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IMPACT REPORT 2024/25

A MONUMENTAL YEAR FOR CRYPTIC: CELEBRATING THREE DECADES OF INNOVATION

Founded in 1994 by **Cathie Boyd**, Cryptic is Scotland's award-winning, internationally renowned, producing arts house. Based in Glasgow, we present today's most imaginative, pioneering artists whilst also nurturing the creative talent of tomorrow. We **create unique, memorable experiences** that **engage and inspire our audiences.**





From **traditional concert halls** to **industrial sites** and **digital platforms**, our projects span many forms. We produce **multi-media performances** and **installations** that **fuse music, sonic, visual** and **digital arts**.

Thriving in a fast paced, ever evolving environment, we are a **not-for-profit** company with a **global outlook**, committed to discovering and presenting **ambitious new work**.

HOW CRYPTIC WORKS

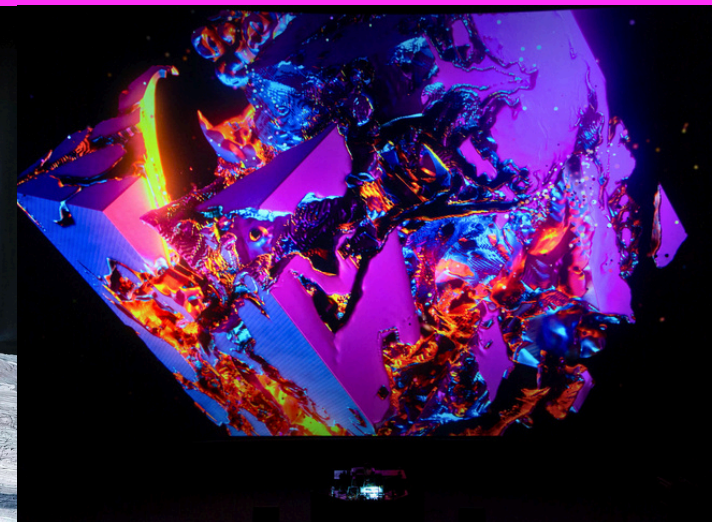
Cryptic builds connected, curious communities through four core strands

Cryptic Nights – Discovering and supporting emerging talent

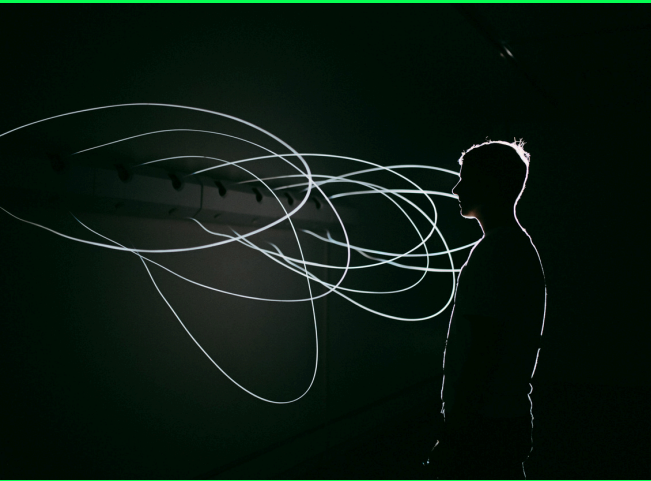
Cryptic Artists – Developing and promoting artistic excellence

Sonica – A biennial international audiovisual festival

Unique Projects – Large-scale, one-off site-specific works



OUR VISION



To offer artists and audiences a **unique** and **unforgettable** Cryptic experience. We nurture talent from artistic development to production and technical innovation, providing space, time and support for deep exploration. Cryptic is committed to shaping the long-term growth of Scotland's **vibrant** and **diverse arts community**.

" (Cryptic) offers us something that we rarely find with any other performance opportunity; it gives us space and time for artists to explore and experiment."

Cryptic Nights Artist

2024/25 AT A GLANCE

In our 30th anniversary year:

- A core team of seven supported **143 artists**
- Delivered **290 events**
- Reached **33,115 audience members**
- Worked across seven countries

Cryptic maintained a strong international profile, presenting work and supporting residencies in **Brazil, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Jersey, Poland** and across the **UK**.

