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INTRODUCTION

In March 2014 Edinburgh saw the beginning of something special.

An entire row of 24 vaults right in the city centre that had been locked up for decades were thrown open, and the whole site was turned into a completely unique urban festival of live music, art, film, spoken word and performing arts.

Over 7500 people attended the festival over 9 days, exploring the unique underground spaces, which had been transformed by the work of over 200 artists and volunteers, and featured a programme of over 50 bands and live acts from across Scotland and beyond.

This spectacular event was produced with no arts funding or backing, and was conceived and delivered entirely by a team of volunteers. It was set up to inject Edinburgh and Scotland's creative scene with something new, fresh and dynamic.

This document sets out the story of how the Hidden Door festival came about, and what it achieved.





WHAT IS HIDDEN DOOR?

Hidden Door is more than just an exhibition, a set of performances, or even a festival: its ultimate aim is to create new exciting ways of bringing the creative arts and a wider audience together.

It has been set up with an emphasis on creating unforgettable immersive experiences, through staging one-off events in unusual spaces, transforming those spaces imaginatively into realms that invite the public to explore and discover a wide range of creative projects, from visual arts installations, to films and live music or theatre performances.

Hidden Door sets out to grow a committed, engaged and supportive audience for the arts in Scotland, and create events that enable creative producers to connect with that audience whilst at the same time providing opportunities to embark on ambitious projects that will develop contributors' work and practice.

In short then, it is about opening up new territory for creative culture in Scotland: by creating opportunities outside of, and alternative to, the standard model of gigs, shows and exhibitions, and by providing a way of connecting new and emerging audiences with new creative work that is independent of the well-worn ways of engaging with or consuming the arts. It is also, at the same time, quite literally opening up new territory for the arts, by opening up spaces that have fallen into disuse, showing what can be done with dormant space in our cities when artists are empowered.

What is Hidden Door: Rory Sutherland. Photo: Chris Scott.

DECAGRAM. Photo: Stevie Powers

Oi Musica, mass band workshop in Hidden Bar. Photo: Chris Scott.



THE PROJECT BEGINS: SEARCHING FOR A NEW SPACE

Summary

Edinburgh is a city renowned internationally for its cultural legacy and festivals. Outside of established arts institutions and set dates in the creative calendar, however, homegrown talent can sometimes struggle to find a platform.

Hidden Door was set up to create a different way of doing things. We wanted to find a new kind of venue in the heart of Edinburgh that would capture peoples' imaginations and make them want to spend time there exploring the content. We decided that a disused building, comprising of different rooms and spaces to explore would be just the thing to ignite a sense of adventure and excitement in Edinburgh's arts scene.

We looked for over a year before we were told about a strip of 24 disused vaults across from Waverley Station that were standing empty. We had found our site.

Challenges

Edinburgh is peppered with disused buildings, but the challenge was to find one that was structurally sound and safe enough to use, big enough to be able to house all the different aspects of Hidden Door, including live music, and could be guaranteed to still be available in 12 months' time.

Solutions

We got the attention of a few people at the City of Edinburgh Council by pitching the idea of an independent festival in Edinburgh for Edinburgh, (not during August) and bringing back to life parts of Edinburgh that had fallen into disuse and disrepair. They then shared information about hidden spaces, and eventually one came to our attention that might just work.

Conclusion

Through persistence, finding the right people to talk to and thinking laterally about how we could use unusual spaces, we finally found and recognised the perfect site.

IF HIDDEN DOOR WAS EVER TO HAPPEN, A SITE WAS NEEDED THAT WAS UNLIKE ANY OTHER ARTS VENUE IN EDINBURGH — ONE THAT WOULD CAPTURE THE IMAGINATION OF THE PUBLIC AND CONTRIBUTORS ALIKE.



THE VENUE

HAVING IDENTIFIED THE STRIP OF 24 DISUSED VAULTS AS THE PERFECT VENUE FOR THE HIDDEN DOOR FESTIVAL, THE NEXT STEP WAS TO SECURE PERMISSION TO USE THEM.

Summary

The iconic strip of 24 arch-shaped lock ups on Market Street had been out of use for decades, and although owned by the Council, were earmarked for imminent development by an international property developer. The Council advised us to seek permission from the developer. Once this was secured then we could get all our contributors on board and start putting the ambitious event together. But it wasn't that simple.

Challenges

Establishing permission to use the vaults turned out to be the biggest challenge of all. Although the Council owned the property we were informed the site would be sold to the property developer by the time we wanted to do our event, and that we should apply for permission from them. The developers were interested at first but then became hard to pin down. It gradually became apparent that the developers wouldn't be taking ownership of the venue by the expected time and we would have to go back through the Council to gain permission.

Meanwhile the clock was ticking...

Solutions

We decided to take the plunge and organise the event before overall permission was granted. We needed to present the Council with a full event proposal. This meant getting all the artists and contributors on board. Everything we could work out we did, including establishing the content, curating it, and designing the event. All this detail was set out in a booklet and presented to the Council about 10 weeks before the festival was scheduled to take place. They granted us permission there and then.

Conclusion

Through open communication with the Council, persistence and flexibility we showed that our vision for the site could work.



A photograph of a blue wooden door set within a stone archway. The door is made of vertical planks and has two horizontal metal hinges. The stone arch is made of rough, weathered stones in various shades of brown, grey, and red. The text 'WHAT MIGHT BE...' is written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters across the left side of the door. The word 'BE' is followed by three white dots.

WHAT
MIGHT
BE...

OUR RESOURCES



HAVING FOUND OUR VENUE, WE NOW NEEDED MONEY, MATERIALS, MANPOWER AND BUY-IN FROM THE PUBLIC, THE ARTISTIC COMMUNITY AND LOCAL BUSINESSES.

Summary

It was important that our vision for the festival was realised to its full potential. Part of the identity of the festival was it paid for itself and gave something back to the city. Our financial model was based on generating our own income and sponsorship from businesses that believed in the importance of the event, rather than relying on government funds.

Challenges

This event was planned with no start-up funds to speak of. All involved in its planning were unpaid volunteers. To create something amazing in the 24 vaults we would need not only building materials and a huge amount of technical equipment, we would also have to generate all the power. We also needed manpower to prepare the site, volunteers to steward the event, stock to sell in the bars and money to pay the bands, production staff and security. On top of this we needed to pay for licences for the festival and rent to the council. Our projected outlay was huge, yet we had no capital to pay for anything in advance.

