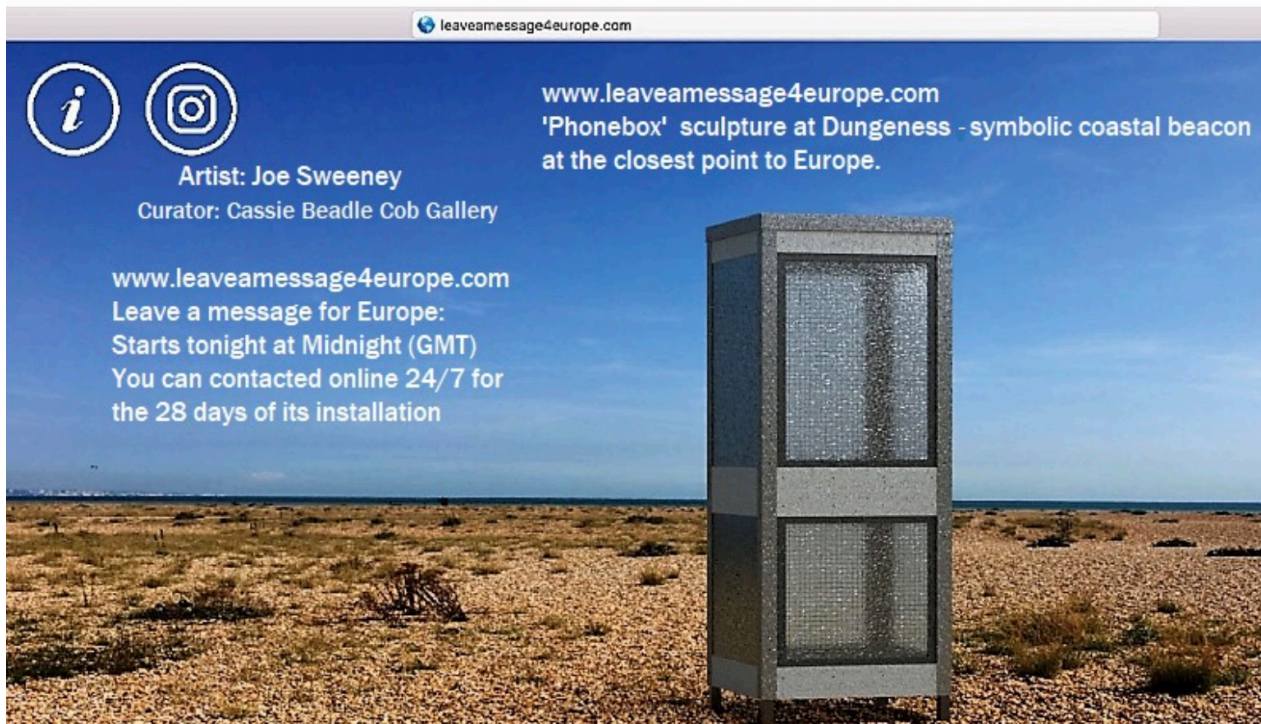


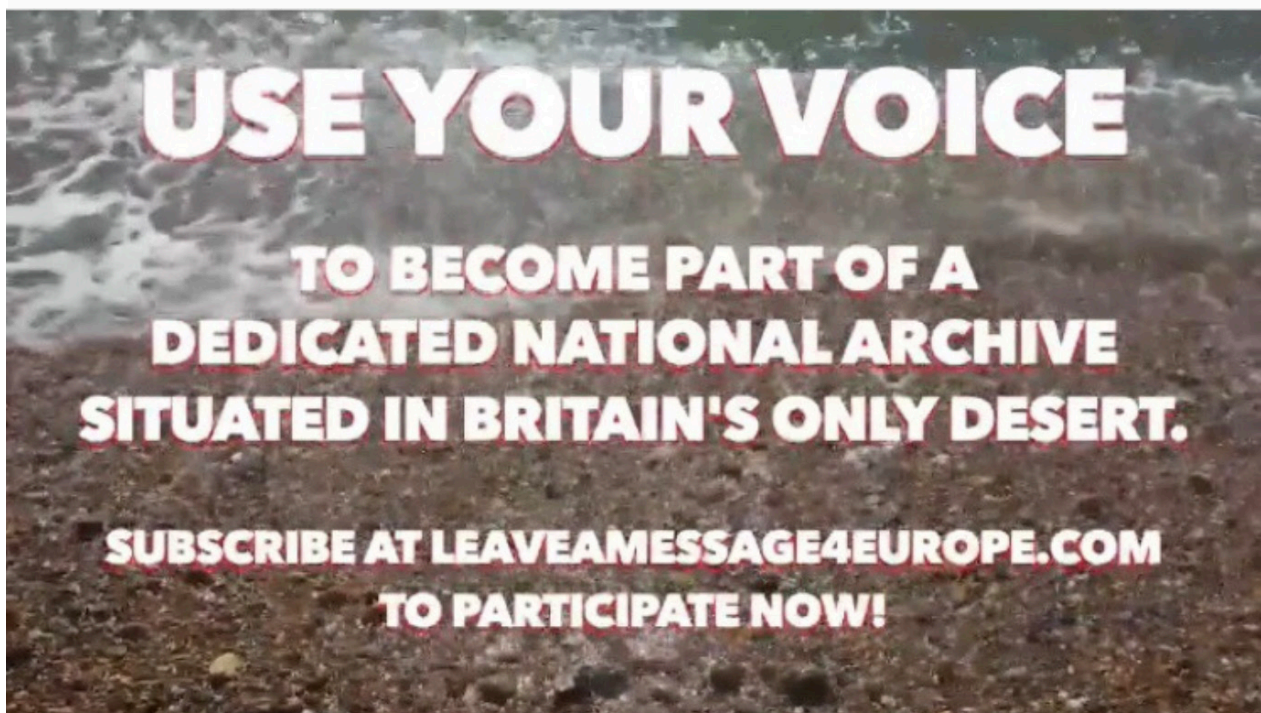
Artist Joe Sweeney Responds to Brexit #leaveamessage4europe 28 Days Public Archive



+44 LEAVE A MESSAGE 4 EUROPE

Two-part, sculptural and digital artwork by [Joe Sweeney](#), collecting a vocal archive of the public's opinion and questions in the countdown to Brexit.

The sculpture of the iconic 90s phone booth resides in the middle of the 'British desert' in Dungeness, Kent and can be viewed 24/7 on live stream via the website.



British Artist Joe Sweeney, embarked on this ambitious project responding to Britain's decisions to leave the EU and invites us all to leave a message as part of a historical archive.



