GLASTONBURY FREE PRESS

WORTHY FARM, PILTON, SOMERSET

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EVERYONE JUMP UPON THE PEACE TRAIN

After a whirlwind few weeks, a buoyant Michael Eavis tells **CHRIS SALMON** about his hopes for this year's Festival and settles the wellies vs walking boots debate once and for all

It's not unusual for Glastonbury-goers to get themselves some new footwear ahead of the Festival, often having first waded into the classic "walking boots or wellies?" debate. But the new pair of leather shoes the Festival's creator Michael Eavis picked up on Monday morning were rather smarter than either of those options. "I designed them myself actually," says Michael, chatting to the Free Press in his Pilton home, a stone's throw from the Festival site. "And I wore them to the gallery opening last night."

Ah yes, the gallery opening. While the rest of us spent Tuesday mainly thinking about getting to Worthy Farm, Michael was travelling away from the Festival site to the grand reopening of London's National Portrait Gallery following three years of refurbishments. And Michael had more interest in the evening than most, with Peter Blake's portrait of him one of the gallery's most prominent new attractions. Quite something for a farmer from Somerset. "It is, isn't it?" he grins.

Having hot-footed it back from London in time for the opening of the Festival gates yesterday morning ("I wouldn't want to miss that!"), Michael's now ready to enjoy the 37th iteration of the event he created way back in 1970. But first he's keen to talk about Pilton's latest batch of affordable, social houses which opened last week, built on land given by Michael using stone quarried from Worthy Farm (which he also donated).

"We've got 52 houses now," he says. "In a village this size, that's just incredible. My mother died when she was 99, and as far as she was concerned these houses were the best thing I've ever done."

The social homes – and Michael's role in them – also drew glowing approval from Gary Lineker when he visited Pilton to officially open the newest additions. And Michael was equally pleased to have the ex-footballer there: "I like his concern for humanity," says Michael.

That's high praise indeed from Michael, who, at 87, still has the same fire for Glastonbury being so much more than just a music festival. "Oh absolutely," he says. "Social responsibility is absolutely essential to the very existence of the event. It's in our guts. The politics, the campaigning, anti-nuclear, pro-peace, anti-military. That's all so important. More so now than ever."

So he's delighted that this year's Festival will celebrate the 75th birthday of his beloved NHS. "Oh I'm such a big fan," says Michael. "I've had cancer twice, actually, and each time the NHS killed it off. To have a totally free health service is just incredible. And they're so good at what they do."

Of course, Michael also wants everyone here on Worthy Farm for these precious few days to have an absolutely brilliant time, and our host is brimming with enthusiasm for the upcoming festivities.

"Joe Rush's Carhenge is wonderful," he says. "It's going to look fantastic lit up – I think he said he's got Beyoncé's people to do the lighting! And all the electric in that area is taken care of by the new wind turbine, which the electrician was telling me has been running on maximum all the time."

And what of his musical highlights? "Well, Elton John is obviously going to be incredible," says Michael, "I'm so pleased he's finally playing. And I can't wait for Cat Stevens. I absolutely love his music." In fact, Michael – whose favourite Cat cut is Peace Train – has been chasing Yusuf / Stevens to play the Festival for two decades. "I went to visit him in London 20 years ago because his agent said if I did, then he'd play," recalls Michael. "So I went up on the train, and then caught a bus to his house. He knew I was coming, so he'd put out all the tablecloths and he gave me a piece of cake. We had a really nice afternoon. And after that, I thought it would happen, you see. But it didn't! Well, not until now. I'm so glad we got there eventually!"

And finally, what of that age-old wellies vs walking boots debate? "Oh walking boots," he says without missing a beat. "I don't ever wear wellies. They make your feet sweat. They're really bad actually. I had a couple of cowmen – really top cow people – who messed their feet up by wearing wellies. So yes, I certainly favour walking boots."

MODERN CLASSIC

Festival debutant Max Richter talks to **RACHEL GRACE ALMEIDA**

The music composed by Saturday's Park Stage opener, Max Richter, gets under your skin. The German-British musician has become a household name in contemporary classical for his rich, detailed movements that break down the often-exclusive walls surrounding the genre. This accessible, undemanding approach to composition is illuminated in his most notable work, 2015's Sleep – an eight-hour concept album that revolves around the scientific and cultural phenomenon of sleep.

