

Programme symposium

“Culture at the Heart of Climate Action”

Mesón de San Antonio, Universidad de Guanajuato
Day 1: October 16th, 2025

Time	Activity	Description	Speakers
9:30 – 10:00	Registration		
10:00 - 10:30	Welcome	Welcome from Isabel Gil (British Council), Introduction from Taghrid Chocair Vizoso (Julie's Bicycle)	
	Keynote	Keynote remarks from Brian Eno (online): renowned musician, songwriter, record producer, visual artist, and activist who co-founded EarthPercent and Cathy Runciman, Co-Executive Director of EarthPercent.	Brian Eno & Cathy Runciman
10:45 to 12:15	Panel 1	The Role of the Artist in Times of Climate Crisis: How are leading UK-based artists catalysing change to drive the creative climate movement? Join a renowned theatre director, musician, writer and climate activist as they share how their practice affects hearts and minds while their advocacy activates systemic change.. Alongside stimulating critical reflection, shifting mindsets, and shaping values, their work across environmental justice inspires global communities to join them in taking action. How do their works directly respond to multiple ecological crises while holding equity and community-centred practices at the heart? What is next for artists who want to actively embrace ecological practices and amplify their message? Join us as we consider the role of the entire cultural ecosystem in creating a sustainable future.	Love Ssega, Amir Nizar Zuabi and Tori Tsui chaired by Taghrid Choucair-Vizoso (Julie's Bicycle)
12:15 to 12:45	Coffee break		

12:45 - 14:15	Panel 2	Cultural and design practices for the future: shaping place-making and policies through participatory approaches From cultural practice to policy, approaches and frameworks are beginning to integrate environmental sustainability into cultural strategies, driving the sector toward environmentally sustainable practices through low-carbon innovation, circular economy models and shifting design paradigms. Innovative practitioners from the UK and Mexico will delve into how their approaches to participatory design, water management and climate change adaptation form connections across environmental, urban, and cultural practices that are influencing policy. How is place-making central to shaping new narratives, establishing innovation labs, and changing the way we inhabit our neighbourhoods? How can these success stories influence policy on local, national, and international levels?	Imandeep Kaur (Civic Square) Jane Withers Mariana Baldera (Isla Urbana) Chaired by: Isabel Gil (British Council)
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Workshops day 1
15:30 a 17:30

Activity	Description	Additional information
Workshop 1	How can musicians and artists use their creations for the advancement of climate and racial justice? A workshop with London-based musician and environmental advocate Love Ssega. Love Ssega will take participants through a step-by-step process illustrating how a song/artwork can activate community voices and eventually inform policy. The session also includes guidance on the value of platforming people's voices authentically across large cultural institutions. Love Ssega is a musician, performer and current Southbank Centre Associate Artist 2024-2027. His work blurs the lines of civic engagement, understanding, activism and hope. He has performed on stages, from Glastonbury to Tokyo, with his self-produced music premiered across BBC Radios 1, 3 and 6Music. He is also known as the founder of the acclaimed arts-focused, Black-led clean air movement LIVE + BREATHE. Love Ssega's multi-arts works have been commissioned by the National Gallery, Royal Shakespeare Company, and Serpentine amongst others, with visual art exhibited internationally at MoMA PS1 and MIT Museum. He also has debut fiction novels for children commissioned.	Venue: Claustro Académico "Maestros Enrique Cardona Arizmendi y Cuauhtémoc Ojeda Rodríguez" located on the second floor of the Central building of Guanajuato University. You must register in advance using the form available at https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/programas/artes/cervantino2025 Space is limited to 30 people per workshop. Note: If you have an instrument or a song you have composed, bring it with you, but it is not necessary to participate!

