

January 2021

Call for Artists

My Christmas Trails 2021

CULTURE
CREATIVE

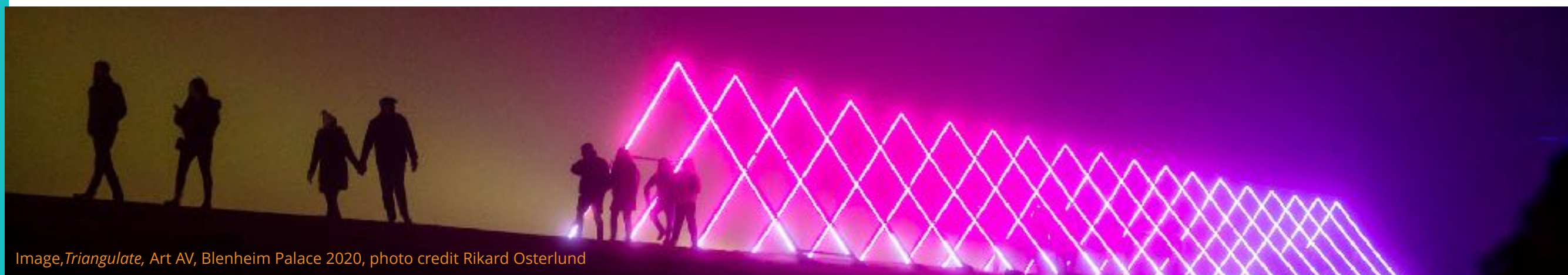


SONY MUSIC



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 plan to return to Kew Gardens (Year 9), Blenheim Palace (Year 7), Bedgebury Pinetum (Year 4), Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (Year 5), Belton House (Year 3) and Stourhead (Year 3).
- In 2020, all our trails went ahead as planned. Only Christmas at Bedgebury in the South East of England closed in December, with the rest running right through until early January. Audience numbers were reduced to enable social distancing and no interactive installations were included.
- This year we hope to be able to include interactive work, and work which can be physically touched. However, due to the continuing uncertainty around outdoor events and trails, when considering artists' work we will favour flexibility, and submissions that explain how the work can be adapted to meet COVID compliant regulations.



Event Background

- In partnership with Raymond Gubbay a division of Sony Music, Culture Creative has just completed its eighth successful year of illuminated trails in the UK and second 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*
(* must also be COVID compliant)



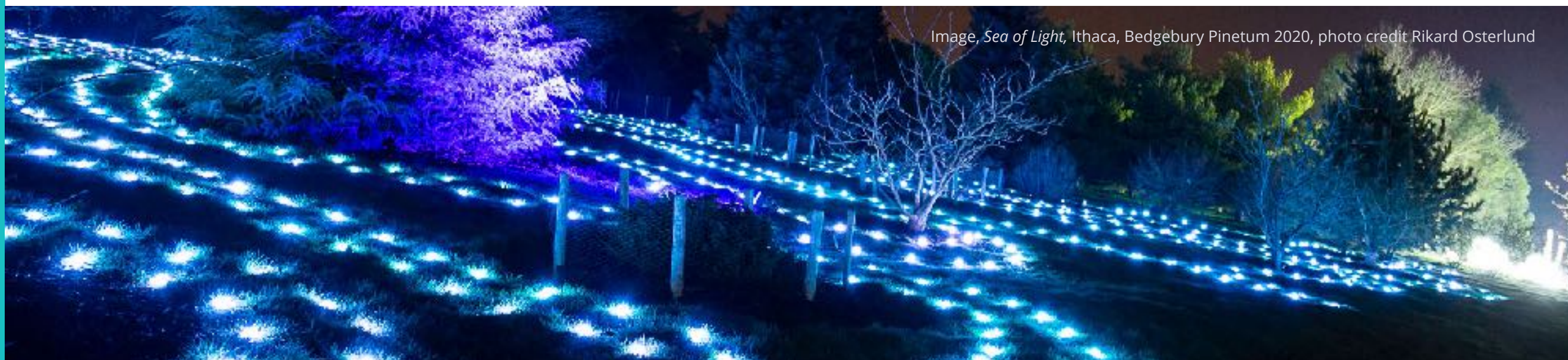
Image, *Fire Garden, Mandylights, Kew Gardens 2020*, photo credit Rikard Osterlund

Our Themes

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



Image, *Sea of Light*, Ithaca, Bedgebury Pinetum 2020, photo credit Rikard Osterlund

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.



Spaces

We will be bringing My Christmas Trails to a minimum of seven UK venues in 2021 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

Image, *We Saw Three Ships*, Lightworks, Christmas at Blenheim Palace 2020, photo credit Rikard Osterlund



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. If selected to progress to the next phase, we will request a more detailed proposal that includes everything from construction methods and budget breakdowns, to renderings showing the installation onsite.

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 19 Feb 2021
ARTISTS SELECTED FOR STAGE 2:	Fri 26 Feb 2021
DEADLINE FOR STAGE 2 PROPOSALS:	Fri 26 March 2021
FINAL SELECTION:	Fri 16 April, 2021
INSTALLATIONS BEGIN:	End of October 2021
MY CHRISTMAS TRAILS RUN:	mid November 2021 - early/mid January 2022
INSTALLATIONS DE-RIG:	Jan 2022

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

Information	Stage One Proposal	Stage Two Proposal (if your work is chosen to progress)
Company/ Individual's details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name and full contact details Business 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed proposals of installation. Rendering or photographs of the work in the site's location. Methodology of the rigging or construction required for the installation. Visitor management risk assessments and method statements.
Location of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any specific location or locations at venues you would like to have considered for your work. Please indicate on a map the onsite location for your work in mind. 	

Submitting Proposals (continued)

Information

Stage One Proposal

(No more than 4 sides of A4 with at least 1 visual reference)

Stage Two Proposal

(if you are chosen to progress)

Production of the work

- 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

- Installation methodologies that would need to be considered for the work, full drawings and method statements relating to engineering drawings, loadings, wind calculations where relevant.
- Considerations for the work being outside in winter weather for a 2+ month period, assurances that the work will be fit for purpose.
- Ongoing management of the work - daily management, maintenance and operation of the works over 40+ show nights - what will be required.
- Show run management plans.
- Detailed production schedules.

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.

- Detailed budgets - full breakdown of costs for all commission parts
- R&D, site visits and pre-production
- Production and installation
- Show run costs, maintenance (if any)
- Post production and de-installation

Our Contacts

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Image, *Cathedral of Light*, Mandy lights, Christmas at Belton 2019, photo credit Alex Hewitt







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culturecreative.co.uk/mychristmastrails

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