

IOU50 Triptych: Body, Land & Lens Residency and Commission Opportunity

Location: IOU Creation Centre and Leeds Beckett University

Residency Period: One-week residency w/c 15th June 2026

Project Development & Filming: Summer - Autumn 2026

Presentation Dates: February 2027

Overview

As part of IOU's 50th anniversary programme, this commission invites **three artists working in body-based performance, durational practice, movement and/or land art** to create new performance-to-camera or film works in collaboration with **MA Cinematography students at Leeds Beckett University**.

The commissioned artists will take inspiration from **IOU's 50-year archive of live performance, film-making, sculptural practice and unique approach to image making**, alongside histories of performance artists working with bodies in landscape, and land artists making interventions into nature.

The three selected **artists will undertake a one-week residency in June 2026**, staying at the IOU Hostel in Hebden Bridge, with studio and making space at the IOU Creation Centre in Halifax. **Artists will visit regional sites of interest via guided walks and tours**, encouraging collaborative dialogue and reflection whilst spending time in nature.

Whilst each film will be different, artists will be required to **work together collaboratively to agree shared parameters**, enabling the works to be presented collectively **as a cohesive triptych**. This may include shared duration, themes, materials, sound, or presentation approaches. Artists and film-makers will support one another in making the work, acting as outside eyes where appropriate.

Artists will share insights from their research and process through **IOU's Ecology and Ecosystems Symposium**, with **final works presented publicly in February 2027**.

The opportunity is open to UK and international artists at any career stage.

About IOU

IOU is a UK-based arts organisation with a 50-year history of creating experimental, interdisciplinary work that blends performance, visual art, engineering, and technology. Based at Dean Clough Mills, Halifax, the IOU Creation Centre supports artists to take creative risks and collaborate across disciplines, developing new work that connects communities, landscapes, and ideas.

Calderdale's dramatic moorlands, waterways, historic mills, and post-industrial landscapes have shaped IOU's creative identity for five decades. The region offers a rich environment for artists working across film, site-responsive performance, environmental storytelling, and experimental moving image.

What the Commission Offers

Three artists will be encouraged to explore relationships between landscape, memory, technology, ecology, and performance, creating a filmed work that reflects IOU's heritage while imagining new rural creative futures.

Residency and Creative Resources

- One-week residency at IOU Hostel, Hebden Bridge
- Accommodation and catering provided during residency week
- Studio, rehearsal, and workshop access at IOU Creation Centre, Halifax
- Site visits across Calderdale and Yorkshire Sculpture Park
- Structured peer exchange between the three commissioned artists

Collaboration and Mentorship

- Collaboration with fellow artists and MA Cinematography students at Leeds Beckett University.
- Individual and group mentoring with IOU's creative team, university staff, commission partners, and invited guest artists.
- Technical filming and editing support from MA Cinematography students.
- Opportunities to develop collaborative approaches to presentation and filming.

Financial Package

- Artist stipend: £750 fee (per artist).
- Travel and expenses contribution: Individual travel / expenses budget of up to £300 (per artist).
- Material budget: Individual materials budget of up to £250 (per artist).
- Production budget: IOU will cover the costs of mounting and marketing the final presentation.
- Film-making budget: Film-making tech and equipment costs covered by our university partner.
- Accommodation and catering provided during residency week, with further stays negotiable.

Profile and Engagement Opportunities

- Contribution to IOU's Ecology and Ecosystems Symposium (Wed 15th July 2026).
- Group critical feedback sessions (Autumn 2026).
- Presentation of work in Feb 2027 at IOU and Leeds School of Arts.
- Documentation archived within the IOU archive.
- Opportunities for public engagement, talks, and digital profiling.
- Introductions to potential future presenters.

Artist Commitments

- Participate in a one-week residency w/c 15th June 2026.
- Develop new performance-to-camera or film work inspired by IOU's archive and Calderdale landscapes.
- Collaborate with MA Cinematography students to realise filmed work.
- Participate in IOU symposium and group feedback sessions.
- Contribute to project documentation, marketing and engagement activity.
- Complete final work for public presentation in February 2027.

Essential Artistic Criteria

Your application should:

- Demonstrate an interest in or alignment with IOU's interdisciplinary approach
- Show how you might engage with the environment via body-based performance, movement, durational practice and/or land art to create a performance to camera or film.
- Be inspired by IOU's archive, environmental concerns and regional landscapes.
- Be experimental, collaborative, and open to process-led development.
- Contribute to IOU50, connecting past creative practice with future-facing ideas.