Workshop 2	Redesigning neighbourhoods: a regenerative and participatory process. A workshop with Imandeep Kaur, director and co-founder of CIVIC SQUARE (Birmingham, UK) After more than 10 years of organising in their home city Birmingham, CIVIC SQUARE are actively working on site to co-build Neighbourhood Public Square as a significant demonstrator. They strive to orient development and construction towards the many layers of redesign required for regenerative civic infrastructure at the heart of our neighbourhoods. Together with many people and partners, they are reimagining land stewardship, finance, governance, and deeply committing to ecological building design, bio-based material retrofit, and enabling wider built environment transition. Imandeep will take participants through some of the methodologies that she has implemented throughout her career, focusing on how we build locally-rooted resilience to climate change by putting people at the forefront of their own social, ecological, economic and climate transition.	Venue: Main Room at Casa Emma Godoy. You must register in advance using the form available at https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/programas/artes/cervantino2025. Space is limited to 30 people per workshop.
Workshop 3	On creating THE HERDS, the largest public art climate journey. A workshop with award-winning playwright and theatre director Amir Nizar Zuabi on the process of creating one of the largest global outdoor works. THE HERDS is public art and climate action on an unprecedented scale – an ambitious coming together of culture and climate. From April to August 2025, life-size puppet animals travelled a 20,000 km route from the Congo Basin to the Arctic Circle, symbolising their flight from climate disaster. THE HERDS united leading artists and organisations committed to driving change. Key stops included Kinshasa, Lagos, Dakar, Marrakesh, Casablanca, Madrid, Barcelona, Marseille, Arles, Paris, Venice, Manchester, London, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Trondheim, culminating in a final event in the Arctic Circle. Amir Nizar Zuabi was the founding Artistic Director of ShiberHur Theater Company, an Associate Director of the Young Vic Theatre, a member of the United Theaters Europe for artistic achievement, and an alumni of The Sundance Institute Theatre Program. Following his work on The Walk, in January 2022 he took up the role of Artistic Director of The Walk Productions Limited.	Venue: Courtyard of the Museum of Guanajuato University, located on the grand floor. You must register in advance using the form available at https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/programas/artes/cervantino2025. Space is limited to 30 people per workshop.

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Mesón de San Antonio, Universidad de Guanajuato
Day 2: October 17th, 2025

Time	Activity	Description	Speakers
10- 10:45	Welcome	Welcome from Isabel Gil (British Council), Introduction from Taghrid Chocair Vizoso (Julie's Bicycle)	
	Presentation	The Grandmothers of Guacaporito: Strengthening Indigenous Fisherwomen's Resilience to Extreme Heat Stress Challenges in Sinaloa London Metropolitan University and the University of Sinaloa are collaborating on a research project that studies the challenges that rising temperatures are creating serious challenges for indigenous fisherwomen in the Jitzamuri fishing camp and Guacaporito community in Sinaloa, Mexico. These women face unique health, social, and economic challenges as extreme heat makes their work increasingly hazardous and demanding. Join us to find out how they are finding ways to help these communities adapt and thrive.	Dr. Mariam Akinlolu (London Metropolitan University) Dr. Angela Castellanos (Universidad de Sinaloa)
	Panel 3	Reducing Environmental Impacts: Creating a Future-Proof Cultural Sector This panel explores how the UK's cultural sector—spanning music, cinema, and multidisciplinary arts—is adopting sustainable practices to help shape a resilient, low-impact future. Highlighting both local and national initiatives, the session will examine how arts organisations are leading the way in the socio-ecological transition through collaboration and partnership. Panellists will dive into practical approaches to embedding sustainability into governance and operations, from action plans to key issue areas such as energy use, travel, circular resource management, biodiversity, food systems, and the elimination of single-use plastics. Financial innovation, including concepts like environmental return on investment, will also be discussed in the context of arts funding and impact.	Pauline Bourdon Keir Oldfield-Lewis (BFI) Zoe Rasbash (Watershed & Shado) Blanmi Nuñez (Festival Ambulante) Chaired by: Graciela Melitsko-Thornton (Julie's Bicycle)
12:15 - 12:45	Coffee Break		

