

arts culture



re-invented

**“you’ve
heard of
herding
cats,
right?”**

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ARTS+CULTURE

CREATIVE THOUGHT AND NEW IDEAS

[No. 1: PROTOTYPE THEORY]



the
Exeter
issue

Artsculture Reinvented

We want to tell you about our ideas for the next incarnation of Devon Artsculture and why you should be part of it.

We want to develop artsculture into a grass-roots social enterprise that publicises and promotes the work of creative practitioners, while at the same time creating opportunities for you to learn new skills and sell your work. As economic uncertainty looms, it makes the need for practitioners to have a means to promote their work in a cost-effective way even more important.

What does this actually mean?

The artsculture website will continue as a resource for information for practitioners and a gallery of their work but with some major changes. By partnering up with an experienced and innovative arts journalist, Lee Morgan formerly editor of Art in Devon, we want to shift the focus of the site to arts-interested members of the public (ie the people who buy paintings, go to gigs, attend workshops... the people who you want to meet!). The useful information about grants, courses, opportunities and jobs for practitioners will still all be there but in the background... or it may not, plenty of people are telling you about these kind of things – if you don't need to hear it from us as well, we won't bother. We are prepared to listen.

What will be front-and-centre is a new online magazine 'arts+culture' which will provide a mix of professional and submitted, in-depth reporting in writing, audio and video - so the reporting really comes alive.

Here's a link to our prototype so you can see what we are talking about:

[arts+culture prototype magazine](#)

Remember this is aimed at your potential customers so we will be looking for engaging and interesting angles on what it is you are doing that informs, entertains and challenges the public. This is the approach that Lee Morgan developed at Art in Devon and with his iconoclastic, cage-rattling and wry website The People's Republic of South Devon. The number of artists who have said to us 'I always sell more at my private views' is evidence enough that people buy from people and revealing the human behind the art, their stories and motives, so the public can make that connection, is a key objective for us.



Sample pages from our online magazine

As arts+culture members you will be the pool of talent from which these stories emerge and you will also be encouraged and given support to become actively involved. This point is what will make our approach different and, we believe, effective. With some of our members being given the skills and the platform to be practitioner-journalists or citizen-journalists we will be able to report on the sector in a way that nobody else can.

How much will the magazine cost?

The online version is er, it's free. And if you are in it and want to forward the link to your mailing list, that'll be free as well. And if advertisers think that they want to reach people like you and people who want to read about people like you and forward it to their customers then that is free too. So you see how it begins to mushroom. We are thinking of calling it viral-recommend-subscribe-vertising... but then again, we probably won't.

If you absolutely must have a physical copy or are an arts venue where a physical copy would be a useful thing to have lying around then you can get one by ordering one from us print-on-demand. It'll cost around about £4, but not the earth as we will only print what people need.

Editorial Policy

We want to run special issues on events or subjects for example: a Totnes Festival edition; a film edition; a poetry edition; a youth music edition. We want people from the artistic community to be guest-editors (we have some key people in the pipeline already!) where they have carte-blanc to explore the topics, people, places and ideas that are important to them. We are also in the process of setting up an editorial panel to keep us on track and provide us with feedback – interested in sitting on this? Get in touch.

We also want members to be practitioner-publicists, practitioner-advocates, practitioner-poster-sticker-uppers. Our theory is that with that kind of grassroots network with real reach and motivated base our work will become an attractive option for advertisers and sponsors... and that's when things really get interesting. We then use those revenues to support grassroots practitioners – the little stuff initially that often isn't high value, but can make a real difference: flyers; travel costs; food for your first private view; what you tell us you need. Then, when we get up a real momentum, we would like to create exhibitions, commission work, develop festivals, send people to trade-fairs.

