



★ **TURF PROJECTS GALLERY, WORKSPACE & STUDIOS, WHITGIFT CENTRE**

Founded in 2013 by Croydon locals, Turf Projects is the first entirely artist-run contemporary art space in Croydon, South London. A registered charity, Turf has supported the work of over 300 artists to date through a programme of free public exhibitions, workshops and events. Turf also run vocational skills workshops for artists, MOSS (a collective of learning disabled adult artists), Art Press (a young peoples collective of Croydon locals aged 14-21), a support & residency programme for Croydon School of Art students, family workshops, projects with local schools & more. Established by creatives with a personal connection to the borough, Turf currently exists across two ex-retail units.

● **TURF PROJECTS STUDIOS, KEELEY ROAD**

■ **Fungus Press Pond Poster Structure**

◆ **Fungus Press Community Garden Poster Structure**

* **Fungus Press Reeves Corner Poster Structure**

* **Fungus Press Walled Garden Poster Structure**

○ **EXCHANGE SQUARE**

Featured Turf's first exhibition 'Putt Putt' in October 2013

▶ **RUSKIN SQUARE**

Area designed by MUF featured Turf's exhibition 'Putt Putt #2', 2014. Ruskin Square was the starting point for Vincent Lacovara's 'Seven Hills of Croydon' a walking tour of Croydon's multi-level car parks.

FUNGUS PRESS is an ever evolving artist poster project, which started in 2014

As concerns grow regarding the privatisation of public spaces across London, and elsewhere, Fungus Press invites artists, designers & writers to respond to Croydon's public spaces through a series of newly commissioned billboard artworks. The text-based posters aim to discuss and celebrate the importance and potential of Croydon's public spaces, offering alternative ways to navigate the area; both geographically and temporally. They speak of Croydon's untold past and its yet to be written future; reasserting the essential role that green spaces play throughout civic life: from articulating our sense of place, to encouraging democratic engagement.

The Reeves Corner structure was designed by George Chinnery. The Park Hill Walled Garden noticeboard was designed and made by artist & woodcarver Esme Toler.

Turf Projects Staff // **Its Only Bondage Was The Circling Sky** // 4 Aug - 1 Sept 2019

Artists: Chris Alton, Rebecca Atherton, Skye Baker, Sophie Blagden, Alice Cretney, Holly Graham, Rosie Mills Eckmire, Jhinuk Sarkar

Unbounded freedom ruled the wandering scene
Nor fence of ownership crept in between
To hide the prospect of the following eye
Its only bondage was the circling sky

Excerpt from *The Mores*, by John Clare, composed c.1821

This exhibition takes its title from John Clare's 'The Mores', in which the English nature poet laments the enclosure of the commons. Between 1809 and 1820, acts of enclosure granted local landowners permission to fence the fields, heaths and woods, excluding the people who had worked and played in them. Whilst farming became more profitable, those who depended on the commons for their survival were deprived of their livelihood. The places in which the people held their ceremonies and celebrated the passing of the seasons were fenced off. The community, like the land, was parcelled up, rationalised, atomised.¹ Some believe it was the enclosure of the commons that drove Clare mad; the loss of almost all he knew and loved must have been a contributing factor.

Almost 200 years later, *Its Only Bondage was the Circling Sky* reflects similar concerns to those of Clare, or concerns that have their roots in the enclosure of the commons; freedom of movement across national borders, co-existence with other species in the age of the anthropocene and climate change, the act of archiving, the privatisation of public spaces, the essential role that green spaces play throughout civic life, and the effects of gentrification – particularly on marginalised people.

For more information about current & forthcoming artist commissions and related events visit: www.turf-projects.com // email: chris@turf-projects.com // instagram: [@f_ng_s](https://www.instagram.com/@f_ng_s)