Solutions

We needed to generate resources and income; a core planning team was put together with members responsible for the various different and important aspects of organisation and resourcing:

- **Volunteers:** the core team recruited volunteers to help set up and steward the festival. During set up, over the 9 days the festival was open to the public and during take down, hundreds of people gave their time for free to make the event possible.
- **Sponsors:** sponsors ranging from smaller local businesses to larger international companies, all sympathetic to the Hidden Door ethos, were approached and asked to back the festival in a variety of ways; with stock, funding acts to perform and by providing equipment and technical support.
- **Contributors:** Contributors bought in to the idea, giving their time for free. They helped build it and put it all together, as well as delivering the content, creating the amazing art, theatre and music that made the event such a unique occasion.

Conclusion

Through generating excitement and enthusiasm in what we were trying to do, hundreds of people supported and gave a huge amount to the project, enabling everyone to work together to create a nine day festival from nothing. We could not have done it without them!



CONTRIBUTORS

FINDING A WIDE RANGE OF CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS WHO WOULD BUY IN TO THE PROJECT WAS THE NEXT STEP. WE NEEDED AMBITIOUS PEOPLE WHO WOULD DELIVER QUALITY AND IMAGINATIVE PROJECTS— BUT AT THE SAME TIME WERE WILLING TO MUCK IN AND GET WITH THE D.I.Y ETHOS.

Summary

In September 2013 a “Call For Contributors” was launched throughout Scotland. Over 300 projects were submitted and a selection panel consisting of two Hidden Door directors, David Martin and Matt Storstein, with three invited artists, Jessica Ramm, Bronwen Sleight and Rachel Maclean went through them all. After an intensive selection process around 100 projects were chosen.

Hidden Door then threw a party, displaying the selected projects and inviting all the contributors to come and meet each other and begin to get a feel for the project they were now a part of.

Challenges

The success of the project depended on contributors being excited by the project, so it was important they were ‘part of something’, rather than just contributing to someone else’s exhibition or event. They had to feel not only excited by the vision, but understand what was required of them to help make it happen, and the organisers had to be very open about how the finances worked.

Solutions

A booklet was purpose designed to accompany the Call for Contributors which contained all the information about what Hidden Door was, how it operated, and how the financial aspects of the event would be managed. The proposal form also included sections about volunteering to help set up the festival, which helped potential contributors get an idea of what would be required, before they had even submitted their proposals. The contributor parties were essential in creating a buzz for contributors and generating a sense that they were a part of something different and dynamic.

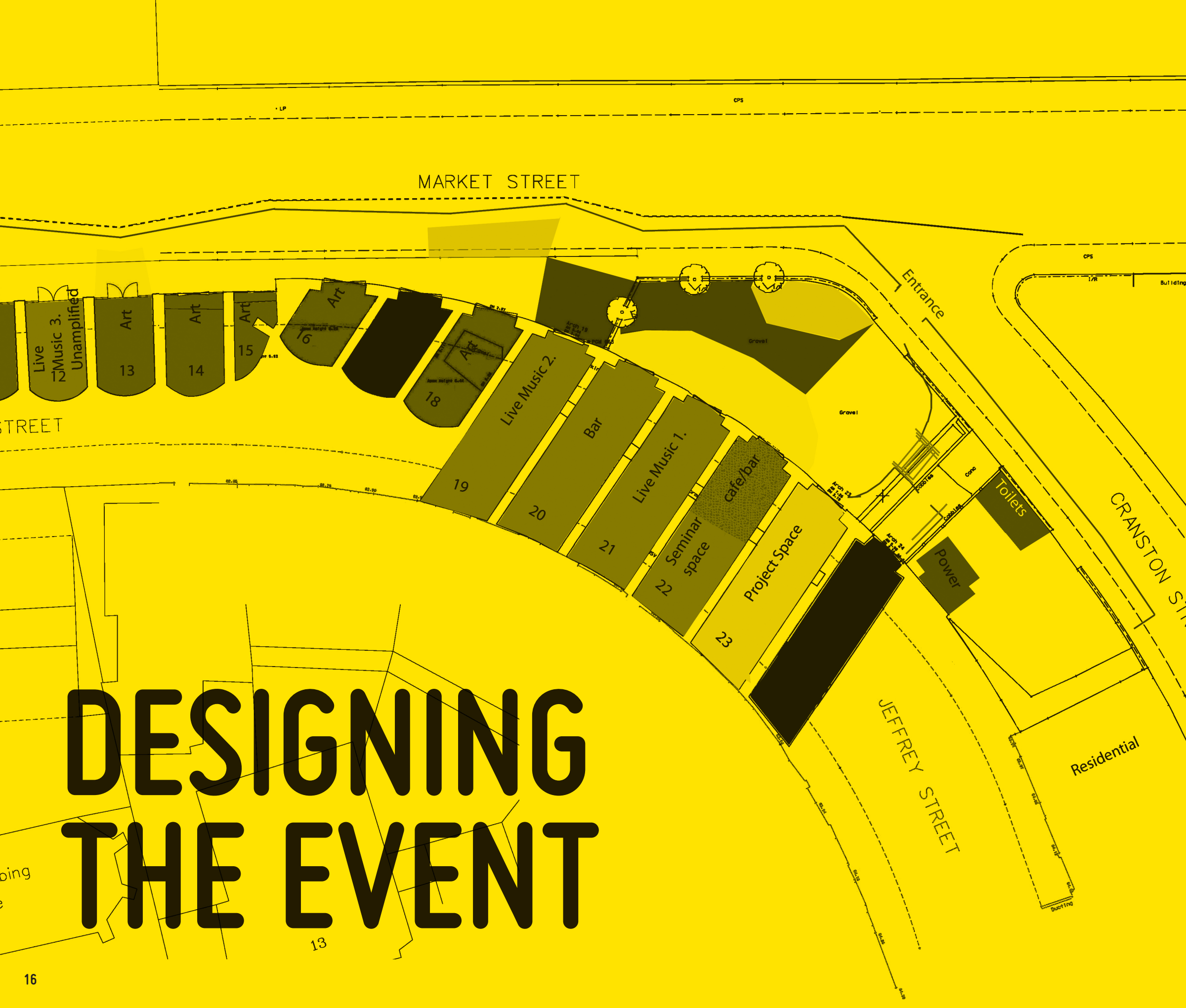
Conclusion

With a clear Call, a rigorous and transparent selection process, parties and site visits for participants, we had a group of over 150 contributors, willing Hidden Door to be a success.





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WITH AN INCREDIBLE VENUE, A DEDICATED TEAM, AND A LARGE NUMBER OF COMMITTED CONTRIBUTORS, THE EVENT NEEDED TO BE CURATED CAREFULLY AROUND THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF THE VENUE, ARTISTIC CONTENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY.

