



Art and culture is key to the climate crisis, declares cross-sector coalition in new report as COP27 begins

Press release (embargoed until 00.00 Tuesday 08 November 2022)

Culture, not just science, is key to climate action, according to a new report published by a cross-sector coalition of business, arts and social sector organisations at the start of COP27, the pivotal United Nations climate change conference.

In a paper entitled **Ecological Renaissance: how art and culture can transform our world (again)**, they argue that art and culture have always been at the heart of social change and that tackling the climate crisis must be seen as a shared scientific and cultural agenda.

Matt Bell, joint author of the report, said: “The environmental crisis is a cultural issue, not just a science problem. It’s rooted in our values, choices and behaviour. Art and culture are fundamental to achieving net zero. They have to play a much bigger role in every net zero strategy if we want the public to buy-in and change so many aspects of the way we all live.”

The report tells the stories of three climate projects which are using art and culture to change modern Britain from the ground-up. Breathe uses public art to tackle air pollution, Misery Medicine is a nature walk for QTBIPOC communities, and the Young London Print Prize works with schools in low income neighbourhoods to inspire creativity and climate art.

The report calls on every major business and council to test their net zero strategy and use cultural programmes specifically to address Scope 3 emissions – the carbon produced in their value chain through activities they do not directly control.

“What art and culture offer, in a million different forms, is a way to influence the choices of people that you don’t control – your customers and supply chain, residents and citizens,” said Matt Bell. “Art and culture are vehicles to persuade people to come on the journey. They’re how you get people engaged and thinking creatively about net zero.”

The report also calls for the creation of a new agency to match talent in the creative industries with all the sustainability teams that now exist across the private and public sectors. This agency would broker relationships between artists and a business, just like an A&R department scouts artists for a record label.

According to the latest research, levels of concern about climate change are at an all-time high in Britain. Climate change is now seen as the second most important issue facing the country over the next 20 years, after Brexit (Cardiff University and Climate Outreach, 2022)¹ with Londoners more worried about climate change than people in any other part of the UK (YouGov, 2022)².

The report was produced in partnership with Landsec, Peabody, Anthesis, Boodle Hatfield, Boldface, Forster Communications and the Foundation for Future London. It is available to download here: <https://bit.ly/3FNnwf6>

To speak to the report authors, Izzy Yon of Boldface or Matt Bell of Woolwich Contemporary Print Fair, and for all media enquiries and high-res images, contact georgie@forster.co.uk

Woolwich Contemporary Print Fair showcases the best contemporary printmaking from across the globe. It nurtures emerging talent and inspires people of all ages to learn and collect. It is now the largest print fair of its kind in Europe.

www.woolwichprintfair.com.

¹ <https://www.ukclimateresilience.org/blog/public-opinion-on-climate-change-is-up-but-lets-not-forget-lessons-from-the-past/>

² https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/hdemoi825d/Internal_ClimateChangeTracker_220720_GB_W.pdf