Pie in the sky? Possibly. The theory is simple, the practice will no doubt be different. People we've spoken to about our plans are either being very polite or think we might be onto something: an independent organisation promoting practitioners that is really shaped by them and provides the means for people to help themselves and each other; a marketing network that is part social club, part pressure group; professional in outlook and execution. We are willing to give it a go if you are. If you aren't, then you can always wait for the next top-down initiative to come along...



Sample Online Artist's Book - with Bio/statement and Image

What is in it for you?

- * A gallery page on the website
- * RSS feeds
- * Access to members area on the website
- * Opportunities to promote your work, exhibitions, performances
- * Networking opportunities
- * Members' deals on design and print
- * Discounted advertising in 'arts+culture': one 50% off voucher per annum and 20% discount otherwise off ratecard prices – hell, we may even be able to do some giveaways
- * The opportunity to submit ideas for articles or even write/record/film articles for 'arts+culture'
- * Opportunities to learn new skills: podcasting, webcasting, interviewing
- * Help to produce an online artist's book – like our 'arts+culture' magazine but dedicated to your words and images (and soon we will be able to have audio, music or film embedded in the pages so it will be a resource not just for visual arts)
- * An umbrella organisation that can support applications for grants or collaborative events
- * Help on promotion
- * A voice. Trade bodies, professional bodies, unions, etc all exist because groups carry more weight than individuals. In our sector, groups tend to be informal or focused on an artform, event or geographic area. We are proposing a means for individuals, groups and organisations to combine, should they wish to, in a way that we don't see happening elsewhere.

What about membership for organisations, galleries, venues?

All welcome and you will get the same benefits as individuals, ie a gallery page you can edit (or just send us press releases and we'll do it), a web book, discounts, live links to your site etc, etc.

What is our agenda?

Promoting the arts and cultural scene, providing information. Apart from that: not having an agenda of our own but providing a vehicle for our members to develop their own.

What is the link between Devon Artsculture and arts+culture

This venture is not connected with any of the former partners of Devon Artsculture and is an independent social enterprise aimed at taking the best bits of the Devon Artsculture project and adding a new journalistic angle. This new evolution is not supported by grants or funding from any organisation because we like the idea of being independent. And, with our journalistic agenda want to be able to challenge and question without fear or favour on those issues that are important to you or directly raised by you.