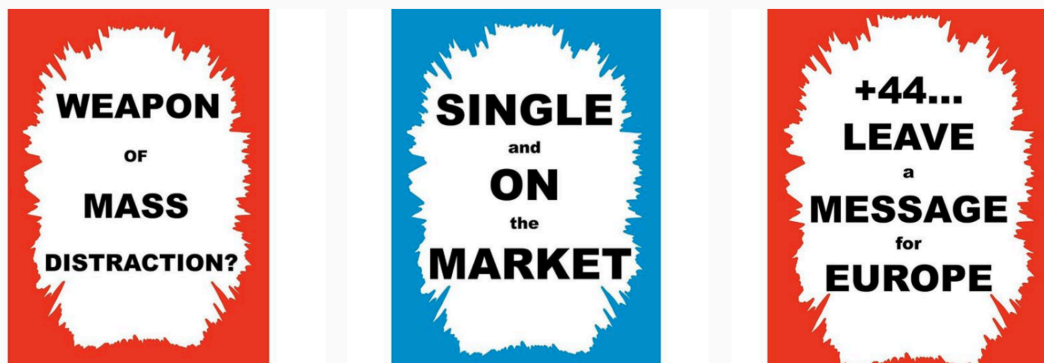
Joe Sweeney at Dungeness, Kent.

While Britain's post Brexit future may not be determined British Artist Joe Sweeney's project sparks quite an interesting concern regarding British history and whether the study of British past has a future in a post-Brexit Britain.



'+44:Leave a Message for Europe' centres around a sculpture of a BT telephone box installed on Dungeness beach. Captured on film 24/7 via a live stream feed for 28 days in the lead up to our departure from the EU.

