

New Adventures

January 2020
Conference guide

Tatiana Mac • Liz Jackson • Laura Kalbag
Cennydd Bowles • Bastian Allgeier
Florence Okoye • Akil Benjamin
Jeff Veen • Natalie Kane • She Wins

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a time for imagination

Simon Collison

Last year’s conference could have been a one-off reunion. It was a challenging project, but the event itself was probably our best yet, and the response overwhelming. It’s your positivity that brings us together for the fifth time.

We’re also here because the purpose of design will change considerably, and to ignore that is to sleepwalk into irrelevance. Will the same work exist in five years? Should we expect a reimagined industry with new responsibilities? What new skills must we consider? Are we the ones causing harm? Lots of big questions easily ignored, but we’ve designed this fifth edition of New Adventures to confront them head-on.

Our industry — the one we once called *web design* — may no longer be an open space for bold visual and interactive creativity. In response to this, I’ve developed an interest in *futures* and the ideas that inform strategic, critical and speculative design. This interest gives me the belief that if design is willing to evolve responsibly, it has much to offer the future.

Ethics in practice

Speculative design is imaginative research, an opportunity to devise hypothetical disruptions and what-ifs where we find new signals and fresh narratives. Uncertain futures ask that we speculate, leading to innovation that catches problems early, highlighting unintended consequences before they cause harm. It’s one way to put ethics into practice, and has the potential to change things for the better.

To me, this kind of design feels open-minded; the antithesis of web design’s current obsession with design systems and an ever-decreasing number of accepted UI patterns. I should clarify: I value design systems — I was one of those banging on about how we “design systems, not pages” in the noughties — and there’s a reason for those patterns. It’s worthwhile work, but designers should *also* demonstrate care for a much bigger and broader world.

Speculative design looks outwards in search of systems *for living*. The work is innovative but also inclusive, practitioners eager to listen to and learn from those that might benefit or suffer from new technologies. I recently

attended the futures-focused Primer EU conference in Madrid, where speakers shared case studies involving ordinary people and real communities. Here was an ethical and inclusive path into uncertainty; purpose-led projects that might mitigate harm and improve lives.

“... if design is willing to evolve responsibly, it has much to offer the future.”

Multi-disciplinary design

There’s a legitimate concern in speculative design as more of us wade in and gentrify the field, that it be misunderstood and commodified like Design Thinking. If we make an effort to understand it together at events like Primer EU and New Adventures, we can swerve that trap and hopefully add value.

Multi-disciplinary practice excites me. Here’s this open-ended space for digital and data practitioners to collaborate with artists, architects, writers, actors, etc. The fruit is often conversations and prototypes for new experiences where everyone is a stakeholder,

not least those directly affected by a proposed technology. This appeals as I've reconnected with art and poetry as a means to imagine, ask questions and enable discourse. With my background as a conceptual artist and my *old school designer* preference for open thinking and experimentation, a professional shift to futures makes sense. I think there's a role there for me, but I'm still on the outside, looking in.

Anyway, for some time I've wanted to take NA in this direction. We've always looked ahead, but now the future feels closer. Our opening speaker, Cennydd, was on board from day one and helped me identify the right minds; brilliant practitioners like Florence Okoye and Akil Benjamin, out there doing the work, and Natalie Kane, making sense of it all through objects and acquisitions. With their support, I've been able to curate a day that meets my ambitions.

“Digging into these topics feels like a natural extension of NA’s ongoing conversation about what inclusivity really means.”

Hope, not harm

Speculative designers work *with* people to better understand and support their lives now and into the unknown. Digging into these topics feels like a natural extension of NA's ongoing conversation about what inclusivity *really* means.

NA has provided many pinch-myself moments, not least Ethan Marcotte's *The World-Wide Work*. I'd asked Ethan to explore

his interest in how we work and the damage we can do. I knew he'd prepared some bold points, but it was an exceptional keynote; the resulting video shared far and wide. Several people suggested it would pair well with Tatiana Mac's 2018 talk, *How Privilege Defines Performance*. We agreed, and Tatiana was the first person we invited. Immediately, she began sharing ideas for a new talk and referencing books with tremendous enthusiasm.

We then approached Liz Jackson, whose *Empathy reifies disability stigmas* talk I found so captivatingly confrontational. I kept thinking “I want more people to hear this,” then remembered I run a conference. I'm in awe of Ethan, Tatiana and Liz and their steadfast commitment to ensuring design is an agent of hope, not harm.

It's about time we invited Laura Kalbag, who many will know for her excellent book, *Accessibility For Everyone*, or perhaps for her work to highlight data misuse and surveillance. Oh, and we're so chuffed to welcome web pioneer Jeff Veen! This year's talks may offer as many questions as answers, so Jeff's here to extend the debate with two live editions of his popular Presentable podcast.

An uncertain future

This has been an even tougher ride than 2019, and we've fallen below conservative ticket targets. Sponsorship proved tough too, partly because we refused to compromise our principles. Despite this, we have some wonderful sponsors, and their support has helped us invest in live captioning and invite thirty scholarship applicants. We've also introduced a climate impact policy, because every event should have one.

We don't yet know if NA has a future. There's a core in this community that we call our “hand-raisers”. They're the ones who always attend or offer to help, and amplify our message online. They give us much encouragement, but their number has dwindled since we began. I think we have one last chance to increase the size of our community, hopefully by finding a way to sustain a permanent online presence with regular online content.

Short-termism is a problem. It's a results-driven industry, and people are individually ambitious; too few look outwards, seek multiple perspectives, and travel without speed. It's all about hoovering up hot new tricks for immediate deployment, with a diminishing appetite for deeper thinking, honesty, and critique. I don't know what that means for design, but it worries me.

Yes, we are excited!

I am very proud of our events and accompanying publications. Recently, we've been building an archive, revisiting every contribution. Much of what our speakers said and authors wrote makes as much sense now — if not *more* sense — than it did at the time. I think that speaks to the value of NA.

And so, despite everything, we're more excited than ever because this one feels so very *right*. It's serious stuff and probably won't be laugh-a-minute, but we think it's the conference the design industry and design-minded practitioners need right now. We love you to bits for understanding that and for being here with us, and we hope you have a brilliant day.

—Simon



New Adventures after-party

Thursday 23 January

The stunning Nottingham Contemporary on the edge of the Lace Market is one of the UK's largest centres for contemporary art — and again we're making it ours! The party will take place in the roomy Café Bar; comfy, cosy, and conducive to conversation. There'll be free drinks on arrival. Entrance at the bottom of the steps. No admittance without name badge. 7pm-midnight.

For more details visit:

newadventuresconf.com/2020/fringe



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Our climate impact policy

Do I need another coat? Must I make this journey? What if I choose not to eat red meat?

The first question an organiser should ask is not “can we make our conference more environmentally compatible?”, but rather, “should this conference happen at all?”. The most efficient event is no event. Even online conferences create energy waste.

We again decided that yes, we as an industry do need this conference and that we still value spending time with each other IRL. And so, by bringing this thing into existence, we must commit to ensuring we run it as efficiently as possible.

The climate crisis weighs heavy on all of us. The need for significant system change seems to mock our efforts at home, but we must do our bit both personally and professionally. We believe every positive action is a small protest, and that if millions of us protest in this way, we might collectively have influence. This belief has been a guiding principle behind our preparation for New Adventures 2020.

By attempting to run an efficient, low-waste conference — and talking about it — we open

ourselves up to criticism when we inevitably fail in some areas. We’re OK with that because at least we’re trying.

“This year, we chose not to work with several companies who think differently to us about things like fossil fuels, worker rights, and whether it’s acceptable to provide services to racist networks.”

