

Are we doomed? Environmental factors for being human

Are our days numbered? Will humans join the 90 per cent of species already extinct? And are our honey bees already heading that way? Life's rich tapestries are explored to their limits within the 'environment' theme of this year's Being Human festival of the humanities.

Led by the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy, Being Human 2017 is the only national humanities festival in the UK. And it highlights the environment through a range of events running from 17 to 25 November. They include:

- [Vanished: a historian's guide to extinction](#) at the University of Birmingham
More than 90 per cent of beings that ever lived on Earth are now extinct. But, as a scientific theory, extinction is surprisingly modern. This whistle-stop tour of the history of extinction from a historian's perspective will show how scientists have gone from believing that extinction can only be due to human actions to accepting that it is an endemic feature of the natural world.
- [Telling the bees](#) at the University of York
Want to know how the honeybee got her sting and glimpse into the possible future of our bees? This performative lecture combines drama and interactive tasks to present the past, present and future of bees and beekeeping.
- [Sound: lost and found](#) at Goldsmiths University of London
Using specialist field recording equipment attendees will walk from West Bay to Dorset to seek out sounds – from inside objects, underwater and electromagnetic –to create a large-scale 'lost and found symphony' during an improvised performance.
- [Home at MERL \(performance\)](#) at the University of Reading
Come to the Museum of English Rural Life and let professional dance company Reside Dance and members of the local community take you on a journey of migration. The promenade performance highlights the performers' past experiences of migration and resettlement while responding to the museum's history, architecture and collections.

This is just a sample of the more than 300 events on offer at Being Human 2017. Other themes explored include science and medicine, technology, hidden histories: lost voices, politics and protest.

Find out more about the festival at www.beinghumanfestival.org and follow the latest news on Twitter at @BeingHumanFest. For images relating to this release, click [here](#).

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Notes to Editors:

1. **For further information**, please contact: Maureen McTaggart, Media and Public Relations Officer, School of Advanced Study, University of London +44 (0)20 7862 8653 / Maureen.mctaggart@sas.ac.uk.
2. **Being Human: a festival of the humanities 17–25 November 2017**
Led by the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy, Being Human is a national forum for public engagement with humanities research. The festival will

highlight the ways in which the humanities can inspire and enrich our everyday lives.

- 3. The School of Advanced Study (SAS)**, University of London, is the UK's national centre for the promotion and support of research in the humanities. SAS and its member institutes offer unparalleled academic opportunities, facilities and stimulation across a wide range of subject areas for the benefit of the national and international scholarly community. In 2015-16, SAS: welcomed 786 research fellows and associates; held 2,007 research dissemination events; received 24.4 million visits to its digital research resources and platforms; and received 194,145 visits to its specialist libraries and collections. The School also leads the UK's only nationwide festival of the humanities: Being Human. Find out more at <http://www.sas.ac.uk> or on Twitter at [@SASNews](#).
- 4. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)** funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects: ancient history, modern dance, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, English literature, design, the creative and performing arts, and much more. This financial year the AHRC will spend approximately £98m to fund research and postgraduate training in collaboration with a number of partners. The quality and range of research supported by this investment of public funds not only provides social and cultural benefits but also contributes to the economic success of the UK. www.ahrc.ac.uk. Follow the AHRC on Twitter at twitter.com/ahrcpress and Facebook facebook.com/artsandhumanitiesresearchcouncil/
- 5. The British Academy** for the humanities and social sciences. Established by Royal Charter in 1902. Its purpose is to inspire and support high achievement in the humanities and social sciences throughout the UK and internationally, and to promote their public value. For more information, please visit www.britishacademy.ac.uk. Follow the British Academy on Twitter [@britac_news](#).