All the Virtual Creative Events that’ll save 2020

The very best online design and art happenings and virtual conferences taking place during this hellish year.

Recently *Digital Arts* partnered with arts platform Playgrounds for online festival Blend, a one-night only extravaganza that featured everyone from Jon Burgerman to Beatrice Blue.

Hosted on Twitch via two simultaneous live streams, Blend’s virtual iteration was a very slick operation that anyone could access with ease: no tickets, no online queues, and no log-in required.

The success of the Playgrounds event showed that the current wave of the pandemic doesn’t have to necessarily be the end of creative events; nor does it have to mean sketchy live streams and a forced, airless sense of festivity.

As such, we present the best creative happenings and conferences you can catch this year from the comfort of your own home, divided into three sections.

You can find free and special **one-time events below** (think conferences and Q&As with top talent), **ongoing fixtures** here, both free *and* paid-for, and even one-off streams **that require payment** to enjoy.

2020’s best one-time events: FREE online streams in art, design and more

May 29th 2020: In Conversation with Stefan Sagmeister & Robert Wong

Join John Zapolski and Ayse Birsel in conversation with emerging voices and legendary figures in innovation; their most recent event was with Don Norman, and this week they host acclaimed designer Stefan Sagmeister and Robert Wong, co-founder & executive director of Google Creative Lab.

June (TBA): D&AD Awards 2020

While hosting a 2020 ceremony is not possible due to coronavirus, D&AD will be celebrating its award winners in a social campaign designed by Studio Dumbar, with Shortlists and

Pencils to be announced via the D&AD website and social channels. Key Shortlist dates include 21 May, 28 May and 4 June. Pencils will be announced on 2 June, 9 June and 16 June.

To accommodate in-person judging, Book Design, Graphic Design, Magazine & Newspaper Design, and Packaging Design Shortlists will be announced on 8 July and Pencils on 13 July. The Black Pencils meanwhile, the highest accolade in the creative industry, Collaborative Pencils and Rankings will be announced on 16 July.

, with sometime in June and July promising insight sessions, Q&As and interviews with D&AD Awards 2020 Judges and Pencil winners.

July 6-10: D&AD New Blood Digital Festival 2020

will entail five days of digital talks and workshops, an exhibition of student work, and a support programme ensuring the next generation of creative talent has access to the people and resources they need to thrive.

This year, New Blood also announces a partnership with The Dots for a virtual exhibition of student work, alongside a collaboration with YCC to help provide job opportunities and placements for recent graduates. Participating universities will gain access to 1:1 industry portfolio reviews for their students, as well as access to D&AD's network of industry professionals.

September 18th and 19th: Pictoplasma in Isolation

This year's first-ever, fully digital awaits all character pioneers, creatives and enthusiasts for a special celebration of contemporary character design and art.

Coming September, Pictoplasma will be live-broadcasting two full days’ worth of character inspiration, with more than 30 artist talks, fresh animation screenings, a special symposium, spreading visual greatness and inspiration into the safe space of your own four walls, no matter where you are, all online, all for free.

Yukai Du speaking at Playgrounds, image courtesy of Niels Hoebers

On the line-up so far are Dan Woodger, Genie Espinosa, Jing Wei, Cristina Daura, Haein Kim, Joseph Melhuish, Hattie Stewart and more. At last year’s real-world Pictoplasma we got to interview talented folk like Julian Glander and Yukai Du (above).

October (TBA): Adobe MAX

Adobe made the difficult decision to cancel the in-person MAX event and make MAX 2020 a digital experience. And it'll be ***free.***

MAX 2020 will be held from October 19–21, 2020. The agenda and registration will be coming soon:

Best and regular virtual creative events in 2020

Design Museum's Digital Design Calendar

There is no reason why self-isolating should mean missing out on the many inspirations design can offer and how it can make a difference in our lives. Brush up with London's Design Museum then on your design history, plus virtually visit the studios of leading designers and even join learning sessions for all ages.

with fashion designer Rejina Pyo, learn how to create sustainable natural dyes at home and enjoy some *Hey Duggee* family activities.

Adobe Live

Adobe last week announced Adobe Live, its series of live creative shows, will extend to the UK as a series of daily interactive livestreams, providing people with a regular dose of creative inspiration and keeping them connected and learning during these uncertain times.

Running on Behance, Adobe Live features some of the world's leading creative minds sharing their tips, tricks and techniques on how to best use Adobe tools; including

Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro and more. In these **free** and interactive sessions, livestream viewers are encouraged to share their unique challenges and questions for Adobe’s visionary speakers to solve in real time.

Enjoy at

VFX Festival Virtual Series

For the first time in its history the VFX Festival, hosted by Escape Studios, is being divided into a virtual series, **free** to attend from May, to support emerging talent from across the world. The expert-led sessions will feature industry professionals who will share their insight on award-winning productions and encourage collaboration among the international participants.

The will commence from May and will run until The VFX Festival next year, scheduled to take place in early February 2021 in London.

Our hot pick: *The evolution and expectations of an Animated Feature*, hosted by Manuel Reyes, CG Supervisor at Jellyfish Pictures, on July 14th 2020.

Nicer Tuesdays

On the last Tuesday of every month, Oval Space in London was taken over to host an evening of creative talks called Nicer Tuesdays.

Until the pandemic subsides, Nicer Tuesdays events will be online only;

A Drink with See No Evil

London animation meet-up See No Evil is now doing free live streams every Tuesday for their virtual *A Drink With…* series.

Their most recent session was with legendary veterans Shynola,

Paid One-time events for 2020

June 22-26: SofaConf 2020

Curated and compèred by Andy Budd and Rachel McConnell, each day will combine keynotes from thought leaders, interactive Q&A sessions, panels and opportunities to connect with your peers.

Keep tabs on this page as we continuously update it with the

virtual festivals that are coming thick and fast as creatives adapt to the 2020 crisis; we’re expecting Playgrounds for one to announce more virtual dates soon.

Related: How to nail a virtual festival slot, with Lucas Zanotto, Golden Wolf and Serial Cut

https://www.digitalartsonline.co.uk/features/creative-lifestyle/all-virtual-creative-events-thatll-save-2020/