Change and sacrifice

By organising a conference, we create for ourselves a temporary position of power. We can use that for good and make smart decisions, or shrug and say ‘whatever’. We must use this opportunity to make the changes we’d like to see at other events, and ensure our every decision stacks up against our principles.

This year, we chose not to work with several companies who think differently to us about things like fossil fuels, worker rights, and whether it’s acceptable to provide services to racist networks. Taking this stance has caused problems

as we’d already fallen way below our sponsorship targets this year, but integrity is everything.

Below, we outline the primary changes and actions we’ve introduced to reduce waste, and initiatives we’re sharing with attendees to help them reduce their impact.

No more goodie bags

Instead of preparing several hundred identical goodie bags, we’ll offer a take-what-you-need zone. Attendees will choose what they’d each like to take — our magazine and pin, hopefully, and only the sponsor materials they find interesting. We’ll provide a box of surplus totes from previous events, but we’re asking attendees to use the bags they bring with them. Volunteers will restock the bagging zone as necessary, and collect surplus material for return to sponsors, or recycling.

Changes at the venue

We’ve asked the Albert Hall to help us reduce waste where possible, notably with refreshments and prepared lunches (there are a few third-party supplier obstacles, and we’re still offering bags of crisps). Most of these small changes cost more money, but they’re worth doing. This year, we will:

- Avoid single-use plastics where

possible.

- Use compostable coffee cups and wooden stirrers.
- Provide jugs of water; attendees will use cups or refillable bottles.
- Provide carton juices in packed lunches, instead of bottled water.
- Provide water in 250ml recyclable cartons where jugs are not permitted (on stage, attendee seating areas, etc.).

Event material

We'll reduce the quantity of display material that gets used for a couple of days and then binned. In the past, we've been able to refit roll banners with fresh graphics, and there are other means of reducing waste. Our only new banners will be our stageside sponsor banners. This year, we will:

- Reuse materials from previous events — signage, t-shirts, stickers, packaging, workshop materials, etc. — even if inconsistent with this year's branding.
- Reduce the number of roller banners and other single-use decorations.
- Mend existing items rather than replace, where possible.
- Print on the reverse of used paper where possible.

Travel

We've welcomed statements from speakers looking to reduce their travel overheads, and it makes sense that organisers also seek to reduce the reliance on overseas speakers. Closer to home, we can reduce the use of cars and promote more sustainable travel options. This year, we have:

- Invited primarily UK and European speakers (two speakers will fly from the US, one from Ireland, and one by train from

Germany).

- Committed to offsetting all speaker flights.
- Encouraged train travel instead of cars to transport speakers to Nottingham (cars are often a necessity when flights arrive and depart at awkward hours, and you consider Nottingham's distance from major airports).
- Chosen to cease car park reductions for attendees.
- Enabled free bicycle storage.

Web and data infrastructure

We must make changes not just at our event but also to our permanent presence on the web, and in our data storage and office setup. This year, we have:

- Continued to improve our website performance and compression methods, reducing the energy impact of data transmission.
- Switched to more efficient web tracking with Fathom Analytics (and, finally, removed all use of cookies from our website).
- Moved our sites to Guru, a greener host.
- Attempted to rely less on cloud storage.
- Held more meetings online to reduce travel impact.

It's only a start

We think it's important to be vocal about the changes we're making so that we might encourage other organisers. There's a long way to go, and we'll fall short of the significant waste reduction we'd hope to achieve. Following the conference, we will perform a detailed evaluation and share the results on our website.

—*Simon Collison and Geri Coady*

AirCare

Our friends at AirCare created a unique service for our attendees, asking them to think twice about flying to the conference. The service allows them to:

1. Calculate the emissions of flying to our event and understand the potential harm to the environment.
2. Consider alternate travel methods.
3. Offset emissions if they must fly.

cutt.ly/aircare

Website Carbon Calculator

Test the impact of your website with the Website Carbon Calculator. Our 2020 website is cleaner than 74% of those tested, and the average visit produces only 0.53g of CO₂. Each year, we're emitting as much carbon as three trees can absorb in that period.

www.websitecarbon.com

See Also

One of our speakers, Cennydd Bowles, released his Air travel policy last year, clearly visible on his Speaking page. His policy ensures organisers understand his capacity for travel before reaching out to him.

cutt.ly/cennydd

Another of our speakers, Bastian Allgeier, often speaks about his climate anxiety. He has committed to reducing the impact from his product, Kirby, and offers free licenses to all environmental projects, climate activists and Fridays for Future groups. Bastian is traveling to New Adventures from Germany by train.

cutt.ly/kirby-climate



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Q&A

We asked our speakers, volunteers, and organisers a few questions to help you get to know them.

Q1 Which book related to our industry or your own work and concerns would you recommend? Can you recommend a second book about something else; a different interest, or maybe fiction?

Cennydd Bowles

Speaker

Donella Meadows, **Thinking in Systems**: a one-way valve into a new way of thinking. And Nigel Slater's **Real Food**, particularly the recipe for white chocolate cardamom mousse on page 300.

Tatiana Mac

Speaker

Algorithms of Oppression, Safiya Umoja Noble. I've had discussions with "hardcore devs" who maintain a "separation of concerns"—or separating the "true technology" discussions on frameworks from the "human" discussions. They often ask: "what do people have to do with code?" "why can't it just be about tech and not these social justice discussions?" The answer is that code is made by, for, and with people. Abstracting humans from code, ignoring power and privilege, leads us to create technology that enables murder, evangelises exclusionary systems, and relieves ourselves of the responsibility of its impact. In *Algorithms of Oppression*, Safiya aptly reminds us of the role that we play in perpetuating the broader social systems that dominate us. I also recommend **East of Eden** by John Steinbeck. It defined my belief in whether or not people are good or evil (a huge part of my NA Conf talk!).

Akil Benjamin

Speaker

Shopping in Jail by Douglas Coupland. This book is what a daydream would feel like if we organised all of our wild thoughts into constructive arguments and discussions. As I spend time looking further into the future and world-building, this book offers an alternative perspective on a world I thought I knew.

Looking Ahead — The Sustainable Global Agenda. A well-designed picture book encyclopaedia. It tells a story about the world, which is difficult to see when you're working day to day. It's informative and has informed strategies for all my businesses.

Geri Coady

Organiser

Robin Ince's book **I'm a Joke and So Are You** deals with plenty of familiar topics—impostor syndrome, anxiety, and mental health. Written from the perspective of a comedian, it will resonate with anyone who works in a creative industry. I also recommend is **What I Talk About When I Talk About Running** by Haruki Murakami. An essential read for any runner or jogger.

Simon Collison

Organiser

I loved **The Social Photo** by Nathan Jurgenson. Highly recommended if you're interested in the literacy of visual culture and networked images as communication tools. A social-savvy addition the best "how to see the world" authors.