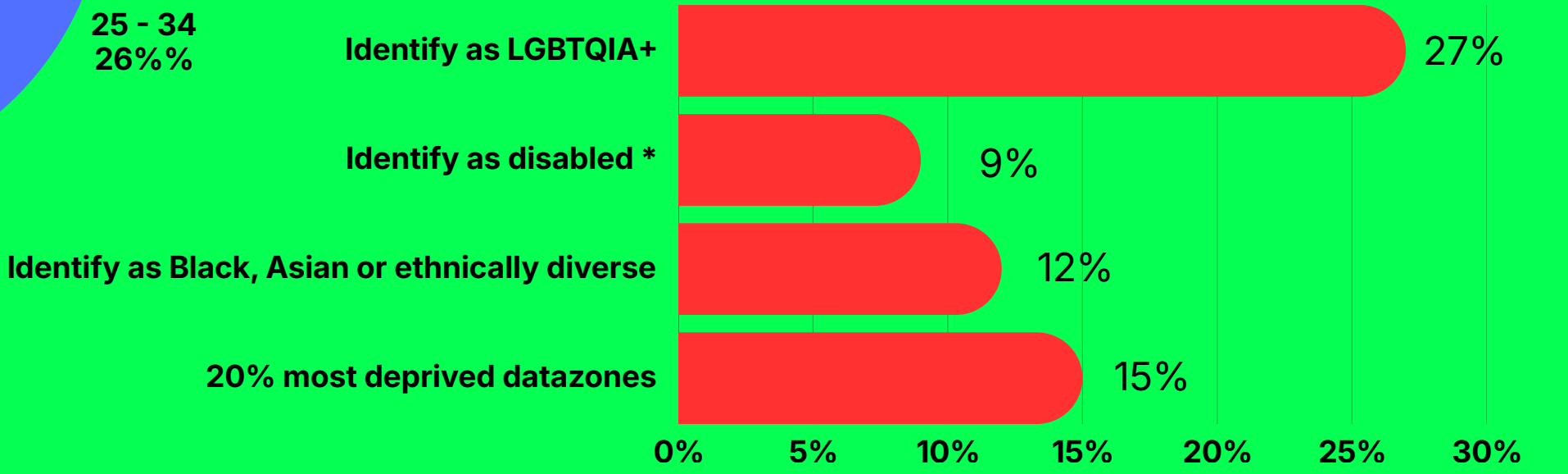
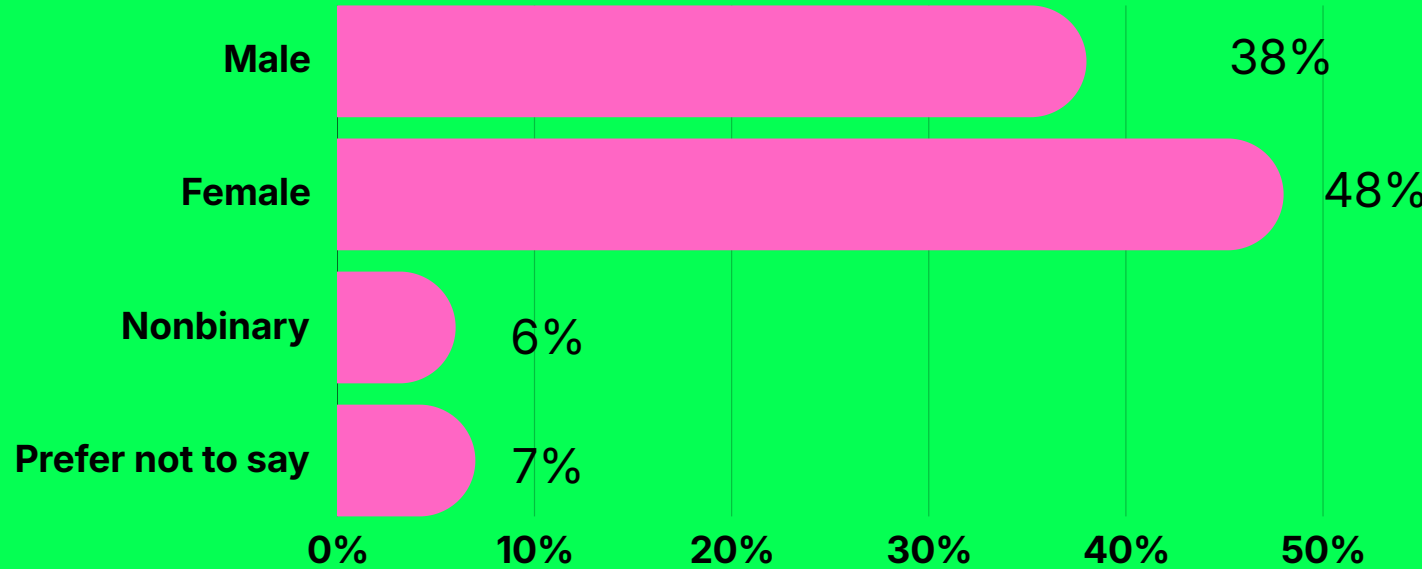
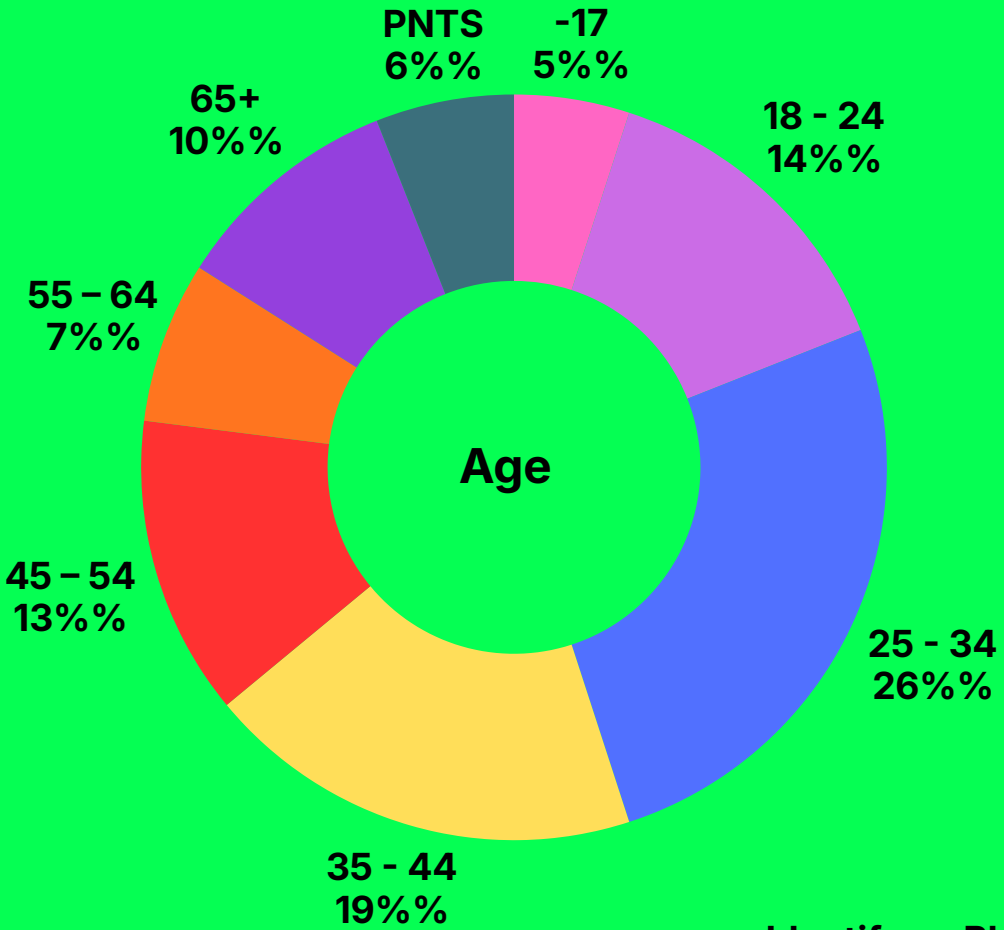


CRYPTIC ARTISTS

Our 2024/25 Cryptic Artists were **Alex Smoke**, **Ela Orleans**, **Harry Gorski-Brown**, **Robbie Thomson**, **SHHE** and **Sonia Killmann**. 2024 also marked our final year collaborating with **Kathy Hinde**.



AUDIENCES 2024/25:



SONICA RETURNS TO GLASGOW FOR ITS 8TH EDITION!

