

# lakesculture

## Cultural Boomers

### Cultural Boomers: Top 5 Experiences

1. Space and serenity, in a perfect setting – Sit in the window seats of Blackwell's serene white drawing room looking out across Windermere to the high fells beyond: the house, furnishings, décor and garden design are perfect Arts & Crafts, the location is ... well ... just perfect too. Space, light and texture were the hallmarks of architect MH Baillie Scott, who lovingly crafted this house as a holiday home for a wealthy Manchester merchant at the turn of the 20th century. Contemporary arts and crafts are on sale in the shop ... and then it's time for that lovingly crafted afternoon tea on the terrace, relaxing high above the bustle on the lake below.

2. Art with a strong sense of place – There are trails in Grizedale Forest that take you through the UK's largest exhibition of site-specific art. Among the pieces is Andy Goldsworthy's famous 'Taking a Wall for a Walk', undulating through the trees. But perhaps it's Goldsworthy's Sheepfolds – dotted across Cumbria, often in remote and isolated locations – that give you the strongest sense of place, with their references to traditional hill farming. "A stone is a living witness to the place in which it sits," he says. These artworks are something to savour: bringing a new perspective to this already inspiring landscape.

3. Poetry and prose in England's best-loved literary landscape – Words by Water is nine days of writers and readers getting together to share the pleasure of books, words and ideas, in – in the words of WbW President Melvyn Bragg – "a setting which has nurtured writing for almost 300 years". Theatre by the Lake, right on the edge of Derwentwater, and Greta Hall – a fine Georgian house that was home to Coleridge and Southey – are the venues for this prestigious literature festival. These are intimate spaces for this packed programme of big names, short talks, global voices, revealing conversations, insiders' perspectives, remarkable readings, tributes, musings and discussions – set in the loveliest of literary landscapes.

4. On the trail of an international icon – Pioneering German-born artist Kurt Schwitters – one of the most significant figures in European Dadaism – lived in the Lake District and was inspired by the Cumbrian landscape. His last great sculpture and installation is the Merz Barn at Elterwater – it is in a fragile state and can only be viewed on special days. But there's a chance to see Schwitters' works year round at the Georgian Abbot Hall Gallery in Kendal. The Gallery also has works by Cezanne, Constable, Goldsworthy, Hockney, Moore, Picasso, Ruskin, and Turner, among others.

5. Artist makers ... inspiring creativity – The Lakes is a place for small-yet-perfectly-formed artist-led festivals, where international artists come to share their inspirational work. At Potfest in Penrith, ceramicists come from across Europe to meet and inspire each other, as well as to share, show and sell their work. And at Printfest in Ulverston, international artists show and sell their prints – in the main exhibition and also at dozens of places around the town, on the Printfest Trail. You can meet the artists, buy the work, watch demonstrations, take part in workshops ... and of course eat cake.