

FUTURE ART AND CULTURE

UK'S 'FUTURE ART AND CULTURE' RETURNS TO SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST INTERACTIVE 2024 WITH ITS MOST AMBITIOUS SHOWCASE YET

Future Art and Culture

SXSW 2024

XR Exhibits
Showcases
Panels
Workshops
Networking

Austin, TX

LOTTERY FUNDING
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
BRITISH COUNCIL
BRITISH COUNCIL

The poster features a central circular diagram divided into 15 numbered segments (1-15). Each segment contains a small cluster of dots, representing different activities or projects. The diagram is set against a solid orange background.

WORLD-LEADING IMMERSIVE ARTS PROGRAMME WILL PRESENT LATEST CREATIVE TECH PROJECTS FROM PIONEERING UK TALENT

SUNDAY 10 MARCH – TUESDAY 12 MARCH
SXSW, AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA
www.futureartandculture.com | **PRESS PACK**

PRESS RELEASE: 13 FEBRUARY 2023

British Underground and **Arts Council England** together announce the eighth **Future Art and Culture** at the international festival of tech and innovation, **South by Southwest Interactive (SXSW)**. The Future Art and Culture programme is also supported by a **British Council** partnership for a third year.

The biggest-to-date annual showcase of British talent focuses on new work that explores the boundaries of art and technology, Future Art and Culture, is presented through exhibitions, panel discussions, partnerships and networking events.

From a powerful first-in-the-world Virtual Reality (VR) exploration of Holocaust memory, which uses cutting-edge technology to take you on a journey with real-life Holocaust survivors, to a Mixed Reality experience that explores what it means to live with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), to a VR journey taking you into the depths of Northern Ireland's stunning Tullyard cave system and live performances from Eli Crossley's Smart Suit-fronted band, Askew, this year's programme will redefine the boundaries of immersive storytelling.

The diverse, interactive experiences will feature in the **SXSW XR Experience** track and include immersive AI (artificial intelligence), VR (virtual reality) and XR (extended reality) projects, together with panels on the future of the arts in the digital realm, from timely themes focused on AI to Quantum Computing. High-profile presentations will include both US and international premieres of multidisciplinary commissions, including exceptional collaborations focused on music, film, photography and history.

This year, six Future Art and Culture projects have been officially selected by SXSW XR Experience, as part of a presentation of 29 international projects to be exhibited. Two of the works - *Maya: The Birth of Superhero* and *SoulPaint* - have been selected to compete in the **SXSW XR Competition 2024**, which was won by Future Art and Culture UK artist **Karen**

Palmer, for her work ***Consensus Gentium***, in 2023. The central XR commissions to be presented as part of Future Art and Culture 2024, can today be revealed as:

Presented by Emmy award-nominated studio **Anagram**, [*Impulse: Playing with Reality*](#) is a groundbreaking Mixed Reality (MR) experience that playfully explores what it means to live with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

At a time of global mental health crisis, *Impulse* fosters empathy towards a deeply misunderstood condition. Those with ADHD are often branded as wild, dangerous troublemakers. The true reality of the condition is struggling with constant acceleration, often overwhelmed by powerful emotions. Through better understanding of what drives these rhythms and their relationship to our own, *Impulse* guides you towards genuine revelations about how to tune into the unique tempos of the people we love.

Kiss/Crash by new media artist **Adam Cole** is an immersive multi-screen installation exploring the subject of AI-imagery and representation, as well as the autobiographical themes of loneliness, desire, and intimacy in the digital age. The installation consists of three individual works in a shared space: *Kiss/Crash*, *Me Kissing Me*, and *Crash Me, Gently*, all of which play with the iconic image of the kiss using AI image translation. Repurposing a classic Hollywood aesthetic through a queer lens, the piece reflects on the nature of images, and places AI models within a history of image-production technologies meant to arouse and homogenize our desires. In the process, it reveals the logic of AI imagery and hints at how our relationship to reality will continue to be stretched and shaped by artificial representations at an accelerating pace.

