



# ALI MATTHEWS



# ARTIST PORTFOLIO

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**Ali Matthews: Creative Portfolio**  
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Photo Credit: Drew Forsyth

## WHO AM I?

I'm a Manchester-based artist & performer working across body-based performance art, durational work, theatre, music and video, presenting projects around the UK and Europe. My own projects include, **Mushroom Language: A Fungal Gothic** (The Lowry/touring), **The Witching Way** (Royal Exchange/touring), **Bobby, Lunch is Darkness** and **The Ballad of Isosceles**.

I work regularly as a performer & director for others' work. Recent projects include training with and performing in Marina Abramovic's **BALKAN EROTIC EPIC** (Factory International/international tour), and performing for Slap Collective at **Compass Festival** (Leeds) and **Disco Neurotico** (Salford/Dublin/touring). I also recently directed Scarlett Rose Lovette's **PSEUDO** (The Lowry) and provided outside eye support for TomYumSim's **Trainwreck** (Battersea Arts Centre).

## ABOUT THIS IMAGE

The image on the left is the lead concept image for my project *Mushroom Language*, a show inspired by mycology, forest ecology and folk horror. This project shows my **strong creative vision for lens-based media**, my interest in **interdisciplinary collaboration** and my focus on work with **ecology & environment**.

Collaborators: Drew Forsyth, Katie Duxbury

# Mushroom Language

**Mushroom Language is about the cycles that shape us - eruption, reproduction and decay. Mushrooms offer us a lens into a more sustainable future, but nature is hilarious and terrifying.**

- 5 interdisciplinary residencies grounded in natural environments, inspired by folk horror & rituals
- Led a creative team across design, music, tech & socially engaged practice.
- Each residency included ecological/site visits to woodlands, urban mushroom farms and more.
- Arts & science partners include Wainsgate Dances, Dartington Arts, Slung Low, New Adelphi Theatre, Manchester Jewish Museum, the British Mycological Society, & LOWRY.

This shows that my own **process-led** practice is grounded in **environmental concerns, educational/science sector partnerships & site visits.**

**It also shows my creative work with collaborators in an interdisciplinary studio-based environment.**

Collaborators: Tom Halls, Rūta Irbīte, Hannah Moule, Rob Athorn, Kate Adams, Simone Kenyon, Rosie Sergent, Leo Burtin.



**Here I am meeting mushrooms in situ, in Calderdale's own Hardcastle Crag!**

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# BALKAN EROTIC EPIC

I have recently been trained in the Abramović Method after being cast in **Marina Abramović's BALKAN EROTIC EPIC** (Factory Intertional/touring). I continue to tour internationally with the work, and the project has involved:

- Working with extreme **duration** (4 hours of intense physical performance involving nudity per night x 11 nights).
- Cultivating **extreme body-based discipline**, and have developed an even deeper passion for **pagan and folklore-influenced rituals located in natural environments**.
- Collaborating with **cinematographer**/music video director Nabil Elderkin( FKA Twigs, Dua Lipa, Ye, SZA). This sparked an interest in **body-based performance art for screen**.



