



**Carolyn Shepherd**  
**Artist Statement**  
**Buckfast Abbey**  
**April 2012**

*'Survival' A Space for Contemplation on the True Nature of Impermanence*  
*(circular installation of charred wood, 10ft diameter, 6ft height)*

**Buckfast Abbey, Dartmoor, Devon - April 2012**

Set on the Southgate Lawn of Buckfast Abbey surrounded by the Monastery, Medieval Hall, Abbey Church and Southgate retreat.

This atmospheric piece invites viewers to contemplate the cycle of destruction, death, rebirth and growth into new life. It is inspired by the opportunity for spiritual growth following periods of trauma.

It forms a dramatic circular 'henge' of charred wood, 10 feet across and 6 feet high made from salvaged timber that has been burnt as individual pieces in a fire pit in a meditative, ritualistic cleansing process to produce a charred surface layer. The pieces are fixed together to become an evocative sculptural circle with pointed spires, striking shapes and well defined negative spaces. By the elemental power of fire, the wood has been transformed and preserved into a beautiful textured surface as it splits and burns in the extreme heat. Exposing the wood to fire preserves it from further decay. Although carbon is formed from the process of destruction, it is the basis of the formation of new life.

Buckfast Abbey is home to a community of Benedictine monks and is a working Abbey open to the public with daily services of worship.

The Abbey and gardens attract 500,000 visitors a year.

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