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**SONY MUSIC**

# **My Christmas Trails 2022**

## **Call for Artists**

**December 2021**

# My Christmas Trails

- My Christmas Trails runs from November to early January and includes an outdoor illuminated trail, seasonal food offerings, a Santa experience, vintage children's rides, Christmas retail shopping and popular Christmas music.
- In 2021 we delivered at Kew Gardens, Blenheim Palace, Dunham Massey, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Bedgebury Pinetum, Belton House, Stourhead House, Delamere Forest, Wimpole Estate, Temple Newsam, Killerton, Kingston Lacy, Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, and Gibside. If you'd like to see one of these trails we can offer one complimentary ticket. Please email [artists@culturecreative.co.uk](mailto:artists@culturecreative.co.uk) with your request.
- All 2022 venues will be confirmed in early 2022.
- In 2021, all trails went ahead as planned, although given the fluctuating COVID regulations, no interactive installations were included.
- In 2022, we hope to be able to include interactive work, and work which can be physically touched. However, when considering artists' work we will favour flexibility and submissions that explain how the work can be adapted to meet any COVID compliant regulations that may be in place.

Image, Giant Letters, ArtAV, Christmas at Dunham Massey 2021, photo credit Kat Gollock



# Event Background

- In partnership with Raymond Gubbay a division of Sony Music, Culture Creative has just completed its ninth successful year of illuminated trails in the UK and third year in the USA. The trails are illuminated, after-dark, approximately a mile-long and take place in winter, in the grounds of heritage and landscape venues.
- Timed entry slots manage a steady flow of visitors. Typically the trail takes approximately 1hr 30mins to walk, plus additional dwell time. The trail routes work in a one-way circular route, with catering and retail hubs, mainly at the entrance, near the box office, and positioned along the trail.
- The work included in the trail will mix new and existing work by international and local artists and a colour treatment of the landscape. It will also include sound, smell, and interactivity to appeal to all the senses, enhanced by seasonal food and drink offerings along the route.



# Our Audience

- We appeal to a broad cross-section of ages, with something for everyone. In 2019 and 2020, approximately 21% of our customers who booked were families and 58% were adults aged 17+.
- Our target groups are:
  - Families with children from 2 to 14 years.
  - Couples aged 25 – 39 living within an hour's drive time of the venue.
  - Couples who are looking for an evening winter experience which is different from the usual ice skating /fun fair offer, and are intrigued by the aesthetic element of the lighting but also want a fun evening out.
  - Older couples aged 45 plus without children – typically they are often members, will know the venue, and are interested to see it illuminated at night as this is a different experience.



# Our Objectives

- The trail must have a sense of place - it must reflect the location and its landscape
  - A “must-see” highlight of the winter calendar, offering an authentic seasonal experience
  - Perceived as a fresh offering and different to previous years, to ensure that delighted and engaged visitors will want to come back year-after-year
  - A content-rich platform for PR and digital marketing activity to channel great stories and promote the trail to a wide range of audiences
  - Visitors feel they have connected with the spirit of the event and have shared a magical experience
  - The trail has created a seamless journey, with a continuous thread, showing the venue in a new light
  - The content has a mix of visual, audio, immersive and interactive elements\*
- \*which can be adapted to meet any COVID compliant regulations that may be in place*



Image, Fire Garden, Mandylights, Kew Gardens 2020, photo credit Rikard Osterlund

# Our Themes

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We envisage that our key themes will provide the inspiration for much of the trail content. Trees in the venue's collection will be lit alongside other built infrastructure. We believe the themes below leave scope for content that fits the uniqueness of the venues, gives an appropriate feel, and fits the event's objectives.

Key themes to consider in the look, feel and visual representation of work include:

High contrast colour in the landscape | Immersive | Fun | Interactive | Magical  
High multiple/covering large spaces | Breath-taking | Contemplative | Symbolistic



# What are we looking for?

Culture Creative is looking for new and existing work that will be embedded in the gardens' stories, narrative, and history. The installations can represent special areas of the gardens and the people that have worked in them. The work can look back at a garden's historical perspective or use stories from the past to inspire work that looks at the garden's future or the garden's wider work.

Although informative, embedded in the gardens both physically and figuratively, the trail must be light-hearted and accessible in presentation. All work must have an excellent daytime aesthetic. Visitor attractions must maintain the quality of daytime visit and create a significant night-time impact that changes it for a paying night-time audience.

**Budget:** We don't want to constrain commissions at this stage, but are happy to advise that individual commissions have ranged from £5k to £60k in the past and that each proposal/commission is appraised on its merits. The decision made during the commissioning process is final.



