities.

We are committed to challenging perceptions that the arts are elitist and not for everyone. We seek to remove barriers to participation, particularly for under-represented groups and individuals and champion arts for its inherent value as well as the effect it has on our general well-being and health. We offer support for Dorset based artists through CPD and bespoke support on developing their work. Contrary to popular perception, Dorset is home to some of the most deprived communities in the country, albeit set alongside some of the wealthiest. We want to ensure all communities get the chance to experience the arts.

We believe the arts have the power to change lives and we nurture a thriving performing arts sector both in Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Inside Out Dorset in Christchurch

Taking place on Sunday 19th September 2021, as part of the festival's opening weekend, our programme will bring together a high-quality selection of local, national and international circus and music work that will mark the start of a new relationship between the festival and Christchurch. The programme was created in part to support bringing the public back to the area's town centres: **improving the visitor experience**, increasing the **vitality and visibility** of the town, and attracting people to spend money in local businesses by **creatively**

animating the town. Given the unprecedented times our local retailers have been through over the last year, we are sure that these aims are now more appropriate than ever.

An experienced event organiser, Activate will deliver the proposed event across two of the three towns in the conurbation: on Saturday 18th September on the lower Poole High Street and on Poole Quay; and on **Sunday 19th September** on **The Quomps** on **Christchurch Quay**. Inside Out Dorset has previously presented events to thousands of attendees in similar locations, such as Poole Quay and in Poole Park, and we anticipate an event such as this would attract similar numbers. This will partly depend on the current COVID-19 situation, to ensure the safety for all those participating in and attending the event.

We are working with our artists, partners and festival team to put together an event management plan for the 2021 festival that will comply with government and public health guidelines, including any new ones if appropriate. We have a range of risk assessment templates created for our work over the summer by our Head of Production and Health & Safety, who has been acting as a safety consultant for a number of organisations over the lockdown period, alongside all the learning our team have gained from attending and communicating with other outdoor arts colleagues, such as Greenwich and Docklands International Festival, the Arts by the Sea festival, and Outdoor Arts UK, along with participating in online gatherings, workshops and training events. We are supporting programmed artists to scenario plan and adapt their work to allow for social distancing, including considering reduced capacity, queuing and audience management.

Our final programme of artists for the Christchurch event will include:

Mimbre - Lifted



Mimbre's new outdoor production Lifted is a collection of funny, poetic and surprising moments, which explore in different ways what it means when one body is carried by another. Or when one person carries two people. Or when a person doesn't want to be carried. Or when three people find the perfect balance.

Teaming up with three guest choreographers, Yi-Chun Liu, HURyCAN and Gary Clarke, this captivating performance experiments with new approaches to Mimbre's trademark acrobatics. Lifted mixes dance, theatre and circus to celebrate the expressions and impressions that appear when three strong women move, lift and balance each other.

Watch the trailer for Lifted here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnPcDOYdRK4>

Cirque Rouages – Boate



throw themselves into the uncertainty.

Watch the trailer for Boate here: <https://vimeo.com/293300917>

Upswing – Catch Me



Catch Me is an intimate and surprising take on age and gender. An older woman and younger man balance, climb and jump across a stack of chairs. Together they discover all the people they can be.

Part installation and part performance, Catch Me asks how we see each other and who we value. Join Upswing for an poetic mix of dance, circus and chairs. Performed in public spaces for the entire family.

Watch the trailer for Catch Me here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ap8imQey8lo>

Les Grooms – Fanfare Tout Terrain



Fanfare Tout Terrain, or 'All Terrain Fanfare' is the story of eight "Grooms" of a famous palace who decide to take a holiday to satisfy their performing passions.

In turn playing serenades, singing lullabies or reciting poems to the public, these curious Grooms turn into sassy and impertinent buskers: they play music in the most incongruous places, dance, run, sing, and gradually become "servants of disorder". Les Grooms repertoire is extremely varied and original: it ranges from medieval music to

Stravinsky, from world music and jazz to film scores and dancing tunes. The company's emblematic show, Fanfare tout terrain has toured 5 continents in 32 countries since 1984.

