

Forest: Wake this Ground

Forest: Wake this Ground invites audiences into the forest, exploring what lies above and below the forest floor. This group exhibition brings together artists, writers, filmmakers, and composers from across the globe as we celebrate nature's restorative power.

Forest spills out across the building, reflecting the richly woven layers of the forest floor's habitat and ecosystems. Artists have been brought together who share a commitment to acts of exchange, collaboration, and communication – processes key to forests survival. Works recycle, reuse, and repurpose resources, drawing attention to how they were made and the materials they are made from. Many echo the complex cycles of decay and renewal and decomposition and regeneration that characterises the forest floor from the layers above.

Weaving its way through our ground and first floor galleries are upended roots, cardboard branches, charcoal books, subterranean worlds, straw plants, dismantled trees, burnt paper, ceramic soil, familiar and forgotten languages, treasured seeds, a family tree, and words embedded in wood and ink. Throughout the foyer and stairwell, you can experience an immersive sound work. On our second floor you can watch forest films in our little cinema, learn about Arnolfini's rich relationship with the Forest of Dean, get creative in our Forest Workshop, and delve deeper or take time to reflect in our Forest Rest Space.

Forest: Wake this Ground has also been brought to life through poet Tjawangwa Dema's sensory gallery guide, encouraging audiences to reflect upon wider themes, such as lost languages, archiving, ancestral roots, materiality and sustainability, land ownership, migration, intergenerational connections, communication, and conversations, taking place every day above and below the surface.

Bringing to bear their own fairy tales and folklore – passed down through generations and across cultures – audiences are encouraged to look at the impact of both fellow-man and our changing climate upon nature as we 'wake this ground' and reflect upon both our ancient past and our fragile future.

Forest: Wake this Ground is curated by Arnolfini. We would like to thank all the exhibiting artists, Tjawangwa Dema, FyonaFinn, Lisson Gallery, Victoria Miro Gallery, Suzane Tarasieve Gallery, Black2Nature, Little Greene, Forestry England, Bristol Archives, and The Forest of Dean Sculpture Trust, and the University of the West of England, Ashley Clinton Barker Mills Trust, and Arts Council England for their continued support.

'Wake this Ground' is a line from the poem *Soil, Unsoiled*, by Zakiya McKenzie exhibited on the second floor.