

Distractions

Press Release. Friday 21 June 2019

Wayne Hemingway, Evabee, Social Chain, Todd Eckert, Dame Wendy Hall, Andy Burnham, La Duma, Paloma Dawkins, Tech for Good Live, Sabotage New Media, Grimm Twins, Sacha Lord, Michael Dugher, Terry Tyldsley, Modern English, Oli Wilson and OPPO are amongst the first speakers, artists and performers to be confirmed for Distractions, a tech, music and creativity summit and showcase taking place in Manchester on the 18, 19 and 20 July 2019. More acts, artists and speakers will be announced over the coming weeks.

Distractions is a three-day summit that debates the future of entertainment – a long weekend of debates, talks, panels, content and new music showcases with some of the world's leading tech companies, artists and producers. Presented by Manchester International Festival, Sound City and FutureEverything, developed by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham and Greater Manchester Combined Authority, with the support of Peter Saville, Rose Marley and Modern Designers, Distractions explores how technology is shaping our entertainment experiences.

In this brave new world of recreational tech, who is in control? Makers or players? Artists or consumers? Platforms or publishers? And in this world – are we too digitally distracted to care?

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Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said:

'Distractions is everything Greater Manchester is about – innovative, forward thinking and radical. We have a pioneering digital, technological and music history. Whether that's building the first computer, the birthplace of the industrial revolution and the Spinning Jenny, or the home of Factory Records; our progressive past should be seen as a great foundation for the future. Distractions is all about showcasing the future of Greater Manchester and asking the moral and ethical questions about how technology is both a fantastic opportunity, but also a distraction from reality in an increasingly troubled world. In Greater Manchester, we don't want to just imagine what the future of entertainment might look like, we want to lead it'.

18 July: FutureEverything

Social Chain, OPPO,
Brendan Dawes, Tech for
Good Live, MMU – SODA
(School of Digital Art),
Manchester City Football
Club, Wayne Hemingway

FutureEverything at Distractions will kickstart this three-day summit by bringing artists, makers and digital creatives together with the people of Greater Manchester to connect their ideas for the future. Through the demonstration of innovation, collaboration and debate, together we will showcase Greater Manchester as a pioneering, global testbed in digital leadership.

There will be inspiring discussions, creative thinking and hands-on prototyping alongside future leaders and creative practitioners working across art, digital culture and technology. Throughout the day, we will explore how, through collaboration and debate, Greater Manchester can be a global leader in innovation for good and showcase home-grown digital tech projects and partnerships which demonstrate best practice in the region and globally.

The day will also include a showcase of prototypes created during a rapid prototyping event run in parallel with this symposium, followed by a short creative summary of the day's activities by social commentator and designer, Wayne Hemingway.

Distractions delegates are then invited to a new artwork, Tracing the Sky by artist Jiayu Liu. Presented by FutureEverything, sponsored by OPPO, the work uses 3D scanning, projection mapping and smartphone technologies to transform the architecture into an immersive and interactive space.

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19 July: Sound City Manchester

Summit – Sabotage New
Media, Modern English,
La Duma, Terry Tyldsley,
Michael Dugher, Andy
Burnham, Social Chain,
Rose Marley

Showcase – Mike Garry,
Yemi Balotiwa, Prima,
Evabee, Leatherparty,
Grimm Twins, Lynchs Band,
Slow Knife, See Thru Hands,
Francis Lung

Bringing their expertise in music festival and conference delivery, Sound City have joined forces with Distractions to create Manchester's newest, music and tech focussed conference. The day will start with the launch of the Greater Manchester Music Review before a series of panel sessions start. Panels will discuss the pros and cons of tech in music, questioning whether these technological developments are enhancing our experiences or disconnecting us from our primal attraction to music. There will also be discussion of the myriad music technology options that could pave the way for a new era of music and look at the skills required in the modern day, exploring how the next generation of creators will navigate this tech-laden world and utilise these exciting new technological tools to enhance the music experience.

Alongside the conference will run a free live music programme at Manchester International Festival Square, curated by an independent A&R panel, chaired by Oli Wilson. The showcase will shine a light on the very best musical talent in Greater Manchester. Jenna G will comper the Sound City music stage.