Descend into the dark allure of spelunking with intrepid cavers Tim and Pam Fogg, who view each cave they visit as a treasure trove of geological and climate history. [*Buried in the Rock*](#), a VR experience presented by **ScanLAB**, transports you into the Foggs' world as they rappel into the depths of Northern Ireland's stunning Tullyard cave system. *Buried in the Rock* is a portrait of two passionate individuals and their motivation to discover new cave passages, despite the dangers, darkness and the unknown that may lay ahead. While following Tim and Pam's descent into the cave, the entire dramatic Tullyard cave system is revealed in stunning miniature detail, capturing the otherworldly formations and watery sounds within the cave.

In 2024, Future Art & Culture are delighted to present **Eli Crossley** and his band **Askew** as part of the official Music Showcase. Following on from their acclaimed 2023 Glastonbury performance, Askew's live SXSW performance will showcase the Smart Suit technology used by Eli, who lives with the condition Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy which causes progressive muscular weakness. This technology will also be discussed in the panel **Tech For All: Unlocking Creativity with Inclusive Innovation**.

Experience the first-in-the-world virtual reality exhibition from **East City Films**, [The Journey Back](#), which applies cutting-edge technology to engage visitors on a journey as they travel through concentration camps with three Holocaust Survivors who experienced them. Originally commissioned by the Illinois Holocaust Museum, these three unique VR experiences - 'Letters From Drancy', 'Escape to Shanghai' and 'Walk to Westerbork' - will be exhibited together for the first time at SXSW. The exhibition is a global game-changer, revolutionising the field of Holocaust memory through innovative technology and transportive storytelling.

[Maya: The Birth of A Superhero](#) is an immersive installation and VR experience by **Poulomi Basu** and **CJ Clarke**. It follows Maya, an ordinary 21st Century girl, as she transforms into a superhero whose powers derive from menstruation, in an odyssey of womanhood. The work is inspired by Basu's law-changing impact art project 'Blood Speaks' about menstrual exile and violence against women in South Asia.

From studio **Hatsumi**, [SoulPaint](#) exists at the nexus of immersive technology, neuroaesthetics and healthcare to explore the richness of the embodied human experience. Audiences are taken on an embodied journey to explore and creatively express feelings of emotion and sensations in the body. Through the process of 3D drawing and movement, you are invited to reveal your unique inner reality, and observe the creations of others. *SoulPaint* is designed to transform the way we communicate lived experience with others, remove the stigma around mental health, and trigger impactful conversations by creating a shared experience in public spaces worldwide. *SoulPaint* will ultimately provide a tool that will be brought into health and social care settings to empower patients to communicate, track and understand their own experience.

A new project from [Beatie Wolfe](#), **Smoke and Mirrors** uses art to communicate six decades of climate data, specifically rising methane levels (Smoke), set alongside the verbatim advertising slogans deployed by Big Oil to deflect, discredit and delay (Mirrors) climate awareness through the decades. This evocative visualisation, with VFX from Parliament, combines the atmospheric methane concentration with fossil fuel advertising slogans since the first Earth Day until present day. Set to "Oh My Heart", which was released as the world's first bioplastic record by Beatie Wolfe, Michael Stipe and Brian Eno's EarthPercent.

Smoke and Mirrors follows Wolfe's multi-award winning [From Green to Red](#), unveiled at the Nobel Prize Summit and the largest art piece at COP26, which was also launched at SXSW.

The Tent is a Mixed Reality cinematic tabletop narrative and a glimpse of the future of immersive entertainment. A modern fairy tale set in Los Angeles, *The Tent* interrogates the nature of activism and asks the viewer, "What does it take to live a life according to your deepest held values? Why is it so complicated to be a good person?" A 21-minute experience in two parts for iPadPro, it allows the viewer to explore a miniature world from any perspective. Built using volumetric video, it draws upon our 3000 year tradition of actors and

storytelling that is at the core of our shared humanity. It's a drama. It's a satire. It's maybe even a petite bourgeoisie fever dream.

