NN Contemporary Art and artist David Blandy produce a fantasy game about Northampton; open call for participation.

Tuesday 2 November, 2021

NN Contemporary Art is delighted to announce the launch of Lost Eons: Land of Iron, an interactive game developed by internationally acclaimed artist David Blandy and participants to be selected from a local open call. The project will explore the future of Northamptonshire in a moment of cultural flux, where gaming methodologies will engage audiences as part of a speculative design thinking exercise, developing creative consultation across a moment of radical change for the town.

Blandy's practice uses video games, role-playing strategies, film and installation. In doing so, he often works with communities that surround each of these forms to critically examine culture and how it shapes identities. Through his diverse work, he explores the potential of world-building for creating new communities and critically interpreting the environment around us.

The artist and selected participants will create a table-top roleplay game. In two online ‘game jams’, they will collaboratively draw, write and take part in active play sessions to develop a setting that reflects a vision of Northampton in the distant future. Design fantasies will play out from the collation of collective and individual experiences, creating alternative communities and a widely different Northampton from the one that we experience today. The participants will work collaboratively to create a future world, devising creatures and characters based on the macro life of the area and seeking inspiration from the history of Northampton. A fictional landscape of portals and possibilities will emerge across asset mapping and niche local knowledge. A gaming logic pushes the boundaries of presumed environments and infrastructures towards an uncanny arena that challenges the status quo and, resultantly, champions positive changes in the real world. A futuristic vision of the role of NN Contemporary Art will contribute to an artist-led consultation fed into wider town regeneration agendas.

Lost Eons: Land of Iron will engage residents as co-producers and facilitate community-building. Using art, design and gaming logic, the players will critically and speculatively evaluate the urban and rural environments in Northamptonshire through the lens of climate change, historical multi-narratives, representation, heritage and community-building.

The game will be published as a PDF publication available to download from the Library Stack NN Contemporary Art branch, online library.

For this project, we are looking for participants who are:

- Based in Northampton or Northamptonshire and have first-hand experience of the town and area
- 16 years plus

How to apply to participate:

Applications should include:

- A written expression of interest, detailing why you are interested in taking part in the two game jams (100-300 words)
- A short introduction to yourself or your bio (50-200 words)
- Confirmation of your availability for the two game jam dates: Monday 8th November 2021 at 6 pm and Monday 22nd November 2021 at 6 pm
- Contact details (address, email and telephone number)

Note: This submitted information will only be used if you are selected. There is no submission fee for the applications and participation in the two game jams is free.

To take part, send your applications via email to info@nncontemporaryart.org by Friday 5th November 2021 9 am GMT. Spaces are limited. Selected participants will be notified by the end of the day confirming they have a place.

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About David Blandy

David Blandy has established his terrain through a series of investigations into the cultural forces that inform and influence him, in recent works examining human consciousness within the digital world. His works slip between performance and video, reality and construct, using references sampled from the wide, disparate sources that provide his (and our own) individualist sense of self. He has exhibited at venues nationally and worldwide such as Bloomberg Space, London, UK; Art Tower Mito, Tokyo, Japan; Kiasma Contemporary Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland; Tate Modern, London; The Baltic, Gateshead; Turner Contemporary, Margate; Spike Island, Bristol; Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, Germany; MoMA PS1, New York, and Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai, China. He is represented by Seventeen Gallery, London.

Notes for the Editors

NN Contemporary Art is a non-profit, contemporary art space, studio complex, project room & education programme in the Cultural Quarter of Northampton, UK. NN works with artists and creative practitioners at all stages of their careers to present an international programme of contemporary art and multi-disciplinary events. In 2018 we were awarded ACE NPO status.

The NNCA's relocation project at 24 Guildhall Road was recently successful in achieving £1.56mil as part of the SEMLEP 'Getting Building Fund' in partnership with West Northamptonshire Council, with works to be completed and public re-opening of NNCA planned for late 2022. Re-imagining an artist-led, regional, contemporary arts institution for current contexts, NNCA will create new spaces within the building for 26 artist studios, a contemporary art gallery, a new project space, an artists research lounge, multimedia room, civic reading room & arts library and shop. These spaces will occupy the basement, ground and lower ground floors of the building, opening up the rest of the building for a future development phase. The new spaces are being designed by the Artist–Architect team Studio Morison and Northamptonshire based Architects PHP, with architect Sean Griffiths acting as Client Advisory.

Studio Morison will be creating a year-long public engagement programme throughout the capital renovation works to engage NNCA's creative communities in the design process. A year-long programme of offsite projects will develop the new spaces collaboratively, through an agenda of action thinking and critical reflection, exploring the neighbourhood and communities that will inhibit NNCA in the future.

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