Summary

As mentioned in The Venue section, we had to make the difficult decision to go ahead with the organisation of the event before final permission to use the venue was granted. Nevertheless, all communications were kept open with the Council. Members of the core team attended regular EPOG (Event Planning Organisation Group) meetings and consultations with the Council in order to ensure all eventualities had been carefully considered.

Decisions on how to maximise the potential of the space were considered in relation to; the selection of creative contributions, audience congestion, sound bleed within the vaults and the surrounding neighbourhood, public safety and fire safety.

Challenges

The event needed to be licensed, and the derelict set of spaces needed to be transformed into a functioning public venue which would pass health and fire safety inspections to allow the event to proceed. This affected our event design. We had over 100 projects to fit into the venue but we needed to maximise audience space to ensure we had enough ticket sales, whilst keeping it safe. At the same time we wanted to give the artistic projects the space they warranted.

The interlinking vaults meant that performance venues had to be placed and curated strategically to avoid sound spill and to ensure local residents would not be disturbed.

It turned out that 24 vaults wasn't that many after all...

Solutions

Entering into detailed conversations with the Council, Health & Safety advisors and Fire Safety officers meant that we could confidently present a final design of the festival before the installation period. We took time to advise all local residents and invite them to the festival. With two weeks to set up the site, we were flexible but careful at all times in discussions with artists, council members, residents and contractors.

Conclusion

Careful planning and consideration meant we maximised the space's potential, curated an incredible festival and didn't get any noise complaints!

MARKETING

A close-up, high-angle shot of a desk covered with various marketing materials. In the foreground, there are several business cards and brochures. One card features a large, stylized letter 'G'. Another card shows a person's face. A stack of brochures is visible in the center, with one showing a grid of images. To the right, there is a large sheet of paper with a grid of small, rounded rectangular shapes, possibly a template for a brochure or a set of labels. The background is slightly blurred, showing more papers and a desk lamp.

AS THE EVENT STARTED COMING TOGETHER, WE HAD TO START A HUGE PUSH TO GET THE PUBLIC TO NOTICE THE EVENT, GET INTERESTED IN IT, AND ULTIMATELY TO PART WITH THEIR CASH AND BUY TICKETS FOR IT.

Summary

With the event coming together, we had to begin a huge push to get people to notice it, become interested in it, and ultimately to convince the public it was worth paying for.

With so many people involved in the event, it was hoped that news of Hidden Door would spread far and wide word of mouth and online. We produced a set of bold black and white teaser posters (designed by Unstable Creations designer Martin Sweeny) that would arouse curiosity and get people talking. This was followed up with a thousand full colour posters and 20,000 large flyers revealing all the event info, featuring artwork by recent printmaking graduate Natasha Russell. We also asked contributing artists to design different black and white flyers for each of the 9 different nights. A different identity was then developed for each of the nights, and they were marketed by different teams of contributors.

All of this was promoted through social media, with each day seeing a new poster, flyer or information about the festival being released on Facebook, Twitter, and on our constantly updated website. This way, we built up the sense that something really dynamic and exciting was happening – you couldn't ignore it for long!

Challenges

- With virtually no capital, we had no funds for 'big' advertising, and had to rely on cheap or free methods of getting the word out. We couldn't impress anyone with our advertising, so we had to intrigue them instead.
- Hidden Door was to be a unique kind of event, in an unusual place that nobody knew of as a venue.
- We also had very little time to market the event. We couldn't enter into any contracts until permission, so we couldn't book bands, and so we couldn't market the event until permission to use the site was secured, so we could not book any bands and therefore could not promote the event.
- Because we were selling tickets for each individual night, the festival was effectively competing with itself for people to buy tickets for one night over another!

Solutions

- Postponing the event by 3 weeks bought us much more time to promote the festival.
- Using social media to constantly build anticipation and interest in the content, and the concept of the event.
- Striking a balance between teasing and intriguing people, as well as convincing them of the quality and scope of the event.
- Using people-power, our greatest resource, to keep growing word-of-mouth networks.

Conclusion

With very few resources, but with a commitment to social media networks, some very good media coverage and some well-designed posters and flyers we managed to sell out 4 of the nights, sell 3254 tickets in total, earn 6800 Facebook 'Likes', and attract over 7500 visitors to the festival during its 9 day run.



