

Ben Whitaker

My name is Ben Whitaker and I am a Duty Manager at John Hansard Gallery. I am also an artist and musician and I've been writing songs since I was a teenager. I was in bands in my 20s and nowadays mostly I write and record solo. During Lockdown I wrote this song called *The South Downs*. It's not really anything to do with local hills, more to do with a characteristic 'voice' to places: whether it's Manchester, Bethnal Green, The Bronx or Solent City. Something which soaks in from the chalk and flints into the rivers and out into the sea. Also, I meant Downs in terms of feeling low or a blues state of mind. There's a lot of death in there: from suicide and drowning to the crushed bones in the soil, but also being resigned to the inevitable. Meanwhile sonically it's quite a cheerful and upbeat ditty.

[Listen to *The South Downs* here!](#)



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