



## Context and Form, Art and Writing

an art.earth residential short course

Monday 7 May to Friday 11 May 2018



Chris Drury: *Ponderosa Whirlpool*, Sculpture in the Wild, Lincoln, Montana - 2016

Join us for this residential week as we continue our explorations of relationship with landscape. Part of art.earth's compelling new programme of short courses. **Context and Form, Art and Writing** is facilitated by environmental artist Chris Drury and writer Kay Syrad. Their special guest is David Buckland, Director of Cape Farewell.

In this five-day intensive, Chris Drury shares his renowned practice of working with form, including whirlpool and vortex, fractal and wave patterns, exploring and investigating how aesthetic forms have the universal enfolded within them but are at the same time particular to individual experience.

Kay Syrad has collaborated closely with Chris on a number of art-text projects and brings her rich knowledge and experience of narrative and poetic form.

As spring elides with summer, you are invited to investigate how form develops in relation to an ecological context that is local, global and seasonal. The programme days assume a regular pattern of immersion in the landscape: walking, collecting, making; reflecting and working inside, with short lectures, shared conversation and discussion, individual tuition, and studio time exploring visual and/or written forms that are personal and universal.

The course includes:

- a series of short lectures on context and form in art and writing
- meditative and sense-based engagement with the landscape
- a chance to experiment together and individually with different forms in language and image
- the opportunity to work outside and inside in dialogue with the tutors

On the Wednesday evening, Chris Drury will offer a public talk **Wandering: earth, art and context**.

## Facilitators

### Chris Drury



Chris says: 'I am an environmental artist, making site specific nature based sculpture, often referred to as Land Art or Art in Nature. I also work in art and science. I make installations inside and make works on paper, works with maps, digital and video art, and works with mushrooms.

My work makes connections between different phenomena in the world, specifically between Nature and Culture, Inner and Outer and Microcosm and Macrocosm. To this end I collaborate with scientists and technicians from a broad spectrum of disciplines and use

whatever visual means, technologies and materials best suit the situation.'

*Drury has uncovered ways to connect to some part of the contemporary world which otherwise would not see itself as necessarily related to the language of land art, nor for that matter the land. Thus, across much of this work, science...informs Drury's exploration of flow and change, overlaying how complexity's patterns are found inside and on the surface of our bodies, in plant life, through habitat and landscape itself to the planetary systems found in the weather and oceans. Fourth Door Review 8*

*Drury's works demonstrate a political engagement with climate change grounded in scientific research that already challenges comprehension when it extends into limits of particle physics and chaos theory. Exploring the aesthetics of such complexity, the art responds imaginatively to fragile habitats while also playing with contrasts of scale which evoke a metaphysical fascination with the microcosm and the macrocosm. The key to this appeal lies in a delicate balance between immersion in an environment and the objective study of universal patterns. from 'How to Draw the Wind' @ Courtauld Blogs*

## **Kay Syrad**



Kay Syrad is a novelist and poet and a freelance writer and educator. Kay's poetry has been published in many journals and anthologies and has won prizes or been short-listed in a number of competitions. Her novels include *Send* (2015) and *The Milliner and the Phrenologist*, and forthcoming in 2018, *Inland*; poetry collections include *Double Edge* and *Objects of Colour*, and two Thames & Hudson artist's monographs. She is Poetry Editor of *Envoi* and a member of the art collective, Sensory Sites. Her artist's book, *1000 tasks: work of the lightshipmen*, was recently purchased by the National Maritime Museum.

*About 'Send': Syrad daringly combines fiction, notes, analysis and poetry, tracing the obsessional and circuitous process involved in exploring truths that cannot be consciously known. With her we are drawn towards conflicting ideas about the nature of early awareness and sense perception, and their consequences. The floating presence of these ideas and quotations, layered with competing fictional voices and the author's interjections, create a highly textured and mesmerising novella from this accomplished writer.*

## Guest Artist



David Buckland *Messenger* 2005

Lens-based artist, film director & producer David Buckland, Curator and Founding Director of Cape Farewell.

Buckland works to enable events to be created, performed and then recorded through lens-based technology. The recorded information is then transformed and manifested through process to have the physicality and emotional presence of a tactile object.

His work is included in the permanent collections of the National Portrait Gallery, London, the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, the Michael Wilson Collection, London and the Metropolitan

Museum of New York. Buckland curated 'eARTh' for the Royal Academy 2009, U-n-f-o-l-d for Cape Farewell 2010, and Carbon 12 for Paris 2012, Carbon 13 for the Ballroom, Marfa Texas 2012, London 2009. He produced the films 'Art from the Arctic' 2006 for the BBC and 'Burning Ice' for Sundance, 2010.