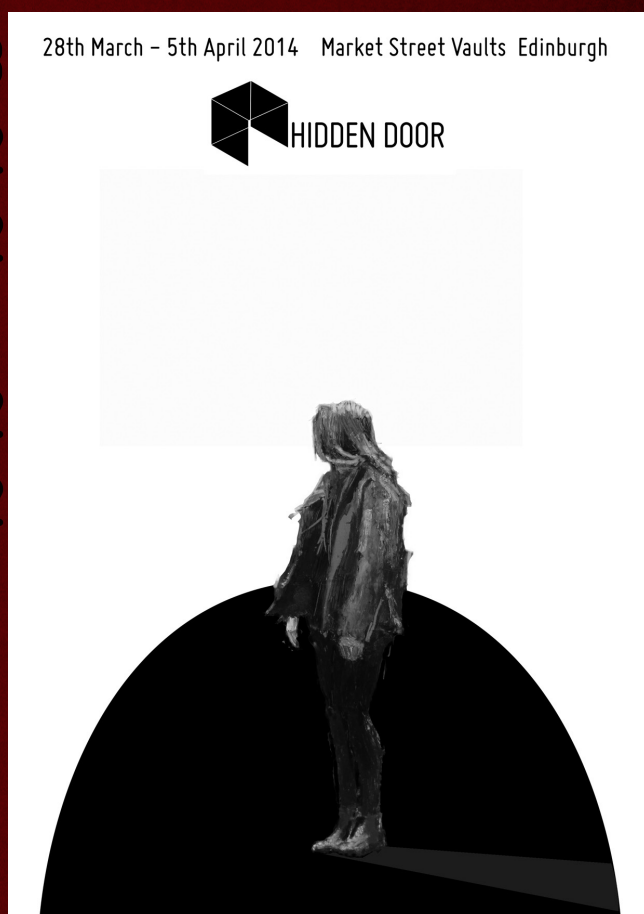
Poster design by Natasha Russell



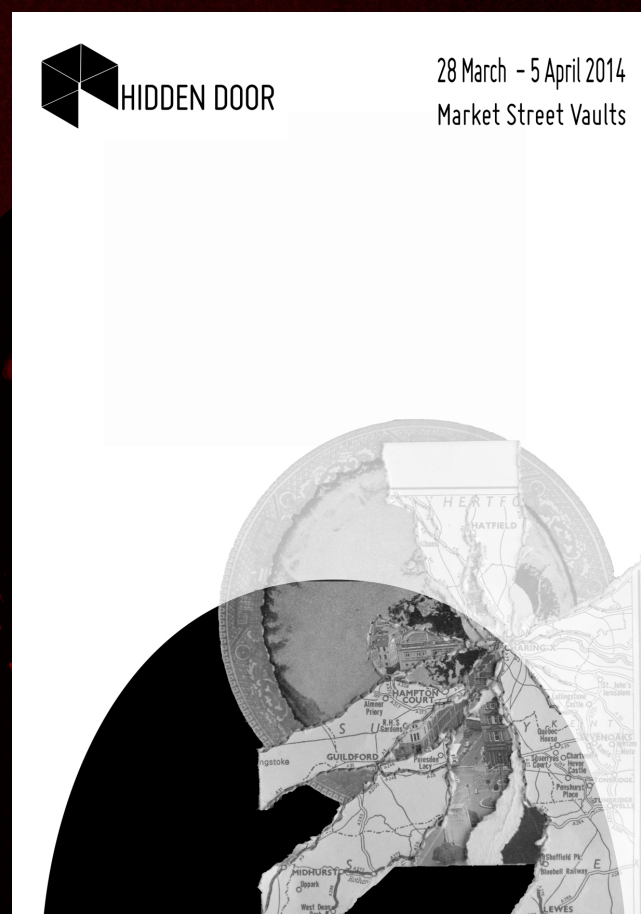
Artist flyer by Ginny Elston



Artist flyer by Matt Storstein



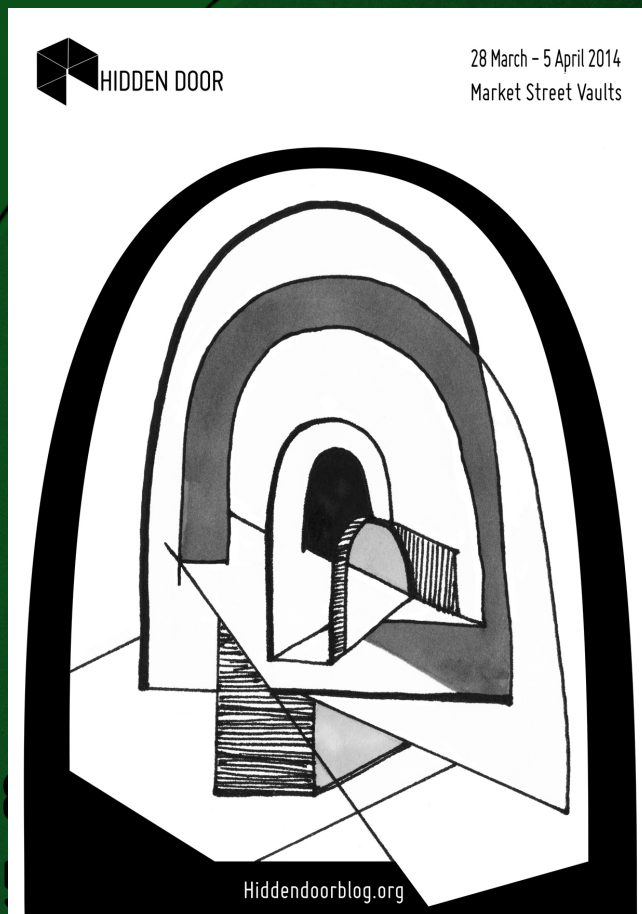
Artist flyer by David Martin



Artist flyer by Miriam Mallalieu



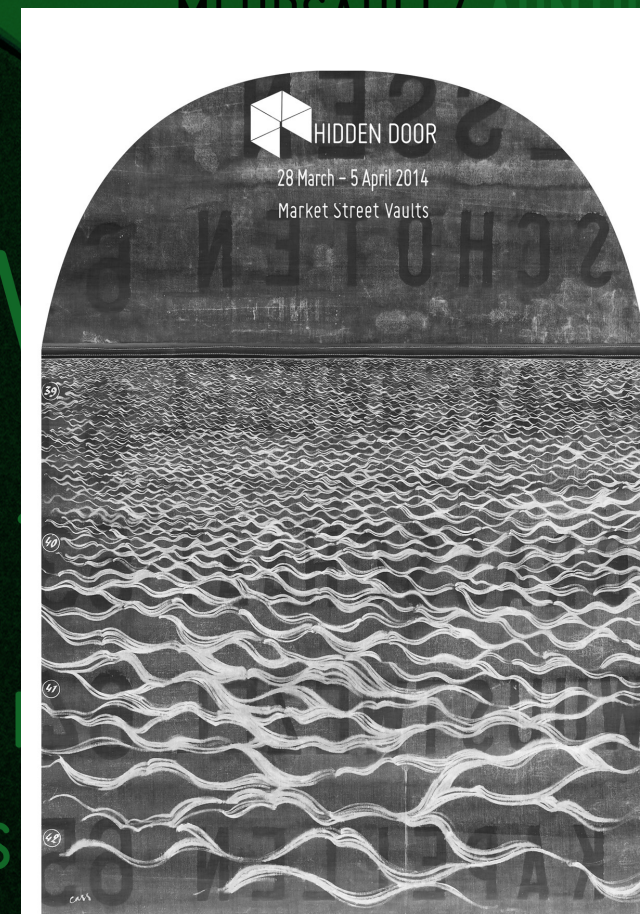
Artist flyer by Ursula Cheng



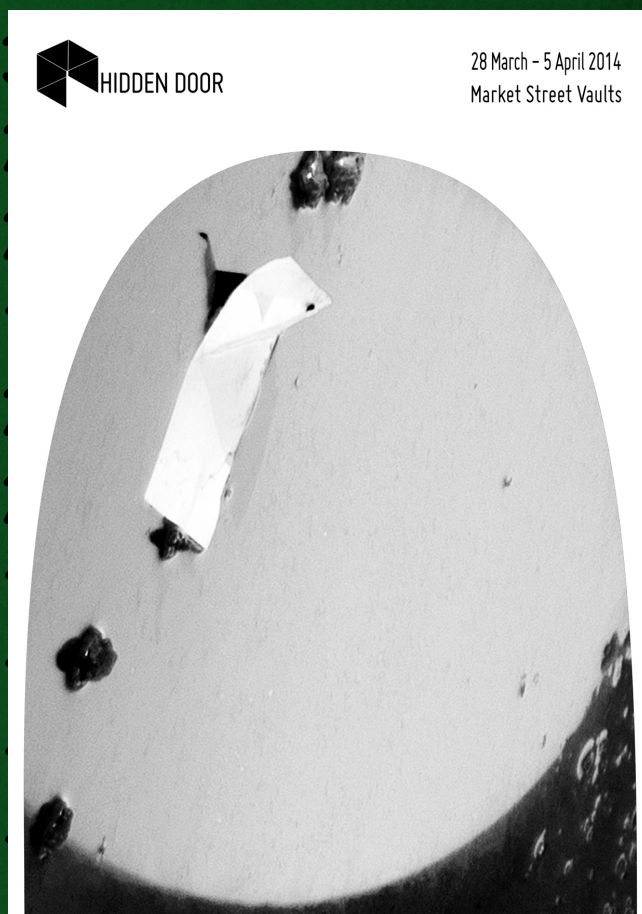
Artist flyer by Morvin Odling



Artist flyer by Bronwen Sleight



Artist flyer by David Cass



Artist flyer by Fiona McGurk

HIDDEN DOOR
28 March - 5 April 2014

24 Rediscovered vaults on Market Street Edinburgh unlocked for 9 days only to showcase some of Scotland's best breakthrough talent