Alongside these genre-defying experiences, Future Art and Culture, in partnership with BFI and Futures Lab will also curate The UK Immersive Takeover on 12 March at UK House in Austin. This series of panels and discussion events with the projects' creators, is focused on thought leadership and will explore the frontiers of these new creative technologies (please see further details in Editors' Notes below).

Crispin Parry, Founder, British Underground said: "From AI to Quantum Computing, art leads the way in helping us understand the power and potential of new digital technologies. Thanks to the continued support of Arts Council England and partnership from the British Council we are able to showcase a significant number of UK artists, producers and participants as part of the Future Art and Culture programme and we look forward to sharing their innovative work with the world at SXSW."

Tonya Nelson, Executive Director, Enterprise & Innovation at Arts Council England said: "The Arts Council is delighted to partner with British Underground again to bring the most ambitious Future Art & Culture showcase yet to SXSW. The programme demonstrates the groundbreaking expertise and imagination of the UK's top digital creative talent in exploring how extended reality and artificial intelligence can be used to tell stories that engage and entertain audiences. By presenting their work on the international stage, Future Art & Culture helps them to connect with their peers around the world and reinforces the UK's position as a global centre of innovation in the creative industries."

Joel Mills, Director Music, British Council said: "The UK is renowned internationally for its exciting innovation at the intersection of arts, music and new technologies. We're thrilled to support the Future Art and Culture programme at SXSW for the third year, helping forge international connections, networks and conversations. The programme promises to be exciting, rich, and diverse: tackling big topics, telling stories in new ways and undoubtedly shining a light on an array of UK talent and creativity through showcasing artistic work."

Editor's Notes:

Further press information, interviews and assets, please contact: Jodie Lewis or Alex Finch at Margaret on jodie@margaretlondon.com / alex@margaretlondon.com

Contact in SXSW (8 - 14 March): Jodie Lewis jodie@margaretlondon.com / (+44) 7834154896

SXSW Interactive takes place 10 - 12 March 2024

Up to date programme information for 2024: www.futureartandculture.com

Press images available to download [HERE](#).

SXSW TALKS & PANELS PRESENTED BY FUTURE ART AND CULTURE:

Where's the creativity in Quantum?

4-5pm, Sunday 10 March

Russell Huffman, UX Product Manager, Quantum Computing Inc

Tonya Nelson, Executive Director, Enterprise and Innovation, Arts Council England

Harry Kumar, Chief Creative Officer, Moth

Monica Bello, Curator and Head of Arts, CERN

Tech For All: Unlocking Creativity with Inclusive Innovation

10am-11am, Tues 12 March

Nick Kwek, Senior Journalist, BBC

Hayley Philippault, Technology Projects Manager, Duchenne UK

Emily Reuben, Founder and Chief Executive, Duchenne UK

Eli Crossley, Singer/Songwriter, Askew

AI Next Frontier: Breaking the Chains of Colonial Algorithms

10am – 11am, Tues 12 March

Karen Palmer, The Storyteller from the Future, Interactive Film Ltd

Ruha Benjamin, Professor in the Department of African American studies, Princeton

Jason Edward Lewis, Indigenous Protocol and Artificial Intelligence, Co-founder and co-director

Kambale Musavuli, Center for Research on the Congo-Kinshasa, Political Analyst

New Scores: Merging Music & Gaming

2.30pm-3.30pm, Tues 12 March

Luke Ritchie, Creative & Strategic Advisor, San Francisco Symphony & Reactional Music

Anne McKinnon, CEO, Ristband

Robin McNicholas, Founder & Director, Marshmallow Laser Feast

Jesper Nordin, Founder & Chief Creative Officer, Reactional Music

Inside Mental Health: Building Empathy with VR

4pm-5pm, Sun 10 March

Walter Greenleaf, Neuroscientist and Medical Technology Developer at Stanford University

May Abdalla, CEO / Creative Director at Anagram

Carrie Ting, Strategic Partnerships, Health & Social Impact at Meta

Rachel Star Withers, Producer / Entertainer / Host of Inside Schizophrenia

New Forms of Business; Making immersive a reality

10am-11am, Mon 11 March

Natash Greenhalgh - Co-Founder and Creative Director, Nxt Museum - TBC.