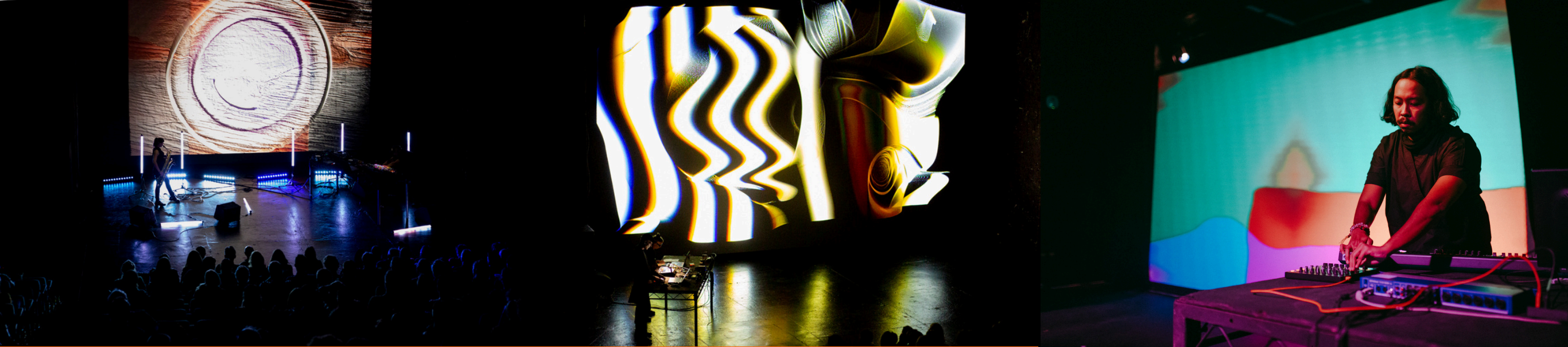
Sonica Glasgow is Scotland's leading **11-day biennial** festival of **audiovisual art** and **experimental music**, produced by Cryptic. For over a decade, Sonica has presented pioneering work at the intersection of **sound, image** and **architecture**, transforming venues across Glasgow into immersive environments that **challenge** and **inspire audiences**.



Photos: Neil Jarvie / Gazelle Twin; Demelza Kingston / NEKO3



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Over eleven days:

31,386 people attendees (↑34%)

280+ Sonica events

150 artists from **19 countries** across **16 venues**

Country focus: **Egypt**

cryptic presents **sonica** *cryptic presents* **sonica** *cryptic presents* **sonica** *cryptic presents* **sonica** *cryptic presents* **sonica** *cryptic presents* **sonica**

Photos: Neil Jarvie / Ida Tonanito + Pierre-Luc Lecours + France Jobin + Markus Heckmann + Heft

Key highlights included:

25,497 visitors to free installations | **374** participants in talks, walks and workshops
5,515 performance attendees | Average performance capacity rose to **71% (↑11%)**

Sonica continues to demonstrate the growing appetite for **ambitious audiovisual work**, attracting **increased audiences** and **international attention**.



IN THE PRESS

Sonica 2024 received extensive national and international media coverage, including features and reviews across **BBC, STV, The Times, Clash Magazine, The Wire, BBC Alba, The New Arab, BBC World and The Scotsman** (4-star reviews).

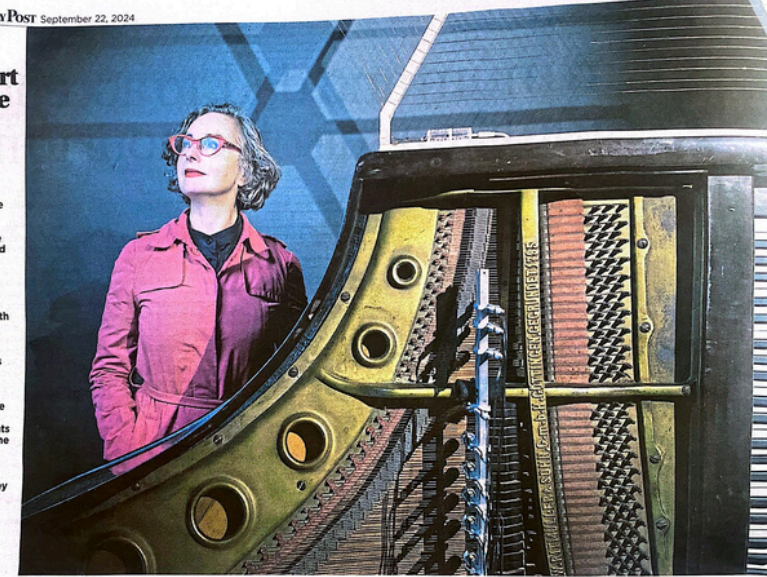
This resulted in:

A combined outlet audience of 234 million
4.57 million estimated views
Over 20.9K engagements

High art hits the right note

Cathie Boyd, director of Sonica art festival at The Lighthouse, Glasgow, stands beside a piece named Antenna by artist Floris Vanhoof. It consists of a grand piano on its side with a hexagonal aerial of fine wires. The antenna picks up electromagnetic waves and converts these frequencies into movements which pluck the piano strings.

Picture Andrew Cawley



Review from Alessandro Cortini, performing An Infini on the Omega (Which in Italian) instrument that he co-designed. The six-tone touch keyboardist's otherworldly tones soar higher because of Marco Cleri's majestic live visuals. He conjures vast Alpine mountains and distant shell casings by rotating gimbals in front of a camera.

On Tommy's same large screen, another highlight is Entanglement, where Markon Heckmann's generative computer graphics respond to France Sibi's electronic soundscapes. Inspired by quantum physics and sound spatialisation, it's a blissed-out near-death experience, with ribbons of pixelated light making graceful nomenclatures and prismatic refractions. The TouchDesigner software that Heckmann created is used by Kore-On-Pax aka Tom Schiefelrod for GAZEFORM, a tenebrous dramscape where slick rainbow colours mutate across an IBM cinema screen, in syncretic flow with his tenets Penderick-inspired soundtracks.

Admirably, half of Sonica's programme is free entry, and grand and grungy rooms across the city stage tech-heavy spectacles. Ahead of Sibi's interactive VR plays gives an alternative tour of the exquisite City Chambers, which contain more marble than The Vatican. Andrey Chuganov's neon-noise respond to torchlight from folk gleaning at the Marston Cross at a hectic crossroads near the Barrowlands venue, interrupting slowed-down time inside the normally inaccessible stone landmark.

Over at Cowshed, critical granosonic cinema is taken over by Culture Queen's VR installation Zingir For A Passivity, where I hope past a horse, dying in Denmark's sense of space. A geodesic dome lends to St Frank shopping mall, where Leo Jansen's Zen A Space For Peace makes a bubble of calm with handbags and light projections, designed for neurodivergent people but, when I pass, accompanied by first responders and a suburban under with shopping, Harry Gidali Brown hands happen-dresses for the gender-neutral affirmations at the Burnt Collection and the Gashale Train messes with the internet dichotomy between chav-gig vocals and anime gobs in Black Dog, weaving fears both supernatural and everyday.