Who Can Apply

We welcome applications from artists working in **performance, visual arts, moving image, live art, dance or interdisciplinary practice**, especially those interested in:

- Performance within natural or rural settings.
- Body based practice or land art.
- Working with archival and historical material.
- Collaboration and peer exchange.
- Ecological thinking and site-based practice.

Artists should be curious, experimental, and open to process-led development within a supportive residency environment.

Artistic Lineage, Archive and Inspiration

Since its founding in 1976, IOU has created original performances, installations and artworks reimagining the relationship between place, audience, and imagination. The company combined art, engineering and technology and were considered at the forefront of experimental arts and performance.

This commission sits within a wide lineage of moving image, site-responsive performance, land-based practice and environmental installation. It acknowledges the company's unique approach to image making, which was often influenced by visual art, performance art and film-making practice rather than traditional theatre.

IOU has an extensive archive which is currently being developed as a resource for audiences, artists, researchers and academics. This archive will be available to successful artists to be used as inspiration for the commission. Example reference points for early work on film include:

- [*An Example of Zeal \(1978\)*](#) – a film made with the Yorkshire Arts Communications Centre, exploring collaboration and human ritual.
- [*Towers \(1977\)*](#) – a striking performance on Brighton Beach where temporary structures and the human body meet elemental landscapes.

This commission supports artists to experiment with the ways in which bodies interact with landscapes, how film can document or transform live performance, and how artistic practice can respond to ecological and social change.

A list of inspirational artists is provided below, for research purposes. Applicants are not expected to directly replicate these artists' work, but may find them useful as starting points for thinking about how performance, environment, ecology, and moving image can combine. The list primarily comprises internationally recognised pioneers of performance art and land art.

Ana Mendieta

Known for embedding bodily traces into landscapes, her *Siluetas* Series merges ritual, identity, and nature.

Joan Jonas

A pioneer in video performance art, blending gesture, myth, and environment into poetic moving image works.

Bruce Nauman

Explored endurance and repetition in performance film, treating the body as sculptural and spatial material.

Alicia Frankovich

Creates sculptural performance films examining the body's interaction with objects and environment.

Carolee Schneemann

Pioneered visceral, body-centered performance works that intimately connect corporeal experience with environmental and spatial contexts, challenging conventional boundaries between self and surroundings.

Richard Long

Creates sculptural and performative works through walking and subtle landscape interventions focused on trace and time.

Andy Goldsworthy

Produces ephemeral environmental sculptures using natural materials that engage with ecological cycles.

Nancy Holt

Known for large-scale environmental works that explore human perception within landscape and cosmos.

Intellectual Property and Presentation Rights

Work created will be produced by IOU, with shared intellectual property between artists and film-makers. Future touring, re-presentations, or online screenings will be managed by IOU unless agreed otherwise with artists and collaborators.

To Apply

Fill out an online application form [HERE](#)

If you have access requirements and wish to apply by another method, please contact mike@ioucreationcentre.org

Timeline

- Application Deadline: 30th March 2026, 10am
- Interviews: Week commencing 13th April 2026
- Residency: 15th - 19th June 2026
- Symposium: 15th July 2026
- Critical Feedback Sessions: Autumn 2026
- Production and Filming: Summer – Autumn 2026
- Presentation: February 2027 (Exact Dates tbc)

FAQs

Is this opportunity open internationally?

Yes. However, international travel costs to/from the residency are not covered.

Do I need to use the IOU Archive?

Yes, selected artists are required to spend time with IOU's Archive as a way of inspiring ideas.

What kind of work can I make?

The commission is primarily aimed at performance artists and land-artists who want to make a work on film. You don't need to have worked in this form previously to apply; an interest in working with landscape and environments is enough.

Do I need to complete a finished artwork?

Yes, we expect the finished work to be ready for presentation in February 2027.

Contact

For further information, contact: mike@ioucreationcentre.org

ioucreationcentre.org

hebdenbridgehostel.org

IOU is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, identities and lived experiences.

IOU Charity no 273527. Company no 130367

IOU is funded by National Heritage Lottery | Arts Council England | Calderdale Council | Dean Clough

