

NORFOLK MAKERS FESTIVAL

11-19 Mar 2023

Presented by:

the
forum



Explore the creative you!

The Norfolk Makers Festival is a free, annual event which brings together local artists, crafters and artisans - both professional and amateur - for a glorious celebration of creativity, personal expression and artistic collaboration.

For nine days, many thousands of people, of all ages and levels of experience, enjoyed free, hands-on activities, practical demonstrations, and a programme of workshops, talks and exhibitions, at The Forum, in Norwich, and at other locations in the city.

The Festival is unique, giving visitors the chance to develop new skills, share their own expertise, make contacts in the creative community and to discover new learning and personal development opportunities.

It also offers artists, businesses, charities, public sector organisations, schools and colleges exposure to an audience of tens of thousands, both in person and via a multi-platform marketing and PR campaign.



Free Activities

WEAVING STITCHING
PRINTING EMBROIDERY
SKETCHING QUILLING
KNITTING QUILTING
LACE MAKING CROCHET
WATERCOLOUR PAINTING
ORIGAMI
WILLOW WEAVING
JEWELLERY MAKING
DIGITAL ANIMATION
SPINNING ZINE MAKING
WOOD WORKING
BODY ART UPCYCLING
ACRYLIC PAINTING
VR DRAWING COLLAGE
DESIGN 3D PRINTING
CRAFTIVISM SCULPTING
AND MORE....



Visitor Survey

63% had a go at the free activities

80% said they had learned something new

49% visited on multiple days

58% came to Norwich especially for the Festival

95% of workshop attendees rated their experience either excellent, very good or good

Workshops

A programme of ticketed workshops provided opportunities for focused creative learning experiences.

“My husband and I were total novices but left completely inspired. We now have resources at home and are making our own designs. The tutor was a joy to work with.”

Workshop attendee

Reaching New Audiences

New for 2023, an online Contemporary Craft Lecture Series, curated by Common Thread Press, featured internationally renowned artists and writers. Tickets to these talks were sold around the UK, and in Europe, the US and South America.

This page and front cover: Demonstrations and hands-on activities. Photos Keiron Tovell.



Beyond The Forum

Open exhibitions attracted large audiences not only to The Forum, but also to Norwich Cathedral, St Peter Mancroft Church and Norwich Castle. And a Young Makers' Craft Market was held at Norwich Arts Centre.

“Dementia Darnings is the most incredible textile exhibition I’ve ever seen. The Cathedral was a perfect venue for it.”

Visitor comment

“Exhibiting the Grenfell Memorial Quilt in the church was a spectacular idea. I was so emotional seeing them in this amazing space. Our community feels so well seen.”

Tuesday Greenidge, Grenfell Memorial Quilt Artist

Engagement, Outreach and Growth

An ever-expanding team of Festival contributors included artists, makers, creatives, sole traders, special interest and community groups and charities, local universities, colleges and schools.

Involvement in the Festival provides exposure to tens of thousands of people, both in person and via marketing platforms, and scope for many development opportunities.

“It has been life changing for our organisation. It gave us a platform where we could show the public our passion and it helped us connect with so many organisations, businesses, and individuals.” Redo Norfolk

Digital Community

56,947
people reached on social media (Facebook and Instagram)

55,333
website page views

8,264
digital audience members (Facebook, Instagram and E-news Subscribers)

  Norfolk Makers Festival
norfolkmakersfestival.co.uk

The Dementia Darnings at Norwich Cathedral. Photo Keiron Tovell.



Henna Body Art with New Routes. Photo Beth Moseley.



Communities and Well Being

Involvement in arts and crafts, and in creative communities, is proven to be beneficial to mental and physical health.

“The Festival provides new creative ways to extend networks, to reduce isolation, to improve wellbeing through developing new skills and taking up new hobbies.”

The Garage

Sustainability and Craftivism

Reusing, recycling and mending is always a theme at the Festival and an integral aspect of many exhibitions, free activities and workshops.

Comment and protest through creative practice is an age old tradition. The Dangerous Pockets exhibition had much to say about women's rights. Sculptures made from plastic found on Norfolk's beaches stimulated conversation about climate change and environmental protection.

Costume and Textile Association exhibit. Photo Beth Moseley.



Celebrating Heritage and Supporting Partners

The story of Queen Elizabeth I's visit to Norwich in 1578, and the influence on local industry of medieval Flemish weavers, was told by the Costume and Textile Association (C&TA), and by young artists working with Curious Spark.

Rural crafts were showcased outside The Forum, promoting the summer's Strumpshaw Tree Fair.

The annual 'From Craft to Career' panel event, provided advice for small businesses and sole traders, and was presented in partnership with Norfolk's Intellectual Property and Business Centre.

“The event always helps us to put our message about the history of textiles in Norwich out there, as well as promoting our organisation. We always get a few new members.”

Joy Evitt, Chair, C&TA

Contemporary Creativity

Students from Norwich University of the Arts helped visitors get to grips with stop frame animation and VR painting activities. Students from City College Norwich demonstrated what they're learning in their Hair and Make Up Artistry courses.

The Norfolk Makers Festival is one of the free events organised and funded by The Forum Trust, an independent educational charity, which receives no regular public funding.

“Folks really can't believe it is free for them to have a go and take things away with them. It's so rare today, which makes it special and accessible to everyone from all backgrounds. I hope it continues for many years to come.”

Festival contributor

VR painting. Photo Beth Moseley.