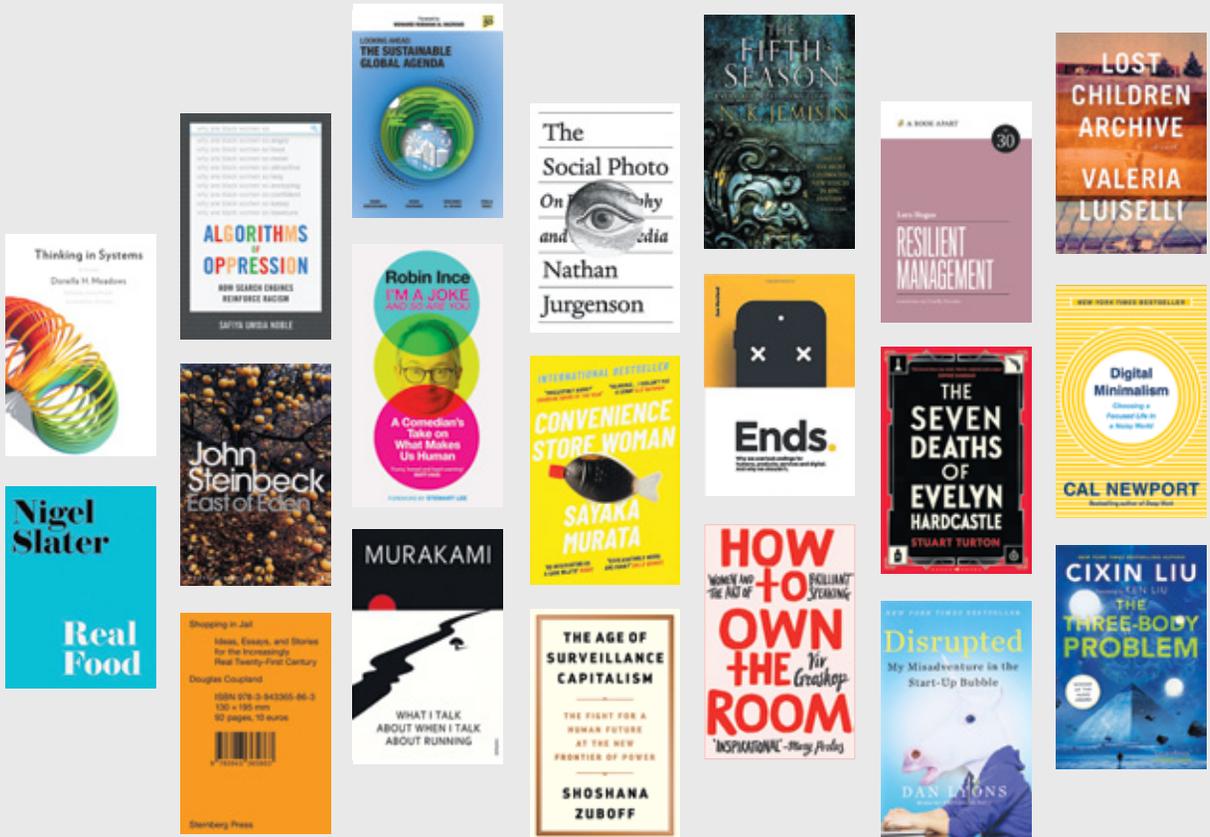
Convenience Store Woman is a slightly sci-fi tale of a Japanese store worker defined by her mundane job and inability to meet societal expectations. She develops a symbiotic relationship with the store that I find delightfully weird.

Laura Kalbag

Speaker

Surveillance Capitalism by Shoshana Zuboff. An intense look at the business models of mainstream tech and their terrifying aims. It provides clear evidence of the Big Tech agenda, although focused on the effects on individuals, rather than the disproportionate impact of surveillance capitalism on the vulnerable or marginalised.

The Broken Earth Trilogy by NK Jemisin. A page-turning saga that also touches on modern world themes with characters whose hope and hurt you really feel. I'm not usually a fan of fantasy, but this trilogy is about as far as you can get from drama with dragons.



Helen Joy

Team

Ends by Joe Mcleod. Endings are discussed across a variety of contexts: death; divorce; waste and recycling; and the customer experience of leaving services. This book advocates for producing true end-to-end digital services where we design meaningful off-boarding experiences instead of focussing only on consumer-oriented on-boarding.

How to own the room: Women and the Art of Brilliant Speaking by Viv Groskop. I read this before speaking at NA 2019. Each chapter explores the speaking style of notable women. The speaking voice that resonated most with me was Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s calm storytelling approach.

Relly-Annett Baker

Lead Volunteer

I’ve been reading Lara Hogan’s **Resilient Management** – a concise, insightful and witty book on learning how to be a good manager. Plenty of people in our industry get promoted for their design skills and not their people skills and you need both to manage well.

One of the best fiction books I’ve read in the last few years: **The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle** by Stuart Turton. Agatha Christie meets Inception.

John With Beard

Volunteer

Disrupted by Dan Lyons, a good laugh (none of us work in places like this, do we?).

Lost Children Archive by Valeria Luiselli, to remind us about wider questions of our humanity.

Bastian Allgeier

Workshop Leader

Digital Minimalism by Cal Newport. I recommend it to anyone who’s trying to spend less time with their smartphone and social media. It was eye-opening how far my screen addiction has come. Working in our industry often left me with a fear of missing out on trends and meaningful business relationships if I didn’t spend enough time online. It’s very liberating to take a break from that and re-evaluate how I want to spend my time.

My second recommendation is one of my all-time favourites: the sci-fi trilogy **The Three-Body Problem** by Liu Cixin.

Q2 Can you offer one piece of advice to help others anticipate or navigate an uncertain industry future?

Cennydd Bowles

Speaker

Distrust orthodoxy. It helps to begin with, then becomes a straight-jacket.



Tatiana Mac

Speaker

Consistent efforts, no matter how small, compound. When faced with an onslaught of endless choices or pathways, it can be daunting to want to take on the weight of the industry as an individual. Repeated actions—whether that be actively correcting ableist, anti-trans, racist, sexist language in multiple interactions or learning one JavaScript function a day—are the way we can grow and progress. Changing directions midway is okay; you did not waste time if you moved on from something that no longer served you.

Akil Benjamin

Speaker

Take stock of your resources, make a plan with a clear simple goal. Use all your resources appropriately to deliver on that plan.

A couple notes on execution: Take your time but don't be slow, usually big goals required lengthy time, find a good pace and stick to it.

Simple is not easy, it's usually requires good insight and high levels of discipline or consistency. With that in mind keep your goal front of mind at all times, write it on the walls if you have to.

Don't sleep on yourself, don't wait for anyone to have your back. This isn't a casino, stacking the deck in your favour is allowed. Therefore work out all the different ways you can ensure the plan goes your way. Having at least two alternatives to any grand plan is helpful for freedom.

Laura Kalbag

Speaker

I'm not really qualified to give advice to others in the industry. I've always been an outsider, self-employed, and for the majority of my decade in the industry I've been running a very small not-for-profit organisation. I'm independent but my future is not certain, I have no financial security or job security. All I know is that we are living in a time of uncertainty, fragility and widening inequality. In a world that is facing climate catastrophe and an industry that is seemingly dominated by exploitation, more things need to change than stay the same.



Bastian Allgeier

Workshop Leader

I can only give the advice that I try to give myself. Stay interested and excited about as many things as possible. Motivation, creativity and energy can be found anywhere. We only need to keep the ability to learn and change.



Geri Coady

Organiser

Have interests and hobbies outside of your industry. Nerd out on something different. It'll help you come up with new or creative solutions to problems that might not happen if you're only ever looking in one place.

Helen Joy

Team

It's ok to not have a set career plan or 5-year goal. The tech industry changes at speed and new roles develop that you might realise you're looking for until you see them. The work you do—how it makes you feel and how it sits with your own moral compass—is more important than job titles.

Q3 What common fallacy — design, tech, or anything else — do you think more of us should wake up to?

Geri Coady

Organiser

Not everything has to tell a story. Learn to appreciate when people simply want to get tasks done without dealing with extraneous fluff.

Cennydd Bowles

Speaker

I always hear that design is about problem-solving. I suppose that's not wrong per se, but it misses something important: design also causes problems. Ignore that at your peril. (Secondly, a pet gripe: there's no evidence the golden ratio is aesthetically special or sacred to humans. It's mathematically fascinating but worthless for design.)

Helen Joy

Team

It really bugs me when people refer to designers as “the creative ones”. I work within an interdisciplinary team of talented individuals who are all as creative as each other. Solving complex coding problems is equally as creative as designing a user interface. All forms of creativity should be celebrated equally across the industry.