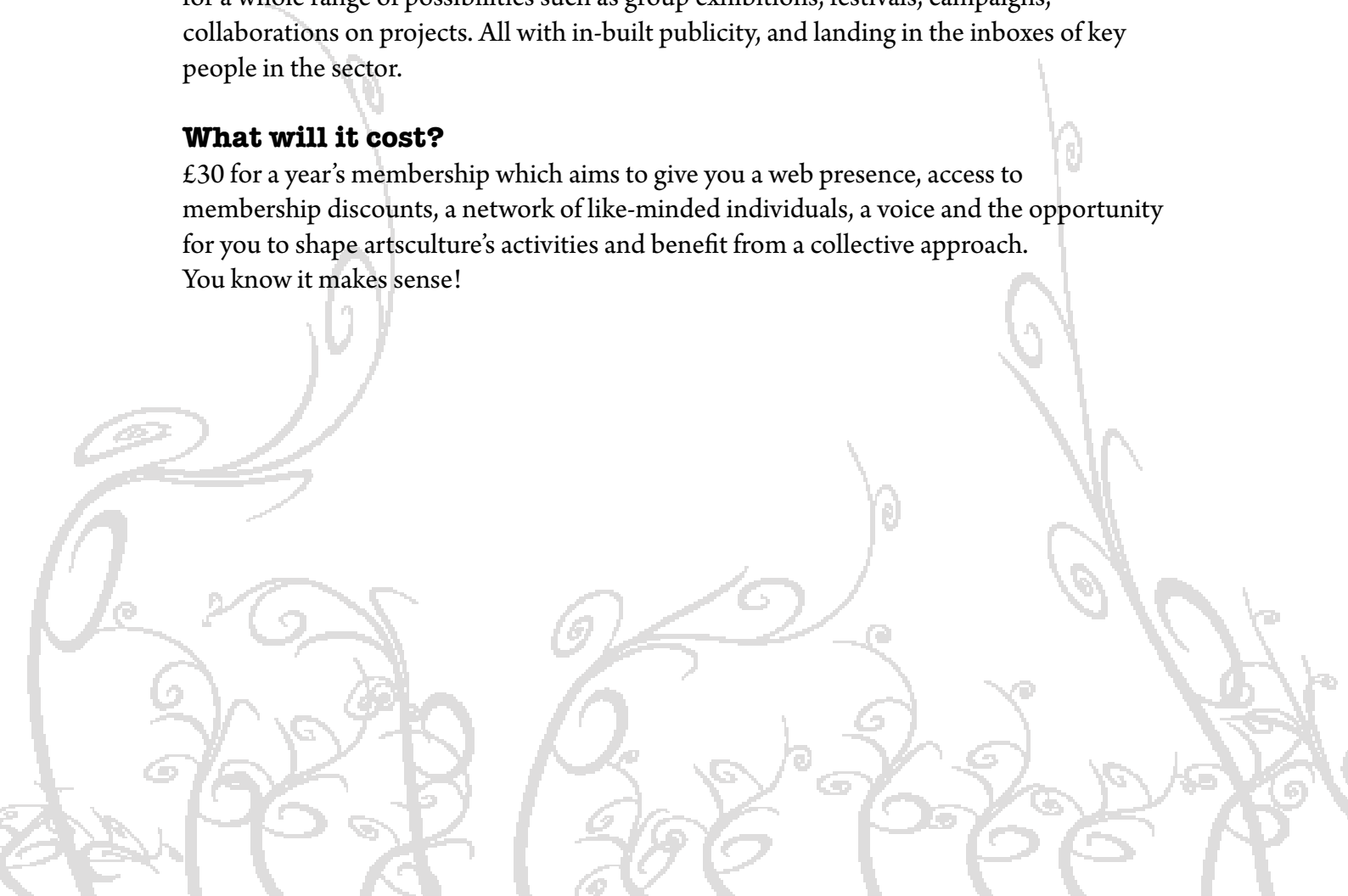
You'll notice we have dropped 'Devon' from the title. We are starting this idea in Devon as it is where we are and where we have most connections but we have noticed that practitioners and punters show scant respect for local authority boundaries so why should we? The model we are proposing offers the opportunity to mushroom, but a mushroom has to start somewhere and Devon it is.

Who is it for?

Practitioners, arts-related venues and arts organisations, arts organisers, galleries, shops selling the work of creative practitioners, arts administrators and cultural/social entrepreneurs. We want to provide a means for all these people (and any we have missed off) to communicate and collaborate. arts+culture is intended to be a potential framework for a whole range of possibilities such as group exhibitions, festivals, campaigns, collaborations on projects. All with in-built publicity, and landing in the inboxes of key people in the sector.

What will it cost?

£30 for a year's membership which aims to give you a web presence, access to membership discounts, a network of like-minded individuals, a voice and the opportunity for you to shape artsculture's activities and benefit from a collective approach. You know it makes sense!



So briefly, what's it all about again?

We want to:

- * engage and involve practitioners
- * produce an entertaining and informative read/view/listen for the art-consuming public – **BIG FOCUS!**
- * concentrate attention on the sector in a depth that nobody else can or does
- * reinvest profits in the sector and have a social purpose
- * show your work to its best advantage
- * have a strong geographic and arts sector focus
- * have a clear environmental position of not printing for the sake of printing and of conducting our activities in a quirky and sustainable way (bamboo laptops, solar chargers, using public transport, etc)
- * have an engaged and active readership

We don't think anyone else is doing this... we are either mad or onto something.
You decide.

If you want to be a part of this **JOIN NOW!**

Oh, and don't forget to tell your friends.



arts+culture catwalk

