

The online advent calendar is about to begin... 24 days of digital distractions counting you down to the holidays

Electric December 2006 is a digital advent calendar presented by Watershed in Bristol, which goes live on Fri 1 Dec – offering a unique digital present each day during the run-up to the festive season. A selection box of short films, games, animations and music can be discovered at www.electricdecember.org helping you count down the days to Christmas.

Topical issues that have dominated the headlines on a national and local level this year include, amongst others, climate change, the war in Iraq, gun and knife crime and the forthcoming anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade. With these headlines in mind, this year's contributors were asked to interpret the theme of **Wishing** and showcase what Bristolians wish for Christmas, the city and for the future. The resulting multi-media distractions are a gift from Bristol and reflect the digital creativity and talent resident in the city.

Details of this year's presents are listed overleaf, highlights include a mystical 'Wishing Machine', where you can select your very own 'wish cycle', the chance to design the Super Hero you always wished you could be, a film that wishes lives were not lost to knives and the 'Wish Library' a magical place where you can borrow a little festive cheer.

Electric December projects the creativity and innovation of local groups, businesses, artists and learning organisations to the world. Each year local community and education groups are partnered with professional media companies to create new creative content for the web. These partnerships demonstrate that the **Connecting Bristol** momentum, which ensures that skills are pooled and shared and the world of creativity on the Internet is revealed, explored and discussed is thriving throughout the city.

Electric December 2006 is also an example of the work contributing to Bristol's bid to The Digital Challenge, which offers a £7m prize to develop a showcase zone for ICT innovation. The wide range of participants reflect the active commitment of Bristolians to share and build an inclusive city.

Watershed's Managing Director, Dick Penny, says of the project: 'Electric December is a platform which showcases Bristol's creativity, presenting 24 fun and interactive digital gifts to the World. Each year the increasingly pervasive nature of digital communication makes this collaborative project ever more relevant and exciting, with new talent sharing fresh ideas with an increasingly inter-connected community'.

Notes:

- Information about each individual present and accompanying images are now available at www.electricdecember.org/06/press
- For interviews contact Taranjit Bahra/ Anja Dalton on 0117 927 6444 or taranjit@watershed.co.uk / anja.dalton@watershed.co.uk
- This is the eighth year for Watershed's unique online advent calendar. In 2005, www.electricdecember.org received over 2.5million requests from 108 countries, serving 146.70 GigaBytes of data.
- Find out more about the development of the Bristol bid for The Digital Challenge at www.connectingbristol.org
- Electric December** is a Watershed project supported by Bristol City Council and Bristol Evening Post.

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Fri 1 Dec

The Wish Library

Bristol Libraries/ Andrew Eason/ Brislington City Learning Centre/ Brislington Enterprise College

Borrow a little festive cheer this Christmas from the Wish Library, a magical place where dreams come true. Hidden away amongst the trees, the library is home to the mysterious Wish Librarian – and he's got just the thing for you!

Sat 2 Dec

Through My Eyes

BBC Radio Bristol/ Jeff/ Laurence/ Watershed

Day two brings together the opinions and passions of Bristolians, building a fascinating picture of how we live in Bristol in 2006.

Sun 3 Dec

Wishing Well

Bath Spa University/ Cotham School

If you had three wishes what would they be? On Day three enter a magical winter wonderland where you can throw your coin into a virtual wishing well to reveal a selection of short animations that feature pieces of writing, acting, recitation, jokes, dance and songs exploring this theme.

Mon 4 Dec

Build Your Own Teacher

Ella Bisset-Johnson/ eshed.net/ Connexions West of England/ City of Bristol College

Today on Electric December you can find out what Bristol students' experiences are of the current education system through a series of animations, short films and music.

Tue 5 Dec

How Wishes Work?

Circumnavigate/ Hannah More Primary School

Have you ever wondered how wishes work? Does it take seagulls, stars, coins, genie lamps, or just simply friends to grant wishes? Well on Day five, Year 2 pupils from Hannah More School in St Philips, Bristol will reveal just how they think wishes work through a series of imaginative animations.

Wed 6 Dec

Wishing On A Star

At-Bristol Space School

A truly star-studded Christmas experience! View dramatic images of the far reaches of space, as seen through the eyes of the Faulkes telescopes and presented by children who took part in The Earth and Beyond Space School delivered by the Learning team at At-Bristol.

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Thu 7 Dec

Wishing Worlds

Amy Feneck/ Oli Lyndale/ UWE/ Creative Partnerships/ Ashton Gate Primary School/ Ashton Park Secondary School

If you were in charge of the world for a day, what would you do? and, if you could make any dream come true, what would it be? See a series of video clips and animation which will melt the heart and make you feel good. Just like a good wish should!

Fri 8 Dec

In The Future You Will See

Meriton Education & Support for Young Parents/ Nathan Hughes/ Duncan Speakman

Ever wondered what life is like for young mothers at Christmas? See them speak for themselves in this provocative art piece, influenced by the dramatic style of Italian master Caravaggio (1571 - 1610). The film combines the everyday with the cinematic to celebrate the timelessness of young motherhood.

