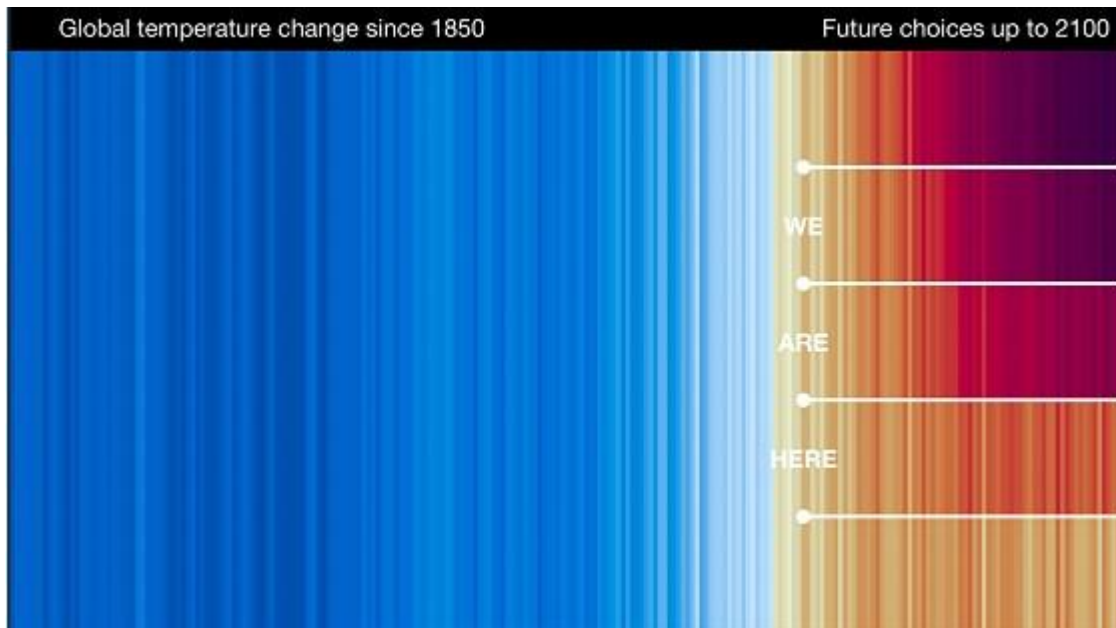




Ecologies in Practice

Guide for Group Leaders

This will help you make the most of the workshop at Goldsmiths. The guide explains the activities you will experience and what you might do to prepare for the workshop. It also offers ideas for how to follow up afterwards.



Graphic showing 'warming stripes' devised by climate scientist Ed Hawkins

The title of this project is: Ecologies in Practice: Participatory Arts Methods for Engaging Young People in Climate Research

The key aim is: to explore how different forms of arts practice can enable young people to find their *own ways of expressing themselves through arts practice*, in response to the Earth crisis. The project aims to offer participants arts methods that can be transferable for their own arts practice research projects.

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Partner: Climate Museum UK (CMUK) <https://climatemuseumuk.org/> **A**

Connecting theme for the workshop is 'voice'

- The Earth crisis threatens the liveable conditions on our planet currently. The United Nations (UN) has found there is no [credible path to limit the increase in warming to 1.5C](#). Human activities that can be called 'ecocidal' have wiped out [70% of animal populations](#) and biodiversity is threatened.
- There is an interest in a growing response to this global situation in schools, and in the arts and learning. Young people want the impacts on their futures to be taken seriously by the adults and institutions they interact with. We know this from [CMUK's Listening Project](#).
- Knowledge from environmental research in academia needs to be accessed more freely by schools, UK Higher Education Institutions, and the creative industries.
- Young people do not yet feel well informed about these issues, so they do not feel empowered to speak with peers who might challenge them or with adults who might be able to make change.
- The CMUK Listening Project finds that there needs to be more inclusion of voice and democratic consultation in UK political systems; this affects young people particularly.

Questions for artist teachers and educators

These are questions that the artists delivering workshops, and you as artist educators might consider as you prepare for the workshop, experience the activities, and follow up back at school.

- What kinds of creative approaches can help young people speak in ways that enable more inclusive, experimental and empowered voices?



- How can we encourage young people to think that diverse views matter, and that the more we express ourselves in different ways about issues we are focusing on, the more chances we have to influence people?
- How can we design learning experiences to inspire more extensive and far reaching conversations on Earth crisis issues using arts practices?
- How can we enable young people to feel empowered to take away arts methods and develop their own practice research between young people and among potentially influential adults?

Discussion before the visit

If you are a teacher / group leader, you could explore these questions with the group. If you are an individual, explore them with fellow students or on your own.