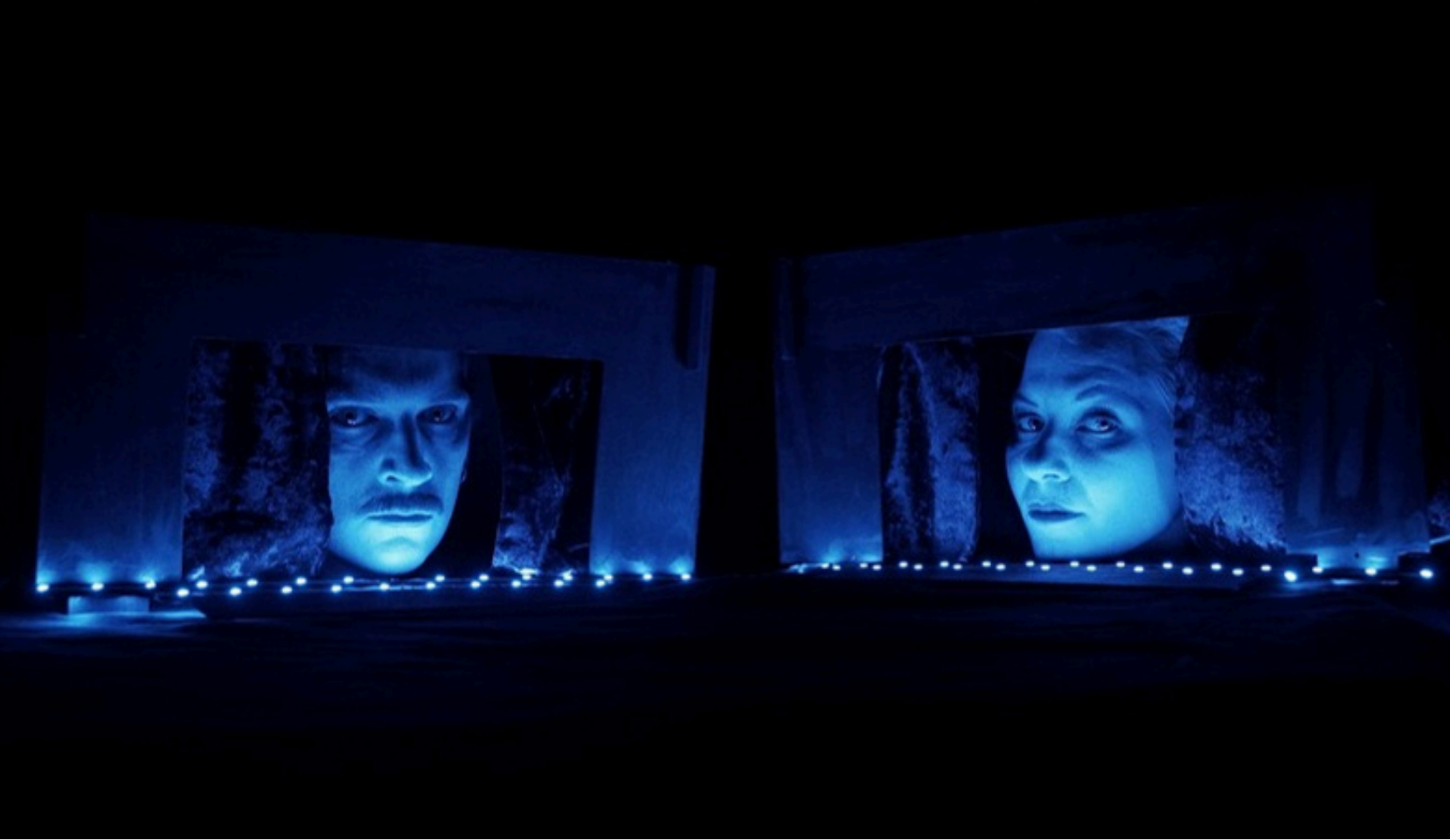
Photo Credit: Marco Anelli



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# Performance to Camera

Photo Credit: Georgiana Ghetiu



This **performance to camera** was created by inputting female dialogue from David Lynch screenplays into two separate Markov text chain generators and an early GPT-2 generator. I collaborated with these algorithms to create an eerie cinematic dreamworld. The work explores how we as humans can collaborate and dream with machines in “A.I. hallucinations”, and its process pre-dates Chat GPT. This project shows my **interest in cinematography**.

Collaborators: Georgiana Ghetiu & Tom Halls

For **The Ballad of Isosceles**, I created a performance for two people at a time as part of an initial commission (Sensored Festival @ Contact), then turned this into a performance for a larger audience with the addition of a “shadow audience” of voyeurs viewing the 2-to-1 experience.

I then made a **VR/360 film document** of this work that simulates the one-to-one eye contact of the **original live work for a recorded medium**, and worked with students in TV & Stage Design at University of Salford to create bespoke VR viewing booths inspired by the project’s visual language.