9 Nights - 9 Unique Parties
Choose Your Night to Party in the Vaults!
buy a different ticket for each party (no overall tickets available)

12 noon - 6pm FREE ENTRY to Exhibition Spaces, Project Space, Bars, Cinema
6pm - 1am Ticket Entry Only
Tickets £10 or £15
(Note live music finishes at 11pm)

Date	Event	Ticket Price
FRI 28 MARCH	The Hidden Door Opening Party: Music Vault 1: Sacred Geometry featuring Digital Jones, We Are Tall Order, Fridge Master, Midi Paul. Music Vault 2: Astrajazz presents NO SPACE NO TIME featuring United Vibrations, Atom Tree, ThunkFish. Interludes by Adventures in Light. Project Space Programme. Cinema: Alchemy Festival.	£15
SAT 29 MARCH	Broken Records presents Plastic Animals, Adam Stafford, The Birthday Suit, Rory Sutherland, Broken Records. Project Space Programme. Cinema: ECA Animation Showcase.	£15
SUN 30 MARCH	Vic Galloway presents Songs in the key of Life featuring Vic Galloway & very special guests.	£15
WED 2 APRIL	Tinderbox Project presents Orkestra del Sol, Tinderbox Orchestra, Edinburgh Film Music Orchestra, The Orchestra Night, featuring Orkestra del Sol, Tinderbox Orchestra, Edinburgh Film Music Orchestra, The Orchestra Night.	£10
TUE 1 APRIL	Hidden Door presents Paraletic Universe, Fiona Soe Paing, Matt Norris & The Moon, Holm, Viridien Quartet, Trio Verso. Word vs Music. A night of Spoken Word, Poetry, Music & Art. Collaborations featuring Film Activism Night.	£10
MON 31 MARCH	Lost Map Records presents Pictish Trail DJ set, Kid Canaveral, Randolph's Leap, Tuff Love. Project Space Programme. Cinema: Programme TBA.	£10
THURS 3 APRIL	DECAGRAM presents Numbers Are Futile, Hiva Da, A ten band, Trudatound, Lipsync for a Lullaby, Tongues, ATMOIS. Music and visuals collaboration with no gaps. Project Space Programme. Cinema: Play Poland Festival.	£10
FRI 4 APRIL	Mish Mish presents a genre defying feast of Scottish musical talent. Meursault, Miaoux Miaoux, LAW, Prehistoric Friends. Project Space Programme. Cinema: Edinburgh Short Film Festival.	£15
SAT 5 APRIL	Hotassent in conspiracy with No Globe and Zzap present: Auntie Flo (live), Galaxians (live), Whilst (live), more TBA. Project Space Programme. Cinema: FilmPoe.	£15

Free Entry with Ticket to HDAfterParty 2: Very Special Guest TBA (11am @ The Caves)

Sponsored by: STEWART, Black Light, EDINBURGH.

See website for full programme. Buy Tickets from: WWW.HIDDENDOORBLOG.ORG

Flyer artwork by Natasha Russell, Design by Unstable Creations

Flyer back by Martin Sweeny

HIDDEN DOOR FESTIVAL
28 March - 5 April 2014
Market Street Vaults Edinburgh

- 80 Visual Artists
- 50 Live Music Acts
- 40 Film Makers
- 30 Poets
- 30 Performers
- 20 Animators
- 9 Unique Parties
- 2 Live Music Vaults
- 2 Bars
- 1 Theatre
- 1 Cinema
- 1 Secret Music Venue
- 1 Site
- 1 Chance...

A one-off opportunity to occupy the forgotten vaults of Market Street.

Hidden Door
a not-for-profit independent festival for Edinburgh

Flyer front by Natasha Russell

PREPARING THE VENUE

A photograph of a person in a red jumpsuit and a winter hat with a pom-pom, kneeling on the floor of a large, arched underground vault. The person is working on a project, possibly a sculpture or installation, using various tools and materials. A white plastic chair and a ladder are also visible in the scene. The vault's interior is covered in a grid of rectangular panels, each featuring a 3D architectural drawing of a vaulted ceiling. The overall atmosphere is one of creative preparation in a historic, underground setting.

TO CREATE A VIABLE VENUE FOR HIDDEN DOOR 2014 THE 24 DERELICT VAULTS
NEEDED TO BE TURNED INTO SOMETHING SAFE AND SPECTACULAR!

Summary

The vaults had been closed to the public for over 20 years and had latterly been used as a store by the Council. Some of them were full to the brim with rubbish; vault 1, for example, was packed with the frames and rusty wheels of abandoned bicycles. By spreading the word through social media Hidden Door gathered a crack team of over 60 volunteers and contributors to clear out the vaults and tidy up the patch of rough ground outside, generously referred to as the Courtyard. Over the first 2 days we removed and recycled upwards of 100 cubic metres of rubbish and waste. We reused as much of it as possible. Once they had been emptied, the vaults had to be swept clean of decades of sandstone dust and washed out.

Next we brought in teams of technicians to build high spec stages for music and theatre, lighting rigs, PA systems and rig the vaults for electricity. We also built a huge fence, piped water in from a fire hydrant, and constructed the all-important bars. The music vault doors, some of the largest on site, were insulated and made sound proof. Every single vault underwent the physical transformation from cavernous wreck to a showcase for the arts, with a huge team of volunteers working round the clock to make it happen.

Challenges

There were so many challenges! But some of the major ones were that in order to make the site work as a venue we had to take out a Temporary Traffic and Road Order to occupy half of Market Street and close off Cranston Street. This meant that the huge site fence, over 100m long could only be erected on the day we opened – we couldn't afford to have it for any longer! Also the venue had no working power; generators were needed to power all electrical equipment. We had no light by which to work without them at night.