- How often do you talk with someone else about environmental issues?
- What gives you confidence to talk about these issues in ways that will influence other people?
- When you talk about these issues, what challenges can we face?
- How do you think making art can help you express your feelings and ideas about worrying or complicated issues? Are there any examples of when making or viewing art has helped?

Some ideas we might discuss at the workshop

- We need to consider the *whole Earth crisis*, not just climate. We can do this by looking at links between climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss and social injustice.
- The current economic system is based on exploiting nature as a resource. Arts and media can reinforce this attitude. For example, [advertising adds 28%](#) to the CO2 footprint of every UK person. However art can also expose the hidden waste, pollution and suffering that result from exploitation of natural resources.
- [Eco-capacities](#), such as eco-literacy, are foundational for the learning that people need in an Earth crisis. Alongside creative learning, they need to be integrated in every subject area or skill-set.



- [Creative conversations](#), with all young people empowered to speak in different spheres of influence, would expand the range of visions for how we might live more regeneratively.
- We know from the CMUK Listening Project that young people do not like being lied to about the Earth crisis. Young people also do not like to be used as eco warriors or patronised by adults. They/you want to voice their truths, and contribute their vibrant imaginations to future thinking and action.
- There is no right or wrong way to express yourself. You might find that you can express yourself better in some arts methods than in others. We would like to encourage experiences of diverse arts practices. There are also many ways that arts methods can become more effective and relate better with others, for example, by using play, humour, metaphor, imagery, objects, free drawing and writing, sound and our bodies.

What will happen during the three creative sessions on the visit?

In this workshop participants will experience each of these three arts methods. Students will move in their school groups, with accompanying teachers and learning assistants between each activity.

Expressing with Sound and Movement (45 minutes)

[Kevin Campbell Davidson](#) and Tom Mansfield

- Kevin and Mikey will introduce themselves and their approaches in responding to the Earth crisis through movement and sound.
- Participants will be invited into an immersive sound experience delivered through silent disco headphones with live commentary. There will be a number of group activities which require the participants to work collaboratively, and which emphasise ideas of voice and interdependence.
- Following this, participants will engage in a listening game involving nature



sounds which connect with ideas of ecological interdependence.

- Participants will then be asked to imagine other sounds they would offer as provoking thinking and feeling around the Earth crisis.

Exploring with Objects (45 minutes)

[Kimberley Foster](#) and [Bridget McKenzie](#)

- Kimberley and Bridget will introduce themselves, and their strengths in responding to the Earth crisis, with wearable art objects they have made.
- They will invite participants to practise finding and mapping associations around their choices of objects from Climate Museum UK's handling collection.
- Then, having practised free and expanded interpretation of objects, they will map meanings around a special object made by Kimberley.
- They will draw out thinking about seeing everything with an Eco Lens, making and protesting what is often hidden (e.g. the impact of consumer objects).

Expressive Drawing and Writing (45 Minutes)

[Miranda Matthews](#) and [Francis Gilbert](#)

- Miranda Matthews and Francis Gilbert will introduce themselves and their combined arts methods for responding to the Earth Crisis and building eco capacities and eco-literacies.
- Miranda and Francis will invite participants to read a poem and view artists' images that connect with creative voices against fracking and over extraction from the Earth.
- Participants will express their feelings about these issues, creating voices in mark-making with eco-pens on long stretches of paper.



- Participants will then interpret their voices of protest in expressive, focused writing.

What will happen after the three sessions?

After experiencing all three arts activities, participants will meet in smaller focus groups for a 30 minute discussion with one of the workshop leaders. The questions we discuss here will input to the CAL/CMUK evaluation of the research project and are intended to feed forward to continued project work in schools.

Questions for discussion will be:-

- How did the discussion of objects with Kimberley and Bridget give you information and enable you to express your voice about the Earth Crisis?
- How did the listening exercises enable you to express your ideas and feelings about how different species of animals and human beings support one another?
- How did the expressive drawing and writing help you to free up your creative responses and communicate what you want to say about issues such as fracking and how extracting minerals and fossil fuels is affecting the climate?

What you can do after the visit

These are some suggested follow up tasks. If you are a teacher / group leader, explore them with the group. If you're an individual, explore them with fellow students or on your own.

After expressing with body and voice

- *Consider:* How does my mood change when I stop and listen to things? What meanings sit behind the sounds I hear in my day-to-day life? When we listen to these sounds with 'an eco lens on things' what do they tell us?