Collaborators:  
Adam York Gregory, Luke Harrison, Katie Duxbury & Marty Langthorne



**This shows my ability to work with students on live artistic briefs, and working to translate live participatory performance into screen/lens-based media**

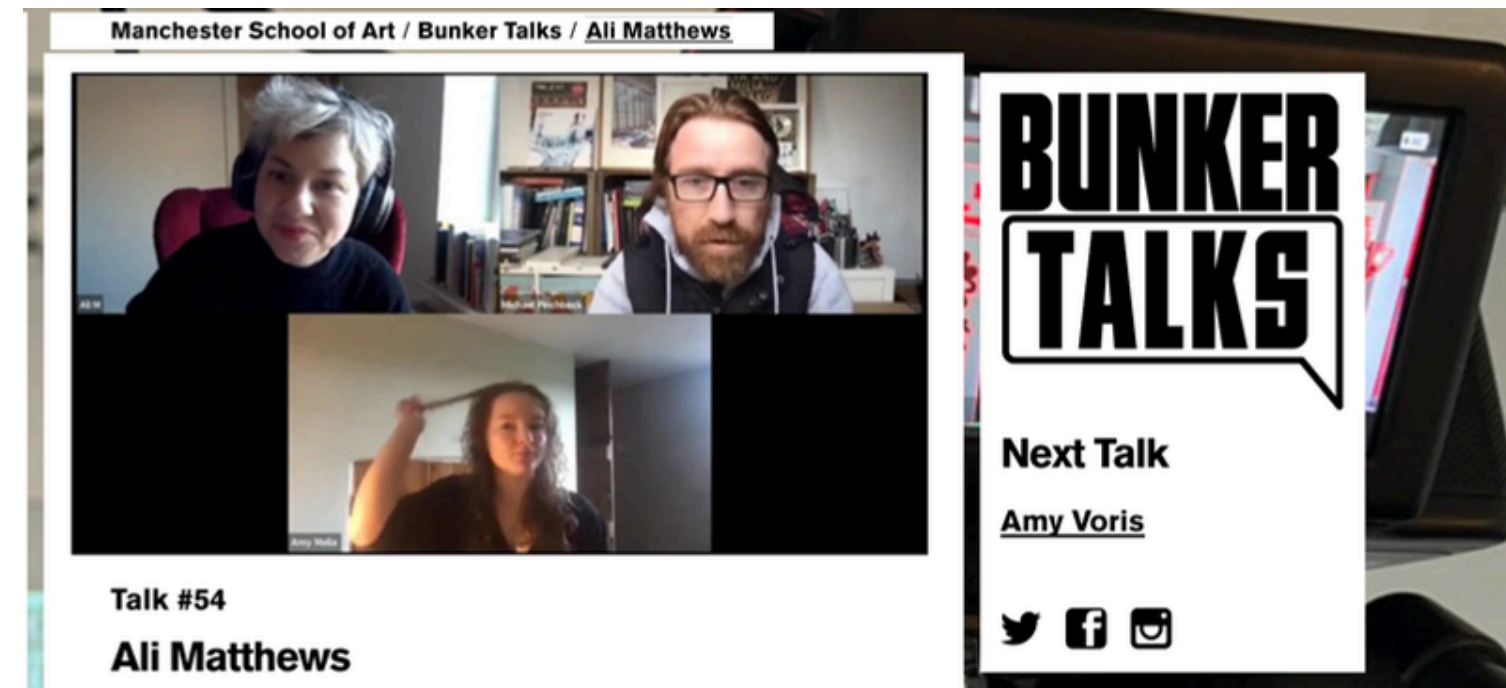
# Invited Keynotes & Artist Talks

I am regularly invited to deliver talks, keynotes & artist lectures at art schools, symposia and conferences around the UK and Europe.

Recent talks include:

An invited keynote for the “More-Than-Human Worlds in Artistic Research” symposium (University of Bristol, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and University of Stavanger Norway).

