

***Estuary 2020* festival postponed to spring 2021**

Metal and Cement Fields today, 30 April, announced the postponement of *Estuary 2020*. Originally due to take place in September and October 2020, the large-scale arts festival will now take place in spring 2021.

The decision to postpone the festival has been made in agreement with its key partners and funders, Creative Estuary, DCMS and Arts Council England. This will allow the ambitious, highly visible and transformational programme of work to achieve its aims and fully deliver on the month-long curated programme of visual arts, literature, performance, film and discussions. It reflects not only the impact of the current restrictions on public aspects of the programme, but also artistic production, community engagement, and schools' programmes that lie at the heart of the project.

The *Estuary* curators remain committed to the artists and other collaborators whose work has been commissioned and curated in response to the estuary and its myriad of histories, landscapes, seascapes, stories, myths and realities. The postponement of the festival will give them the proper time to reflect on their contributions, many of which rely on input and participation from our estuary communities and ensure that the ambition of *Estuary* is delivered in full.

Moving this edition of *Estuary* to 2021 maintains its central importance to the success of the wider Creative Estuary project. As part of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC) vision, this major initiative uses culture as a catalyst for growth in this unique part of the country. Stretching from Southend to Margate, Creative Estuary is driving forward the creative and economic evolution of this unique region, unlocking its potential both as an international production hub and a collaborative, inspirational working space for a new generation of creative talent.

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Notes to Editors

Estuary 2021

Estuary 2021 is the second edition of the large-scale arts festival that celebrates and acknowledges the lives, landscapes and histories of the spectacular Thames Estuary. Taking place on the river itself, and along the 60 miles of South Essex and North Kent coastline, an ambitious programme of artworks and events will respond to powerful themes resonant to the estuary, including the climate emergency, industrialisation, military and imperial legacies, environmental protection and challenges, as well as the rich and often overlooked stories of its diverse communities and settlements. It is led by a partnership between estuary-based arts organisations, Metal (South Essex) and Cement Fields (North Kent) working in partnership with a wide range of artists, arts organisations, local authorities, river agencies and businesses.

Installations, exhibitions, events and an accompanying major talks and film programme respond to estuary industrial heartland, nationally important heritage sites, protected wildlife, acres of open marshland, together with seaside fronts and port towns.

Artworks will be set in the landscape, or on the river itself and artist-led walks and field trips explore the rich, diverse culture of the region bringing new audiences to significant sites to foster a deeper understanding of the estuary.

Estuary 2021 is an ambitious, highly visible and transformational programme of work, linked to an innovative skills programme delivered through a wide range of arts and agency partnerships across the region. It is made

possible through Creative Estuary, an ambitious long-term project to develop the Thames Estuary into the world's largest creative corridor; a world leader for the creative and cultural industries. Full programme to be announced in Autumn 2020.

www.estuaryfestival.com
@estuaryfestival

Creative Estuary

Creative Estuary is supported by The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and led by a consortium of public sector and cultural organisations. They include the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), Kent and Essex County Councils, the Greater London Authority, 11 local authority areas represented by Thames Gateway Kent Partnership and Opportunity South Essex, South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN), University of Kent, University of Essex, Locate in Kent and cultural organisations Metal and Cement Fields.

In early 2019 the University of Kent was awarded £4.3m from the DCMS Cultural Development Fund on behalf of the partners.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport funds the Cultural Development Fund which is administered by Arts Council England. More information about the fund can be found [here](#).

@CreativeEstuary

Metal

Metal was founded by Jude Kelly CBE in 2002 working with current Artistic Director and CEO, Colette Bailey since its inception. We provide innovative, multi-disciplinary residencies and development opportunities for artists from the UK and overseas, from our spaces in Southend on Sea, Liverpool and Peterborough.

We are interested in how artistic process, and the practice of artists can input into, and influence social, economic and political issues of the day. We work with artists, educators, communities, individuals, businesses and agencies across all sectors to create a wide range of activities and projects that include residencies, exhibitions, commissions, festivals, performance, talks, workshops and publications. Through our artistic programme we draw out evidence and ideas for a better understanding of the artist's role in civic life and ensure that these are shared with a wide and diverse set of partners.

Conversation and debate across disciplines and cultures is central to the philosophy of Metal. Food has played a large part in the way that we like to bring people together to talk. A central feature of each of our buildings is a large oven.

www.metalculture.com
@MetalSouthend

Cement Fields

Cement Fields is a distinctive arts organisation based in North Kent. We work collaboratively with artists and communities, to create outstanding new art along the Thames Estuary from Dartford to Whitstable.

We believe artists are essential to social and cultural life and seek to support early-career artists to create ambitious new work. Our programme spans the realms of contemporary visual arts and civic engagement, and creates learning opportunities for young people to develop imagination, skills, and find meaningful pathways into creative careers.

Cement Fields has grown out of Whitstable Biennale, a visual arts festival founded in 2002 with an international reputation for developing experimental new work, often giving artists their first commission, and attracting over 70,000 visitors.

Cement Fields is supported using public funding by Arts Council England, and supported by the University of Kent.

www.cementfields.org / www.whitstablebiennale.com

Instagram: @CementFields / @whitbien

Facebook: @CementFields / @WhitstableBiennale

Twitter: @CementFields / @whitbienn

Presented by:

Metal +

Cement Fields

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