



Press Information
24.03.09

Ackroyd and Harvey, Jonah Brucker-Cohen, Elin Wikström, Amy Balkin, Scenocosme, James Marriott, Usman Haque and HeHe to feature at Futuresonic 2009 arts festival

Renowned contemporary artists to explore environmental themes @ Cube and across Manchester/the North West, May 13-16 2009

Futuresonic, the UK's urban festival of art, music & ideas, has curated a world-class programme of contemporary art and artists happening across Manchester and beyond from May 13-16. With an emphasis on Environment 2.0, the three day festival will feature some of the world's leading proponents of contemporary and environmental art including a number of international premieres.

Highlights include Ackroyd & Harvey who have gathered hundreds of acorns from renowned artist Joseph Beuys' seminal artwork 7000 Oaks for a new long term project. They will be creating the UK's first installation featuring Beuy's creative 'offspring' in the form of 120 oak saplings grown from the acorns. To accompany the work Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey will be participating in three days of live conversation at Cube discussing the environment, art and Beuys' legacy with gallery visitors and special guests.

Another highly influential duo, the Paris-based HeHe partnership, will be represented at Futuresonic with the documentation of their celebrated environmental project *Nuage Vert* (aka 'Green Cloud'). Five years in the making, Nuage Vert saw HeHe project a green ring of laser-light onto the smoke and gas emissions of a power station chimney in Helsinki. The light ring was linked to a thermal sensor in the chimney - and as Helsinki's power consumption fluctuated so the 'green cloud' simultaneously expanded and contracted. Awarded a Golden Nica by Prix Ars Electronica in 2008, HeHe's Nuage Vert is regarded as one of the greatest exemplars of how art can directly communicate a powerful and accessible message about our impact on the environment.

San Francisco artist and activist Amy Balkin, currently leading an international public domain project in California, will also be taking the issue of climate change directly to the people with a public recital of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on Manchester's Market Street, one of the busiest public thoroughfares in the UK. Over three days, special guests and public volunteers will join Amy to take part in a unique reading relay of this little known, very dense and complex political/scientific document that runs to thousands of pages.



The theme of public interaction with artworks can also be found in Scenocosme's *Akousmaflora*. *Akousmaflora* is a garden of living plants and flowers which react to human gestures and physical contact by emitting a range of sounds. As leaves are stroked so the plants will 'sing' to visitors and create an organic choral concert that will echo around Cube.

Cube will also play host to Kim Abeles' *Presidential smog plates*— a series of Franklin Mint style commemorative plates each featuring a recent US President carrying a quote from each about their views and commitments towards the environment and business. The images were created by exposing individual stencils to city centre smog, the duration of exposure being directly linked to the each President's own track-record on carbon emissions during their time in office.

Other Futuresonic 2009 Arts Festival Highlights

Elin Wikström's *Reds against Greys* – a conceptual art event and exhibition mixing film, performance art, lectures and a wheelchair tag rugby match. With this project Sweden's Wikström will look to explore biodiversity issues and provide a metaphor for Darwin's battle of the specie

Imagine@Liverpool Cathedral – Futuresonic has commissioned artist Cleo Evans, in collaboration with local change ringers, to perform a recital of John Lennon's 'atheist' anthem on the bells of Liverpool Cathedral. The bells have the highest and heaviest peal in the world. Already having ruffled a few ecclesiastical and ethical feathers across the globe, the proposed project has been given the blessing of Yoko Ono

Jon Cohrs' *Oil Prospecting* - Winner of the Futuresonic 2009 Art Award Commission, New York's Jon Cohrs will be prospecting for oil around Manchester equipped with reconfigured metal detectors, hydrocarbon sensors and a range of locative media tools

Aaron Koblin's *Flight Patterns* - a data visualisation project that captures the path of airliners in the United States in colour and form. The result is a stunning visual animation tracing thousands of aircraft flight patterns in America's airspace during a single day

Rorschach Clouds - a video installation by New Zealand based new media artist Janine Randerson that shows cloud formation and decay as a fluid and highly visual natural process

The launch of Jonah Brucker-Cohen's *THWONK* - an extension to Brucker-Cohen's Bump List, THWONK is an exciting and dynamic approach to creating online communities that will allow participants to alter the rules and boundaries of the networks and how they connect. THWONK enables users to see how their behaviour in online communication is determined by the constraints of the medium

Graffiti Radio by Yuri Suzuki – artist and designer Suzuki plans to stencil a special 2-D barcode at various locations across Manchester. When found the code can be 'scanned' by taking a picture of it on a mobile phone. If the phone is web-enabled this will then trigger a stream of music created by Yuri especially for Futuresonic.