- This shows **my international profile as an artist researcher and speaker** across ecology, creative practice and environmental humanities.



## Additional talks at venues including:

- Museo Reina Sofia (Madrid)
- CARPA (Helsinki)
- Glogauir Studios/SOMOS Arts (Berlin)
- MMU/Manchester School of Art
- University of the Arts Bournemouth
- Cass School of Art & Architecture
- Wimbledon College of Arts/UAL

I also lecture & work with students at the University of Salford across BA, MA and PhD levels. This shows my ability to work across higher education and art practice environments, speaking to and working with students, fellow researchers and the wider public.

# THE WITCHING WAY

This **live concept album show**, performed at The Royal Exchange, emerged from a **65 mile walk through the Forest of Bowland** from Pendle to Lancaster. This project is another example of my creative process stemming from **body-based durational work in landscape** and led to the creation of a live performance with live-mixed “zine” visuals.

This project shows my **engagement with natural environment**, as well as my commitment to **interdisciplinary projects that mutate across forms (live, music, audiovisual)**.

Collaborators: Leo Burtin, Adam York Gregory and a musical team including Sophie Galpin (Dua Lipa, Self Esteem), Becky Wilkie (RashDash) and Ellie Davies (Honeyfeet).



Photo Credit: Grant Archer

**[Listen to the album here.](#)**

# PINK OYSTER

[Spotify](#)

[Bandcamp](#)

I record and release music under the moniker Pink Oyster, and **my songs stream on all platforms.**

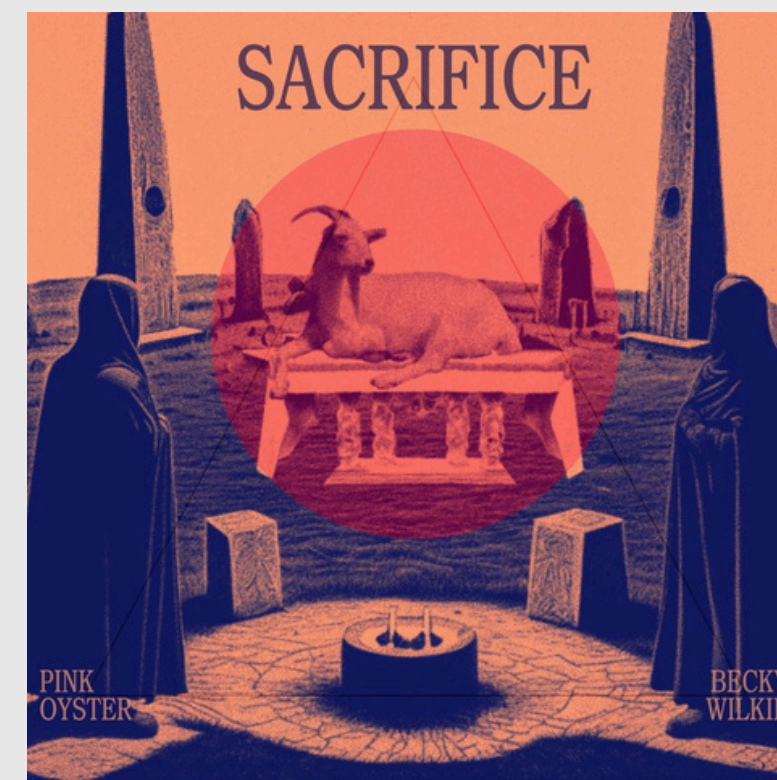
My indie folk single **Cheekbone Queen** was called “dark and absorbing...a very special track” by York Calling.

My goth cowboy dreamscape **Control** was played on BBC Radio Manchester, where I also interviewed & played live.

My collaboration with Hannah Moule, **Mulch Me**, is an electro-prog anthem and love poem to decay.

My synth banger **Sacrifice** sends up the martyrdom of middle age.

I frequently play with collaborators Becky Wilkie (Rashdash) and Ellis Davies (Honeyfeet).



# Contact Me:

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