Richter views Sleep – both the record and physical act – as a form of protest, proposing an alternative to our overconsuming way of life. "It's easy for us to lose sight of the basic human experiences that can make life such a miracle. The sound of a piece of music, a kind word, a gesture of friendship, a moment in nature – these are all things that can connect us back to our fundamentals. With all the challenges we face as a species at this moment, this is more important than ever."

The composer hopes his own Glastonbury show elicits this special kind of human connection, treating the performance like a communal ritual which evolves in real time. "I have no idea what to expect, and that is pretty much always the case with live music," he says. "Glastonbury has its own magical energy and I hope we can tap into that. Every live show is an experiment, really, and I'm expecting to be surprised, as ever."

And he's certainly got a surprise up his sleeve: joining him will be British actress Tilda Swinton, who will perform the reading she originally recorded on his 2004 album, The Blue Notebooks. "Tilda is a legend. She agreed to read the text on the record when I made it in 2003. Glastonbury will be the first time since that we have played the piece together. I can't wait!"

RAMBLING ON

EMILY MACKAY explores the issue of land access (or the lack of it) before a Left Field debate on the topic this Friday

This weekend, you're free to wander at ease. Out in the real world, though, wanderers can soon be stopped in their tracks. Recent cases like the high court battle over the right to wild camp on Dartmoor remind us that "the countryside" is smaller than we think, but the facts still shock. We can walk freely on only 8% of English land, and only 3% of rivers give uncontested rights of access. Less than 1% of the population owns half of the country's land.

If you don't like the sound of that, head over to Left Field, where This Land Is Your Land: The Fight For Nature (Friday, 1.30pm) will debate whether we can truly learn to protect nature, when we can't even access so much of it.

Among the speakers is naturalist and land justice activist Nadia Shaikh of Right to Roam, a group campaigning to expand legal access to nature in England. "It's hard to imagine the vastness we can't access," she says. Last year, Right to Roam was part of an event called Kinder in Colour, marking the 90th anniversary of the Kinder Scout trespass when hundreds of walkers braved arrest in the Peak District to protest against the fencing off of moorland by the wealthy. Awareness is growing, Shaikh says, but as Kinder in Colour hoped to underline, outdoor and conservation organisations themselves can often be guilty of excluding.

"The western idea of conservation is a construct... the idea that land can only be preserved in the absence of humans," she says. So rather than focusing on the causes of nature-destruction – pesticides and pollution; unsustainable agriculture; the climate crisis; habitat fragmentation – we direct our frustration at people. "Within the conservation sector, the misanthropy is rife... there's still a 'right kind of person.'"

That ideal of the outdoorsy type who enjoys nature in the "correct" way intersects with race and class prejudices, something Rhiane Fatinikun knows all too well. She founded Black Girls Hike, which also took part in Kinder in Colour, in 2019 as a safe walking space for women of colour. "Some people don't see the reason for our group, or understand the nuances of the barriers to the outdoors for some people," she says.

Those barriers include the cost of travel and kit, and the skills and knowledge of what to do and where to go. Since Black Girls Hike began, the discussion has shifted, Fatinikun and Shaikh agree, but only one step: meaningful change is now needed.

To that end, last year Black Girls Hike was the first Black organisation to become a mountain training provider, and this summer will start working with the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Right to Roam, meanwhile, is moving towards the concept of "wild service": reciprocity with the natural world, but also, says Shaikh, "the idea that we've got to start believing in loving humans... recognising that's who we're serving, and in doing so, will be in service to nature."

And it's beautiful to see how the two can connect. "On a recent hike in the Lake District, this woman was telling me that she'd been able to come off her anxiety and depression medication since she'd been coming to Black Girls Hike," says Fatinikun. "It's nice to hear how you're actually changing people's lives." If that sounds more like the kind of land you want to wander, get yourself to Left Field on Friday to hear more.

Q&A: JOE WICKS

The Millennial Mr Motivator tells **KATIE GLASS** what to expect from his Friday morning workout in the Theatre & Circus Field

How did it come about, you doing a P.E. class at Glastonbury?
I bought tickets officially with my brother, his partner and my wife, Rosie. I got super excited and thought it'd be cool to do a workout while I'm here; have an amazing experience and bring a bit of activity and energy to the Festival. It's a great moment to come together, and a good start to the weekend. And I can tell my friends I've played Glastonbury!

