

# EDINBURGH ART FESTIVAL

31 July – 31 August 2014

[www.edinburghartfestival.com](http://www.edinburghartfestival.com)

**Yann Seznec**  
*Currents*

Commissioned by Edinburgh Art Festival

Installed in a Police Box on Easter Road  
Easter Road (corner of Albion Road), EH7 5QJ  
Mon–Sun, 10am–6pm

## Biography

Yann Seznec is an artist, musician, and sound designer living in Edinburgh. Yann studied at Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh and the University of Edinburgh. His work focuses on interaction, physical sound, and unusual approaches to technology. He has shown work at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Inspace, Chapter Cardiff, AND, MIT Media Lab, CCA Glasgow, the Hannah Maclure Gallery, and Mediamatic Amsterdam. Recent projects include numerous collaborations with Matthew Herbert, including building a musical pigsty and a project with the BBC Concert Orchestra to build custom software and hardware for the "Baroque Remixed" show at the Roundhouse, a Faster Than Sound residency at Aldeburgh Music, and performances at Mutek Montreal, Melbourne Recital Hall, the Royal Opera House, and Köln Philharmonie. He is founder of Lucky Frame, a BAFTA-winning creative studio based in Leith.

*Currents* is produced by Suzy Glass and Erin Maguire.  
Fans donated by Computers for Charity.  
Supported by Retrouvius.



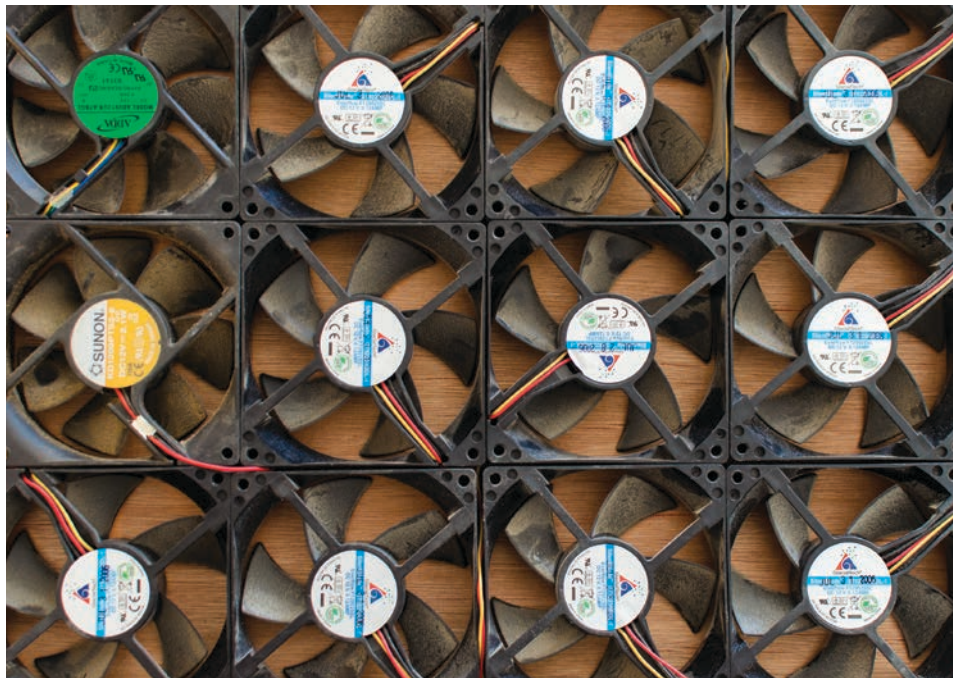
Supported through the  
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Yann Seznec *Currents*

Cover and inside images: *Currents*, 2014



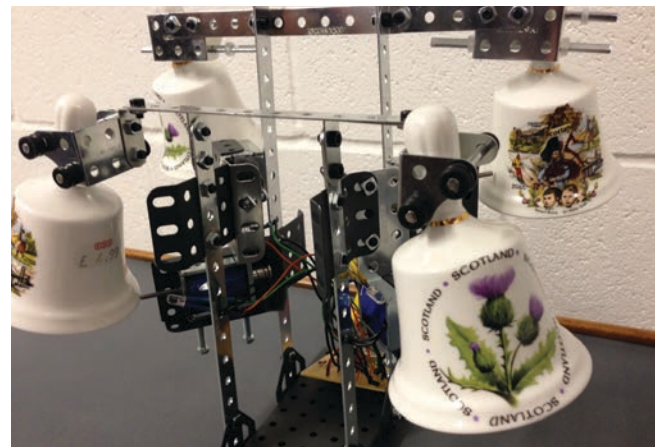


Artist and musician Yann Seznec often uses technology as a medium to reveal processes (natural and man-made) that are imperceptible to the human eye or ear. In *Secret Sounds of Spores* (2011), for example, the artist collaborated with mycologist Patrick Hickey to create an installation which used light and sound to reveal the millions of spores deposited every day by mushrooms.

Seznec's playful approach, combining the hi-tech with the lo-fi, repositions technology at the level of the domestic and the human, translating complex systems that can, to a layperson, seem remote or impenetrable, into small acts of wonder and mystery. *Twitter Bells* (2013) was a small structure built from meccano to support a series of tourist souvenir bells which, with the aid of solenoids, rang every time someone tweeted the hashtag #CHScot.



*Secret Sounds of Spores*, 2011



*Twitter Bells*, 2013, photograph by Chris Scott

*Currents* expands Seznec's interest in technology as a tool, to consider how it shapes our environment. Computer fans are now a ubiquitous technology, used to cool down machinery when we produce, consume or analyse information. Frequently discarded, the fans point to our obsession with change, as well as to the realities of a global economy that make it cheaper to produce anew rather than repair.

Seznec's installation is a physical and sonic experience, connecting discarded computer fans to real-time weather data from around the world to move air around the visitor. If Seznec's earlier works have made visible hidden natural processes that surround us, *Currents* allows us to experience large scale global movements (economic and meteorological) in microcosm.

Seznec has chosen the locations from which to gather his live weather data not only for the range of wind effects they are likely to produce, but also for the contexts they will evoke. St. John's, Newfoundland in Canada, the site of one of Seznec's chosen weather stations, is reportedly one of the windiest cities in the world. Thailand is perhaps more likely to produce a gentle zephyr at this time of year; but it is also the place which produces the vast majority of the 20 million computer fans made each month.

At times, *Currents* makes for uncomfortable listening, generating a range of sounds reminiscent of natural and man-made phenomena which more often elicit anger or irritation, or which we associate with acts of destruction: angry bees, motor bikes revving, chainsaws at work. There are other, gentler noises too, strange fumbings and tickings, and gentle tapping sounds, which speak to a hidden presence behind the scenes.

Working with the basic substances on which all sound depends – air and vibration – *Currents* builds a rich portrait of the global society which we now inhabit, in which the constant movement of computer fans evokes the international network of 24 hour communication on which we all depend, but also speaks of the economic and social model of constant consumption and disposal which has evolved in its wake.

*Currents* is accompanied by a series of live performances by the Yann Seznec Fan Club during the festival. For full details see our website.

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