Cassie Beadle Curator at Cob Gallery says: "The sculpture stands and evocative symbol of the near past, a feature that everyone can recognise from quite literally a mile off and in that vain the project aims at attracting the most diverse participation as possible to paint as true and authentic portrait of the UK as possible at this pivotal time."

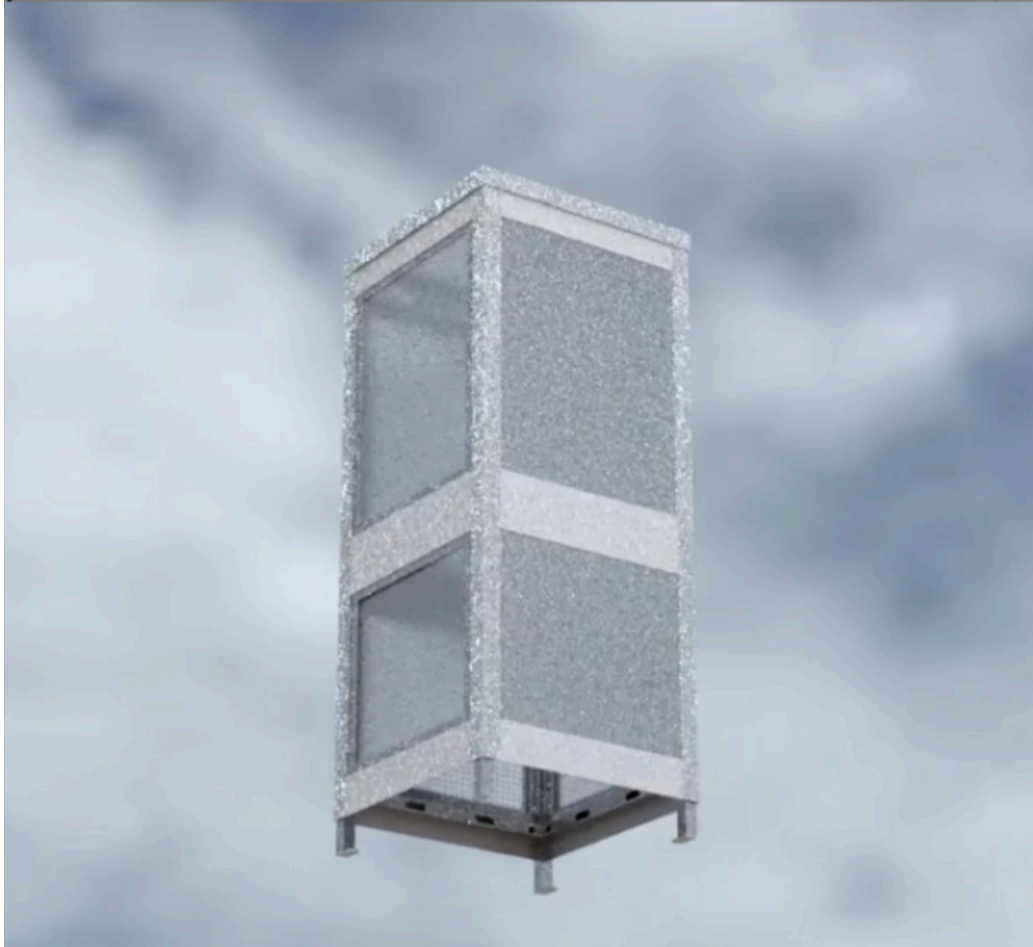


Interview with Curator Cassie Beadle - Cob Gallery, London

AF: How has it been to work on this project and how did it come about?

Cassie Beadle: It's been an incredible honour to watch Joe develop as an artist. We have worked closely with him since his debut solo exhibition. This particular project has been in development since the referendum. Joe was excited to build a concept around Brexit, as this political landscape seemed to make a nation scrutinise its identity. Joe had just completed his second solo exhibition, which looked at the British Coast as a - 'last outpost of regeneration' and the peculiarities associated with a coastal British identity. Simultaneously Joe began looking at the BT phone box as an increasingly redundant, but present urban motif - almost like a modern relic - and we began to think of it as an almost daily overlooked, yet potent symbol. Joe's work involves elevating the everyday or the overlooked into the symbolic gesture, so with these key 'ingredients' and a collision of these various concepts, the project seemed to come about very naturally as his first public sculpture.