The Wire / On Location

including street harassment. SHHE aka Su Show performs The Moving Tables in a connecting cage of transverse light beams designed by Sam Jones, leading an electronic liveband session with her heavenly modular synth inhales. While Show was inspired by Madeline Tenen's ideas in Alexandria, Michael Bagg was Musician in Residence on the way to the ice patrol ship, and Out Of The Whom Comes The Ice is a soundtracking play to those melting wildernesses.

Looking backwards to pre-QUEEN keyboard telecoms, musician Lomond Campbell presents The Ultramachine, a beautiful brass and woodwind section that he created in the Highlands, allowing electronic elements of gangster letters on a spinning wheel to generate sounds while composer/ film maker Da O'Leary goes back hoody through the nicotine clouds of 1960s French cinema, where pop bands soundtrack a golden age that never was.

A month after the Scottish Government threatened to slash its arts funding, proposing a catastrophic blow to what's already some of the most meagre arts support in Europe, Sonica flouted abundance in their adventurous, international programme. Ambitious, inventive, mind-bending stuff to make senses outside and synapses epileptic.

News Weekly/Flax Henderson/Paul Lytton Cafe Deli, London, UK

Multifarious and similar pyrotechnics emanating from Van Vondermark's tenor saxophone searers through the air as Paul Lytton's drum rolls like a bag of old bones. Then Nole Wooley, having put his regular trumpet down, places his higher pitched piccolo trumpet to his mouth and changes the mood music instantly. His perfectly perform vibrato, controlled and consistent, cuts in-and-out of Burnt Brigan or Harry James under with shopping, Harry Gidali Brown hands happen-dresses for the gender-neutral affirmations at the Burnt Collection and the Gashale Train messes with the internet dichotomy between chav-gig vocals and anime gobs in Black Dog, weaving fears both supernatural and everyday.

Wooley goes the opposite way - thinning out, puncturing holes through their recurring loops - until the time away to return the music to a point of near-stasis from which it can go again.

114

The Wooley/Vondermark/Lytton trio is an occasional project, but clearly they would love to work together all the time if only they had the same luck with programming in British improvised music, the overt force just vices of the basses to the floor. Moments, stately concealing and his improviser music, create a grip both full of accident and without any. Musically the trio also define their workable terms by the absence of a bass. Although a player in the mould of John Edwards or Ole Krue could sit or seariness to make the music three and prosper in other ways, it stands the trio replica in the liberty of not having to defer to harmonic absolutes from below, or the particular energy that comes from high wire, high register double bass acrobatics.

Already enough goes on, Lytton can barely curb his enthusiasm for speedy harmonies of tenors and percussive robes. He is - the regular assortment of skins and cymbals, bass drum of the bottom to his hat top - is supplemented by a glittering array of metal objects, battery-operated toothbrushes, banana-shaped toys to shake, sticks with serrated edges to drag down the edge of his tenor drum, and he pushes an regardless when stuff inevitably falls off his kit and into the floor. He's a drummer who sets as many questions to be answered as he does answers, ready time over which musicians can float their ideas.

What exactly should an improviser's response be to Lytton's sounding empty plastic water bottles into the skin of his tenor drum? How to deal with sounds that generate themselves beyond any intention of the player's?

Vondermark spends much of the gig playing clarinet, and deploys noise-free key sounds to lead on the creaking choreography of Lytton's water bottles. Wooley looks on a head-on on the face. Moments when the music coalesces around a rhythmic centre are a hard ground to the face. Moments when the music coalesces around a rhythmic centre are a hard ground to the face. Moments when the music coalesces around a rhythmic centre are a hard ground to the face.

During the trio's first, following his piccolo trumpet ballad, the music scuzzes suddenly as Wooley yanks in his shopping bag bag-based phraseology. The second set opens with the three musicians - Lytton holding a metal object - working towards a sustained and unifying tone, before the music advances left-off again. Vondermark is speaking, tenor saxophone rodeo-riding Lytton's lashing pulse. Suddenly it's gone to the air and Wooley introduces his musicians before anyone in the audience had realised and could start applauding.

Photo: Dave

Out.Fest Various venues, Barreiro, Portugal A 10-minute ferry ride across the Tagus estuary from Lisbon is Barreiro, a former industrial city whose location on the edge of a peninsula gives it a wistful, windswept feel. It's the headland home to long-running experimental music festival Out.Fest, this year celebrating its

THE SKINNY
INDEPENDENT CULTURAL JOURNALISM

WHAT'S ON ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT LIFESTYLE FESTIVALS COMPETITORS

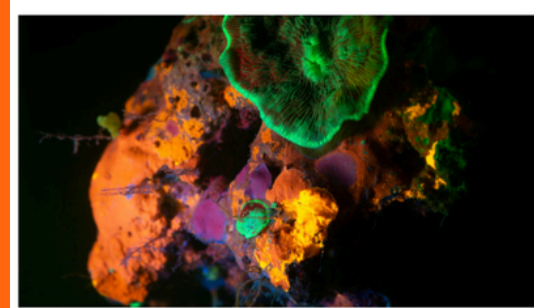
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT / MUSIC / NEWS

Sonica announces its 2024 programme

Sonica, Glasgow's biennial festival of innovative audiovisual art, returns with a line-up featuring a blend of international and local talent. Alessandro Cortini, SHHE, Bec and Alex Snake are among the lineup

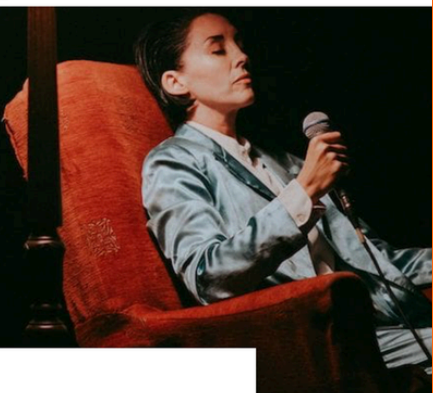
Article by Jamie Dunn | 29 May 2024

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Paul Durcombe and Alex Snake

cryptic presents **sonica** cryptic presents **sonica** cryptic presents **sonica** cryptic presents **sonica** cryptic presents **sonica** cryptic presents **sonica**



CLASHMUSIC / LIVE / 04 - 10 - 2024

Facebook Twitter

Live Report: Sonica Festival 2024

A fantastic exhibition of left-field arts...