What can people expect?
Me on stage with a playlist of music. I take people through a five-minute warm-up, and a 30-minute workout. It's all bodyweight exercises and very accessible. It's a family fitness workout, so you can have a baby in a carrier or a kid in a stroller. Bring your mum or your gran. It's not like a military style bootcamp. We'll do a bit of dancing, music's playing, and then you're going to walk away feeling energised and excited for the rest of the Festival.

Can hungover people come?
You know, if you feel a little bit hungover or wake up a bit flat, or stressed, come along. You're going to feel the energy and that always gets you a bit more positive. It's going to put a smile on your face. Exercise really does change how we feel.

Do we need a P.E. kit or can we show up in fairy wings?
I'm all about fancy dress. Just go for it. It won't be down on the ground, you're going to be mainly standing doing squats, lunges, star jumps, running on the spot. You can wear wellies, anything you want.

What did you learn about getting people fit during lockdown?
I realised exercise can feel quite daunting and intimidating, but really can be so much fun. And you can get your kids involved. It doesn't have to be a perfect workout. Sometimes you have kids climbing on your back and you're running around the living room together. It's fun, and about teaching people you can have a great workout and feel good about yourself at the end.

Are you a Glastonbury virgin or have you been before?
I've never been! Everyone says Glastonbury Festival is life changing and it's the best thing on Earth. I'm really excited. For me, it's the dream line-up. I'm a massive Elton John fan. I love Arctic Monkeys, Fred again.., Lewis Capaldi.

Will we find you meditating in The Healing Field or in the mosh pit for Guns N' Roses?
I'm into my house music, so I'll probably be in one of the dance tents. I just want to explore.

Are you a clean-living teetotaller or will you go a bit wild at this year's Festival ?
Well, I'm a massive foodie so I won't start drinking until I've eaten. I love my food. I'm greedy. I want to try everything. I'm like, "you get the wings, I'll grab the burger, and you can get the noodles". Once I've had a bit of grub, I'll definitely be enjoying a gin and tonic and I'll be up late. I'm not like someone who's in bed at 11 o'clock. I'll be out trying to find the underground stages.
Join Joe's Live P.E. workout at The Gateway, Fri, 11.15am.

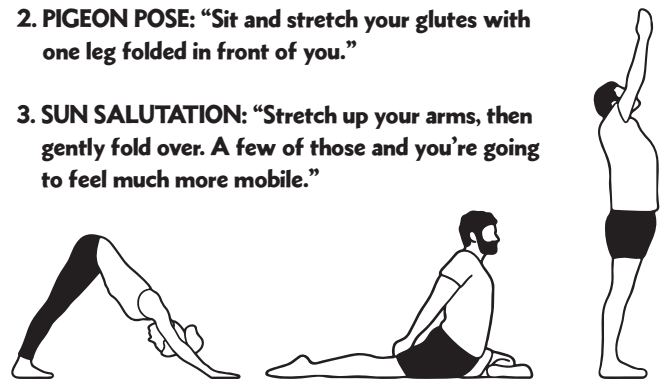
A BIT OF A STRETCH

JOE WICKS SELECTS THREE STRETCHES THAT WILL KEEP YOU MOVING FREELY THROUGH THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL

1. DOWNWARD DOG: "Find a bit of grass and stretch out your hamstrings."

2. PIGEON POSE: "Sit and stretch your glutes with one leg folded in front of you."

3. SUN SALUTATION: "Stretch up your arms, then gently fold over. A few of those and you're going to feel much more mobile."



THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

JOHN LEWIS on Morocco's Master Musicians of Joujouka, who will be kicking off events on the Pyramid Stage this Friday

In the autumn of 1968, around 10 months before his death, Rolling Stone Brian Jones travelled to Tangiers in Morocco, accompanied by his girlfriend, the model Suki Potier, and a London recording engineer named George Chkiantz. They went into the mountain village of Joujouka to document the ceremony of Bou Jeloud, a festival recommended to Jones by the painter and poet, Brion Gysin.

Jones spent a few days charming the villagers and recorded their intense musical and spiritual ritual on a reel-to-reel tape recorder. The villagers had fond memories of their exotic guest, marvelling at his long blond hair and his prodigious marijuana consumption; later they'd write a song about him, singing "Brahim Jones, Brahim Jones, Jajouka very stoned".

