

# Hidden Door 2023 begins

Hidden Door opened on Wednesday with an ambitious series of immersive performances – Environments – all site specific.

The festival organisers think that everyone might spend around 90 minutes in this area before accessing the rest of the entertainment.

Music from Porridge Radio, Hot 8 Brass Band, Max Cooper, NiNE8 and Pillow Queens began the five days of the festival at The Complex at 15 Dalkeith Road.

There is more than music with poetry, spoken word and a collection of visual art on display.

From 31 May to 4 June, audiences will be invited into the building to witness its transformation from an office space into a spectacular, atmospheric festival of music, performance and art.



PHOTO Chris Scott

### **Environments: collaborative projects**

Environments, which run on all five nights of the event, will create a structured journey for the audience to explore The Complex, with several surprises along the way.

Responding to the vast interior spaces, Hidden Door has commissioned stand-out artists from last year's festival to create a series of Environments for the audience to explore as they venture deeper into the former office building. Featuring live music, dance, film projections, set design and even opera, each Environment is a unique collaboration bringing together some of the most visionary emerging artists to talk about our natural world in a unique and imaginative way.

Audiences will start their journey in the post-nuclear wasteland created by choreographer **Róisín O'Brien** and composer **Rowan McIlvride** where a dance piece will take place.

They will then find themselves in a mountain environment

inspired by neighbouring Arthur's Seat, brought to life by recent Duncan of Jordanstone art graduate **Zoe Gibson**. Working with dancer **Kai Tomioka**, she will explore the impact of conflict.

In the next Environment, opera singer **Stephanie Lamprea** is working with musician **Tom Green** and visual artist **Oana Stanciu** to create an *Anthropocenic Garden*, exploring themes of extinction.

Meanwhile, in a forest of moveable trees, Beijing Dance Academy graduate **Yuxi Jiang** will bring her contemporary take on Chinese folk dance to create a piece meditating on *The Last Leaf on Earth*.

As the audience explore deeper into the venue, they will encounter the *Sea Bed*, courtesy of artist **Alliyah Enyo**.

Finally, they will end up deep in the geological depths of the earth and its distant past, curated by Edinburgh electronic music producer **Exterior** with a roster of DJs and musicians featured.

The audience will experience a surprise element, guided on their journey with performance created by dance theatre maker **Tess Letham** and costumed by **Cleo Rose McCabe**.

The Environments run on a loop from 6-9pm every night.



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## **Music**

An eclectic mix of bands will be filling three performance spaces at this year's Hidden Door, bringing almost every genre of music to the event.

Indie rock band **Porridge Radio**, Grammy-winning **Hot 8 Brass Band**, electronica and techno producer **Max Cooper**, radical pop collective **NiNE8**, and Irish rock band **Pillow Queens** will take to the Cabaret Stage on each of the five nights.

Also performing in the former canteen will be post-punk outfit **Pozi**, doom jazz trio **AKU!**, jazz collective **Corto.alto**, alt-pop singer **Berta Kennedy**, Edinburgh band **Dinosaur 94**, and post-punk electronica **Sweaty Palms**.





The space will end each night with a party hosted by brass band **Blue Giant Orkestar**, sax and drums duo **0.**, and utopian synth duo **Free Love**, with more to be confirmed.

Down in the Loading Bay stage, indie band **DEADLETTER**, rap artist **Bemz** and alt musician **Rozi Plain** will entertain audiences. Over the five days, they'll be joined by indie band **Wombo**, American rock band **Flasher**, hip hop artist **Billy Got Waves**, rapper and singer **Jelani Blackman** and outsider pop outfit **The Micro Band**.

The space will also host six bands selected through an open call, who will perform for audiences during the day on Saturday and Sunday before the event becomes ticketed. They are **Goodnight Louisa**, **Peplo**, **Blush Club**, **Josephine Sillars**, **Rhona Macfarlane** and **Blair Coron**.

In the Club Space, music label **Paradise Palms**, Afro-Latin club night **Samedia Shebeen** and women and non-binary DJ collectives **Sisu** and **EPIKA** will each host residencies showcasing their roster of talent, bringing a late night party to every day of the festival, which runs until 1am each night.

## **Visual art**

On display inside The Complex will be visual art from a wide range of artists practising in Scotland, much of which will explore the same issues as the Environments.

A series of interactive installation pieces from **Becky Hunter**, **Chell Young**, **Elvey Stedman**, **Evie Rose Thornton**, **Kirsten Millar**, **Scott Hunter**, and **Soorin Shin** will explore ideas of climate change and industry.

Also on display will be photography from **Emily Nicholl**, abstract art from **Iain H Williams**, industrial art from **James Sinfield**, an installation from **Jo Fleming Smith**, object art from **Joan Smith**, textile art from **Laura Lees**, etchings from **Madeline Mackay**, found billboards from **Martin Elden**, ice-inspired hangings from **Mary Walters**, ink drawings from **Natasha Russell**, sculpture from **Ross Andrew Spencer**, paintings from **Ryan Cairns**, and sculpture from **Tim Taylor**.



Work from recent art school graduates **Aimee Finlay, Alice Sherlock, Amy Kim Grogan, Ben Caro and Kat Culter-MacKenzie, Ciaran Cannon, Coire Simpson, Dhira Chakraborty, Irene Aldazabal, Leah Wood, Sarah Phelan and Shae Myles** will also be on display.



Iain Robinson  
**Spoken word**

This year's poetry and spoken word programme will showcase a diverse group of new and developing performers from across Scotland and beyond.

On the first day of the festival, writer, poet and researcher **Caitlin Stobie** will share her writing, and **Clare O'Brien** will present her work inspired by the natural world and the creatures that wander through it. Queer writer and spoken word poet **Gray Crosbie** makes their return to Hidden Door, as does **Sean Wai Keung** presenting his reflections on identity and migration.

Thursday 1 June sees poet and performance maker **Bibi June** present post-apocalyptic stories on climate change, while actor and poet **Rupert Smith** takes inspiration from Shakespeare into his work. **Jay Whittaker** will perform her irreverent, unsentimental poems looking at mortality, illness and loss.



Clare O'Brien

On Friday 2 June, Irish poet **Éadaoin Lynch** will perform from their debut poetry pamphlet, and **Genevieve Carver** will present her work in response to dolphins, porpoises and seals. British-Sudanese lyricist and performance poet **Zaki El-Salahi** will take to the stage, and **Sal** will perform her work entangling trans and chronically ill experiences with organic processes of decay and birth.



Saturday sees queer Latinx writer **Andrés N Ordorica** share his writing on the diasporic experience, and **Ross McCleary** performs his piece advocating for refilling of the Nor Loch. Edinburgh-based US poet **Allie Kerper** will also perform.

The last day of Hidden Door will have performances from Scottish-Canadian poet **Patrick James Errington**, and Glasgow's **Oliver Robertson**. **Janette Ayachi** will share her musings on searching landscapes and human connection, and **Elsbeth Wilson** will celebrate joy from a marginalised perspective.

Details of the full programme, including performance days, can be found on the [Hidden Door website](#).

Hidden Door is supported by Creative Scotland, the City of Edinburgh Council and the PRS Foundation's Open Fund for Organisations. Our 2023 partners include The List, Paradise Palms, Sisu, Samedia Shebeen and 432 Presents.

Tickets are available via [hiddendoorarts.org/tickets](https://hiddendoorarts.org/tickets) or from Citizen Ticket.