Tatiana Mac

Speaker

The fallacy I wish to disrupt is there is a best way to do things. Daily people are fighting about let versus const, whether Typescript is a good or bad idea, etc. Instead of encouraging a wider array to approach things, we tend to want to narrow. It comes, generally, from a place of insecurity. If we can fight for the way we do it to be crowned “correct,” perhaps we can fend imposter syndrome off for another day.

Instead of crowning a best, we can create an environment where we share context and circumstances. What is “best” for one person, in one product team, with a specific audience is going to be worst for another person. Perpetuating the idea of “best” also tends to lead into people, where we crown individual members of the community as heroes—a dangerous sport when we're all so fallable.

Akil Benjamin

Speaker

Microsoft isn't behind, I think they're just busy doing something else radically different. Watch how they're doing more and more infrastructure projects around the world. I think we should pay attention to that, just in case.

Laura Kalbag

Speaker

We need to stop pretending that Big Tech can be changed from the inside. The people running these corporations are unprecedentedly powerful, wealthy, and (by their own benchmarks) successful. They do not perceive a problem with their objectives or their funding models. By entertaining the idea that they're interested in change we are, at best, gaslighting ourselves. At worst, we're complicit.



Simon Collison

Organiser

The idea that art and poetry are irrelevant or pointless; that culture is not worthy of investment. In a world of closed down thinking, a poem is valuable because it doesn't tell you how to think about it, and art helps by undoing the illusion of a smooth functioning world to expose the truth. There is propaganda everywhere, and it's hard to make sense of things. More than ever, we need these open, democratised spaces in which to see ourselves. What matters is not always *what* you think, but *how* you think, and culture is an ongoing training plan for that.

Bastian Allgeier

Workshop leader

What we are doing is not neutral, but way too many people in our industry want to believe it is. Every project has an effect on the people and the environment around us. We, as designers and developers, need to take responsibility for those effects and take them into account when we make decisions. We are facing problems in the next decade that cannot be answered with ignorance or by trying to stay neutral.

Q4 What gives you hope?

John With Beard

Volunteer

Speakers and attendees at New Adventures.

Geri Coady

Organiser

Gen Z and younger. I wish I was that switched on when I was that age.

Simon Collison

Organiser

I'm fond of this line from a 2018 Real Life editorial: "When young people receive old ideas, they find the inconsistencies." We're witnessing this in all kinds of ways right now because the systems we've grown up with seem totally at odds with a world in peril. To understand the future, we have to understand the power and determination of young people. [<https://cutt.ly/next-gen>]

Helen Joy

Team

People. Over time I've learned that when things get tough, people who offer support are the most valuable thing you can have in life. I'm eternally grateful to have a number of amazing friends and family who have helped me through tough times and who I know will always be there for me.



Akil Benjamin

Speaker

They finally found a buzzword to put their money where their mouth is, "Embedded Ethics".

Now they've worked out how to make ethical practises attractive I'm interested to see if it can change design patterns worldwide. It's already started; just depends on its impact now.

Tatiana Mac

Speaker

I try to give myself hope every day. In the face of much hardship, I've been able to use my privileges to resist my oppressions, for myself and then for others. Hope, with depression, can seem like a contradiction. Hope lives in small spaces for me—when someone thanks me for something I wrote, when I see TV shows with queer people of colour where they get to be full characters, when I see a 'skip to content' link on a popular website, when I see someone help a stranger.

Bastian Allgeier

Workshop Leader

I find hope in the current climate change movement. It's inspiring to see the dedication of teenagers and young activists that keep on fighting, even though the world around them rapidly changes for the worse. There's hope when I see how people from all generations join them and start to wake up. Change is possible and political activism can work. We only have to look back in time to find great examples.

Laura Kalbag

Speaker

That humans are capable of change.

Relly Annett-Baker

Lead Volunteer

My kids and their friends. That whole generation. They haven't got time for pandering to old ways and old ideas. They want to save the planet and if we let them they will, and maybe they'll save us too.



Cennydd Bowles

Speaker

The climate resistance movement.

Q5 Would you tell us a little-known fact about yourself?

Cennydd Bowles

Speaker

I used to play chess to a good standard: I once drew with an International Master (one down from a Grandmaster).



Helen Joy

Team

In my first job working for Future Publishing, I ended up randomly modelling biker leathers for Fast Bike Magazine. It didn't inspire to me be a biker, though. 13 years later and I've still never been on a motorbike.

Geri Coady

Organiser

I designed The Cure's official MySpace page in 2008. Now, if only it was acceptable to have MySpace profiles in your portfolio...

Akil Benjamin

Speaker

Bring me pineapples, I will forgive almost anything.

Simon Collison

Organiser

I went to art school and after graduating I began to find success as a conceptual artist — before all this web business distracted me. My first proper residency was in Iceland, a whole glorious Summer back in 1998 when it was mercifully free of tourists. I made lots of friends and totally fell for the place, returning so many times I'd feel homesick when not there.



Laura Kalbag

Speaker

I'm the oldest of five children and it explains all of my personality.

Bastian Allgeier

Workshop Leader

I've been a guitarist in a SKA band for more than 20 years. My first gig was when we opened for Manfred Mann's Earth Band. I was scared as hell. I had only one guitar solo during that gig, and that's when my amp broke down. Good times!

Relly Annett-Baker

Lead Volunteer

I'm studying a Masters in crime fiction at Cambridge University and I write children's crime fiction in my spare time. And I love to recommend books.

Tatiana Mac

Speaker

I studied piano for 15 years.

Creating an email. Nightmare.

Making email is hard. You have to plan your message, write content, gather assets, and design everything. Then code HTML that works in mobile devices as well as Outlook. Set up complex data-driven personalisation. QA and fact check everything. Finally, press send and hope for the best. Often these tasks have to be organised across multiple people. It's stressful work.

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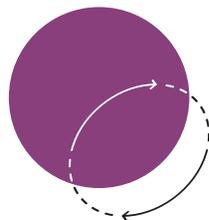
Nottingham coffee tour

Friday 24 January

If you need a post-conference caffeine boost to power through the weekend, come join our Nottingham Coffee Tour to check out the local bean scene. Guided by Geri Coady, she'll show you the best speciality cafes that the city has to offer. Starts at 10am.

For more details visit:

newadventuresconf.com/2020/fringe



New Adventures

Conference guide January 2020

our speakers



Cennydd Bowles is a London-based designer and futurist with seventeen years of experience advising clients including Twitter, Ford, Cisco, and the BBC. His focus today is the ethics of emerging technology. He has lectured on the topic at Facebook, Stanford University, and Google, and is a frequent speaker at technology and design events worldwide. His second book, *Future Ethics*, was published in 2018.

he/him • cennydd.com • [@cennydd](https://twitter.com/cennydd)



Akil Benjamin is a biologist turned design thinker. Leading the research team at Comuzi, a design invention studio, Akil works with innovators to produce new, digital products services and experiences. Taking on a role which explores how individuals and communities experience the world around them, Akil specialises in crafting positive human experiences.