It wasn't until 1971 that Jones's manipulated tapes were eventually released as an album: Brian Jones Presents the Pipes of Pan at Joujouka. This hypnotic swirl of oboe-like improvisations, hypnotic chants and clattering, compound drum patterns appealed to people far beyond rural Morocco. The LSD enthusiast Timothy Leary was a fan, as was the poet William Burroughs, who described their music as "the primordial sounds of a 4,000-year-old rock 'n' roll band". Four millennia might be pushing it, but these rituals are certainly many centuries old.

Since that fabled recording, there have been numerous high-profile collaborations. In 1973 the Master Musicians recorded with the jazz saxophonist Ornette Coleman, and later worked with Lee Ranaldo from Sonic Youth, Flea from the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Jane's Addiction and Talvin Singh. The rest of the Stones even used their old bandmate's recordings as the basis for a 1989 track on Steel Wheels.

Their performances are always full of surprises, borrowing from traditional rituals to celebrate feasts, harvests, prosperity and fecundity, often performed in animal costumes, and always using outlandish rhythms and piercing horn solos. Neuroscientists have long concluded that these kinds of rhythmic rituals can, after about 10 minutes, create altered mind states, inducing euphoria. The Master Musicians Of Joujouka have always understood this. "I don't know if I possess the stamina to endure the incredible, constant strain of this festival," wrote Brian Jones in 1968. "Western civilisation has made psychic weaklings of us."
The Master Musicians of Joujouka play the Pyramid Stage, Fri, 12noon, and The Rabbit Hole, Fri, 7pm.

REST EASY

ROBIN MURRAY has the lowdown on two new tents providing calm amid the chaos

With so much to see and do at Glastonbury, it can be easy to try and cram as much as possible into your weekend at Worthy Farm, but it's crucial we all take time to look after ourselves to ensure our Festival experience doesn't go awry.

After all, while the eclectic mix of music and rich cultural experience Glastonbury offers can provide the ultimate escape from reality, the frenetic nature of the Festival can at times feel bewildering. A lack of proper sleep can make you feel like you're not quite firing on all cylinders, mentally, and that's without considering the various other mood-changing factors at play.

That's why Glastonbury takes its support network for Festival-goers so seriously, with a host of welfare organisations on site to provide help around the clock. And this year, two new Worthy Rest hubs operated by Mind, Samaritans, SARSAS (Somerset & Avon Rape & Sexual Abuse Support) and iTHINC Harm Reduction will provide a place for people to go if they need to take a breather away from the hustle and bustle of the Festival.

Situated in Silver Hayes and The Park, the new Worthy Rest tents offer a calming space, as well as specialised support, advice and counselling to those who need it, with those on hand drawing from many years' worth of experience.

Samaritans has had a presence at Glastonbury every year since the Festival first took place in 1970, and long-serving Samaritans volunteer Austin Duffy, who is this year enjoying his third Glastonbury with Samaritans' Festival Branch, thinks the Worthy Rest tents will make it easier to assist Festival-goers who feel a little below par.

"I think it's a really great idea," he says. "It will enable all the individual services to work as a unit under one umbrella. It's a far more coordinated effort around welfare and safeguarding."

"There are lots of services on site working towards the same goal – making sure people have an enjoyable event and aren't distressed in any way – and now we'll be working together, almost like a triage service, or a one-stop shop for welfare."

Victoria Poole, funding manager for mental health charity Mind in Somerset, says keeping your mental state in check at the Festival doesn't mean you have to sacrifice enjoyment.

"Attending a festival can be an exciting and memorable experience, but it's essential to take care of your mental health and wellbeing to ensure you have a positive and enjoyable time," she tells us. "And remember that prioritising your mental health doesn't mean compromising your fun. By taking good care of yourself, you'll be better equipped to enjoy the Festival experience to its fullest."

Mind has plenty of tips on how to stay safe, including recommending people pace themselves and take regular breaks; set boundaries and know their limits; build a "support system" of friends; and stay hydrated and nourished. Heed their advice and you'll have a Festival to remember.