Ulrich Schrauth - Artistic Director, VRHAM! Festival Virtual Reality & Arts and Artistic Advisor UBS
Digital Art Museum

Myriam Achard - Chief, New Media Partnerships and Public Relations, PHI

Moderated and curated by: Ben Luxford - Director of UK Audiences, British Film Institute

SXSW XR EXPERIENCE TRACK: FUTURE ART AND CULTURE PRESENTATIONS:

IMPULSE: PLAYING WITH REALITY - ANAGRAM

SXSW XR Experience (Spotlight)

Congressional Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, 101 Red River St, Austin, TX 78701

11am - 6pm, Sunday 10 March – Tuesday 12 March

KISS/CRASH - ADAM COLE

SXSW XR Experience (Special Events)

Congressional Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, 101 Red River St, Austin, TX 78701

11am - 6pm, Sunday 10 March – Tuesday 12 March

BURIED IN THE ROCK - SCANLAB

SXSW XR Experience (Spotlight)

Congressional Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, 101 Red River St, Austin, TX 78701

11am - 6pm, Sunday 10 March – Tuesday 12 March

THE JOURNEY BACK - EAST CITY FILMS

Letters From Drancy - Darren Emerson

Escape to Shanghai - Charlotte Mikkelsen

Walk to Westerbork - Mary Matheson

SXSW XR Experience (Spotlight)

Congressional Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, 101 Red River St, Austin, TX 78701

11am - 6pm, Sunday 10 March – Tuesday 12 March

MAYA: THE BIRTH OF A SUPERHERO - POULOMI BASU & CJ CLARKE

SXSW XR Experience (Competition)

Congressional Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, 101 Red River St, Austin, TX 78701

11am - 6pm, Sunday 10 March – Tuesday 12 March

SOULPAINT - HATSUMI

SXSW XR Experience (Competition)

Congressional Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, 101 Red River St, Austin, TX 78701

11am - 6pm, Sunday 10 March – Tuesday 12 March

ADDITIONAL FUTURE ART AND CULTURE PRESENTATIONS:

SMOKE AND MIRRORS - BEATIE WOLFE

"Innovation Bridge Europe House" (*IBE House*)

Wax Myrtle's Club at the Thompson Hotel, 506 San Jacinto Blvd, Austin, TX 78701

(Corner of East 5th, 4th Floor)

Friday 8 March – Tuesday 12 March

ELI CROSSLEY/ASKEW:
OFFICIAL SXSW MUSIC SHOWCASE
[DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED](#)

ABOUT FUTURE ART AND CULTURE

Future Art and Culture is a major international showcasing initiative at SXSW. The project focuses on the boundaries of art and technology through exhibitions, panel discussions, partnerships and networking events. Future Art and Culture is produced by British Underground funded by Arts Council England with additional partnership support in 2024 from the British Council.

ABOUT BRITISH UNDERGROUND

British Underground (BU) curates and produces international showcase and streaming projects in music and the arts. BU is an Arts Council England NPO and PRSF Talent Development Partner working across culture from Stormzy to the Royal Shakespeare Company. BU has over 20 years' experience producing significant showcases and events at South by Southwest, in Austin, TX (SXSW).

ABOUT ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Arts Council England (ACE) is the national development agency for creativity and culture in England. ACE invests public money from the Government and the National Lottery to support the arts and culture sector and to enable people across the country to enjoy a range of high quality cultural experiences.

www.artscouncil.org.uk

ABOUT BRITISH COUNCIL

THE BRITISH COUNCIL is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We support peace and prosperity by building connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and countries worldwide. We do this through our work in arts and culture, education and the English language. We work with people in over 200 countries and territories and are on the ground in more than 100 countries. In 2021-22 we reached 650 million people.

www.britishcouncil.org