

# Short film “Plastic Song” shows the catastrophic impact of plastic waste

Filmmaker Julian Hanford has launched a new conceptual short film called Plastic Song featuring renowned artist Steve McPherson highlighting plastic pollution in our water, rivers, beaches and oceans. The artist has been walking the Kent beaches collecting discarded plastic objects and transforming them into artworks.

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The film brings together the alchemy of artist Steve McPherson with Julian Hanford’s emotional filmmaking to capture the growing tide of plastic pollution in our oceans. The documentary is not just aesthetic however, it’s a stark warning that highlights the World Economic Forum findings that suggest that by 2050 our oceans could contain more plastic than fish.

In 1950 the global plastic production was 2.3M tonnes which has now increased exponentially to 448M in 2015. The majority of it is dumped into the natural environment and finds its way into our rivers, our oceans and ultimately our foods.

Tiny particles of microplastics have been found in the majority of the world’s tap water. They are also swallowed by farm animals or fish which mistake them for food and have even been found in the fruit and vegetables

we eat.

The World Economic Forum has warned that by 2050 our oceans could contain more plastic than fish. Worst still, since the onset of COVID-19 the use of single-use plastics is rising, 129B facemasks and 65B gloves are being used and disposed of every month, with large numbers entering the natural environment.

*“Watch it on a big screen if you can, with full music to be immersed in a world of colour and be inspired to join the movement to stop plastic pollution for the health of our blue planet.” – Dianna Cohen, CEO & Co-Founder, Plastics Pollution Coalition.*

In Britain, an appalling 700,000 plastic bottles are littered every single day and are making their way into our oceans. There are now around 159 plastic bottles for every mile of beach in Britain. New research reported in two papers in Environmental Pollution and in one paper in Science of the Total Environment has also concluded that the River Thames in London is ‘severely polluted with plastic’. In fact, it has some of the highest recorded levels of microplastics for any river in the world.

Since 2007 McPherson’s primary source materials have been the discarded plastic objects that wash ashore on his local Kent coast. Wave worn, sun-bleached and scarred with unknown histories, they are carefully collated to produce aesthetically beautiful art with an overwhelming sense of order, which is at odds with the wasteful nature of the material from which they are made.

*“It’s great to see Steve using art to shine the spotlight on the plastic pollution crisis, which is an ongoing disaster for the planet. Plastic has been found blighting lakes, rivers and beaches right*

*around the world including right here in the UK.”*  
*– Julian Kirby, Plastics Campaigner at Friends of the Earth*

Reflecting on this growing tide of pollution photographer and filmmaker Julian Hanford has collaborated with artist Steve McPherson to produce Plastic Song – a beautifully made short film which captures McPherson’s creative process and raises important questions.

His work repurposes these objects into intricate patterns in which the natural world comes back to life, as well as the industrial structures responsible for producing the world’s waste.

*“I think what Steve creates are akin to contemporary fossil records of our late civilisation. It would be strange to think of what a distant future culture would make of us if these works were unearthed many centuries hence.” – Julian Hanford*

*Steve McPherson is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work is held in private, public and corporate collections worldwide. It has featured in the Guardian, Time and Coast magazine. Since 2010 he has worked with the conservation groups Marine Conservation Society, Plastic Oceans and Surfers Against Sewage.*

*Read also*

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### Sustainability is not just a buzzword

- Filmmaker Julian Hanford launched the new conceptual docu-short film called Plastic Song featuring renowned artist Steve McPherson at Ernie's Beach nr Oxo Tower, South Bank. Artist Steve McPherson highlights plastic pollution in our water, rivers, beaches and oceans. He describes his work as '21st Century archaeology'. Since 2007 he has been walking the Kent beaches collecting discarded plastic objects and transforming them into artworks. Wave-worn, sun bleached and scarred with unknown histories, the pieces are put into order on McPherson's canvasses – at odds with the disorder from which they've come.
- The film brings together the alchemy of artist Steve McPherson with Julian Hanford's emotional filmmaking to capture the growing tide of plastic pollution in our oceans. The documentary is a creative, visionary perspective of the major plastic pollution crisis facing our civilisation. Care-free holidaymaker scenes are interlaced with scenes of McPherson scouring the beaches for plastic.
- A recent [BBC news report](#) highlights the River Thames as having one of having the worst plastic pollution levels in the world, higher than both the Rivers Rhine and Danube.
- The World Economic Forum has warned that by 2050 our oceans could contain more plastic than fish. McPherson's work is not just aesthetic, it's a warning.

In 1950 the global plastic production was 2.3M tonnes which has now increased exponentially to 448M in 2015. The majority of it is dumped into the natural environment and finds its way into our rivers, our oceans and ultimately our foods.

Found by artist Steve McPherson these objects and hundreds like them have been transformed into complex, thought provoking pieces of art.

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