BBC 2023
COVERAGE IN NUMBERS
64 BBC CAMERAS ON SITE
15 CAMERAS USED FOR EACH PYRAMID STAGE SET
40HRS OF LIVESTREAMED ACROSS BBC ONE, TWO, THREE & FOUR
9 DAYS TO SET UP
OVER 90 SETS TO WATCH ON DEMAND ON BBC iPLAYER FOR 30 DAYS AFTER THE FESTIVAL
FIVE MAIN STAGES LIVESTREAMED ON BBC iPLAYER
85HRS OF LIVE BBC RADIO BROADCASTS
45 km OF FIBRE-OPTIC CABLE.
LIVE COVERAGE SINCE 1997

MEET OUR 2023 ETC WINNER

N'famady Kouyaté tells **RHYS BUCHANAN** what it means to perform at Worthy Farm

"Am I dreaming?" The words of Guinea's Cardiff-based artist N'famady Kouyaté moments after winning the 2023 Emerging Talent Competition at Pilton Working Men's Club in April. It was easy to see why the 31-year-old won over a judging panel that included Emily Eavis, who described him on the night as an "artist who deserves to be heard by a much bigger audience".

If you make it along to one of his performances over the weekend, Kouyaté says you can expect something you've probably never heard before: "A high-energy fusion of traditional African music with elements of jazz, pop, indie and funk."

"My debut single Balafô Douma is a reference to the instrument I play, which is sacred to West African culture," he says, explaining how his music is rooted in his upbringing. "My mum and dad taught me how to play the balafon, so there's a lot of family heritage in the song. I'm glad I can carry the song everywhere I go. It's part of my story."

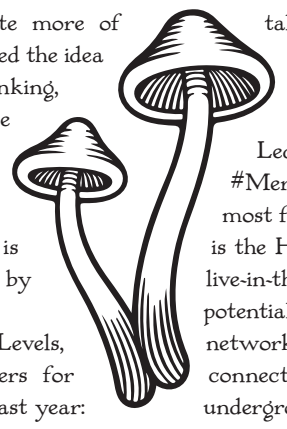
Kouyaté says he's never felt more motivated since winning the competition, and has been busy with his band rehearsing for the Festival and working hard on his debut album. But now the Festival is here, he plans to soak up the experience. "It feels like it's a natural home for my music and I'm just incredibly proud to be playing here."
He plays Bread & Roses, Thur, 8.30pm; Greenpeace Stage, Sat, 12.30pm; Croissant Neuf, Sat, 11.30pm; Avalon Stage, Sun, 11.30am.

SOUND OF SILVER (HAYES)

EMILY MACKAY explores what's new as the Festival's dance music stronghold turns 10

What would you do, given the chance to make your mark on one of Glastonbury's many distinctive areas? That's the thrilling prospect ahead of Tom Paine, of the Bristol event production crew Team Love, as he guides the North West Corner's beloved Silver Hayes, where cutting-edge dance meets reggae, rap and grime, into a new era on its 10th anniversary. We caught him on his way to the Festival site to witness Silver Hayes's monumental new stage, The Levels, for the first time. "I've been sent pictures of this crazy scaffolding," he enthuses, "I'm very excited." The Levels was conceived as "an ode to classic nightclub design", and will host the likes of CamelPhat, Daphni, Sub Focus and Nia Archives.

Paine started almost 20 years ago as a tea boy in the Dance Village, before it became Silver Hayes in 2013. When longtime area organiser Malcolm Haynes decided to retire, Team Love were poised to make their mark. Then Covid struck, and when they finally took over last year, there were existing agreements to be honoured. So, says Paine, "This is our first year for really trying to put our ideas and creations into it. And it's the anniversary, so it felt like a brilliant time to try and create more of a new direction. We liked the idea of a very forward-thinking, experimental, quite European approach to dance and electronic music… the fire-breathing, dystopian bit is already done very well by other areas!"



As well as The Levels, there will be makeovers for two stages introduced last year: the art deco cinema frontage of The Lonely Hearts Club will be reimagined by the Bristol artist Mr Jago. And The Firmly Rooted Soundsystem will, says Paine, become "much more of a venue, with a bar, an all-day feel, roots reggae, and all the current sounds inspired by sound system culture."

Another new area, The Information, will host talks on bio-design, accountable activism and independence from Sports Banger, Led By Donkeys and #Merky Books. Perhaps most forward-thinking of all is the Hayes Pavilion, a bit of live-in-the-field research on the potential of mycelium – the network of fungal threads that connects and supports plant life underground – as a sustainable building material in the form of a sleek, glowing structure filled with sound art.

