Sonica Glasgow 2022: Five Festival Highlights

Biennial visual sonic art festival Sonica returns to Glasgow for its tenth-anniversary edition with a programme featuring artists such as Alex Smoke, Ela Orleans and Robbie Thomson

Article by Jamie Dunn | 20 Jan 2022

Glasgow-based art production house Cryptic have assembled another tantalising edition of the visual sonic art festival Sonica, which this year celebrates its tenth anniversary. The festival will feature over 200 events, screenings, free-to-attend installations and talks spread across Glasgow from over 85 artists.

"Now more than ever, audiences are looking to have all their senses ravished and Cryptic couldn't be more excited to be one of the first big festivals happening in Scotland in 2022, welcoming people back through the doors of 11 venues across Glasgow and beyond," says Cryptic's artistic director Cathie Boyd.
It's already been announced that the festival will kick off with *Kistvaen*, a collaboration between artists Roly Porter and MFO in which primordial motifs – elements and seasons, sun and moon, gods and magic – are contrasted with those of 21st century life to explore the links between the pagan-orientated past and technology-driven present. There is also a special performance by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, helmed by influential composer Gavin Bryars, which will feature kaleidoscopic live visuals designed by coder Alba G Corral.

With the full Sonica programme released today, here are five other performances and installations that catch the eye (and ear).

**Alex Smoke at Paisley Abbey**

Among the established locals involved in this year’s festival is Glasgow producer Alex Smoke, who’ll be taking over the majestic Paisley Abbey for new work *Creation*. The performance responds to the Abbey’s grand surroundings; going above and beyond, Smoke has also devised a new instrument for the performance – a third bridge zither. *Sat 12 Mar, Paisley Abbey*

**Solareye**

Another stalwart of the Scottish music scene taking part in Sonica is Solareye, also known as Dave Hook, the frontman with hip-hop collective *Stanley Odd*. We’re told he'll be performing a new set of solo works imagining a future Scotland in the aftermath of a fictional disaster – Becky Sikasa lends support. *Thu 10 Mar, The Glad Cafe*

**Ela Orleans: *L'Apparition***

Artist, vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Ela Orleans premieres her new audiovisual work *L'Apparition* at Sonica. The work takes as its basis the hundreds of images made by French Symbolist artist Gustave Moreau in preparation for painting his biblical masterwork *Salome Dancing before Herod*. *L'Apparition* will appear in a double bill with the first live performance of *Girmata*, the new EP from British-Rwandan sound artists Auclair. *Fri 11 Mar, Tramway*
End of Engines

We love the sound of *End of Engines*, the new multimedia installation from Glasgow-based artist [Robbie Thomson](https://www.robbiethompsonmusic.com). It’s described as a robotic sonic sculpture symbolising how our reliance on outmoded power sources and dependence on fossil fuels has help bring us to the current climate crisis. It’s one of a group of installations at the CCA, with a virtual garden by Maotik and a seven metre wind tunnel by lighting designer Guillaume Cousin also on the menu. *10-20 Mar, CCA*

Sing the Gloaming

The Hidden Gardens in Glasgow's Southside will play host to *Sing The Gloaming*, a series of sound sculptures that will be strewn around this secluded green space. Several Glasgow-based vocalists and artists give voice to the sculptures, including Arab Strap’s Aidan Moffat, Modern Studies' Emily Scott and Finnish-English vocalist Hanna Tuulikki. The exhibition is inspired by many Scottish words related to the nature of light – ‘glimmer’, ‘gleam’, ‘gloaming’; – whose etymologies all stem from a single 5000-year-old word form. *10–20 Mar, The Hidden Gardens @ Tramway*

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*Tickets to live events go on sale at 10am today (20 Jan) from [sonic-a.co.uk](https://sonic-a.co.uk)*

*All installations are free and non-ticketed. All performances, workshops and talks are ticketed*

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