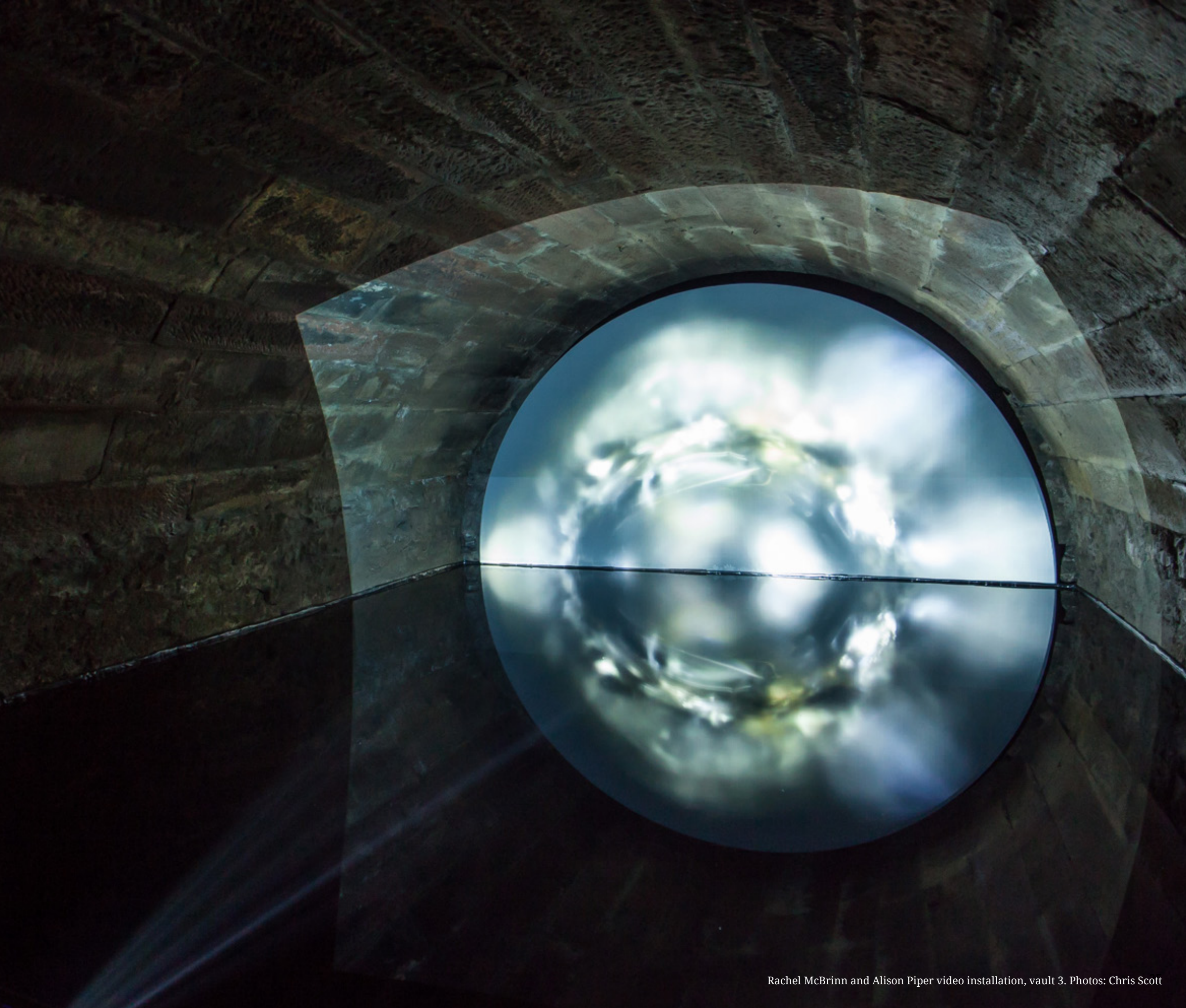
Solution

Volunteers were crucial to this process. But also by enlisting the help of skilled tradesmen and by making the most of the skills the artists and handy volunteers had we managed to build a technically impressive and visually stunning festival site, utilising both the interior and exterior of the 24 Market Street vaults.

Conclusion

We transformed a derelict street with 24 damp and dirty old lock ups and a large outdoor area into a high spec, fully functioning and exciting venue for art and performance that looked astounding – in just 12 days.





THE PROGRAMME & CONTENT



WE AIMED TO PRODUCE A PROGRAMME THAT WOULD MAKE THE VAULTS SEEM LIKE THEY WERE FIT TO BURSTING WITH A DIVERSE RANGE OF LIVE MUSIC, PERFORMANCES AND SCHEDULED EVENTS SO THAT WE COULD SELL ENOUGH TICKETS TO MAKE THE EVENT VIABLE.



Summary

The festival was to run for 9 nights across 2 weekends. Each night we had to programme 2 live music venues, 1 performing arts space, a smaller “intimate” music space and a cinema. There were also 5 seminar discussions and several perambulatory events that took place in the outside space. The programme featured over 50 bands and live music acts, 20 poets, 5 dance/performing arts companies, plus many other visual artists and performers.

Challenges

The biggest challenge in putting the programme together was that we couldn’t book any bands until we had final permission, as we couldn’t enter into any contracts we would be liable for. This meant we had to wait until the end of January before we could finally book acts.

We also had to ensure there was always a choice of things for people to see as not everyone on site would be able to fit in to any one of the spaces.

Solutions

Taking the decision to postpone the event by 3 weeks was a difficult, but ultimately successful one. This allowed us enough time to build an impressive programme, and market the programme, as well as the event concept.

In order to build up a distinct programme for each night, the 9 nights were given to different music promoters to book bands for, allowing them to “curate” their own programmes of live music. This gave each night a distinct identity and helped market the event.

Conclusion

Despite a very short timescale, a diverse and densely-packed programme was delivered that ensured audiences would be attracted to the festival, get value for money and always have a choice of things to see at any one time. This ensured there were plenty of opportunities for them to come across acts they didn’t know, or art forms they were unused to seeing, thus broadening the experience of the arts.



FACTS & FIGURES

Statistics

<i>Day time attendance</i>	Free
<i>Evening tickets sold</i>	3254
<i>Visitors</i>	7500
<i>Weekday evening ticket</i>	£10
<i>Weekend evening ticket</i>	£15
<i>Contributors</i> <i>(including musicians)</i>	250
<i>Volunteers</i>	100

Talked about by...

