# PRESS RELEASE: COS21, Cheltenham Open Studios June 2021

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# COS21: The 12th running of the hugely popular visual arts trail

COS21 is the 12th time the artists from Cheltenham Open Studios have opened their doors to the public in this celebration of the visual art being made in the area. Now a biennial event, it has become an important part of the cultural landscape for artists and art lovers alike. The first event, in 2001, saw just 46 artists take part; in 2015, the last time the event was staged, over 10,000 people visited the studios, workrooms and exhibition spaces of over 200 artists working in Cheltenham and its surrounds. Due to the lockdown restrictions, this year’s event runs later in the year than normal, from 25 September – 3 October, and we have a record number of groups joining us this year, which is fantastic to see.

Organised by artist-run association, Cheltenham Open Studios, this year’s art trail links together over 60 different exhibition venues, where you can meet the artists, view their work, learn about their practice and even have a go yourself.

Chapel Arts are hosting a taster exhibition that will give people a flavour of the range of work on show this year, and sign post people to the other venues.

It’s hands on, too. As well as individual artist demonstrations and workshops at a number of venues on the trail, we will be hosting some workshops in Pittville Park as well as running a mini trail there too, as we connect with an external venue on the trail to highlight the fact that we have heard so many stories of people reconnecting with the green space and nature during lockdown, so pick up a map at The Boathouse and see how many items you can find.

Focused on the centre of Cheltenham the art trail radiates out to the outskirts too. Visit the COS website to see our current directory of artists, where the guidebook will be ready to download at the end of August. [www.cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk)

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Quote:

Artist and COS Patron, PJ Crook MBE, writes: “ *COS is always a highlight in my diary. Creativity has always flourished during times of adversity, enabling us to momentarily escape or embrace the traumas that confront us. Even though the exhibiting or showing of the works physically has often been prohibited over the last 2 years, since the last open studios, it cannot quell the creative spirit, which always finds a way to express itself and to make art.*

*This fabulous festival of creativity is a coming together of so many exciting artists, groups and organisations in the region. I hope the sheer joy of immersing yourselves in the vibrancy of colour, textures, shapes and forms will lift your hearts and hopes through the stunning achievements of the COS artists. What better pick me up could we have than a new piece of art to lift our spirits!”*

**About Cheltenham Open Studios**

Cheltenham Open Studios is a not-for-profit association run by artists. Like other Open Studios organisations around the country, it is evolving out of an art festival event into a thriving community of artists. With well over 100 members, it aims to network artists together to promote the visual arts in Cheltenham and its surrounds, engaging people with the original art made here.

**Contact**

Niki Whitfield

Creative Director

T: 07821 098171

E: [niki@cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk](mailto:niki@cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk)

## Insta – [@cheltenham\_open\_studios](https://www.instagram.com/cheltenham_open_studios/)

**Facebook** - [cheltenhamopenstudios](https://www.facebook.com/cheltenhamopenstudios)

'Original Art Made Here'

Meet the artists, view their work, learn about their practice.

**COS21, 25 September - 3 October**

To join in, visit:

[cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk](http://cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk/)