Having the privilege of working with groups and organisations such as the G20, BBC, M&C Saatchi, ASOS, Uber, and EY, Akil has the ambition to continue working with larger organisations to provoke the right people within them to look at problems in a new light, affecting change at a greater scale.

he/him • [@comuzi_lab](https://twitter.com/comuzi_lab) • [@akil_benjamin](https://twitter.com/akil_benjamin)



Natalie Kane is Curator of Digital Design at the V&A, London, where she is responsible for the acquisition, care and display of the museum's digital design collection. In 2018, Natalie was curator of the U.K. entry to the Milan Triennale, showcasing the work of research agency Forensic Architecture. Beyond the museum, Natalie is one half of Haunted Machines (together with Tobias Revell), a curatorial research project exploring cultural narratives around technology that have been commissioned by Serpentine Galleries, Ars Electronica, Design Museum and Impakt Festival. She is also a visiting tutor at the London College of Communication and the Institute of European Design in Barcelona, and an Advisory Board member of the Society for Computers and Law.

she/her • ndkane.com • [@nd_kane](https://twitter.com/nd_kane)



Liz Jackson is the founder of The Disabled List, a design organisation that engages in disability as a creative practice. She is also a curator at Critical Axis, a community driven project that collects and analyses disability representation in media. In 2018, Jackson created The WITH Fellowship, which partners disabled creatives with top design studios and creative spaces for three-month fellowships. You can learn more about Liz in her personal website, [The Girl with the Purple Cane](#).

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[she/her/handsome](#) • [thegirlwiththepurplecane.com](#) • [@elizejackson](#)



Laura Kalbag is a British designer living in Ireland, and author of [Accessibility For Everyone](#) from [A Book Apart](#). She's one third of Small Technology Foundation, a tiny two-person-and-one-husky not-for-profit organisation. At Small Technology Foundation, Laura works on a web privacy tool called Better Blocker, and initiatives to advocate for and build small technology to protect personhood and democracy in the digital network age.

On an average day, Laura does everything from design and development, learning how to run a sustainable not-for-profit, and trying to make privacy, and broader ethics in technology, accessible to a wide audience. You can find her making design decisions, writing CSS, nudging icon pixels, or distilling a privacy policy into something humans can understand. Sometimes she speaks at conferences and writes articles too.

[laurakalbag.com](#) • [@laurakalbag](#)



Florence Okoye is a User Experience designer whose practice centres on using service design methods to design inclusive digital experiences. She has worked in a range of sectors from utilities to cybersecurity, using critical design to inspire design approaches that can create resilient and adaptable services in complex systems.

She currently works at the Natural History Museum where her work is focussed on using digital design as a tool for opening access to science and the natural world.

[she/her](#) • [@FINOkoye](#)



Tatiana Mac is an independent American designer who works directly with organisations to build clear and coherent products and design systems. She believes the trifecta of accessibility, performance, and inclusion can work symbiotically to improve our social landscape digitally and physically. When ethically-minded, she thinks technologists can dismantle exclusionary systems in favour of community-focused, inclusive ones.

Never totally pleased with design tools, she designs in browser to bring performant, semantic, and accessible narratives into the web. Her current obsessions are optimising variable fonts, converting raster images into SVGs, and recreating modernist paintings in CSS grid. When she can successfully escape vim, she finds new countries to explore (34 and counting).

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she/they • tatianamac.com • [@TatianaTMac](https://twitter.com/TatianaTMac)



Jeff Veen is a Design Partner at True Ventures, where he spends his time helping companies create better products. He does this as an advisor, as well, for companies like about.me, Medium, and WordPress. Previously, he was VP of Design at Adobe after they acquired Typekit, the company he co-founded and ran as CEO.

Jeff was also one of the founding partners of the user experience consulting group Adaptive Path. While there, he led Measure Map, which was acquired by Google. During his time at Google, Jeff designed Google Analytics and lead the UX team for Google's apps.

Much earlier, Jeff was part of the founding web team at Wired Magazine, where he helped build HotWired, Web Monkey, Wired News, and many other sites. During that time, he authored two books, HotWired Style and The Art and Science of Web Design.

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about.me/veen • [@veen](https://twitter.com/veen)

schedule

Wednesday 22nd January

- 0800 Workshops registration
- 0900 Workshops
- 1900 Design Exchange
- 2000 JH Bowling

Thursday 23rd January: The Conference

- 0830 Registration
- 0930 Opening remarks
- 0940 Cennydd Bowles: Building Better Worlds
- 1030 Akil Benjamin: Clean your studio. Draw on walls.
Don't break things. Radical is close to home.
- 1100 Morning break
- 1130 Natalie Kane: Unknown Unknowns: Collecting our
digital lives
- 1215 Presentable Live with Jeff Veen
- 1245 Lunch (provided)
- 1300 Women in Tech, Notts: Lunchtime Takeover
- 1345 Liz Jackson: Productivity recreates disability
- 1430 Laura Kalbag: Defying the mainstream: building
technology that respects our rights
- 1515 Afternoon break
- 1545 Florence Okoye: Designing for a collective futurity:
mapping the unseen
- 1630 Tatiana Mac: Our Banal Binary
- 1715 Presentable Live with Jeff Veen
- 1745 Closing remarks
- 1800 Ends
- 1900 After-party (don't forget your name badge)

Friday 24th January

- 0900 Run Club
- 1000 Coffee tour with Geri Coady
- 1400 Fr00tball tournament



topics

Building Better Worlds

Cennydd Bowles

We can't go on like this. In the face of climate crisis, deepening inequality, and widespread automation, our infrastructures and imaginations aren't ready for the changes ahead. But this is no time for mourning. Designers can rebuild our outdated institutions and prototype better futures to come. Along the way, we'll reimagine design itself. User-centred methods have blinded us to social and ecological harms; we now need speculative and critical approaches to the world's biggest challenges. Design in a world on the brink means embracing our moral duties, becoming planetary custodians, and giving the many, not just the few, a stake in the future. Better worlds are possible, if we wish them.

Clean your studio. Draw on walls. Don't break things. Radical is close to home.

Akil Benjamin

How can you leave hubris at the door and produce a piece of work?

I will talk about our methods at COMUZI to produce radical pieces of work, but the honest truth is, the methods can only do so much. It's about your integrity of self and how you view them to employ methods appropriately.

I believe all the 'invisible' decisions about how you choose to be is what makes the work.

To do what I do, I've had to learn peacefulness, how to face fears, how to will myself through doing and how to lead my team through extreme personal growth. It hurt, but you should see what we produced.

Stepping outside yourself is simpler than you think. Being radical is close to home. None of it was easy and that's what this talk is about.

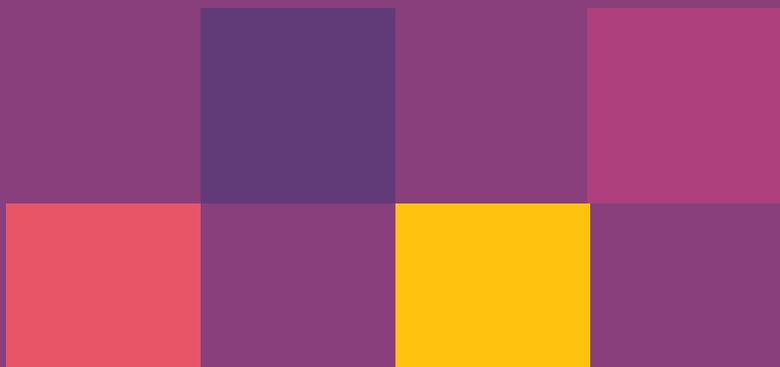
Unknown Unknowns: Collecting our digital lives

Natalie Kane

As a curator specialising in collecting our lived experience of digital design, it's often a fight against time, obsolescence and an unthinkable huge and edgeless system. It's deeply complex and deeply human, so what would we keep for the future, and what will be left?

If we are, as Amanda Lagervist argues, living with the "persistent presence of the infinite, in the age of temporal instantaneity" what do we understand our digital culture to be? With our digital selves living in places that aren't often clear to see, strategies to think through our experiences in digital space are vitally important.

In this talk, there will be questions for our past, present and future selves, and the occasional friendly ghost.



Productivity recreates disability

Liz Jackson

When designers and technologists market disability-centric products, they tend to focus on how their 'solution' increases productivity. This has the unintended negative effect of recreating disability when their intent was to ease it. In her presentation, Liz Jackson will discuss the value of letting disabled people inform what work means and how work is done. In doing so, Jackson will offer a new approach to design, not for optimization and self betterment, but rather design that allows people to exist and work and thrive as they are.

