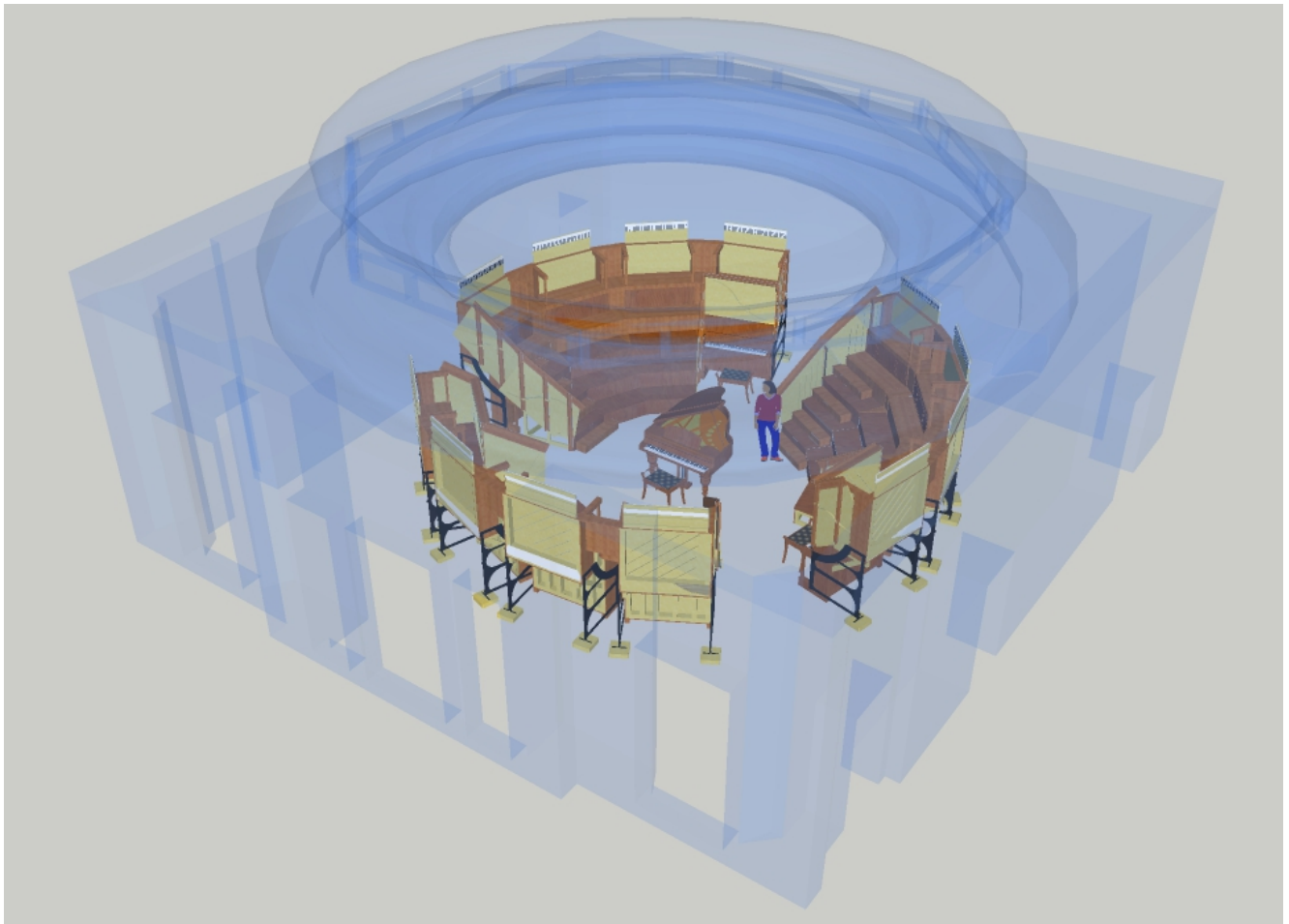


A new Pianodrome for Edinburgh will be unveiled this week

If you have never heard of Pianodrome then imagine an amphitheatre type of structure made entirely from old upright pianos, some of which are still playable. (Also, where have you been?) This summer a new Pianodrome is being created and installed at the former Royal High School with financial help from an anonymous donor.