- The List
- The Skinny
- The Scotsman
- i-on Magazine
- STV News
- BBC Scotland
- Evening News

- Creative Edinburgh City award shortlisted nominee
- Featured in the List's Hot 100
- ***** The Scotsman

- Over 7400 likes on Facebook
- 2300 followers on Twitter



REVIEWS AND COMMENTS

A man and a woman are shown from the chest up, looking upwards with expressions of joy and wonder. They are holding glasses of beer. The background is dark, and a large amount of white confetti is falling around them, creating a festive atmosphere. The woman is wearing a red scarf and a dark jacket, while the man is wearing a dark jacket. The overall mood is celebratory and joyful.

THE SCOTSMAN



It's an event which in every way lives up to its name and its billing.

The organisers have an overview of all the plentiful hidden spaces in the city centre and the clear will and ingenuity to make something as unique as this happen.

Contributors

The best aspect of being involved with Hidden Door was interacting with and getting feedback from the audience.

- Alan Bond, visual artist

Hidden Door was so much fun and it was an event that I was really proud to be part of. All the people involved were wonderful and I learnt masses from working with them. Setting up the event was stressful at times (as always!) but so worth it- even coming back during the week just to attend the event for fun was brilliant. It was somewhere that I actually wanted to be.

Normally, as an artist, you tend to feel pretty isolated, but the Hidden Door team were so inclusive, and there were so many people around willing to help and working together on things that it was fantastic. It was really fun and I met some lovely people.

I really liked the experience of exhibiting at a festival that was so large and varied- with music, theatre, cinema etc. The audience coming and seeing the work was so much larger and broader than usually visiting exhibitions (especially exhibitions by pretty unknown artists). The chance to exhibit work to so many people was pretty overwhelming.

- Miriam Mallaleiu, visual artist

Hidden Door 2014 gave me the opportunity after a few years of progressing my career in landscaping to re invigorate my self in the art world after gradating in sculpture in 2010. The chance to work in such a wide and inspiring environment and meet such a grand spectrum of artists has given me a huge boost to forward my art career and not let it fall behind work. I cant wait for the 2015 festival!

- Donald Watson, sculptor, designer of the Hidden Bar

The best aspect of being involved with Hidden Door was the great vibe and being involved with so many creative people from every walk of life.

- Susie Lieper, visual artist

Great things came out of our initial experience of being involved in Hidden Door - just like you said, it worked like a platform for us later on.

- Julia James Griffiths, dancer and choreographer

The best aspect of being involved with Hidden Door was the exposure to a large audience, being part of such an exciting event and meeting other artists.

- Lynda Wilson, visual artist

The whole project was very inclusive - communication was (is) excellent - and it's a great experience for artists at all career stages. The team as a whole generate great optimism.

The best aspect of being involved with Hidden Door was that I was able to try something different on a much larger scale. Being part of a team made this much easier and a less solitary task. Having other creatives round about was definitely inspiring.

- David Cass, visual artist

Audience

Hidden Door 2014 is without doubt the best event I have been to since I moved to this city last year. I am gradually gaining an idea of the diversity of musical talent on offer and Hidden Door was the first opportunity for me to see many aspects of the Edinburgh scene brought together. The combination of art and music was very interesting to me and my first peak into the visual art community here. I think it's amazing to see people with great ideas put grassroots events together in an organised fashion!

- Leonie Tiedemann, festival visitor

This is a great initiative to make temporary use of unused spaces... thank you for making it happen

- Liz Thomas, festival visitor



ANALYSIS

What Did Hidden Door Aim to Achieve?

Hidden Door set out to achieve an ambitious goal; to create an inspiring event that would bring audiences and arts producers together in a dynamic format that would be different from the normal ways the public and artists are used to when experiencing the arts.

Hidden Door set out to involve a wide range of creative producers with the aim of empowering them, inspiring them, and bringing them before a wider public than they would normally have access to.

Hidden Door set out to do this at such a scale as to not just be thought of as a D.I.Y exhibition, or performance, but to be considered as a festival, to be big enough that it would be noticed, and make a difference in the cultural calendar of Scotland.

Did Hidden Door Succeed?

By taking on such a difficult, but ultimately inspirational site as the disused Market Street vaults, turning them into a once-in-a-lifetime high-tech venue and taking over half an Edinburgh city centre street, Hidden Door certainly caught the attention, and the imagination, of the public.

The exciting venue drew in large numbers of the public. By providing ticketed and free timeslots to the festival, Hidden Door managed to attract over 7500 visitors in 9 days, while raising enough revenue to just about cover its costs. This demonstrates that an innovative model for the arts can generate large and diverse audiences, provide great exposure for artists and performers and generate revenue. The scale of the event also increased word of mouth interest as well as additional press and media coverage.

Additionally, Hidden Door was a positive experience for its contributors and volunteers, creating a platform for artists from a wide variety of backgrounds and locations to work together, get to know each other, and form networks. They come out of the experience with a sense of ownership and pride in the final event.

So many people visited the festival and so many took part in some way. Hidden Door continues to be joined by new volunteers and many artists, contributors and volunteers are supporting Hidden Door into the next venture proving an unorthodox approach to arts events production can have a viable future.



Henry Martin, Paul Martin, Ben Martin, vault 7. Photo: Chris Scott



THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE



Towards a new economy

Hidden Door has shown that it is possible to stage successful events that can change the way audiences consume and engage with culture, that are sustainable and self-financing, with virtually no resources except the sheer will, determination and generosity of the artists and contributors themselves.

However, if Hidden Door is going to fulfil its potential it needs to find ways to give more to the artists.

Artists are forever giving their time and skills for free, and while employing artists is not the answer, Hidden Door may be able to generate an alternative economy for artists. By developing an interface through the events where the public then support artists, through sponsorship, purchasing work and publicising their work actively through social media, the relationship between artist and audience can be deepened.

Budgets for artists

Going forward Hidden Door is looking at funding streams and opportunities to enable the project to continue to grow whilst providing better support for its contributors.

Education

Contributors meet together to create the event, they learn together, and invariably develop their practice. There may be an opportunity to turn some aspects of contributing to Hidden Door into a formalised course of education that artists and creative practitioners would be interested in taking. Hidden Door in different cities – A Hidden Door in Newcastle, Manchester, Inverness- it's possible!

Publications

Hidden Door may produce a self-published magazine, or fanzine to go with its next event.

We've only just begun

Hidden Door is about empowering creative producers and connecting with audiences. By utilising the dynamic, ever-changing nature of the city it has created something new, and something people are excited about. And it has only really just begun.