Watch a preview of Fanfare Tout Terrain here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqMKksyedDE>

Dorset Youth Dance, The Remix (East), COAST – Tess



Dorset Youth Dance (DYD) is a county-wide youth dance company offering high quality dance experiences, for young people who have a real passion and enthusiasm for dance and want to take that extra leap in training. DYD made the short dance film, Tess, in 2020. Created in partnership with Movers & Shakers, a company of mature dancers,

this contemporary dance film with an intergenerational cast is inspired by Hardy's literature and filmed in local landscapes. They will perform a version of Tess as part of the festival in Christchurch, working with The Remix (East), Activate's inclusive youth performance company for disabled and non-disabled young people; COAST, Pavilion Dance South West's resident youth dance company; and a TBC company of mature dancers.

Watch the original film of Tess here: <https://vimeo.com/487848857>.

Fingerprint Dance – new work



Fingerprint Dance is a performing arts CIC delivering high quality inclusive dance and performing arts projects which support wellbeing in Dorset rural and coastal communities. They celebrate diversity and different life experience, enriching mental and physical health and challenging preconceptions about who makes and consumes art.

Three of their ongoing projects include Grace + Growl (a contemporary dance company of mature dancers aged 50+, who have previously appeared at Inside Out Dorset), No Limits (creative dance and music project for people with learning disabilities, including a new performance company) and The Shoe Chorus (inclusive community street theatre project taking as its theme climate change and our relationship to our environment).

For our Christchurch event they will bring these three projects together to devise and perform a piece of site-responsive dance theatre which will celebrate survival and reconnection while asking big questions about what we have learned over the pandemic.

Watch Grace & Growl at Inside Out Dorset 2016: <https://vimeo.com/395465562>

Rimski & Handkerchief (to be confirmed)



Rimski & Handkerchief are a musical clown duo, specialising in street theatre, walkabout & static shows - and pop up worlds in any spaces. They have performed at Camp Bestival, Boomtown and Glastonbury. Their aim is to produce magical moments and welcoming spaces, where people can temporarily step out of time and into the realm of

dreaming without boundaries, and nourishing the senses. We believe this is much needed medicine for the modern human, and a powerful antidote to the world's current struggles.

Duck Rabbit Penguin – Serving Sounds



Duck Rabbit Penguin (aka Poole-based brothers Jason & Adam Dupree) create sensory surreal narratives that comment on human perception. His work finely balances between the tragic and the absurd, blending a multitude of art forms, such as Circus, Physical Theatre, Live Art and Dance. One of Jason's main focuses is on changing the audience from a passive observer, to an active participant in his shows. This leads his creation to being immersive or interactive.

Serving Sounds is the bar that serves bass rather than beer; a multi-sensory interactive sound installation to create connection through music. The objects you would usually find on a British pub bar have been transformed into music. By using touch sensors and triggers, these items are now groups of instruments. Audiences can create a whole song by asking the bar tenders for a genre, tempo and then mixing in the different samples. This work will be presented as part of its research and development phase.

Working with Christchurch Town Council _____

We were delighted to be presenting our festival in Christchurch for the first time, and to be working with Christchurch Town Council. As the first Inside Out Dorset to happen since the local authority changes, Activate were keen to explore the new locations and meet the new audiences that this merger opened up.

By creating a new partnership between Christchurch Town Council and Inside Out Dorset we hope to support and grow the cultural offer for the town, increasing Christchurch's profile as a town where high quality arts activity takes place and making it a cultural destination. We anticipate that Inside Out Dorset 2021 will continue to build on our previous work in the

conurbation, attracting further media coverage, improving the town's profile and generating local and national interest from new and existing visitors.