From this Thursday all the way through to September members of the public will have the opportunity of experiencing the former school building in its new role as a cultural hub, when The Old Royal Pianodrome comes to town firstly as part of Hidden Door Festival.

Plans to convert the building into the new home for St Mary's Music School in the form of a national music centre have already been approved, although papers showing some cosmetic amendments have [just been lodged with the council](#).



An artist's impression of the new Pianodrome being created this summer

The 10 metre diameter circular amphitheatre created from more than 40 pianos will be unveiled at [Hidden Door Festival](#) which runs from this Thursday, 9 to 18 June 2022, but Pianodrome will remain in place after the festival for four months, hosting performances there during the Fringe in August.



PHOTO Chris Scott



Tim Vincent-Smith creator of The Pianodrome PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

We visited the Granton warehouse where lead Artist Tim Vincent-Smith was creating the new amphitheatre to find out more. We spoke to him sitting on the old Pianodrome which has been sited in several places in town including the Royal Botanic Garden and at The Pitt in Leith.

Tim explained that while the Pianodrome looks as though it is only two pianos high, there are actually three pianos embedded in it. The bottom ones are called the anchor pianos, some of which are playable, and then each anchor piano has seating units in front of them which are also made out of formerly

loved instruments.

In our podcast below Tim, who is a founding member of the band S!nk, also played some Beethoven and Brahms on one of the pianos in the first version which is called the Grand Pianodrome, warning it was just a little bit of tune.

No doubt the new Old Royal Pianodrome will be in tip top working order when it is unveiled on Thursday at [Hidden Door Festival](#).

As well as the installation of Pianodrome at the former Royal High there will be drop in events, workshops and performances creating a Summer Resonancy. More details [here](#).

Ten piano sculptures were created for the Leeds Piano Trail in September last year, some of which you can now see at Ocean Terminal in the former Debenhams store. In addition The Elephant in the Room sculpture (again made from pianos) is standing six metres tall in the stairwell at that end of the shopping centre.

Pianodrome Producer and Director Matthew Wright, said: "Since we first invited audiences to play with and sit on our upcycled piano sculptures we've been delighted to find ourselves part of an enthusiastic, growing culture of do-it-yourself creative expression in the city. The new Pianodrome Amphitheatre is a chance for us to work with this community, and a growing list of partner organisations, to create a welcoming, sustainable, playful and magical musical space where new sounds and ideas can be shared and celebrated by all."



PHOTO of Tim Vincent-Smith and Matthew Wright by Elliot Counce Photography

Pianodrome Director and Lead Artist Tim Vincent-Smith, said: "In the same way that we, at Pianodrome, take beautiful old pianos and give them new lives as interactive sculptures, the new National Centre for Music will take the iconic Old Royal High and make it really sing. It is a great privilege and a pleasure to be given this opportunity to play a small part in the commencement of this wonderful transformation."

David Martin, Hidden Door's Creative Director, said: "We are honoured to be hosting the world premiere of a new Pianodrome at this year's Hidden Door Festival in June. While our event breathes new life into Edinburgh's forgotten spaces, Pianodrome gives new life to abandoned instruments, and through their inspirational creativity they generate new space for performers and audiences to experience in a completely unique and often interactive way."

"Their imaginative vision epitomises the spirit of the festival, so it is fantastic to be working in partnership

together to put on a programme of theatre, music and spoken word performances that will provide unforgettable experiences for anyone lucky enough to find a seat at the Pianodrome during Hidden Door.”

The images below show the Pianodrome installations in Leeds last year and you can see these sculptures in Ocean Terminal where they are displayed in the former Debenhams store.

Photos below of the Leeds Piano Trail by Anthony Ravelo