## Who the course is for

Like all art.earth residential courses, this course is for anyone in need of an opportunity to engage with new approaches to creative practice or a rediscovery/refreshment of their creative selves, It allows for a condition of radical permeability – between senses, processes, materials, and modes of speech and writing. The course is for those who wish to engage in an unpredictable, shared process of practical enquiry with all the uncertainty and curiosity of a complete beginner, irrespective of their prior accomplishments.

That's a way of saying that you can bring along a lifetime of creative experience, or none at all. Either way, you will be open to change and to rediscovery, and be happy to share and exchange knowledge and ideas.

## About art.earth short courses

art.earth residential short courses are designed as intensive periods of work, reflection, quietude, and creative energy. They are not just designed for artists, although creative expression forms an important part of the activity and learning.

We take an inclusive and transformative approach to learning: this is not a hierarchical structure but one of genuine knowledge sharing and with the assumption that everyone in the room has much to learn and much to offer.

We work in the wonderful Ship Studio in Dartington Hall's medieval courtyard. This space becomes yours for the duration of the course and how it is laid out and how it feels is very much a product of the course and those engaged in it.



Dartington is in itself an extraordinary venue. In addition to its medieval courtyard and other buildings, it is situated in a 900-acre rural estate wrapped by the River Dart in one of the UK's most beautiful area - the South Hams of Devon. The estate is a varied ecological site, with the river and riverside, open field and woodland including some ancient woodland, managed and farmed area, formal Grade II\* listed formal gardens boasting an astonishing array of native and non-native species. For almost a century the modern Dartington has been a place of societal change, of creative exploration, and of social experiment. For more information visit [dartington.org](http://dartington.org).

We use this wonderful ecological environment in our courses, spending as much time outdoors as in for much of the year.

*...I just want to say thank you for organising the short course for In Other Tongues. Alyson and Mat were excellent; well organised, inspirational, caring and encouraging. The evening with Alice Oswald will stay with me as a very special event. The Ship studio was a lovely venue too; and it*

*was a privilege to be able to work in it and the surrounding gardens/grounds. I learnt a great deal, and it is still percolating.*

*Overall I thought the course was fabulous, not least [because of] the tighter focus on writing (with support from drawing/illustrating) which produced a very intense programme of practical work which was about delivering creative work.*



## Costs

Non-residential (includes lunches and dinner) **£675**

Full residence with all meals, in student-style accommodation (shared bathrooms) **£795**

Full residence with all meals, in hotel accommodation (private or ensuite bathrooms) **£895**

For more information about booking go to <http://artdotearth.org/our-events/short-courses/>

## Some Reading

*Exchange* (2015) by Chris Drury and Kay Syrad is published by Little Toller Books. It explores the collaboration between the artist Chris Drury, the poet-novelist Kay Syrad and four Dorset farmers who were radically rethinking their approach to farming the land. A beautiful and authentic prose poem examining organic farming and the process of change. Published with the eco-arts organisation Cape Farewell. Available from [littletoller.co.uk](http://littletoller.co.uk) and elsewhere.

*Mushrooms/Clouds* (2010) by Chris Drury is published by Center Books on the American Midwest and is available through Amazon and other good booksellers. In "Mushrooms/Clouds", a series of artworks commissioned by the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, Drury brought an international perspective to topics ranging from land and water appropriation to nuclear testing in the American West. Chris Drury has been lauded for his many installations and site-specific works that investigate themes related to the environment and emphasise cycles of destruction and regeneration in nature and the ways that humans affect these processes.

*Chris Drury: Silent Spaces* (2004) with an introduction by Kay Syrad. Like fellow artists Andy Goldsworthy and Richard Long, Chris Drury creates art inspired by the wild landscapes of the world. His work falls into two categories: firstly, that made en route in remote and beautiful locations, frequently cairns or shelters; secondly, objects such as meticulously worked baskets, exquisitely formed 'bundles' of bone, wood, leaf, grass, feather and stone, created later from materials found along the way. This magnificently illustrated book is a remarkable record of a highly inventive artist. Available through Amazon and other good booksellers.

*Send* (2015) a novel by Kay Syrad (see review excerpt above)

*Double Edge* (2012) a collection of poems by Kay Syrad, published by Pighog Full Collections