Defying the mainstream: building technology that respects our rights

Laura Kalbag

Our every move, habit, and facial expression is tracked and captured by the web and Big Tech at large. We're told surveillance is the price of using modern technology, and that our personal information is merely used to improve our experiences. Instead, we see data about us being used to perpetuate systems of oppression and discrimination. Being designers who are also users, we also have to reckon with how we both contribute to this surveillance system and are exploited by it.

Despite what we're so often told, technology doesn't have to be this way. This talk will explore a few of the practical ways we can design to benefit human welfare, not corporate profits.

Designing for a collective futurity: mapping the unseen

Florence Okoye

The onus is increasingly on digital designers to go beyond considering the aesthetics and interactions of a product. Creating truly inclusive design for diverse global audiences with intersecting needs now meets questions of sustainability, ethical and advocacy design, and cybersecurity.

Overwhelming as this might be, these questions are necessary to grapple with for those concerned about questions of privacy and data rights, access and inclusion, and the social and environmental cost of the technologies used on a daily basis, which will only scale up in complexity and reach.

This talk will focus on lessons learned from a series of ongoing experiments that have been taking place amongst different sections of the design community to understand how we can navigate the problematics of product creation in the context of a capitalist hegemony driven market to inquire, critique and design collectively in the face of our voracious technological landscape.

topics

Our Banal Binary

Tatiana Mac

Binary code is the axiomatic core of computing. From ones and zeros, we built magnificent inventions that visualised black holes and cup-winning football goals.

Our reliance on the binary has a cost. Our language, laws, and technology build upon reductionist Boolean thinking: true and false, good and evil, black and white, just and unjust. The binary that gifted us could also become the most monolithic harbinger to developing nuanced solutions for social change and innovation.

We will fracture the spokes of this axiomatic wheel, exploring a new model that encourages a more intersectional and inclusive way to build for all.

Presentable Live

with Jeff Veen

This year's ambitious talks may offer as many questions as answers, so we've invited web pioneer Jeff Veen to host two special sessions. Now, these are not "panels"; we all know panels destroy a good vibe. Nope, this will be more like a chat show: a live version of Jeff's hugely popular Presentable Podcast. Jeff's a skilled interviewer and he'll represent you well, but there will be multiple ways for you to inform the debate.

The long-running Presentable Podcast focuses on how we design and build the products that are shaping our digital future. Jeff and guests track the tools, trends, and methods being used by teams from the biggest companies and latest startups. In each episode, Jeff brings over two decades of experience as a designer, developer, entrepreneur, and investor as he chats with guests about how design is changing the world.





fr00tball

Friday 24 January

Play five-a-side footy in a non-judgemental, diverse and often talentless environment where everyone is welcome. We provide the balls, bibs, liquids, and trophy. Indoor shelter and changing rooms available. Put your name down at fr00tball.com, or just turn up and play or watch. For updates follow [@fr00tball](https://twitter.com/fr00tball). 2pm-4pm.

For more details visit:
newadventuresconf.com/2020/fringe



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workshops



Building Better Worlds: a futures design workshop

Full-day workshop with **Cennydd Bowles**

In the face of unprecedented public scrutiny and a world undergoing deep, complex change, technologists must expand their horizons. Short-term perspectives – more products, more users, more growth – have run out of oxygen. Instead, we need to think more intelligently about our shared futures, and the social, political, and ecological influence the tech industry wields.

Building Better Worlds, a one-day masterclass by Cennydd Bowles, teaches critical, innovative ideas and methods from the emerging fields of speculative design, futures thinking, and experiential futures. By exploring the consequences of emerging technology, and creating design fictions that make potential futures feel vivid and real, you'll learn to stretch your thinking and your practice alike. Instead of focusing merely on quarterly roadmaps and existing users, you'll learn to recognise your responsibilities toward future societies and generations, and use that knowledge to help your organisation react smartly to the challenges ahead.

Along the way, you'll learn how to influence not just the artefacts of the future, but the future itself.

Cennydd Bowles is a London-based designer and futurist with seventeen years of experience advising clients including Twitter, Ford, Cisco, and the BBC. His focus today is the ethics of emerging technology. He has lectured on the topic at Facebook, Stanford University, and Google, and is a frequent speaker at technology and design events worldwide. His second book, *Future Ethics*, was published in 2018.

he/him • cennydd.com • [@cennydd](https://twitter.com/cennydd)





Kirby CMS

Full-day workshop with Bastian Allgeier

Learn how to build websites with Kirby CMS from scratch. Kirby is a fast and flexible file-based content management system used by companies like Daimler AG, EasyJet, Mozilla, Harvard and more.

Everybody attending the workshop will receive a free Kirby 3 license included in the workshop ticket price.

Bastian Allgeier lives in Heidelberg, Germany. A masters degree in design and more than a decade of experience as a developer inspired him to create his own content management system, Kirby, in 2012. Seven years later he's leading a team of 5 and Kirby is powering thousands of websites around the world.

bastianallgeier.com • @bastianallgeier



How to Negotiate with Confidence

Morning workshop with She Wins

Research confirms that men are four times more likely than women to negotiate, especially when it comes to their salary. As a result women can lose out on making £600,000 more over their working life(!)

The ability to negotiate was identified by the World Economic Forum as one of the top ten skills you need to succeed in the modern workplace — so it is time to brush up on this essential skill.

When women earn their worth, we all benefit: other women, men, families, businesses and the wider economy. **She Wins** help women recognise, negotiate and earn their full value at work. Clare Sutcliffe and Kate Pljaskovova offer online courses, in person workshops and online resources to ensure you earn your worth.

shewins.co • @SheWinsCo



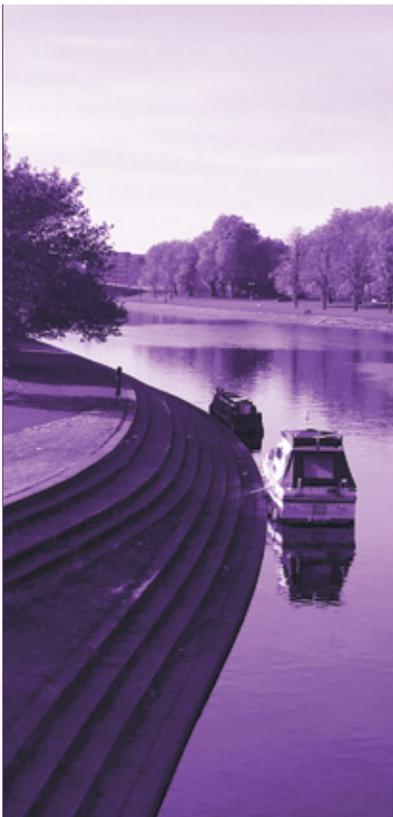
WEDNESDAY

22 JANUARY 2020

8pm UNTIL *12am*

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REGISTER YOUR TEAM AT
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Run club

Friday 24 January

Shrug off that after-party daze and join us for laid-back loops around the river. At 9am we'll meet at Wilford Village tram stop, and run our favourite 5K loop around the Trent. The group pace will be 7:00/km, which lends itself nicely to chatting. Strava users can join the "New Adventures" club. Don't forget your kit!

For more details visit:

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A BOOK APART

Tito

Would you buy us a coffee?

If you've enjoyed New Adventures and would like to show your appreciation, please consider buying us one or more cups of coffee.

Your generosity will help us cover our costs for this event, and would mean the world to us both.

