

# NVA Speed of Light



We were invited along to Arthur's Seat to experience the NVA's *Speed of Light* before it opens to the public on Thursday evening, just ahead of the Festival itself starting with the sell-out Opening Concert, Delius's *Mass of Life* at the Usher Hall.



This is one of four national projects commissioned by Legacy Trust UK's Community Celebrations programme. The aim of the scheme is to build a legacy from the staging of the Olympic and Paralympic games in London this month. In Edinburgh we have the perfect stage for the spectacle.



There are big white tents in Holyrood Park, which is where you will start if you pay to be a walking observer. There are both runners and walking groups taking part in the performance, so actually if you pay to join in, you become the public art.

We walked up the hill the hard way, lugging camera gear with all the other photographers. We hope that we bring you a flavour of what you might experience. You have to be reasonably fit to be involved, and a head torch is a good idea, although at points you might have to turn it off. We walked off the back of the crags onto the road and then back down to the car park, although others carried on to the top of Arthur's Seat with the runners and walkers. If we had known this is where we would end up, we would have taken a car to the middle of the park and walked the couple of hundred yards to the vantage point, but we were accompanied and directed by NVA and EIF staff at all times. As a walker you will also be

subject to their direction and guidance, as this is obviously a bit of a dangerous place to be after dark.



The walkers carry light sticks which have an altimeter in them. Somehow, magically after reaching a certain height, the sticks start to emit music which will apparently be different each evening. The sticks contain an individually encoded micro-computer which has had a musical score uploaded to it. Movement triggers the music created by the Resonance Radio Orchestra which is described as having a layered effect. As we walked down the hill back to the starting point we could begin to hear the slightly eery music from the top of the hill.



Being staged throughout the Edinburgh International Festival 2012, this event means that Arthur's Seat becomes the focus for a fusion of innovative public art and sporting endeavour. The mass choreographed act of walking and endurance running will illuminate the area allowing a mesmerising visual display to unfold as hundreds of runners wearing specially commissioned light suits take to the intricate path networks below.

If you wish to find out more about the Speed of Light, please visit <http://www.eif.co.uk/speedoflight>

