

EAST QUAY

Open Call
Somerset Artist Residency 2026

contains

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About East Quay

East Quay is an arts venue which opened in September 2021 in the harbour town of Watchet, West Somerset. It is home to two contemporary art galleries, 9 artist studios, a project space, a paper mill, a geology workshop, a print studio, a bookshop, an education space, a restaurant, and five unique accommodation pods, all overlooking the town's quayside on Somerset's coast.

East Quay is managed by Onion Collective CIC, a Somerset-grown, female-led, not-for-profit social enterprise, illustrating that when people have the space and time to imagine collectively, the results can be creative, welcoming, ambitious, and fun.

The galleries at East Quay are managed by Contains Art CIO (charity number 1193931) and are founded on the belief that who you are, where you live and what you have should not constrain access to creativity and culture. In 2022, Contains Art was awarded NPO status by Arts Council England, with its purpose being to raise ideas, open minds, invite discussion, and encourage a social, economic, and environmental conversation through culture.

Since opening in 2021, East Quay has showcased exhibitions and artworks by a range of artists, including: Pouloumi Basu, Pinkie Maclure, Serena Korda, Jake Elwes, Sam Francis, Lyn Barlow, Grayson Perry, Peter Liversidge, Laura Ford, Bedwyr Williams and many more!

The organisation continues to strive to bring the highest-quality contemporary art to audiences in Somerset and the South-west and want visitors to go away feeling excited, challenged and inspired. We are aware of the need to embrace and firmly state our place in the world, providing visitors with a lively and thought-provoking programme, full of fun, joy, power, humour, and diverse ideas.



Open Call Details

We are pleased to offer a 5-week residency to a Somerset-based artist in our sought-after Studio 10 Project Space here at East Quay. The residency will run as part of our contribution to this year's Somerset Arts Week's Festival, which will take place between Saturday 19 September - Sunday 4 October 2026. We are accepting applications from artists working in all mediums.

About Studio 10 Project Space:

Studio 10 is our multi-use project space which helps us build connections with the local community, through introducing our audiences to new mediums, artworks, and wider contemporary practice. It also provides us with the space in which to platform emerging and underrepresented artists alongside our wider exhibition programme.

Residency dates:

Friday 4 September - Sunday 11 October 2026 inclusively.

Production Budget and Honorarium:

Contains Art CIO is offering the following fee (inclusive of VAT) to the selected artist, to covers artist stipend, material costs, and any equipment needed to produce work during the residency: £1,200.

Artist eligibility:

East Quay defines 'Somerset-based' in-line with Somerset Council's five districts: Sedgemoor, West Somerset, Taunton Deane, South Somerset, and Mendip.

Somerset-based artists must have at least one of the following connections to Somerset:

- Has grown up in Somerset
- Has attended a school in Somerset within the last 10 years
- Is a resident of Somerset
- Has a Studio in Somerset

Please note:

This is an opportunity for artists who are looking to be present and active in Studio 10 during the 5-week period. This is a Studio Residency, rather than an exhibition opportunity as such, so the focus is on making, exploring and sharing ideas with different people in a new environment. It is therefore expected that the selected artist is present in the space on a regular basis, including during Somerset Art Weeks, and is happy to talk with visitors throughout the residency. We recognise that existing commitments can make this difficult, so are happy to discuss individual challenges when it comes to meeting these requirements.

Application deadline:

Sunday 5 April 2026

Open Call Brief

East Quay welcomes Somerset-based artists to apply for this year's Somerset Artist Residency in Studio 10 Project Space. We encourage artists to consider our three core programming themes: *Peripherality*, *Transition & Alternative Futures*, and *Joy & Wonder*. Below are some of the questions we are thinking about in relation to these themes:

Peripherality:

- How do we define or determine peripherality? What does it mean to exist at the edge, or in liminal spaces?
- Are artists natural edgewalkers - pushing boundaries, challenging ideas, inviting imagination? How do we cultivate and support more of this?
- What does it mean to operate on the outskirts of the mainstream? Socially, economically, artistically?
- Does peripherality bring freedom as much as challenge?
- How do peripheral regions shape our sense of identity and belonging?

Transition & Alternative Futures:

- What does or could the future look like?
- Can we imagine a system beyond capitalism?
- How can art envision and communicate potential alternative futures?
- How can cultural diversity be respected and supported through transition?
- How do we build relationships of kinship with communities and the more-than-human?

Joy & Wonder:

- How can art capture and convey moments of wonder and joy in everyday life?
- Do we need joy for liberation? What is radical joy?
- What role can joy, wonder, positivity and hope play in humanity's capacity to imagine and work towards a better future?
- What is the relationship between joy, wonder, and creativity, and how do these fuel the expansion of ideas and dreams?