As both Christchurch Town Council and Activate are aware, high-profile, well-organised events attract visitors, improve accommodation bookings, increase footfall and generate income for local businesses. The 2019 report 'The Value of Arts and Culture in Place-shaping' by Arts Council England and Wavehill said:

'A strong arts and cultural offer can support efforts to maintain or enhance the attractiveness of retail centres as places to live, work and visit by offering unique experiences for visitors and/or shoppers through the animation of public spaces including art works, live performances and opportunities for local cultural identity to be explored and celebrated.'

Our economic impact assessment of Inside Out Dorset 2018 showed that a high proportion of our audiences undertook additional activity around their visit to festival: 58% visited a restaurant, café, pub or bar as part of their visit; and 50% of those attending who stayed overnight in the county were in paid-for accommodation.

By bringing high-quality international work of the kind illustrated above to Christchurch we will help the town hold its own against other UK coastal towns with comparable populations – Hastings, Southend-on-Sea, Exmouth, Torbay – who utilise culture as a key driver in the socioeconomics of their towns.

Activate have a long history of working in Dorset and our most recent event, Dorset Moon shows the reach we have. Over 41,000 people attended the three events we produced in Bournemouth, Sherborne and Weymouth in June and July 2019, part of the international celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the Apollo moon landing. 5. Our PR campaign created global coverage for event: locally, from BBC TV & radio, glossy monthly magazines and daily papers; nationally, including The Daily and Sunday Telegraphs and The Observer; and internationally, featuring on CNN News (USA) with 384 million daily visitors, Die Welt (Germany), The People's Daily (China) with 258 million daily visitors, and The Standard Pop (Thailand). As a result, over a quarter of the 41,000 visitors (27%) were from outside the county. As part of the marketing campaign, an easy-to-use cultural tourism toolkit was tested: 45 business actively engaged in the Dorset Moon campaign, with 19 individual shop window displays and 17 competitions and associated events. The toolkit was designed for the local hospitality sector and other businesses to use in order to generate greater economic impact from the event, and we will look to use this again for Inside Out Dorset 2021.

One of the most notable characteristics of outdoor arts is the way in which it can contribute to pride in place and its active role in encouraging community cohesion. Reporting by the Audience Agency showed 70% of people surveyed at similar activities strongly agreed that an event is good for the image of a place. As well as promoting a feeling of community ownership

and pride, events like Inside Out Dorset can also define a sense of place that can be used by towns to build confidence and attract inward investment.

This event will feature a range of family-friendly, community-engaged performances with which Inside Out Dorset can help Christchurch businesses re-establish their profile as an attractive destination for visitors and shoppers across all demographics following a very difficult eighteen months.

Activate understand how hard the Covid-19 pandemic has hit high streets across Dorset, with shops unable to open, footfall drastically reduced and businesses struggling to continue trading. We hope that work such as Inside Out Dorset will help encourage people back into towns. Between July and August 2020 we worked with Outdoor Arts UK, Indigo Ltd. and a number of other arts organisations on 'Getting Back Outdoors', an audience survey. The recently published report shows that, of current audiences:

- 90% are missing outdoor arts events
- 75% are looking forward to the 'buzz' of being at a live event
- 78% would consider coming back to outdoor events

Respondent quotes, such as "I would very much like to get back to outdoor events with my family. I would feel more confident to enjoy entertainment outdoors", show how important it is to do what we can to bring events like Inside Out Dorset to Poole and Christchurch.

Contact

Inside Out Dorset is produced by Activate Performing Arts and our team will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

- [REDACTED] – Executive and Artistic Director
- [REDACTED] – Co-Artistic Director
- [REDACTED] – Outdoor Arts & Festival Producer
- [REDACTED] – Associate Festival Producer

Please contact [REDACTED] for further information or call [REDACTED] for further information.

Activate is an Arts Council England South West National Portfolio Organisation and receives core funding from Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.