© Neil Jarvie

REPORTAGE

In the Shelter of the

"The most thrilling conjunction of visuals and performance"
Clash Magazine

"Sonica's remit to pair innovative sound and visual artists always brings together unique international talent."
The New Arab



Features > Culture

The Egyptian artists not to miss at the 2024 Glasgow Sonica Festival

Last week, the biennial Sonica Festival kicked off in Glasgow, with this year's edition spotlighting Egyptian artists. The New Arab visited to speak with them



AUDIOVISUAL WORKS TRAVELLING ACROSS THE GLOBE

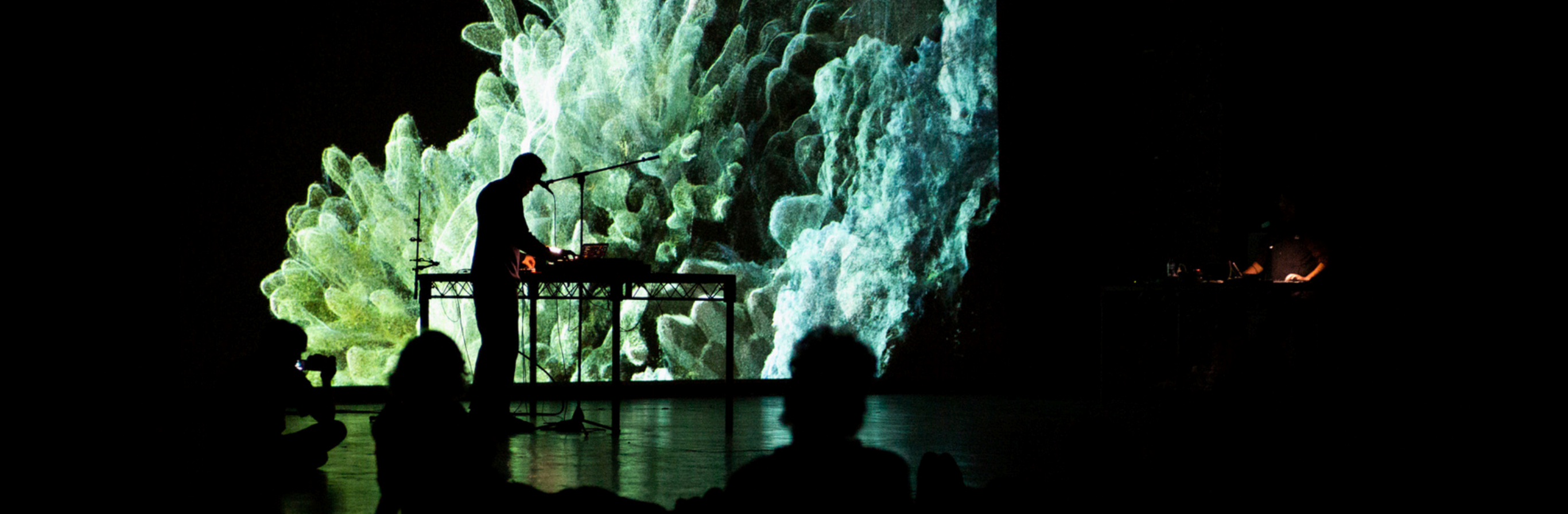
In 2024/25, Cryptic supported **13 artists** to create, collaborate and tour internationally building long-term partnerships and sharing Scotland's innovative audiovisual practice with **audiences across seven countries**.



JUNE | JERSEY

Cryptic returned to **ArtHouse Jersey** for the second consecutive year. **Konx-om-Pax** and **SHHE** undertook a two week residency developing work for **Sonica**.





JULY | CAEN, FRANCE

Alex Smoke and Paul Duncombe premiered **Twilight Zone** at **St Julien Church**, Caen, as part of **festival]interstice[**. The work later received a Scottish premiere at Sonica. Supported by the **British Council's Spotlight on Culture UK–France 2024** programme.

SEPTEMBER | MARSEILLE, FRANCE

Harry Gorski-Brown continued his international collaboration with French artist-composer **Annabelle Playe** premiering **Elephant, you shake your sheep!** at GMEM, Marseille. The work subsequently toured to **Sonica Glasgow** and **Théâtre Hexagone** (Grenoble). Supported by **Diaphonique**, in partnership with **GMEM Marseille, Théâtre Hexagone** (Grenoble) and **Stereolux** (Nantes) and produced by **Cryptic** and **Full Rhizome**.





OCTOBER | LUBLIN, POLAND

Dopey Monkey undertook a **Different Sounds** residency in Lublin, collaborating with local artists to develop a new promenade work for 2025. The project is part of the **British Council's UK/Poland Season 2025**.

NOVEMBER | PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL

SHHE traveled to **Kino Beat Festival** in **Porto Alegre**, Brazil for a three-week artistic climate residency which culminated in a collaborative installation with local artists, supported by the **British Council's Cultura Futura Grant**.





FEBRUARY | LUXEMBOURG

Sonia Killmann presented her audiovisual work **Digital Skies** at **Multiplica Lab's** A/V Night, further expanding the international reach of Cryptic Artists.

ELA ORLEANS NIGHT VOYAGER TOUR CONTINUES

Ela Orleans' audiovisual work **Night Voyager** continued to perform including:

- **Musical Utopia**, Korzo Theatre, The Hague (NL)
- **Perth Theatre and Concert Hall**, Scotland (supported by PRSF Beyond Borders)

Orleans also performed at **Kings Place**, London, as part of **Scotland Unwrapped** alongside **Lucy Duncombe** and **Feronia Wennborg**, and presented her latest Cryptic commission, **La nuit dorée**, at **Le Sample, Paris** (FR).



SUPPORTING EARLY CAREER ARTISTS

cryptic
nights

Through an open call, Cryptic supported **12 emerging Scottish artists** across **five live events**, delivered in partnership with **CCA Glasgow**. Including:

- **Sean Logan and Angus Bradley with Drake Music Scotland**
- **Nina Stanger and Catriona Beckett**
- **Georgina Penstkart**
- **Adam Strachan and Dougie Taylor**



Photos: Demelza Kingston / Nina Stanger + Catriona Beckett + Mours; Mirrin Hegarty / Sean Logan

