

Full Lineup Revealed For Belfast XR Festival With Top Extended Reality Experiences On The Bill

Belfast XR, now in its third year, specialises in curating worldclass immersive technology content that takes the art of storytelling to a new level.

BELFAST, COUNTY ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND, February 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An innovative arts festival is set to once again merge technology and art to create a unique virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) experience for attendees.

Belfast XR, now in its third year, specialises in curating worldclass immersive technology content that takes the art of storytelling to a new level.

Extended Reality or 'XR' is the collective name for virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR). VR is a computer-generated artificial environment with scenes that appear to be real, while AR is a digital overlay onto the real world, which is viewed through your phone or an iPad.

This year's lineup has been confirmed to include three unique paid for experiences along with an additional three free bonus experiences available for visitors to the festival.



Deepa Mann-Kler, festival director



Belfast XR Festival: Wed 28 & Thur 29 Feb, 2024

Appearing at the festival will be the magical VR journey through the work of Catalan architect and designer Antoni Gaudí in Gaudí, The Atelier of the Divine.

Attendees will take part in a 20 minute experience designed for small groups of six.

The story will take festival goers back to 1926 when, weakened by age and feeling his death approaching, Gaudí invites his new assistants to discover his studio, to understand his vision and complete his work.



Scene from VR experience Gaudí, The Atelier of the Divine featuring at the Belfast XR Festival

The heart-wrenching voyage of survival Stay Alive My Son is also one of the key events, based on the internationally acclaimed memoirs of Pin Yathay, this immersive 60 minute story thrusts audiences into the shoes of a pained father forced to make the gut-wrenching decision to abandon his six-year-old son to survive during the Cambodian genocide.

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The final headline experience will be Eternal, the profound exploration of eternal life, where during this 20 minute experience attendees will step into the realm of eternity with a mesmerising audio journey designed exclusively for one person, in the comfort of their own bed.

As intimate audiences of just two people per time slot

climb into a bed they will delve into a profound exploration of eternal life and contemplate the sacrifices one might make for immortality.

Deepa Mann-Kler, director and curator for Belfast XR Festival which is an annual gathering for the XR arts - storytelling, visual arts, music, drama, dance, literature and theatre, said bringing virtual and augmented reality content to new audiences locally is something the team at Belfast XR are passionate about.

She said: “Our ambition is to create an unmissable annual gathering for XR that inspires storytelling and our passion is to bring the best global virtual and augmented reality content to new local audiences. You don’t need to have used a virtual reality headset before, as our team

will guide you through the whole process.”

For attendees who purchase tickets for any of the headline events this year they will have exclusive access to three additional free experiences.

Emperor is a 40 minute long captivating virtual reality experience that delves into the mind of a father grappling with aphasia. Attendees will witness the poignant journey of a daughter striving to connect with her speechless father, uncovering the depths of his memories along the way.

Flow is a 15 minute experience where users will be swept away by the winds through what appears to be an ordinary day filled with turbulence. Encounter the sensations of smells, heat and breath, as the air currents unveil hidden presences and reveal captivating events in the life of a woman.

SEN is also a 15 minute experience where attendees will enter the mystical realm of the traditional Japanese tea room, where they'll meet SEN, the tea spirit. As disaster strikes and SEN dissolves into the universe, it discovers unity with all beings, bringing calm to the tea room.

Running on Wednesday February 28 and Thursday 29 this year's festival theme is Legacy which will offer attendees the chance to experience world history in captivating ways allowing audiences to step into the past, interact with historical figures, and explore significant events firsthand.

Belfast XR Festival is both for XR enthusiasts and those who haven't experienced any form of XR in the past.

Deepa explained: “The Festival is aimed at 16+ years of age and is open to everyone. You don't need to have experienced AR, VR or any of these types of experiences before. We have an amazing team who will guide you through the whole process from the minute you step into The Black Box.

“I want people to have memorable experiences. I want them to be altered, in a good way. I want them to talk about how it made them feel. I want to increase their appetite to experience more.

The Belfast XR Festival is supported by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. It is also supported by the Department for Communities through Northern Ireland Screen, Digital Catapult NI, Future Screens NI and Ulster Screen Academy.

For more information follow Belfast XR Festival on social media or go to belfastxrfestival.com

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