"It's saying, can this product be used?" says Paine. "Not only within the festival industry and set design, but also hopefully film and TV, even in buildings, replacing some fairly horrible oil-based products."

Team Love's ideal is to grow the mycelium using manure from cows at Worthy Farm, and form a "cyclical, carbon-neutral process". But for now, they are already living the dream.

"It's an amazing opportunity to showcase what we can do as an organisation but also what Silver Hayes can bring," says Paine. "We're really good friends with the other areas, and I know everyone feels the same way: you always want to set the bar another level higher."

This print, by Stanley Donwood, is one of the posters available from the Glastonbury Free Press tent in the Theatre & Circus Field.

BUILDING

BY POET IN RESIDENCE KATIE AILES

I set up my tent in my bedroom –
had to check that everything fit.
I patched a few holes,
it's a little bit cosy,
but at least it's pretty well-lit.

And it isn't just me who's
been building!
Have you seen all the
pictures online?
Instagram's littered
with glittering images,
Pilton is looking real fine!

Worthy Farm's been transformed
by a pacifist army,
this hard-working swarm
of carpenters, painters,
and lighting technicians,
welders and joiners,
of course electricians,
the movers and shakers
who bring decorations,
build compost loos, signage,
and wild installations,
yes, Carhenge is up!
And a weird-looking tree!
Lots of colourful flags
flap and wave in the breeze,
and they've fixed on
the peace sign
to the Pyramid stage!

In a matter of days
they will open those gates.
I am all out of patience but
there's not long to wait...

So I'll take down my tent
and I'll pack it away,
get a good night of sleep
(or I'll try, anyway).

I'll be dreaming of everything
this week will yield,
I'll wake up,
and then guys –

I'll see you in the field!

TRUTH HURTS

The Speakers Forum is the Festival's go-to hub for vital debate about the climate emergency, finds **KATIE GLASS**

Permeating the soul of Glastonbury, giving meaning to the partying and music, is a deep respect for nature with a political bent. The Festival has always been a place for debate and discussions about how to look forward, especially environmentally. And at the centre of this progressive thinking is the Speakers Forum in the Green Futures field. Shane Collins, Frome's Green Party Councillor who books the Forum's programme, considers it "the beating green heart of Glastonbury Festival... We aim to enlighten and change people's lives as it has done for us".

Over five days, the Speakers Forum will run 47 talks in a comfy, inviting space, under a rare slice of shade, with a programme spanning activist masterclasses, discussions on rewilding, and discourse on how race, class and feminism intersect with issues around climate change. Speakers are as diverse as Maria Pevchikh, who runs the jailed Russian dissident Alexei Navalny's media organisation, Lord Deben, chair of the Climate Change Committee, Just Stop Oil activists (freshly released from prison), and documentary film-maker Asif Kapadia.

For Collins, the highlight of the Speakers Forum is being "suddenly surrounded by a sea of understanding, like minds who are committed to rapid social change, who understand the climate emergency. Having grown up a few villages away, Glastonbury has changed my life, and our work in the Forum aims to do the same for others as well".

Just Stop Oil co-founder Indigo Rumbelow will be speaking this year (Saturday, 5pm) on "16 months, 2,000 people, 138 prisoners, 53% UK petrol pumps dry, eight major sporting events, 100s of marches, and 92% name recognition... We are very powerful when we come together and resist!" she says. "Civil resistance works. If you're fed up with this Tory government trashing the economy and drilling for every last drop of oil in the sea, then come to our talk to find out what we're going to do about it." She says we should "stop settling for half measures; strategise, organise, mobilise, and resist".

David Wheeler, a professional footballer for Wycombe Wanderers and the PFA's first-ever sustainability champion, will be discussing whether football can become a cultural force to fight climate change with Football for Future, a movement he joined after becoming frustrated by the lack of action within the football industry. "I wanted to be able to have a greater influence and make a positive impact on the environment," he explains. "Football for Future brings together two of my main passions and provides an opportunity to create significant and lasting change." He hopes his discussion with Hearts and New Zealand footballer Katie Rood (Saturday, 4pm) will show the audience that "daunting, direct climate action is not the only method to engage with climate change... Football clubs hold significant sway in communities and by engaging with them, it is possible to have more influence over and above yourself."