Image, *Blooming & Booming*, Adam Povey, Christmas at Kew 2020, photo credit Rikard Osterlund

# Spaces

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We will be bringing My Christmas Trails to a minimum of seven UK venues in 2022 and route maps are available on request - these are indicative and subject to change depending on operational and artistic development, but should give a sense of the landscape that the trail will operate in. Commissioned works will be installed in a variety of spaces including:

- Large open lawn spaces that audiences can traverse or walk around
- Waterfalls and areas with natural water flow
- Arbors - dense or thinly spread - creating a black background palette or an area where natural moonlight interacts with the work
- Intimate trails through heavily planted areas - Chinese Hillside, Japanese Gardens, Herbaceous Borders
- Circular plazas and fountains, open spaces offering hard standing and flat areas
- Courtyards with dramatic backdrops of historic buildings, statues and gateway entrances
- Tree lined pathways



# Call for Artist Proposals

The trail is curated by Culture Creative and installed by the artists and the onsite production team - some elements will be stand-alone. Others will be developed as a collaboration between artists, drawn together independently and presented as a package, or suggested collaboration by the creative producers, i.e. you do not have to know about lighting, just know what you would want to achieve.

This content call will be a two-stage process. Firstly, we ask for an initial proposal that includes preliminary ideas, thinking, and a general cost estimate (a breakdown of this can be found on page 11). Please read the production requirements thoroughly on the following page before submitting a proposal. If selected to progress to the second stage, we will require a more detailed proposal, the full details of which will be shared directly.

A trail map of each site is available on request. All routes are subject to final confirmation and content development.

**DEADLINE FOR STAGE 1 PROPOSALS: Fri 28 Jan 2022**

**ARTISTS SELECTED FOR STAGE 2: Fri 25 Feb 2022**

**The final selection of proposals will be dependent on the information required at the second stage. We aim to complete our programme by May 2022.\***

**INSTALLATIONS BEGIN: End of October 2022**

**MY CHRISTMAS TRAILS RUN: Mid November 2022 - early/mid January 2023**

**INSTALLATIONS DE-RIG: Jan 2023**

*\* Due to the volume of proposals that we receive, we are unable to reply to everyone. If you have not heard from us by the end of May, you have not been selected for the 2022 trails. However, we do keep all submitted proposals on file for future years.*

# Production Requirements

Please note, these production requirements are for guidance and in special circumstances we will do our very best to support artists without a technical background, if the idea is strong enough. However, preference will be given to work which can be safely transported around the world and survive outdoors in all weather for up to eight weeks.\*

- Please be aware that **everything** required to install the artwork onsite must be supplied by the artist.
- Please assume that the artwork will be situated on grass.
- Artwork ideas proposed must be a minimum of IP65 rated.
- Powers units (transformers, capacitors, junction boxes) should be IP65 rated, or enclosed within the artwork.
- Where possible, the use of external dry boxes will not be accepted if the waterproofing can be contained within the design of the work.
- All power supplies and wiring on the artwork should be black (or the same colour as the artwork).
- The main power supply lead must be black and must be a minimum of three metres in length with a 16 amp ceeform plug.
- If the artwork requires any assembly on site each individual element must be clearly marked or labelled.
- The work must come with a pdf document containing detailed assembly instructions and photographs (please bear in mind that English may not be the first language of those assembling the work so detailed photographs will be required).
- It is desirable that a link is provided to a video of the work being assembled.
- It is the responsibility of the artist to provide adequate numbers of spare components for any element of the artwork that can be reasonably determined as consumables (blues, led tape etc).
- For the avoidance of doubt, all artworks received by CCL must be fit for purpose to be installed onsite without any further purchases (excluding rigging at height - see below).
- Should the artwork be required to have rigging at height, CCL must be informed in writing and a separate discussion will take place.
- The artist must ensure the artwork is packaged and protected in such a manner that means it can then be forwarded on to locations around the world.
- The above may include being stacked in a truck or sea container and means the work could be stored within a container for up to six weeks.
- The artist must ensure that the packing is strong and secure and photographs must be sent of the packing before it is dispatched to CCL.
- Liability for any damage in transit due to insufficient packing remains with the artist.
- All artworks must be able to withstand wind speeds equal to or in excess of 45mph and documentation must be supplied from a qualified structural engineer to confirm this (CCL can assist in this process although costs will remain with the artist).

*\* If you have any queries about submitting your proposal please email [artists@culturecreative.co.uk](mailto:artists@culturecreative.co.uk)*

# Submitting Proposals

Please submit the following information as part of your stage one proposal. All documents must be received as a PDF and uploaded via our website [www.culturecreative.co.uk/artists-call](http://www.culturecreative.co.uk/artists-call).\*

## Stage One Proposal

## Information Required

Company/ Individual's details

- Name and full contact details.
- Company name, type and status, incl. tax status.
- Two references of previous work.

Description of your proposed installation (no more than 4 sides of A4 with at least one visual reference)

- Is it an existing installation or a new idea?
- Response to the key themes and venue, description of the installation, its relevance, dimensions, materials.
- Description of the installation during the day and its night-time impact.
- What interactivity may be possible with the work? (can the work be adapted to meet COVID guidelines?)
- Visual representations, previous work or sketches.
- What collaborations, if any, are involved in your proposal? Or would you like to consider, enhancing your work with other artists from other genres (to be assisted by the creative producer in stage 2).
- Any thoughts on how commercial benefits can be linked to the installation whether directly or indirectly.

