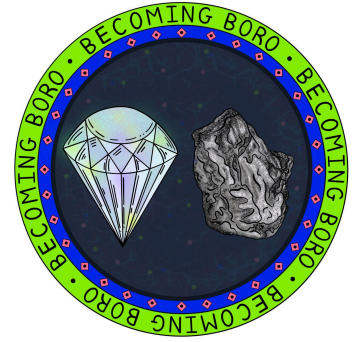


Becoming 'Boro: live action role-play experience will explore a Middlesbrough of the future



Becoming 'Boro is inviting people to explore the part they play in Middlesbrough's shifting identity and potential futures. A place-based, live action role-play (LARP) - will be the first event of its type in Teesside and will all be grounded in local history, present tensions, and eco-social possibilities.

Booking is now open on [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/maw25-larp-4628233): <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/maw25-larp-4628233>

Industrial legacy, ecological justice, and political change will be explored as part of a series of live action role-play thought-experiments in Middlesbrough this September and October.

LARPs (Live Action Role Plays) are creative events designed to spark imagination and action through collaboration. Role play, improvisation and critical thinking collide enabling you to explore all the "What ifs" about any situation, from the probable to the very unusual, and find unconventional solutions collectively.

'Becoming Boro' is the first North East event from the exciting London creatives Furtherfield and is all about co-creating with local people to explore the part they play in Middlesbrough's shifting identity and potential futures.

Using Chamber LARP - a small-scale, collaborative live role-play experience - the people of Middlesbrough will be able use their memories, imagination and lived experience to co-create an intimate experience, grounded in local history, present tensions, and eco-social possibilities. The experience will be like stepping into a real-life, multiplayer game where you meet your future neighbours in Middlesbrough.

The production has been developed by artists Ruth Catlow (from Furtherfield) and [Cecilia Wee](#) who have been working with Middlesbrough artists, residents,

community organisers and civic collaborators to help shape themes of industrial legacy, ecological justice, and political change.

[Becoming 'Boro](#) is part of the Middlesbrough Art Week, the largest contemporary arts festival in the North East of England and will take place at the end of September and beginning of October.

The [publicly bookable sessions](#) for the LARP will be:

- Friday 26th 3-5pm (venue TBC)
- Thursday 2nd October 9.30-11.30am at Middlesbrough Town Hall
- Saturday 4th Oct 1.30-3.30 at Middlesbrough Town Hall

Two further sessions for specific community groups will be taking place during the art week.

Ruth Catlow, artist and ***Becoming 'Boro*** co-creator, explained: *"This experience is best described as being an intimate immersive storytelling event inviting participants to time travel to Middlesbrough in the future. Through immersive storytelling and play this event will explore the town's extraordinary history, present tensions, and future possibilities."*

The experience will use two sets of 'power objects' designed by artists that will allow people to imagine time-travelling together, exploring ideas, discovering fresh perspectives, and rehearsing meaningful change.

Ruth added: *"Our unique LARP model is a proven way to gain insights into the more-than-human world, to test ideas, and spark new ways of thinking, feeling and relating to each other, especially in times of uncertainty. We can't wait to bring it to the Middlesbrough Art Week. This part of the country is full of so many surprising stories and remarkable people - this experience really will be a chance to see the town in a completely new way."*

The idea is supported by Borderlands, a creative engagement programme currently running in South Tees. Borderlands Creative Producer Lou Scholes explained the ambition of the idea makes Becoming 'Boro one of the highlights of this year's Middlesbrough Art Week. She said: *"This is a co-created experience that offers people here to be part of something totally different to anything else - the whole team here are so proud it is the first event of its type in the North East."*

She explained that any local people with any access needs or just wanting more information on how to get involved can get in touch via email or social media.

Lou added: *"One of Borderlands' missions is working with our communities to tell the stories of our people and our places - Becoming 'Boro is going to be an amazing way*

to do just that. The Furtherfield team are using this deeply immersive and interactive game to help give both people and our town a voice and a perspective on what its future might hold. The experience will be a fantastic thought experiment and I just can't wait to take part."

[Middlesbrough Art Week](#) has a free public programme of art exhibitions, screenings, performances, workshops, talks and public works. Established in 2017 as The Middlesbrough Art Weekender, it has grown each year and now celebrates a 10 day programme which reimagines Middlesbrough's industrial past through an artistic takeover of the town.

Delivered by the artist-led team of The Auxiliary and their ever expanding network of artists, programme collaborators, producers, coordinators & wide reaching partnerships, MAW supports artist ecologies in the north east, connecting artistic practice and ideas with like-minded peers nationally and internationally, and is committed to practice and principles of fair work and social justice.

Beyond Boro encapsulates how the Middlesbrough Art Week is helping people to imagine a different future for the region, according to the Art Week's artistic director Liam Slevin. He said: *"MAW25 finds us looking out at a fragmented world, and are more than compelled to ask how we might imagine it differently."*

Liam added: *"This is the crux of it really, we need to find more common ground with one another, connect in more tangible ways and a festival can do this, it naturally brings people together and I'm very excited about the conversations that the work on show will spark."*

/ ENDS

Notes to Editors

About Furtherfield

Furtherfield organises for inclusivity and equity in art and technology and advocates for their use in imagining and building real social change and positive environmental impact.

The organisation has been delivering creative work for the past 25+ years. It produces playful, collaborative art research-experiences that engages critically with emerging network cultures locally, nationally and internationally, online and off, spanning a range of venues and spaces.

Learn more about [Furtherfield](https://www.furtherfield.org/): <https://www.furtherfield.org/>

About Borderlands

Borderlands is a creative engagement programme working with our communities to tell the stories of our people and our places. We use creativity to amplify voices which are rarely heard and often ignored.

We are part of the Arts Council's Creative People - one of a number of national projects primarily funded by Arts Council England, with the aim of more people choosing, creating and taking part in brilliant creative experiences.

Borderlands is a creative engagement programme, with the environment, heritage and place as key themes. Our approach is regenerative and embeds principles of climate care, circular economies (local talent, local organisations and suppliers) as well as local knowledge and wisdom. While we are inspired by global ideas and learning, there is a creative resource much closer to home that Borderlands is supporting, platform and learning from, especially our communities.

We showcase and celebrate our places and our people. Borderlands has a once in a lifetime opportunity to truly transform how local people can play a pivotal role on multiple levels, especially in regard to creativity and the arts. Our role is to support people to dream and reimagine a better legacy for this place and our people. Borderlands is committed to being curious, caring and compassionate. We will continue to listen and respond to our communities.

Follow Borderlands on social media

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