With police forces clamping down on climate change protests, Collins insists we must remain positive and focused: "Keep on keeping on. Necessity breeds ingenuity, we can find a way around most laws to continue to publicise our message". Or, as Just Stop Oil's Rumbelow adds: "In the face of repression – we resist!"

"ART IS HOPE, ART IS MAGIC"

CHRIS PARKIN speaks to 2004 Turner Prize-winning artist and Free University of Glastonbury lecturer, Jeremy Deller

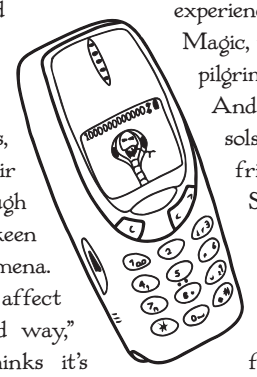
There's a photo in artist Jeremy Deller's recently published compendium of artworks, Art Is Magic, of a Glastonbury memory that has stayed with him. It's not from his last one, in 2010, when he witnessed the Flaming Lips conduct a noggin-frying happening; nor is it of the Tor backlit by the sun, or a wonky dawn at the Stone Circle. Instead, it shows a noticeboard completely covered in messages from a Festival pre-smartphone.

"I got lost," says Deller, explaining the story behind the picture. "I was with a group of people queuing up to get into the site at night on Friday and I was desperate for a piss. I got out of the car to go for one, turned around, and couldn't find it again, so I was separated from my group before I even got in. A semi-disastrous start to the weekend."

Thanks to that most analogue of Festival message boards, he did eventually find his friends ("then lost them, then found them again – that's how it was"), but not without a sense of foreboding. "You'd put your note up but within minutes they got covered by other peoples'. There was this big turnover of notes. It would be great to take them home at the end of the Festival and keep them, because they were kind of hilarious to read some of them, like a time capsule."

Glastonbury without a phone might be a horrifying thought now, so glued are we to our tech, but the story is reminiscent of a scene from Deller's 2018 acid house documentary for the BBC, Everybody in the Place, in which he delivers a lecture on the era to a class of sixth-form students. As we watch their reaction to footage of Salisbury residents defending Travellers and lawless warehouse raves in the North of England, it's the absence of phones that seems to most surprise them. "They were puzzled," says Deller, "but probably thought it might affect how people look, how they behave, and how they might enjoy themselves more because they know they're not going to be photographed or have to photograph themselves to prove they were there."

Not that Deller will be risking a repeat of his own phone-free experience. ("It's not exactly fatal, not having one at a festival, but still…") After talking about Art Is Magic and picking apart work like The Battle of Orgreave, his acid house collaboration with the Williams Fairey Brass Band, and his inflatable Stonehenge at The Free University of Glastonbury on Saturday morning, Deller will be turning off airplane mode and heading deep into the Festival. With an antenna tuned into the rave, he's excited to take in the spectacle of Block9, created by friends of his, as well as the surreal, satirical and often provocative art that looms large around so much of the Festival.



Deller is in good company at this year's Festival, with other similarly minded artists present, including Cold War Steve, Sports Banger and Led By Donkeys, who all filter their creative impulses through personal politics and a keen eye for cultural phenomena. "We all do things that affect each other, in a good way," says Deller, who thinks it's best to forget about definitions of what art is and isn't. "There's no point in asking permission to do the things we do because it's going to be denied, so you might as well do them and then deal with it after. That's how a lot of us work, or have worked in the past. I love that. Seeing your work on the street or out and about is, for me, the biggest thrill. It's there, it's living, real life around it."

Deller is just as interested in the idea of Glastonbury Festival itself, as he is in the visual and performance art; an event in the lineage of ephemeral experiences that, as he puts it in Art Is Magic, turn into folklore, becoming pilgrimage and ritual for people. And from its Stone Circle and solstice celebrations led by his friends and neolithic devotees, Stone Club, to its walking theatre, anti-authoritarian art and four-to-the-floor madness, Glastonbury represents something very familiar to Deller. "Art is about experience, and about something that's special to you," he says. "Art is hope. Art is magic."

Jeremy Deller appears at The Free University of Glastonbury at the Crow's Nest, Sat, 11am, and then will be in conversation with Sports Banger at The Information, Sat, 3.45pm.