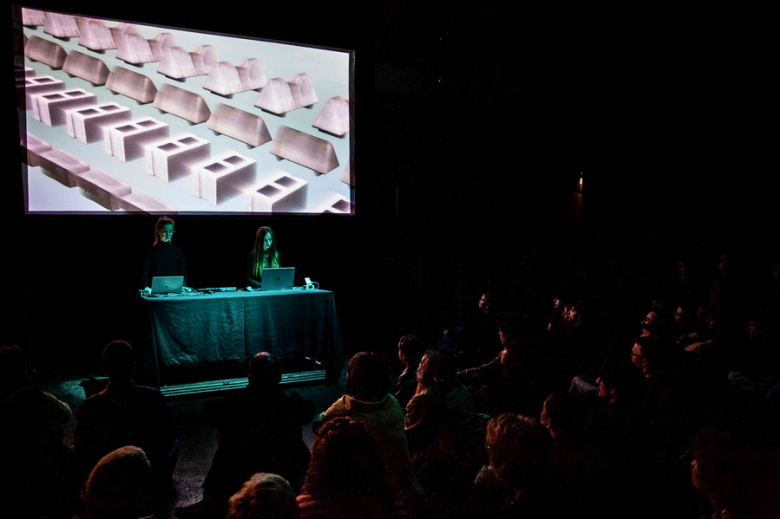


*"Immersive, captivating,
inclusive."*

Audience on Cryptic Nights

*"It let me understand people, it's a
big achievement for me to be able
to communicate to you in this way
and without music and art I may
have never been able to."*

**Cryptic Nights Artist
The Herald**



IMMERSIVE ARTS

Cryptic was invited to join the University of the West of England's AHRC-funded Immersive Arts programme (2024–2027) as the Scottish partner.

This UK-wide, artist-led initiative supports 200+ artists to push the boundaries of immersive technology.



IMMERSIVE ARTS

Funding strands:

- Explore – £5,000 / Experiment – £20,000 / Expand – £50,000
- 326 applications from Scotland (13% of UK total)

March 2025 results:

- 15 Scotland-based projects funded
