**The Wildflower Hour: An Interview with Chloé Eathorne**

**Rupert Loydell:** *So Chloé, you let slip in a seminar this morning that you do an hour show each week on Source FM, our local community radio station! Can you tell me how that came about, and the kind of things your programme features?*

**Chloé Eathorne:** I first came across Source FM by tuning into different frequencies on the radio at a Falmouth University Open Day. On the airwaves, I heard the most chaotic show, hosted by a Cornish man. I had never heard a radio show like it before that represented the community, and immediately it sparked my interest and desire to contribute to the station.

I began The Wildflower Hour in 2020 during lockdown, with a focus at the heart of the show to explore all things art, poetry, and mental health. Conversations around mental health and the effect of music and the arts on our well-being were particularly prevalent during that time and is something I remain passionate about. I had no prior knowledge of radio; Source Volunteer Annemarie supported me in setting up the show and learning the ropes, which I'm very grateful for! Since then, the show airs weekly, featuring an eclectic mix of feel-good tunes, interviews with local artists and musicians, and explores Cornish heritage, which is often overlooked in mainstream radio.

**Rupert***: Who have you interviewed on the show?*

**Chloé:** I’ve interviewed a variety of guests on the show, including poet Ella Frears (shortlisted for the T.S Eliot and Forward Prize), pioneering sound artist Justin Wiggan, Blue Health Coach Phil Williams, local artist and forager Jasmine Blackmoore, and author, bee advocate and naturalist Brigit Strawbridge, to name a few. These conversations have explored everything from; a haptic suits ability to transform plant biorhythm music into touch, the power of the ocean for coastal mental health, the moment a poet realises the power of words, and the magic of the ley lines that run through Cornwall.

**Rupert:** *How do you see poetry, music, and the arts linking to well-being and mental health? It's great how these issues are now very public.*

**Chloé:** I think that poetry, music, and art are intrinsically connected to our ability as humans to process emotions and express ourselves. The impact of music on our mental health is significant. Stick on some funky, soulful sounds and it can transform a mizzly Cornish afternoon into bliss or the power of a Debussy track to relax us when stuck in heavy traffic on the A30.

As a poet, exploring poetry on air has been a great way to engage with spoken word. Emotionally, engaging with poetry is a cathartic process be it through writing, listening, or performing. This quote from Muriel Rukeyser encapsulates it perfectly: 'Breathe-in experience, breathe-out poetry.*'*

Art has a significant impact on our well-being. Art forces our minds to slow down, focus on smaller details, and promotes relaxation. It is also a powerful force in creating connections. Earlier in the year I spoke to Jayne Howard founder of Arts Well, a community interest company based in Penryn, about the role of creativity in our mental health amidst the current cost of living crisis. She said 'Creativity provides opportunities for people to connect. This connection helps people to feel they are not so alone and to share ideas and solutions, it gives people a voice and enables them to express things that they might not be able to articulate in other ways.'

As a passionate advocate for mental health, it's really important to talk about these topics to reduce the stigma that still remains. I’ve spoken to Phil Williams, Blue Health Coach from Quiet Connections about the benefits of water on our well-being, Stacie Clark on the value of quiet confidence, and Brigit Strawbridge Howard on the importance of connecting with nature for our physical and mental health.

**Rupert:** *Do you have much rapport with your audience? How does your programme sit within all the different types of broadcasts on the station?*

**Chloé:** My most loyal listener is my gran, who listens to the show every week, and that means the world to me. I think a lot of large stations focus on statistics and numbers, but to me the shows are personal, it's just me and the listener connecting through the airwaves over groovy tunes and a love of poetry and art. I love that about community radio. There is an eccentric mix of fantastic presenters on Source FM, including Pirate Pete, Megan Chapman MCMC Spoken, A Space to Speak your Mind, Simon Nield, Andy Coote, Mark Davison, and Tony Leamon aka Pagan Tony, and Daave the Raave. I recommend tuning in at different times throughout the week for a brand-new flavour of radio!

**Rupert:** *So do you have a DJ or MC name? or are you just the nameless presenter of The Wildflower Hour'?'*

**Chloé:** I don’t have a cool DJ name, on air I'm just Chloé, presenter of The Wildflower Hour. A while back The Fish Factory Arts in Penryn held a DJ workshop experience focused on sound mixing with local recording studio Sirens Studio. The workshop explored another side to mixing and producing music, so I may come up with a ‘proper’ DJ title to explore this side of DJing in the future!

**Rupert:** *You spoke briefly about the fact that although the actual radio signal is very local and only transmits to Falmouth and Penryn, you have listeners all over the world through the internet. How is it, do you think, that people in, for instance, the USA, relate to this small area of Cornwall?*

**Chloé:** Source FM has great outreach. Being both available to tune in locally in the Falmouth and Penryn area on 96.1 FM, and the ability to listen online from anywhere on the Source FM website <https://www.thesourcefm.co.uk/>. Many Cornish expats tune in from all over the world, including the US, and can get a taste of home and keep up to date with what's happening in the Cornish community whilst on the other side of the globe!

**Rupert:** *What have you enjoyed the most in your time volunteering for Source?*

**Chloé:** I recently posted my 100th show and looking back presenting for community radio has given me so much more than a platform to discuss my passions but has connected me with many people and fantastic creatives in the local community and beyond, which is my favourite part. Volunteering has come with lots of fun opportunities, including presenting live at Falmouth's Sea Shanty Festival, doing vox pops and interviews dressed as a pirate, which isn’t something you do every day!

**Rupert*:*** *Have your studies at Falmouth University helped with any of this, or does it run alongside being a student?*

**Chloé:** Studying Journalism and Creative Writing at Falmouth has helped me to gain a better understanding of the equipment through utilising spaces like the Sound House and exploring the different roles available in a radio career. I’m a part of Surf Radio, Falmouth and Penryn's award-winning student radio station, which is great to be involved with.

**Rupert*:*** *And finally, any advice for students who aspire to working on or writing for the radio?*

**Chloé**: My advice would be to just give it a go! Getting stuck in is the best way to learn. Through meeting new people and making new connections you can get so much out of volunteering for community radio. Connection is at the heart of radio. I’m thankful it has connected me with many fantastic people in the local community and beyond.

**Rupert***: Thanks for your time Chloé. And good luck with the show.*

**Chloé:** Many thanks, Rupert!

**Catch The Wildflower Hour on air Thursdays from 3-4 PM**

**The Wildflower Hour Links**

Source FM:<https://www.thesourcefm.co.uk/show/the-wildflower-hour>

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