12:45 - 14:15	Panel 4	The Cultura Circular Programme in Mexico: Festivals Transforming Commitment into Action How are practitioners exploring creative, sustainable practices in festival production whilst celebrating environmental stewardship within the arts? Three Mexican festivals, spanning environment, design, and urban permaculture, share their experiences of developing innovative projects through their approach to programming, planning, management, and audience communication. Their initiatives span across: energy and renewable efficiency, biodiversity, rethinking materials, waste management, food and procurement, as well as amplifying local action and influencing policymaking. Cultura Circular is a British Council programme that aims to contribute to creating a more sustainable cultural sector in Latin America and the Caribbean through the development and capacity building with selected festivals in the region.	Andrea Martínez (Festival del Bosque) Paco Ayala (Huerto Roma Verde) Ricardo Lozano and Joanna Ruiz Galindo (What Design Can Do Mexico) Chaired by: Maria García Holley (British Council)
14:15 - 14:30	Presentation	A short introduction to The Scorched Earth Trilogy by Dumbworld's producer Rhian Cooper and Alejandra Montemayor (British Council) A trio of satirical films inspired by environmental disaster and the lack of serious climate action. The short works tackle some of our most pressing concerns with humour and wit using a highly original mix of street art, animation, contemporary orchestral music and opera in their search for answers. The films ultimately challenge our complacency, provoking animated responses and sparking meaningful conversation. Established in 2009 by Brian Irvine and John McIllduff, Dumbworld is an artist-led, creative production company. They create artistically ambitious and exciting pieces that involve working closely with significant practising professionals as well as people of all ages, experiences, and backgrounds. Their work sits at the intersection of music, image and words, including film, opera, documentary, oratorio, animation, public art installation, performance pieces, theatre, and curatorial projects.	

Workshops day 2
15:30 a 17:30

Activity	Description	Additional informacion
Workshop 4	A workshop with Graciela Melitsko-Thornton and Taghrid Choucair-Vizoso of Julie's Bicycle From minimising the environmental impacts of cultural organisations and events to supporting networks for climate action, learn from Julie's Bicycle's tools and practical guidance for the sector. From supply chains to capacity building, participants will be guided through processes that help them understand sustainability and reduction methodologies. The session will also share exercises from their renowned international Creative Climate Leadership programme, encouraging artists and cultural managers to take action on the climate and ecological crisis with impact, creativity, and resilience. Julie's Bicycle (JB) is a not-for-profit that unites culture, creativity, and climate action to drive change. Founded nearly 20 years ago, JB was one of the first organisations to recognise the cultural sector's potential to lead climate action. Through continuous innovation, advocacy, and collaboration, it has remained at the forefront of the creative climate movement.	Venue: Courtyard of the Museum of Guanajuato University, located on the grand floor. You must register in advance using the form available at https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/programas/artes/cervantino2025. Space is limited to 30 people per workshop.
Workshop 5	Design Jam: Circularity and Culture: A workshop with What Design Can Do Mexico Ricardo Lozano and Joanna Ruiz Galindo will present a 'Design Jam' for festivals and cultural organisations to try exercises rooted in circular economy. This hands-on workshop is designed as a space for participants of the British Council event during el Cervantino to explore the roles and responsibilities of the many actors involved in cultural festivals and public events. Through a series of role-playing activities, participants will step into the shoes of different team members to define tasks, identify more sustainable solutions, and reimagine how we create culture from various positions within the cultural ecosystem. By using play as a tool for engagement, this session encourages empathy, collaboration, and a shift in perspective, essential steps toward breaking old paradigms and fostering more inclusive and circular ways of working in the cultural and creative sectors.	Venue: Claustro Académico "Maestros Enrique Cardona Arizmendi y Cuauhtémoc Ojeda Rodríguez" located on the second floor of the Central building of Guanajuato University. You must register in advance using the form available at https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/programas/artes/cervantino2025. Space is limited to 30 people per workshop.

Workshop 6	How can artists and climate activists create authentic impact online that translates into action? A workshop with climate justice campaigner and author Tori Tsui on the effective use of social media platforms. How can artists and climate activists create an authentic online impact that translates into action? Tori will guide participants through navigating eco-anxiety to enable resilience and clarity in the face of rising pressures and global grief. She is a Senior Advisor for the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and Climate Justice Lead for Brian Eno's Earth Percent. Her debut book, 'It's Not Just You', about eco-anxiety and mental health was shortlisted for the Wainwright prize.	Venue: Main Room at Casa Emma Godoy. You must register in advance using the form available at https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/programas/artes/cervantino2025. Space is limited to 30 people per workshop.
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Find out more about the United Kingdom's activities at the Cervantino Festival here:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/en/programmes/arts/cervantino2025>