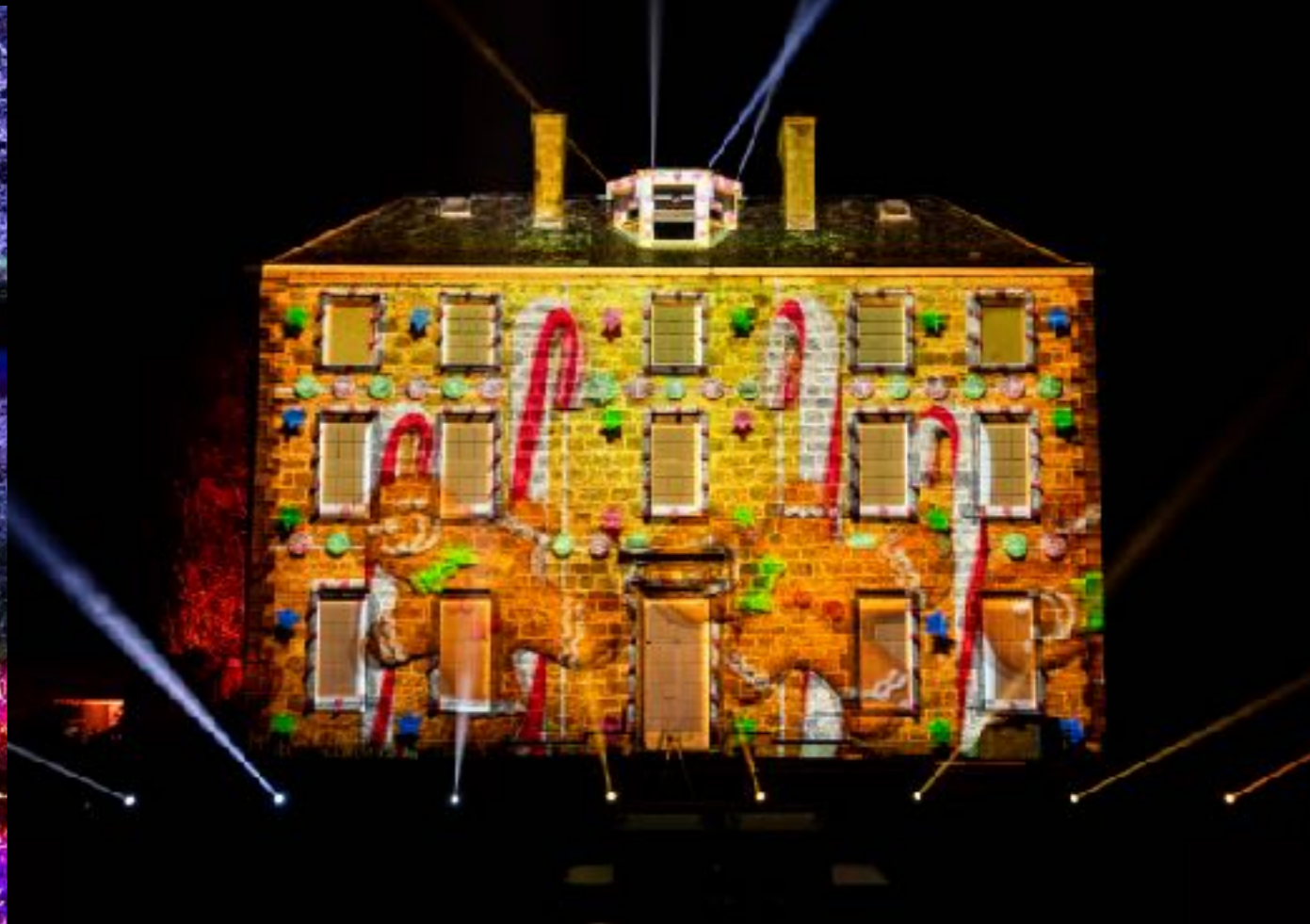
Production of the work

- Ensure your artwork meets all the production requirements on the previous page, and if there are any which is doesn't, clearly state that in your proposal.
- Production of work in general terms, acknowledgement of the challenges you feel this work will have in this landscape.
- Power requirements.
- Time required onsite to rig and de-rig work.
- List of support needs you may have in order to rig and de-rig.

Budget

- Fees.
- Preliminary estimate of key installation costs.
- Outline of support needs for the installation that may incur additional costs, such as transport, external lighting, travel, fork or manual lift, etc.

*\* If you have any queries about submitting your proposal please email [artists@culturecreative.co.uk](mailto:artists@culturecreative.co.uk)*



L/R Top Laser Lake by Definitive Special Projects, Season's Greetings by Lightworks,  
Bottom Dragonflies by Martha Ellis and Luke Oldale, 12 Days of Christmas by Woody Fox

L/R Top Electric Forest by Culture Creative, Father Christmas by Rusticus  
Bottom Flower Garden by Tilt, Neon Strings by Culture Creative





L/R Top *In Bloom* by toystudio, *Circa* by Limbic Cinema  
Bottom *Triangulate* by ArtAV

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**[culturecreative.co.uk/mychristmastrails](http://culturecreative.co.uk/mychristmastrails)**

Image, *Christmas Cathedral* by Mandylights, My Christmas Trails, Photo credit Alex Hewitt. Copyright Sony Music