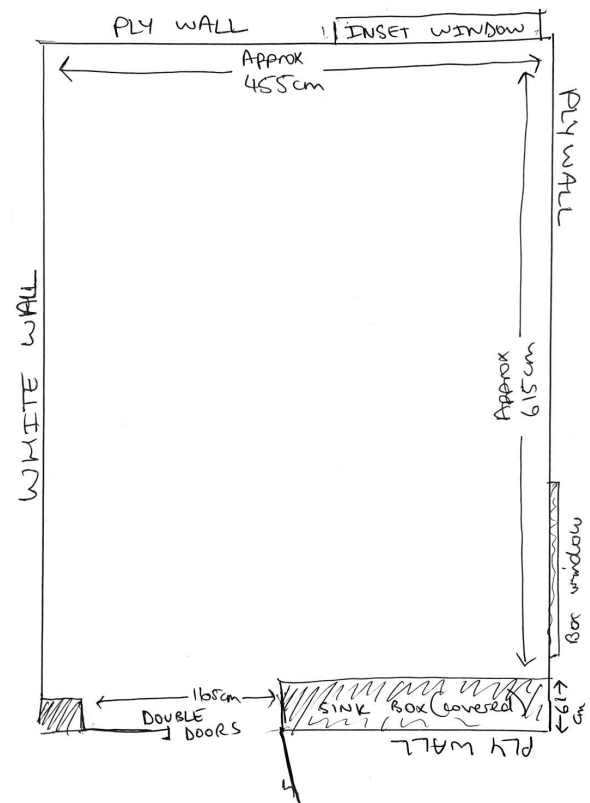
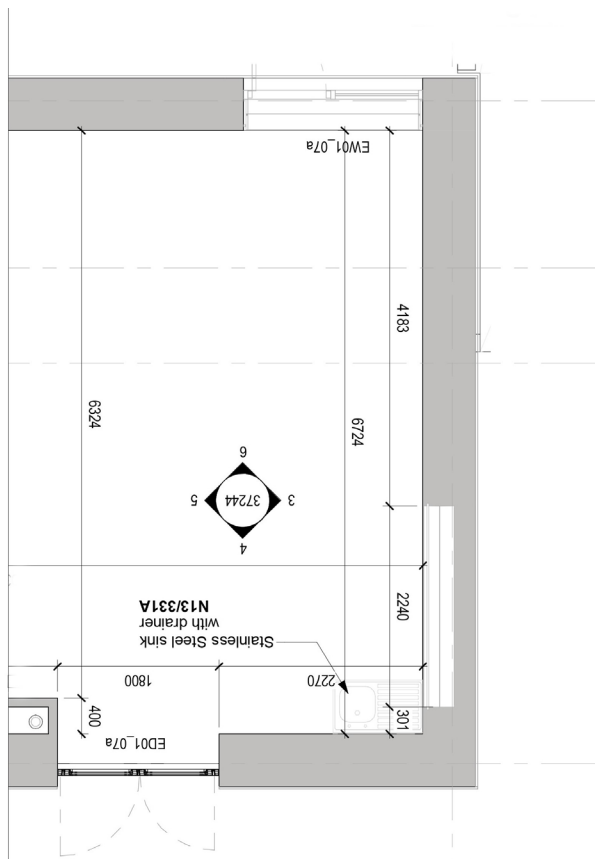


Jeffrey Hart, Craftsman-in-Residence, 2025



Steve Burden, Somerset Artist-inResidence, 2025

Studio 10 Floor Plans and Dimensions



Studio 10 Previous Projects



DIAGENESIS, Elizabeth Woodger, 2024



OUT OF THE BOX: Contains Art at 10, 2023



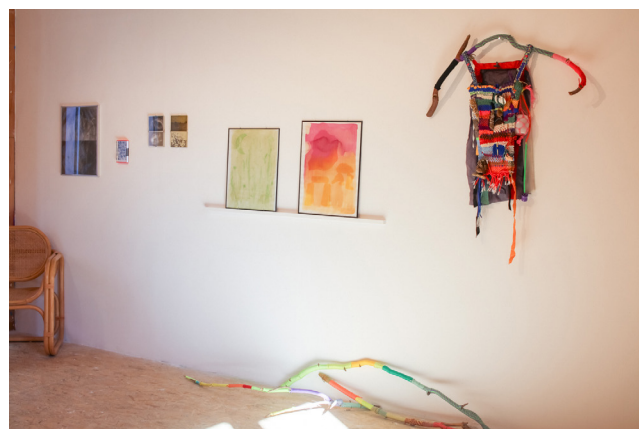
Mind of Wonk, cololaboration between Lottie McCarthy and Mind in Somerset's Bridgwater Art Group, 2024



End of Year Art Show, produced and curated by Danesfield and Minehead Middle Schools, 2025



Passing Through, a collaborative project with Studio KIND in Barnstaple, featuring work by 14 local artists



Coating, Anna Chrystal Stephens, 2025

To Apply

To apply, please complete all the fields in the Google Form (link below) and submit your application online by **5pm on Sunday 5 April 2026**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

<https://forms.gle/mES5NifBWDWQPWJcA>

When creating your proposal, please consider the following:

- How you plan to use the time in Studio 10 to explore your creative practice and develop new and existing ideas.
- How your proposal relates to our programming themes (please refer to Pg. 3).
- How you plan to engage with our audiences throughout the residency period.
- How you plan to use the space to display your work(s).

Proposals will be considered by Contains Art in relation to the following criteria:

- The quality, originality and ambition of the creative ideas at the heart of your proposal.
- Ability to engage with our audiences and local communities.
- Previous track record and/or proof of potential.
- Capacity and approach to deliver the project in-line with your proposal.

Letting you know our decision:

Contains Art will review all applications received. Shortlisted artists may be invited for interview depending on the nature of the application. All applicants will be contacted with the results in the week commencing Monday 13 April 2026.

If you would like more information about the residency and East Quay as a whole, please contact: Millie Laing Tate, Assistant Curator, at millie@containsart.co.uk



Equal Opportunities

East Quay is an equal opportunities employer, dedicated to creating opportunities for everyone, regardless of their background.

Equality and diversity are central to our mission and not just simply added considerations. We are committed to creating a truly inclusive environment where everyone can participate, learn, work, and engage in a safe, supportive space, free from prejudice and discrimination.

As part of our commitment to promoting diversity in creative practices, we strive to implement reasonable adjustments to support artists who may face barriers during the selection process, regardless of the reason.

Please note that the commission site is located on the first floor of our building which is accessible via a lift.

Once you have submitted your application, we kindly ask that you complete our Equal Opportunities form using the following link:

<https://uk.culturecounts.cc/s/hPX3r>



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