CREDITS



The Team

David Martin, Jack Nissan, Matt Storstein, Jill Boualaxai, Emily Tracey, Hazel Johnson, Pete Lang, Lorna Simpson, Jas Hinks, Jonny Brown, Laura Hickey, Vivien Malzfelt, Steph Daughtry, Claire Hills, Jim Coltham, Alicja Pawluczuk, Natasha Russell, Ginny Elston, Katherine Dilworth, Jane Raven

Volunteers

Brendan McCarthy, Cristina Spiteri, Brian John Bethune, Sofia Lazaridi, Richard Anstice, Raka, Clare Flatley, Rosanna Hall, R. Eric Swanepoel, Julien Pearly, Almu Cachaza, Alexander Aulds Smith, Ellie Swinger, Fiona Soe Paing, Martin Cathcart Froden, Jakub Sokolowski, Veronica Casey, Jan Waterfield, Susanna Murphy, Rollo Strickland, Emily Dunlop, Joanna Pidcock, David Mola, Jennie Creitzman, Anjila Wilson, Rob Raithby, Robert Duncan, Sissi Wang, Dominica Harrison, Chantelle, Christine Baird, Callum Crofts, Yasmine Piening, Sara Sutherland, Zahra Noble, Andrew Gardiner, Giulia Martini, Mathias Benninghoven, Georgia Thornton, Jack Handscombe, Eric Lai, Amy Weng, Becky Morrison, Amelia, Katie Fegan, Chloe Shand, Sean Jardine, Leva Gudaityte, Rapolas Daugintis, Chiara Aquino

Performers

Kate Young, Creative Electric, Vision Mechanics, Oceanallover, Vic Galloway, Tara Hodgeson, Paddy Hare, Chandler & Watson, Viridian Quartet, Trio Verso, Oi Musica, BOAR Collective, Misa Brzezicki, JJ-Griffiths Dance Company, Jon Bishop, Poets: Andrew Philip, Janie McKie, Rob A. McKenzie, G.S Smith, Steven Fowler, Holly Pester, Ali Robertson, Martin Belk, Northern Upland Sheep Strategy, Anthony Autumn, Daisy Lafarge, Anne-Laure Coxam, Nick-e Melville, Ross Sutherland, Tom Jenks, Ryan Van Winkle, Sarah Kelly, Samantha Walton, Jow Lindsay, Lila Matsumoto, Greg Thomas, Iain Morrison, Colin Herd, MacGillivray, JL Williams

Visual Artists

Jess Ramm, Bronwen Sleigh, Will Corner, Jenny Salmean, Robin Richardson, Harry Van De Bospoort, Miriam Mallelieu, Rachel McBrinn, Alison Piper, Susie Leiper, Davie Forsythe, Liza Green, Lynda Wilson, Felicity Bristow, Susie Wilson, Henry Martin, Paul Martin, Ben Martin, Holly Prentice, Khalid Alsayed, Fiona McGurk, Alan Bond, Tim Vincent-Smith, Dave Murray-Rust, Rocio Van Jungenfeld, Stephanie Jane Burt, Lyndsey Wardrop, Harriette Yarrington, Ruairidh Allen, Stephen Kavanagh, Liam J. McLaughlan, Deirdre Macleod, Paula Petroll, Donald Watson, Adventures in Light, Adam Cavill, Ben Davies Jenkins, Jenny Drewitt, Fintan Ryan, Natasha Todd, Jenny Nicholson, Zone Architects with Fiona Baxter, Liam Bonnar, David Clark, Ross McArthur, Pavlina Stergiadiou, Hannah Thomas, Heidi Wakefield, Too Much Fun Club, Totes Colo Collective featuring Roween Suess, Richard Taylor, Catriona Whiteford, Annie Lord, Helen Stephenson, David Cass, Blameless, Dougie Strang, Morvern Orr, Caroline Inckle, Emma Mcleod, Karen Gabbitas, Olof Olson, Captain Lightfoot, Fabrizio Potestad, Tracy Foster, Ursula Cheng, Jenny Smith, Emma Pratt, Camille Biddell

Bands

SINK, Digital Jones, Midi Paul, Fridge Master, We Are Tall Order, Astrojazz, Thunkfish, NoGlobe, Atom Tree, United Vibrations, Matthew Collings, Broken Records, The Birthday Suit, Plastic Animals, Rory Sutherland, Adam Stafford, Steve Mason, James Yorkston, Melissa Bradd, Jellyman's Daughter, Pictish Trail, Tuff Love, Kid Canaveral, Randolph's Leap, Matt Norris and the Moon, Holm, Mickey 9s, Paraletic Universe, Edinburgh Youth Gaitherin', Edinburgh Film Music Orchestra, Orkestra Del Sol, Tinderbox Orchestra, Mike Kearney Ka Tet, Small Feet Little Toes, ATMCIS, Tokamak, Numbers Are Futile, Urban Farmhand, Tongues, Lipsync for a Lullaby, Hiva Oa, Grevious, Prehistoric Friends, Conquering Animal Sound, Meursault, LAW, Miaoux Miaoux, Yong Yong, Whilst, Galaxians, Auntie Flo, Notsol Silent, M.O.T.O, Jaisu, Jon Phonics, Jon 1st, Miracle Glass Company, Toby Mottershead, Richie Cumming, Jack of Diamonds, Miracle Glass Company

Film Makers

Kim Miller, Alastair Cook, Richard Ashrowan, Paul Bruce, Paul Maguire, Jared Taylor, Mateusz Jarza, Movern Cunningham

Tech

Russell Cobden, Calder Sibbald, Barclay Dakers, Chris Hall, Phil McBride, Mark Neal, Bryan Jones, Joe Seal, Kristian King, Dave Kaye, Rosalie Good

Food

Wild Rover Food

Bar

Billy Ross, Peter Ross, Old Chain Pier and the staff of the White Horse Pub

Sponsors

Estrella, McEwans, Thistly Cross Cider, Stewart Brewing, Lindsay Scaffolding, Blacklight, MCL Create, Sonic Lodge, Red Bull

Edinburgh City Council

Robbie O'Donnell, Sarah Cooke, Bryan O'Malley, Paul Kerr

Talks

Katie Rowland, Nikola Miller, Richie Cummings, Neil Cooper, Susanna Beaumont, 2141 Artists Collective, Richard Heggie, Suzanne Ewing, Malcolm Fraser, David Given, Larissa Moran, Scott Fletcher

Other Helpers

Martin Sweeney, Ross Witness, Pete Johnson, Davie Johnstone, Chris Humphries, Katie Macphail, Rachel Maclean, Anna-Lena Meyer, Benjamin McLaughlin, Alix Rothnie

Box Office

Cat and all at Brown Paper Tickets

Design

Adam Cavill Limited

Security

Everyone at Specialized Security

Design Editor

Andrea Martinez



Tara Hodgeson, Bonegarden



Dave Murray Rust and Rocio von Jungenfeld, light sensitive robot installation, vault 13. Photo: Chris Scott

