

Review: Isle of Wight Creative Biosphere

From 10th December 2022 to 4th February 2023, Quay Art's West gallery is showcasing the Island's Creative Biosphere exhibition. An array of creativity from around the Isle of Wight is presented, with many artists partnering up with schools and other organisations. As you look around the gallery, the theme of biosphere can be seen from many different perspectives and creative approaches. From flags, photography and carnival costumes to wire sculpture, charcoal drawings and film documentaries, the gallery has been transformed into a collage of multi-media, creative interpretations of the biosphere.



In one section of the gallery, artist Trudie Wilson has collaborated with Carisbrooke College, bringing together a collection of pieces inspired by a stone outside of the school. An insight into the creative process behind the project is shown, such as with the inclusion of initial charcoal drawings, a collection of journal pages and photographs that provided inspiration for the project and perhaps the centrepiece is the intricate wire sculpture of the stone.

Across from this, is one of my favourite parts of the exhibition, a trail of mythical creatures created by artist Teresa Grimaldi and young people involved in Brave Island, Ventnor Free School and Ventnor Exchange. Perhaps what is the most vibrant and interactive aspect of the exhibition, this project creates an almost chaotic but beautiful representation of what is meant by the Island's biosphere. This project links also to a trail in Ventnor Park, tying together the importance of exploring nature and the imaginations of the young people involved.



One of my other highlights of the exhibition include the project between Liz Cooke and Cowes Enterprise College. Inspired by artwork and drawings made by students at the school, Liz has created a series of beautiful, multi-coloured flags, of which three are displayed in the gallery. This project brings so much colour and vividness to the gallery, as well as showing the diversity that the space can be used for.

Overall, the Creative Biosphere exhibition clearly highlights the true meaning of how unique and important the Island is to both the natural world and the art world. Not only are a diverse number of places on the island represented, but also the gallery has become an explosion of creativity, colour and connection between the creative arts and the biosphere we live in.

Pip Johnson 2023



Images: Maria Bell