- *Plan*: a game which uses audio or movement to encourage participants to think about the ways they are interconnected and part of the natural world. For example, you could record sounds on your phone as a starting point, then invite people to guess where it is, or how many different sounds are featured, and then see what other conversations emerge from this process. You might ask questions which encourage them to think more widely about climate, nature or injustice. Notice how you feel, and where the conversation went, and consider what you might do differently next time.
- *Explore* examples of artwork that explores the history of sound in the more-than-human world, listen to David G. Haskell's '[When the Earth Started to Sing](#)' or try the immersive audio experience [Deep Time Walk](#) by downloading the app.
- *Make* a sound collage from sounds found in your local environment. Think about how you might engage your audience - what sounds capture your attention? Think about the sound conditions of your school or educational institution. How could sound be used differently to change the feeling of the environment.

After exploring with objects

- *Consider*: what is my own strength and role? What is my particular lens on the Earth crisis which I can use to power my conversations with others? Examples of lenses might be exposing injustice, empathising with animals, imagining new inventions or many other approaches. For an artwork that explores lenses, see Lygia Clarke: [Oculus](#) (Goggles)
- *Plan* an occasion when you will have a conversation with someone about the Earth crisis using an object. It might be the object you have made, or it could be a random thing you have to hand. Use the object to kickstart it. You could ask: when you look at this, what does it make you think? You might suggest themes that encourage them to think more widely about climate, nature or injustice. Notice how you feel, and where the conversation went, and consider what you might do differently next time.
- *Explore* examples of wearable art or portable objects to make visible environmental problems. See artist [Rob Greenfield](#) who wore all his rubbish in a clear plastic suit for 30 days! Also, see Kasia Molga's [The Human Sensor](#), performers wearing costumes that change colour as air pollution worsens.
- *Make* a wearable or portable object that you can always have ready to use for conversations. This might be strange enough to stir questions or emotions. It might be funny. It might be powerful and clear in its message. You decide.



After expressive drawing and writing

- *Consider:* How can I combine my expressions in visual language - such as drawing, painting, print, photography, film and making with different forms of written language? What helps me to feel more empowered to express my feelings and my voice to fellow students and to influential others? Examples of factors for empowerment could be thinking about visual and verbal protest artworks; drawing and writing for the feelings of others where the Earth crisis is already having a big effect in the Global South and Polar Regions; and considering the voices of endangered animals in drawing and writing. For inspiration you could look at [Young Poets Network with People Need Nature](#), [Voices for Biodiversity](#) environmentalist poets such as [Ailton](#) [HYPERLINK "https://princeclausfund.org/awardees/ailton-krenak"](https://princeclausfund.org/awardees/ailton-krenak) [HYPERLINK "https://princeclausfund.org/awardees/ailton-krenak"](https://princeclausfund.org/awardees/ailton-krenak) Krenak.
- *Plan* a collaborative artwork in drawing and writing that could include the voices of young people who do not often get to put their voices forward about global issues. Which groups of young people need to be more included? How could you reach out to them to bring them into the conversation? What public platforms could you use to display your collaborative artwork to connect with more people about the reparative, regenerating interventions you would like to see happening more often? For examples see [The Big Green Draw](#), [Youth Art United Nations Climate and Oceans](#)
- *Explore* your individual experiences of hearing information about the Earth Crisis and encountering issues, in a reflective journal that includes free drawing and writing. What feelings do you need to let out and how could you do that with free drawing and writing? For examples of techniques for creative journal making you could see [The Mindful Art Journal](#). For combinations of visual art practice and text you could listen to Bob and Roberta Smith [Art of Now: The Joy of Text](#).
- *Make* a space in your school, youth centre or community where you can gather voices on the Earth crisis in drawing, visual imagery, and writing. This could be a notice board; a leaflet or 'zine'; performed poetry at an assembly. Create a collage of different visual and verbal expressions. For inspiration you could look at the collaging and text/image techniques of artists such as [Alberta Whittle](#), [Benjamin West](#), and/or [The Brooklyn Collage Collective](#),



Resources on environmental research

For background into climate science, you can find:

- Some resources on [‘Climate Basics’ here](#)
- [Environmental Infographics](#) here
- Resources [on the Global Goals](#) (or Sustainable Development Goals) here. •

The [Tyndall Centre](#) for Climate Change Research

- This [animated film](#) is one of the best for summing up the Great Acceleration of human consumption, how we became [Energy Blind](#), and the need for a Great Simplification.

More resources on how and why to engage people with climate and

ecology • Why talk about the [Earth crisis? Why not just climate?](#)

- The [People Take Action](#) toolkit from Climate Museum UK enables you to run a workshop with groups to explore all the ways that they might take action, to increase their sense of agency and gain a sense of purpose.
- Greta Thunberg [‘The Climate Book’](#)
- [Climate Outreach](#) has lots of climate visuals and research on how to engage people