Geri & Simon xxx

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Outpost Coffee Roasters

HAND CRAFTED + LOCALLY ROASTED

**Thursday 23rd Jan, from 8:30am
at the Albert Hall**

Love speciality coffee? Get your fix from the Outpost popup at the conference venue.

At busy times you can also grab a cup of functional caffeine from one of our coffee stations.



Women in Tech, Notts Lunchtime takeover

**Thursday 23rd
The Osborne Lounge at the Albert Hall
#WITNotts**

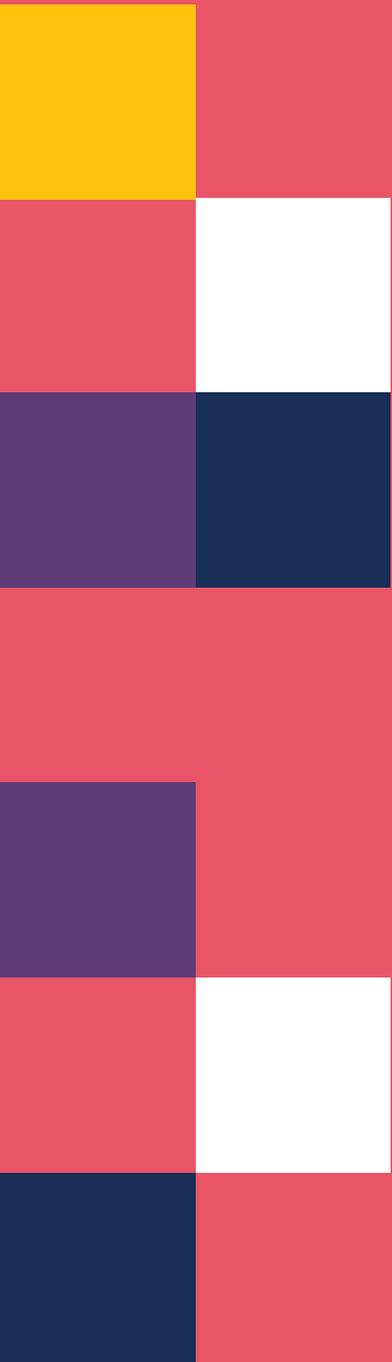
Get to know your fellow attendees by grabbing your lunch and coming to the lunchtime takeover. Back after 2019's fun and informative lightning talks, the takeover will enable you to meet other attendees in a relaxing, informal and light-hearted session; if you've come by yourself then this is the place to be to meet new people.

WiT celebrates the women and gender minorities in our industry and doesn't exclude anyone, so you can enjoy this event no matter what gender you identify with.

newadventuresconf.com/2020/fringe

attendees

Completed tickets as of 9th January: Adam Kendall • Adam Stewart • Adele Murray • Aija Kalnina • Ajay Mathur • Akil Benjamin • Alan Durkan • Alex Cowles • Alex Jegtnes • Alex Older • Alok Babu • Amanda Annandale • Amber Wilson • Anam Hussain • Andrew Broomfield • Andrew Howell • Andrew Travers • Andy McGregor • Andy Stannard • Andy Thorne • Ann Carrier • Anna Dodson • Anthony Glenn • Anthony Mellor • Ashleigh Wilson • Ashley Baxter • Aurora Shahu • Baljinder Kaur Hayre • Bastian Allgeier • Becky Lee • Becky Mallaband • Becky Shaw • Ben Bodien • Ben Coleman • Ben Holliday • Ben Longden • Ben Seymour • Benjamin Brundell • Brian Feeney • Brian McNestry • Byron Fitzgerald • Caitlin Goodale • Callum Upfield • Carl Collins • Carlos Eriksson • Carolina Gilabert • Caroline Jarrett • Cennydd Bowles • Charles Burdett • Charlie Tapster • Charlotte Dann • Chris Allwood • Chris Armstrong • Chris Merritt • Chris Shiflett • Claire Cahill • Clare Brown • Clare Sutcliffe • Colin Oakley • Craig Atallah Frost • Craig Francis • Craig Richardson • Craig Shaw • Craig Smith • Cris Thompson • Dan Baker • Dan Scotton • Dan Webb • Daniel Howells • Daniel James • Daniel Merriman • Daniel Stump • Daniel Westlake • Daniel Wiegand • Darryl Snowball • Daryl Cecile • David Hughes • The other David Hughes • David Rapson • David Roessli • Dmitry Osipchuk • Doc Parsons • Doug Wilson • Dwayne Codling • Ella Bishop • Elliot Ross • Elliot Jay Stocks • Emily Nicholls • Emily Wilkinson • Emlyn Kinzett • Erika Balode • Filip Hnízdo • Florence Okoye • Frances Brown • Garrett Coakley • Garrett Winder • Gavin Elliott • Gavyn McKenzie • George Wood • Geri Coady • Gisela Reyes-Cruz • Greg Annandale • Greg Bowler • Greg Harvey • Greg Wood • Haleigh Houde • Hans Verschooten • Helen Joy • Henry Desroches • Iain Heath • Ian Axton • Ian Stapleton • Ian Thomas • Ieva Graudule • Ileana Lindeman • Isaac Lowe • Jack Simpson • Jade Snowball • James Ashcroft • James Bull • James Lindeman • Jamie Huskisson • Jaz Brooks • Jedd Fenner • Jeff Veen • Jennifer Mackown • Jenny Hadfield • Jessica Marsden • Jessica Salisbury • Jim Ramsden • Jim Silvey • Jo Pudney • Joanne Dodd • Joe Leech • Joey Dudgeon • Johanna Kollmann • John Chennells • John With Beard • John-Henry Barac • Joke De Winter • Jon Heslop • Jon Houghton • Jon Stones • Jonathan Engstrom • Jonathan Hadlow • Jonathan Kokké • Jonathan Stephens • Jonic Linley • Jose Verissimo • Joseph Russell • Josh Rose • Joshua Shammay • Juan Fernandes • Julian Higman • Justine Pocock • Kate Pljaskovova • Kate Portman • Katie Attwood • Katie Ottewell • Kay Dawson • Kayla Shipp • Konstantinos Bougioukntolaptsis • Laura Kalbag • Lauren Hulme • Lauren Sternberg • Lea Chapman • Leah Jane Jervis • Leanda Ryan • Lee Whitelock • Lex Lofthouse • Lily Worth • Liz Jackson • Lucy Pickering • Luke Murphy-Wearmouth • Lyla Hadlow • Magdalena Jadach • Mandar Tamhane • Marc Carlucci • Marc Prior • Marc Thiele • Mario Rader • Mark Boulton • Mark Mitchell • Martin Wright • Mat Hayward • Mat Johnson • Mateen Khan • Matt Bee • Matt Conde • Matt West • Melody Tse • Michelle Pavey • Mihaela-Raluca Tabacu • Mikey Cattell • Naomi Parker • Natalie Dickson • Natalie Kane • Nathan Pitman • Nick Stevens • Nicola Saunders • Nina Limbrick • Olga Stokowiec • Oliver Stanley • Oluwatomisin Niyi-Awosusi • Paul Bailey • Paul Davis • Paul Jardine • Paul Liddington • Paul Wallas • Paula Cox • Pete Clark • Pete Jobs • Pete Lambert • Peter Coles • Peter Heslop • Peter Hind • Peter Reaper-Reynolds • Peter Smith • Phil Howell • Phil Sorrell • Prisca Schmarsow • Rachel Watson • Rebeca Radford • Relly Annett-Baker • Remi / Rowan Friedman • Rich Paul • Richard Smith • Rizwana Akmal Khan • Rob Sugars • Robb Owen • Robert Stringer • Ruth Ivimey-Cook • Sam Goddard • Sam Hutchings • Sam Roberts • Samuel Coles • Sarah Esterman • Sarah Thew • Sean Dunwoody • Seth Warburton • Shane Hudson • Simon Clayson • Simon Collison • Simon Cox • Simon Jones • Simon Wilson • Simon Young • Stefan Grindley • Stefan Nietzsche • Stephanie Stimac Drescher • Stephen Dudley • Steve Kirtley • Steve O'Connor • Steven Borthwick • Steven Woodhead • Stu Marlow • Stuart Reeves • Tatiana Mac • Tatiana Ugriumova • Tereza Kinnert • Tim Spear • Tom Davey • Tom Davies • Tom Jepson • Tom Lord • Tony Ball • Travis Schmeisser • Trevor Morris • Val Mitchell • Velvet Spors • Westley Knight



credits

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Organised and designed by Simon Collison and Geri Coady