20 July: Manchester International Festival

Jessica Brillhart, Todd Eckert,
Hardeep Pandhal, Dan
McQuillan, Paloma Dawkins,
Claire L Evans, Dame Wendy
Hall, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer,
Refik Anadol, Marshmallow
Laser Feast, Novara, TEM
creative studio, Sophie Scott,
Vivien Sansour, Julian Oliver

How is science and technology enabling us to reconfigure our minds, bodies and relationships with each other, and the world around us?

Taking inspiration from key commissions and events at this year's Manchester International Festival (MIF19, 4 – 21 July) productions, we'll hear from world-class artists and futurists visualising new worlds and the thinkers tackling the big ideas. Featuring demos alongside debate, this event forms part of Interdependence, MIF19's ideas programme.

*Tickets for the event are available [here](#)
at £45 for the three days or £16 for individual day tickets.
www.distractionsmcr.com*

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FutureEverything

Established in Manchester in 1995, FutureEverything is an award-winning innovation lab and cultural agency that has helped shape the emergence of digital culture in Europe. Together with an international community of artists, technologists and collaborators, FutureEverything explore the intersection of art, technology and society through bold new art commissions, living labs, participatory design and public events.

Taking an artist-led and human-centred approach, FutureEverything is passionate about bringing people together to discover, share and experience new ideas for the future, creating opportunities for people to consider, challenge and test the use of technology in creative and unexpected ways.

futureeverything.org
@FuturEverything

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Greater Manchester is one of the country's most successful city-regions. Home to more than 2.8 million people and with an economy bigger than that of Wales or Northern Ireland. Our vision is to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old. We're getting there through a combination of economic growth, and the reform of public services.

The GMCA is made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils and Mayor, who work with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region. The ten councils (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) have worked together voluntarily for many years on issues that affect everyone in the region, like transport, regeneration, and attracting investment.

Mayor of Greater Manchester

Andy Burnham was elected as Mayor of Greater Manchester in May 2017. Prior to this Andy was MP for Leigh from 2001. In government, Andy has held Ministerial positions at the Home Office, Department of Health and the Treasury. In 2008 he became Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, before returning to Health as Secretary of State in 2009. In opposition, Andy has served as Shadow Education Secretary, Shadow Health Secretary and Shadow Home Secretary.

Manchester International Festival

Manchester International Festival (MIF) launched in 2007 as the world's first festival of original, new work and special events. It is an artist-led festival presenting work from across the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture and is staged every two years in venues and spaces across Greater Manchester, UK. The festival's seventh edition, MIF19, takes place from 4 – 21 July 2019.

mif.co.uk

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Rose Marley Management

Rose Marley Management Ltd is a creative production agency delivering creative projects and artists from EMI to Warner, Glastonbury to Royal Albert Hall. Most recently RMM has delivered Manchester Together (Albert Square Memorial for Manchester City Council), and Blue Peter's 60th Anniversary poem (for BBC and Tony Walsh).

Rose Marley is a committed social entrepreneur, leader and ambassador for the Creative Digital Sector contributing to over £40m GVA per annum in just over five years as Director of SharpFutures Manchester CIC and founding COO of The Sharp Project and Space Studios. Rose is currently working with Andy Burnham to deliver on his vision for young people 'Our Pass' and the music and tech pilot Distractions.

Sound City

Sound City is the brand responsible for organising a range of boutique music, media and technology festivals and conferences around the world.

Since their inception over ten years ago we have designed, delivered, marketed and hosted events in cities on 3 continents that range from a series of shows, conferences and product and service launches to full music and arts festivals and creative and digital industries and conferences. Sound City consistently delivers high quality, high calibre events that have been acclaimed by audiences and critics alike.

Sound City owned events include Liverpool Sound City festival and conference (now going into its 12th edition), Dubai Sound City, Tromso Sound City, New York Sound City (4th edition) and Sound City Digital (2nd edition), Sound City Korea (3rd edition), Gateway to the Asian Music Markets, Off The Record (4th edition) and Sound City Satellite.

www.soundcity.uk.com