- £150,000 awarded across Aberdeen, Dumfries, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leith and Moray



WATERSHED



cryptic
ravishing the senses



UNLIMITED



INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUALITIES AND ACCESS (IDEA)

Inclusion is central to Cryptic's values and ongoing development. We aim to be an organisation whose **programme, workforce and audiences** reflect the diversity of the **communities we serve**.

We are committed to:

- Compliance with the **Equality Act 2010** and current best practice
- Proactively addressing discrimination and structural disadvantage
- Adopting the **Social Model of Disability**.

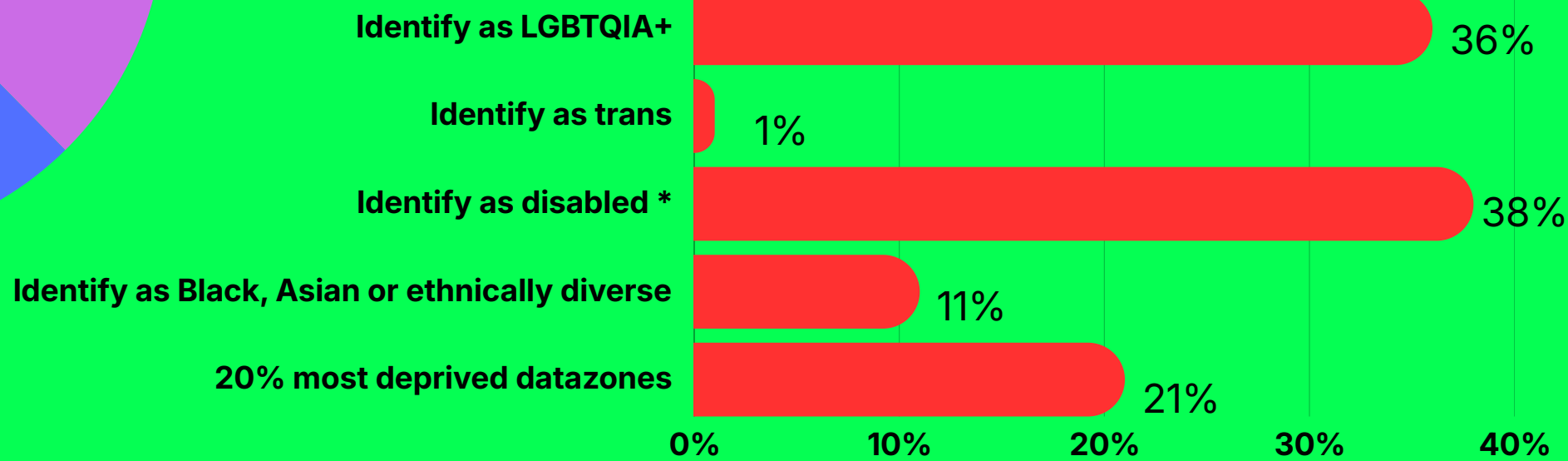
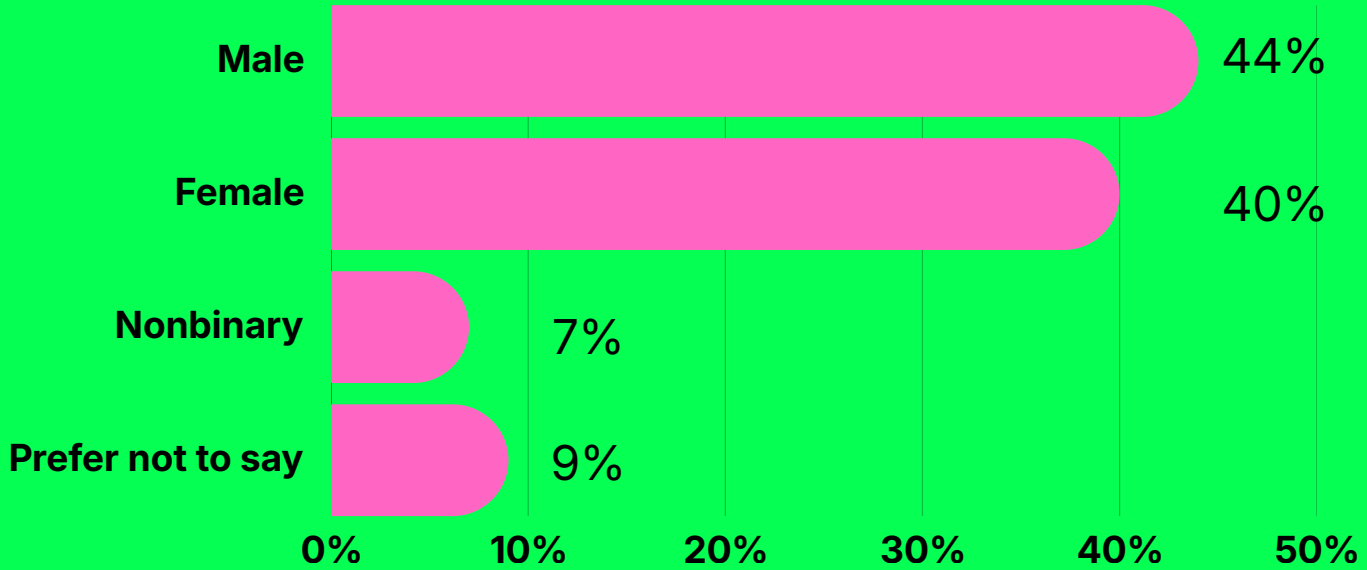
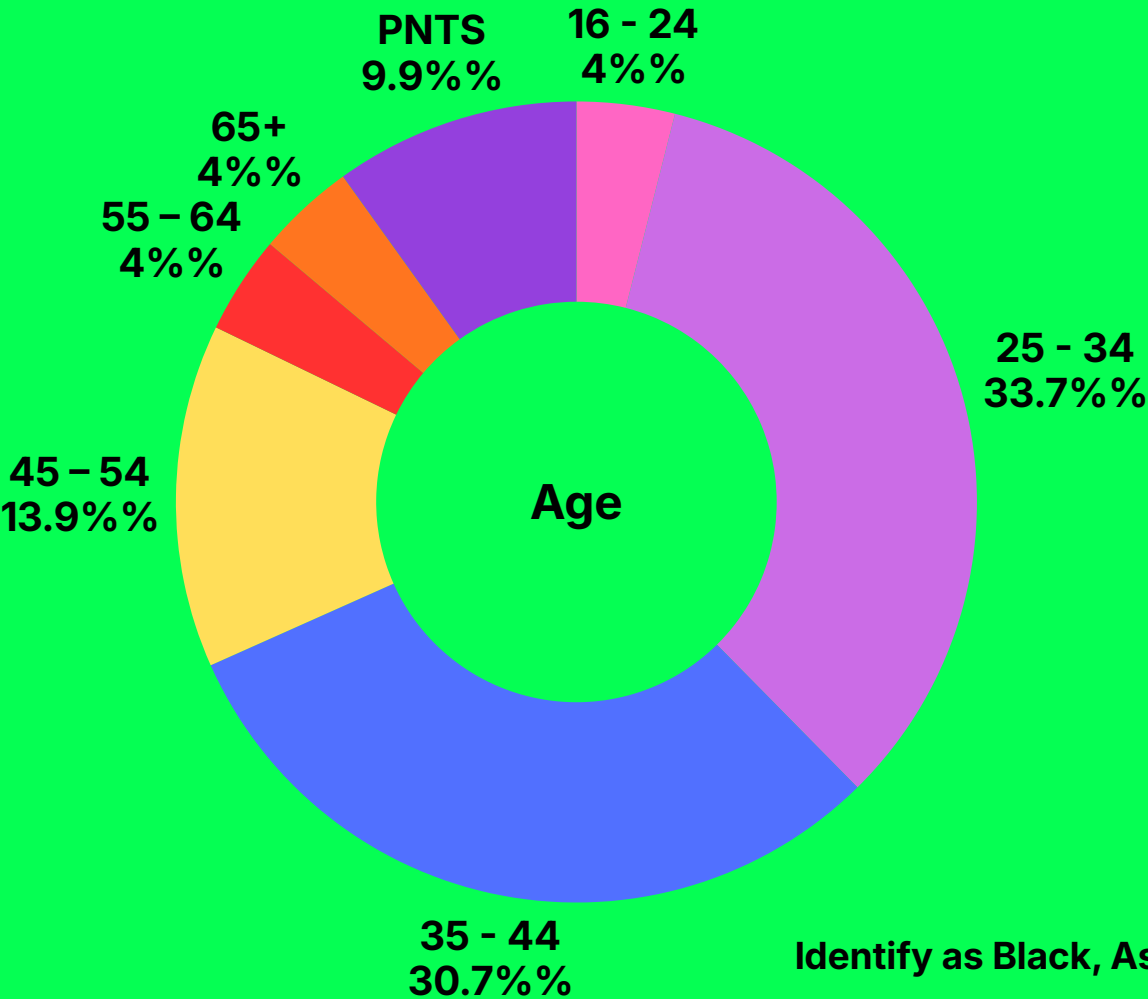


INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUALITIES AND ACCESS (IDEA)

Cryptic is a **Disability Confident Employer** and a signatory of **Keychange**, **Menopause Workplace**, **Living Wage**, **Fair Access Principles**, the **Scottish Business Pledge** and the **Equality Action Pledge**. We also align with the Scottish Government's **Fair Work First** policy, ensuring ethical, supportive and productive working environments that enable creative risk-taking and participation at all levels.



ARTISTS 2024/25



SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND NET ZERO

Cryptic embeds **environmental sustainability** across all the company and aims to inspire **positive change**.

In 2024/25 we:

- Became signatories of the **Green Arts Charter**
- Continued active participation in **Creative Carbon Scotland, IETM Environmental Working Group** and **CCA Cultural Tenants' Green Team**
- Maintained membership of the **Green Arts Initiative** (since 2014)



CRYPTIC ANGELS

Thank you to our **Immersed, Inspired** and **Intrigued** Cryptic Angels for their generous and continued support.

Cryptic 30th Anniversary Angels:
Bob Downes
John and Pat Graham
Eileen and Peter Jacobs
Ian Smith
Ruth Wishart.

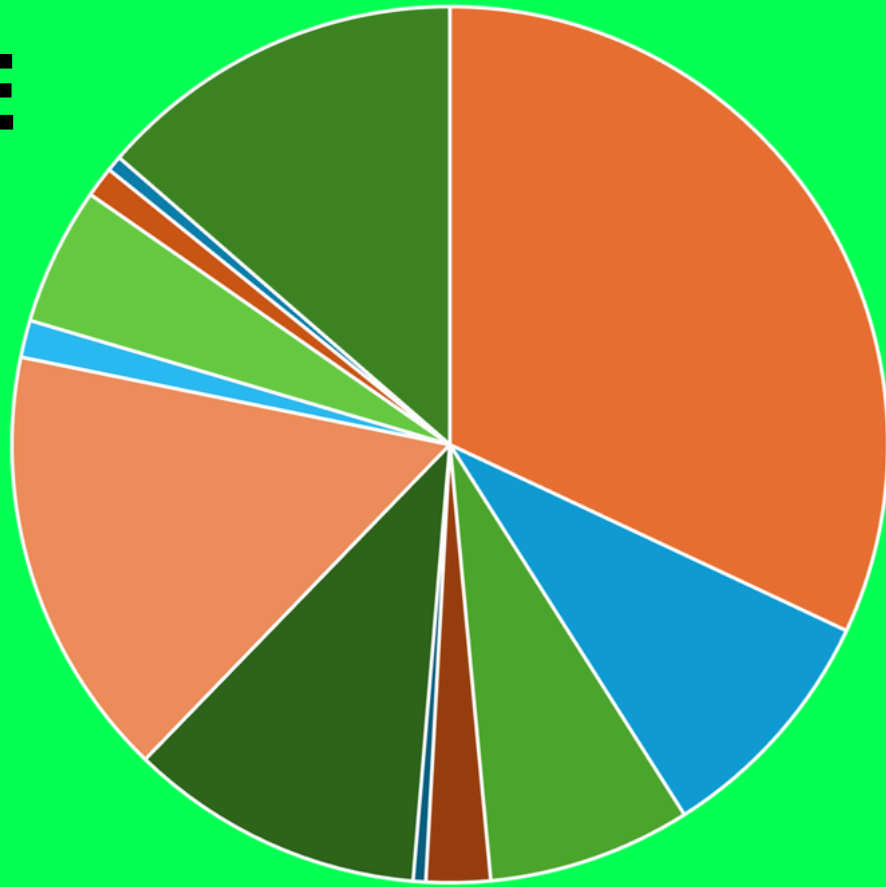
Immersed:
Martin and Jan Butterfield,
April Chamberlain
MC
Christopher Glasgow
Dame Seona Reid
Gina Wilson.

Inspired:
Cathie Boyd
Eunice Crook
Colin Hicks
Alan Orr
Douglas Scott
Steven Spier.

Intrigued:
Karen Anderson
Paul Climie
Bjorn Heile
Mary Macleod.

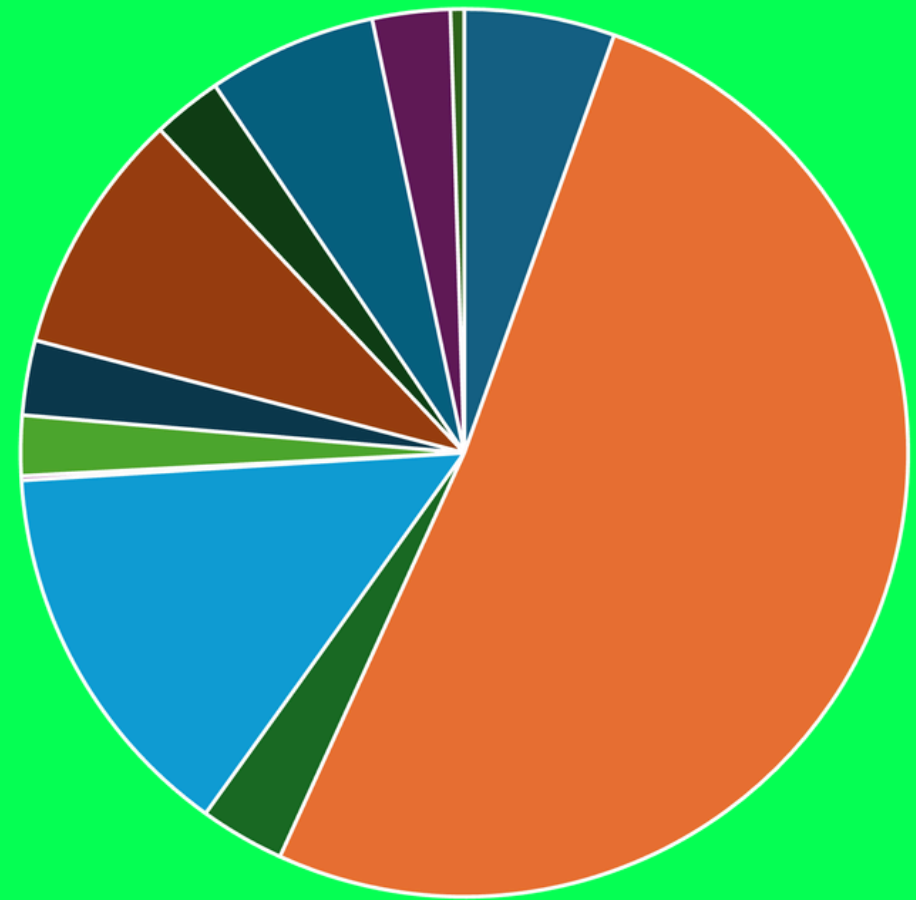
Join the Cryptic journey and help us support artists to create, innovate and inspire [here.](#)

FINANCE



INCOME

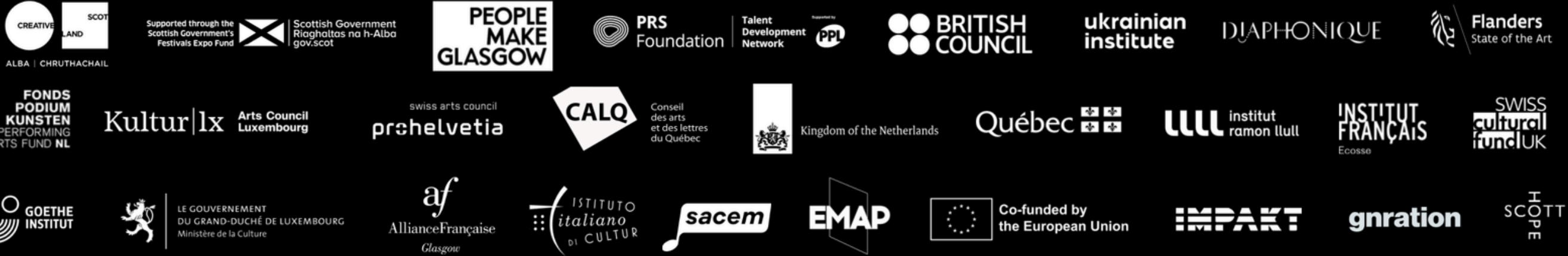
- Creative Scotland RFO 32%
- CS EXPO 9%
- Public Funding 8%
- Trust and Foundation 2%
- Donations 0.5%
- InKind support 11%
- International Fundraising 16%
- Government Incentives 1%
- Earned Income 5%
- Other Earned Income 15%
- Interest 1%



EXPENDITURE

- Planning and International Development 6%
- Sonica 51%
- Cryptic Nights 3%
- Cryptic Artists 14%
- Special Projects 0.1%
- Touring 2%
- Immersive Arts 3%
- Marketing 9%
- IDEA 3%
- HR 6%
- Overheads 3%
- Governance and Audit 0.5%

Supporters:



Partners:





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IMPACT REPORT 2024/25