The location of the symbolic BT phone box sculpture resides for the next 28 days in Dungeness and the location choice was important for Sweeney. The pebble beach as it is a symbolic Brexit location as Kent was predominantly 'leave' and Dungeness is a British coastal beach also known a British desert, dubbed as "Britain's only desert" by the Met Office. 'Located at UK's most south-easterly point, the inactive phone box acts as a beacon. It is a nostalgic call to action – a reminder of the way we once communicated - with the nuance of the voice. '



The project did not come without its hurdles, specially when it came to housing the phone box sculpture in the middle of the Dungeness and locals response to it.

AF: Did you face any obstacles or difficulties with curating this project?

Cassie Beadle: The most obvious obstacle was placing a sculpture in a protected area of England. Dungeness as the site was always what we envisioned. It has so many extraordinary qualities that resonate with the artist personally, and relate to the concept, both culturally and geographically. It's a part of the UK that is so unique in its appearance and the expansive shingle beach, considered 'Britain's only desert' is overlooked by a huge power station creating wonderful dystopian clash of nature and industry. Secondly, the area of Kent, is predominately 'leave' and at one point, we were concerned that some would feel choosing this county for the site had a provocative agenda. However, this project has been conceived as non-partisan, and if anything - evocative rather than provocative- we want everyone to take part- after all it's reflective of an overarching feeling of 'voicelessness' that has swept through the country. This being said, the project on the whole has been embraced by the local community, and we have worked hard to make sure that the digital aspect of the project (the website being a 24hour forum) means that we extend the projects reach beyond its locale.



For 28 days, the phone box installation will be the official statue of #leaveamessage4europe and will encourage the the public to engage with the sculpture by calling free via the website leaveamessage4europe.com to voice and record their hopes and fears, at this pivotal moment in Britain's history with the EU.

All messages will be collated and form a publicly accessible vocal archive. Whilst the sculpture is installed, this archive will grow over the four 'live' weeks, will be audible online during that time and lead to the creation of a permanent archive.'Exposed to the elements, the sculpture also represents the UK, facing new challenges and an uncertain future. Visit the sculpture in person or view it streamed live here, 24-7, as it is altered daily by its environment - and as we count down to B-day.'



Joe Sweeney



Joe Sweeney

AF: Will Cob Gallery hold a recorded piece of this project once it's finished?

Cassie Beadle: We hope that the footage captured from the live feed and the audio archive will go on to form Joe's first time based media work. We are excited to develop this with Joe and the video medium does feel a good direction for his work. We will of course be leaving a message for Europe!

AF: Finally who can participate/what audience are you hoping to attract?

Cassie Beadle: The digital aspects of this project hopefully means we are really able to share as far and wide as possible. This was discussed at length in the project development stage. Digitally, the sculpture transcends time zones, countries, continents (and unpredictable British weather that could restrict people from visiting the site!). The sculpture can be viewed via the website www.leaveamessage4europe.com and contacted online 24/7 for the 28 days of its installation. Should Article 50 be extended, we will look at extending the message leaving facility and the online platform, even if the physical sculpture has been removed. I hope that anyone and everyone who has anything to say about Brexit or about our relationship to Europe will contact the project. I would also LOVE for reciprocal participation from European countries. I hope the sculpture makes a range of audiences think about the way we communicate with each other.

Joe Sweeney: It's for everyone!

1 - 29 March 2019

www.leaveamessage4Europe.com

+44... Leave a message for Europe

Joe Sweeney

Curator Cassie Beadle



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[LeaveaMessage4Europe](http://www.leaveamessage4Europe.com) is brought to you by Contemporary Artist [Joe Sweeney](#), a project that highlights the importance of human interaction, dialogue hopes and fears at this pivotal moment in Britain's history with the EU.

Joe Sweeney works with a visual language created through British idiosyncrasies, everyday references and the banal, commenting on our fast changing times by elevating the throw away. Playing with Britain's passion for nostalgia, he often creates morbid but humorous work through sculpture, print and installation.

LEAVEAMESSAGE4EUROPE
@LEAVEAMESSAGE4EUROPE

Artist: [Joe Sweeney](#)

Curated by Cassie Beadle - Cob Gallery

Support from: Arts Council England

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