

OUT HERE

3 May 2026 - 19 July 2026

Artists: Ashleigh Beattie, Shezad Dawood, Emelia Hewitt, Adam Rawlinson, Steve Sutton and Keziah Thomas-Mellor

Out Here brings together six artists exploring our relationship with nature through drawing, film, painting, performance, photography, prints, sculpture and site-specific artwork. Their practices often involve spending time going out into nature or working directly with natural materials, as well as researching the interaction between human and non-human worlds.

This exhibition also demonstrates Castlefield Gallery's commitment to placing artists at different career stages side by side, in order to open up new dialogue between their works. *Out Here* sees internationally renowned artist **Shezad Dawood** return to Castlefield Gallery, continuing his longstanding relationship with the gallery, exhibiting alongside artists living and working in the North of England.

Episode 7: Africana, Ken Bugul & Nemo (2022) is the seventh installment of Shezad Dawood's expansive film series *Leviathan Cycle*, which is an integral part of Dawood's long-term multimedia project *Leviathan* (2017–ongoing). *Leviathan* looks at the intersection of both human and non-human ecologies in relation to climate change, migration, and mental health. *Episode 7: Africana, Ken Bugul & Nemo* depicts a fluid journey through Senegalese landscapes which moves in tandem with accounts by the writer Ken Bugul and the lawyer and community organiser Africana, who are both actively concerned with de-colonial practices. Bugul and Africana were invited to imagine themselves as their future selves reflecting on what changes have occurred in the world. The film blends fact and speculative fiction, narrative and documentary, enacting the unique, sliding temporal scale that underlies the entire *Leviathan* project, connecting deep time to tentative futurity.

Cracked Earth (2026) by **Ashleigh Beattie** covers several surfaces of the gallery with clay soil, dug from her garden where she lives in Manchester. Originally from Zimbabwe, the work references Beattie's experiences of both displacement and belonging, while also drawing a connection between the land where she now lives and the land used to produce tobacco, cotton and maize under British colonial rule. The work's title *Cracked Earth* recognises the lasting negative ecological and economic impacts of the introduction of these crops to Zimbabwe.

Emelia Hewitt is interested in the history of photography, from its documentation of everyday life in the 19th and 20th centuries, to its early intersections with the sciences where it was used to investigate and categorise the natural world. Recent projects have seen her exploring the photographic and natural history collections of museums and galleries. Her works often feature insects, plants, and animals, at times using macro photographic techniques to reveal the minute details of her subject matter. Recent works have also seen Hewitt experimenting with cameraless photography such as cyanotypes, anthotypes and chlorophyll printing as well as making more sustainable development fluids with natural ingredients and fewer chemicals. Like Beattie's work, these works merge their subject matter with their materials, producing imagery of the natural world with dyes and solutions made from berries, herbs, coffee, beetroot and turmeric.

Adam Rawlinson is an abstract painter working primarily in oils. His practice is underpinned by research into lichens, taking interest in their often unnoticed and underappreciated significance within our ecology. Whilst walking through forests and wild landscapes he records his experiences and observations with oil pastels on paper. These sketches inform large scale abstract paintings which combine macro and micro view points, moving between close-up details and overall composition. Rawlinson's abstract paintings are an attempt to confront and embrace the ineffable in nature, to deal with what is beyond the ability of our everyday language to describe. Encountering his work is an opportunity to explore our individual and collective experiences of what it means to be alive and in the world.

Steve Sutton works with naturally occurring found materials such as fallen trees, beach pebbles, and animal remains, as well as appropriated materials discarded by other people. His work is influenced by a longstanding physical relationship with the land. Years spent working with wood and other materials to maintain a farm have earned him many skills and experiences that inform his art practice. He responds carefully to the characteristics and possibilities of his materials, bringing them together with a mixture of labour-intensive techniques and delicate but purposeful placement. For Sutton, the works often take on anthropomorphic qualities, or metaphorical, human sentiment, reflected in titles such as *Intimidation* (2025) *Medicine Man* (2019) and *Ash to Ashes* (2026). The materials, processes and titles of these works demonstrate the entanglement between human and material languages, suggesting the limits and possibilities of our human relationship with the natural world.

Keziah Thomas-Mellor's work translates experiences of walking and climbing through the UK landscape into drawings and sculptures made in the studio, and live performances in gallery spaces. *I need silence, and to be alone and to go out, and to save one hour to consider what has happened to my world, what death has done to my world* (2024), with its meditative repeated marks and title taken from a quote by Virginia Wolfe, relates Thomas-Mellor's experiences of moving through landscapes to more general experiences of time, loss, impermanence and the body. In a manner similar to the movements of a rock climber, the marks and shapes of her spiral drawings, are in part, determined by the dimensions and capabilities of the body that makes them. Thomas-Mellor was joined for the first time by two other performers to produce *Three Spirals* (2026) at Castlefield Gallery on 30 April 2026. For her, there is something hopeful and insightful in the mixture of symbolism associated with the spiral, which she also finds in nature's own tensions between growth and cyclicity, impermanence and boundless flow, power and vulnerability, continuity and transformation. *Lost in the Uplands* (2023-ongoing) is a series of biro drawings on coffee cup lids of landscapes which relate to where they were found. These works, installed high up in the gallery space, can be viewed through a pair of binoculars. The work is critical of littering but also suggests there is more to see when it comes to our relationship with nature, if we look beyond the rage bait debates. The campaign for the

Right To Roam points out that there is a right to roam in only 8% of England, and cites the negative impact of this reduced access to nature on people's physical and mental health. Perhaps there is a way in which we should be more like these coffee lids, climbing up high in the gallery space or trespassing into nature, despite the restrictions imposed by the land-owning class.

At a time when it may feel difficult to grasp the scale of our problems, the artists participating in *Out Here* train our gaze on what could be dismissed as lesser details of the world.

Their works encourage us to consider what meaning the ground beneath our feet holds for us, to be reminded that the small patches of lichen growing along a tree branch are a crucial part of our ecology, and that spiral geometry repeats in religious and spiritual imagery, nautilus shells, cyclones and galaxies. The result is an exhibition which invites us to see history, politics and possibility in these encounters between the subtle and the sublime.

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The logo for The Haworth Trust, featuring a stylized line drawing of a landscape with hills and a building.
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