Volunteer lead: Relly Annett-Baker

Support: Cennydd Bowles and Helen Joy

Photography: Stefan Nitzsche

Pet fox: it's still Greg Wood

Publication

Editor: Simon Collison

Design: Geri Coady

Printing: Century Studios

Paper: Horizon Offset 120 gsm White (FSC Mix Credit)

Typeset in Aperçu from Colophon Foundry, Source Sans Pro

Thank you to:

The speakers, the sponsors, the exhibitors, the volunteers, Pim Doeswijk and the fantastic team at Nottingham Albert Hall, Dale and everyone at Nottingham Audio Visual, Richard Adamson at Lace Market Hotel, Niki Harman at Nottingham Contemporary, Doc Parsons and Tito, everyone at Outpost Coffee Roasters, the team at Botti de Mama, John Atkin at Serif, Jamie Huskisson and everyone at JH, Chris Shiflett and the whole Faculty team, Garrett Winder at Good Work, Travis Schmeisser at Flight, Katel at A Book Apart, Kai Brach at Offscreen, Elliot Ross at Taxi For Email, Brenda and Andrew at White Coat Captioning, Wayne at Century Studios, ML Badges, Women in Tech Notts, Marc Thiele, Vitaly and Amanda at Smashing Magazine, Ethan Marcotte, John With Beard, Helen Tesla, David Hughes, our parents, Hoodie-chan, Truffle, our dear little Bearface, those inevitably forgotten – and of course, every single attendee.

Thank you to our scholarship applicants. Huge thanks to Octophin Digital for being our primary scholarship tickets sponsor. Our sincere thanks also to the following generous companies and individuals: Daniel Wiegand, Jonathan Stephens, Niice, Alex Jegtnes, Martin Wright, Caroline Jarrett, Jan-Paul Koudstaal, Flight app, Kyle Ridolfo, Smashing Media, Andy Parker and Steve Kirtley, Christopher Murphy and Mariusz Ciesla.

Our most sincere thanks to the hand-raisers. You're the ones who continue to show up either in person or to amplify our message. We see you and appreciate it every single time. Thank you, Dan Donald, Johanna Kollmann, James Lindeman, Juan Fernandes, Prisca Schmarsow, Dan Rubin, Pete Lambert, Elliot Jay Stocks, David Roessli, Robb Owen, Ben Seymour, Sophie Dennis, Rich Paul, Garrett Coakley, Justine Pocock, Tom Jepson, Ben Bodien, Pete Clark, Kirsty Burgoine, Richard Wiggins, Simon R Jones, Rizwana Khan, Paul Jardine, Westley Knight — agh, we've run out of space!

You are here

Nottingham map

Key Venues

- 1 Albert Hall Conference Centre
- 2 Antenna
- 3 Nottingham Bowl
- 4 Nottingham Contemporary
- 5 Wilford Village Tram Stop
Tram from Old Market Square, Lace Market, or railway station, towards Clifton South (5 mins)
- 6 Gresham Sports Pavilion
Directions as for Wilford Tram stop, but add 8-mins walk.

★ Recommended

Coffee and Tea

- 7 Outpost Coffee Roasters ★
- 8 Speciality Coffee Shop ★
- 9 Wired Cafe Bar
- 10 Cartwheel Coffee
- 11 200 Degrees Coffee
- 12 200 Degrees Coffee
- 13 Josephine's Tea Room
- 14 Effy (Coffee) ★

Good Quick Food

- 15 Tough Mary's Bakehouse ★
- 16 Ugly Bread Bakery
- 17 Pudding Pantry
- 18 Oscar & Rosie's (Pizza)
- 19 Zaap Thai Street Food
- 20 Bar Iberico ★

Pubs and Bars

- 21 Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem ★
- 22 The Hand & Heart ★
- 23 Junkyard ★
- 24 Kean's Head ★
- 25 Cock and Hoop
- 26 BrewDog
- 27 Brass Monkey Cocktail Bar

Hotels

- 28 Lace Market Hotel
- 29 Premier Inn Chapel Bar
- 30 Premier Inn Goldsmith St.
- 31 Hotel Ibis
- 32 Hart's Hotel
- 33 Park Plaza

Parking

- 34 NCP Car Park Mount St.
- 35 Q-Park Talbot Street

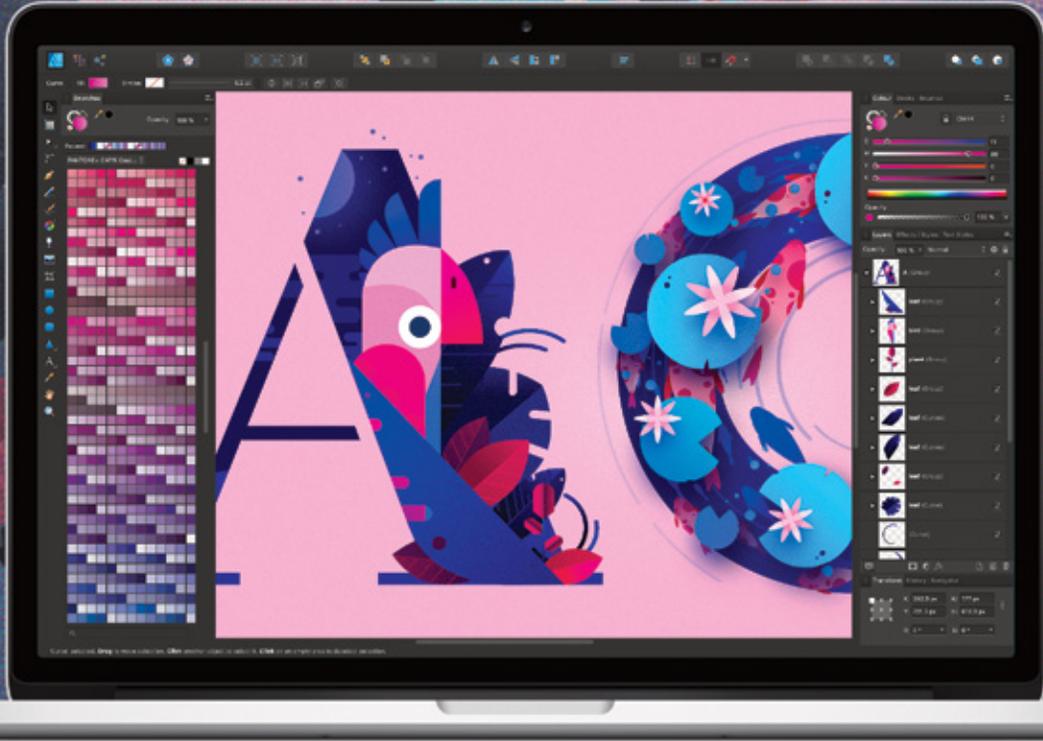
Transport

- 36 Royal Centre tram stop
- 37 Old Market Sq. tram stop
- 38 Lace Market tram stop
- 39 Nottingham Railway Station
- 40 National Express bus stop

 The tram tracks



36 Days of Type by Nora Torn



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