Sat 9 Dec

Wishing For A Greener Knowle West

Knowle West Media Centre/ Green Bristol

Wishing for a green Christmas this year? What more topical Christmas treat could you have at the moment but an online computer game where you get to have fun and learn how you can make your world a little bit more environmentally friendly?

Sun 10 Dec

Visible And Invisible

Anna Farthing/ Tom/ Joyann/ British Empire and Commonwealth Museum

See Bristol's harbour today and take a closer look at the anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade through two short films created by Bristol teenagers that use the Digital Story format, which aims to test new ways of using museum archives for independent learning.

Mon 11 Dec

Future Schools

Calling the Shots/ Henbury Extended Schools/ Fluffy Logic/ Witherwood Extended Schools

On Day eleven, see what pupils wish for in their future school. What would be the role of the school from primary to secondary level, and ultimately out into the big wide world? How would lessons be taught? And would a robot really help you with your homework?

Tue 12 Dec

Bristol Wishes

Innov8tive Media at City of Bristol College/ New Oak Primary School

Roll your mouse over a panoramic landscape of Bristol, click and watch as the wishes of pupils from New Oak Primary School transform into short films and animations, ranging from wishing that England were better at football to wanting more cinemas in the city – this is a fun and interactive piece of media.

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Wed 13 Dec

Flying

Kuumba/ Roxana Freeman/ Lucia/ Hattie

Do you wish for less excessiveness in the run up to Christmas? **Flying** is an anti-bling film which challenges us to re-define our notions of success, not in terms of money and materialism but instead as a positive vision for personal happiness and a world without conflict.

Thu 14 Dec

Live, Work, Play

Beef/Connecting Bristol

How connected is Bristol? Where do you work? Drink? Sleep? Connecting Bristol presents a window on the lives of Bristol folk, exploring quite literally the locations where people Live, Work, and Play, mapping the triangle of their lives across the city.

Fri 15 Dec

We Could Be Heroes

Circumnavigate/ eshed.net/ Connexions West of England/ City of Bristol College

Have you ever wished you had a superpower? X-ray vision perhaps, or the ability to stop time? Maybe even the power of invisibility? On Day fifteen Electric December users will be taken to a parallel dimension where they can become the superhuman alter ego they always wished they could be.

Sat 16 Dec

Caught In The Middle

StreetScenes/ TFA/ Affiliated

Wishing lives were not lost to knives...Gun and knife crime seems to dominate many present day headlines, and on Day sixteen **Caught in the Middle**, a short film addresses many of the issues that young people face and warns about the danger of carrying and using weapons.

Sun 17 Dec

Brunel's Britain Route Planner

Available Light/ Gridclub

On Day seventeen visit **Brunel's Britain Route Planner**, which has been nominated for a BAFTA Interactive Award at this years Children's Awards. Who do young people wish they could become today? Beckham? Madonna? 150 years ago it was an inventor, designer and engineer called Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The challenge today is to design Brunel's Great Western Railway which links Bristol to London. You will need to solve some engineering problems, including encountering some fierce opposition along the way.

Mon 18 Dec

I Wish

Urbana Laguna/ Saint Michael's Primary School, Winterbourne

Wish for a better world today, **I Wish** is a short film where children speak candidly about their wishes, revealing what the next generation of innocent wishful thinkers hope for the future.

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Tue 19 Dec

The Sky I Wished

Kathryn Thomas/ Simon Whetham

See the full splendor of Iceland's Northern Lights in **The Sky I Wished**, a short film which features a series of stills of artist Kathryn's paintings and is accompanied by a hypnotic score composed by sound artist Simon Whetham.

Wed 20 Dec

Can You Wish On A Frog?

Circumnavigate/ Firstborn Creatives/ Fast Forward

Join the wishing frog in this interactive guessing game to discover all the weird and wonderful ways people in the schools and on the streets of Bristol make wishes, whether it is on a fairy, before getting shot or on a falling star.

Thu 21 Dec

Adisa

Bristol Museum/ Dani Landau / Bread Youth Project / Full Circle / The Mill

Window Twenty-one invites you to join a group of Bristol teenagers on a journey they took to explore their African heritage and identity.

Fri 22 Dec

Wishing You An Improvised Christmas

The Birdman of Alkijazz - Tony Orrell, and Quadrode/ and others tbc:

See Bristol's international standing in music clearly defined in this 90 second short. Filmed during the first in a series of bi-monthly grudge matches between the Birdman (musician Tony Orrell) and various improvising heavyweights including Will Gregory (saxophones & synths), Adrian Utley (guitars) and Jim Barr (Basses) jamming alongside classic silent films from the surrealist era.

Sat 23 Dec

Mutant Supertoy

Arnolfini/ i-DAT/ Headley Park Primary School/ Kahve Society

Treat your toy like a friend, don't chuck it in the bin; take it apart and put it together again; toys are not just for Christmas, they are for life. On Day twenty-three see a new breed of toys come to life, which have been designed by the children for the children.

Sun 24 Dec

Wishing Machine

The i City Learning Centre/ Bristol Gateway School/ Monks Park School/ St Bedes School

The **Wishing Machine** has been abandoned next to a log cabin in a forest of Christmas trees. See Santa fill the machine with gifts, then choose your wish cycle to see animations - Some of which are funny, some of them are thoughtful and some of them are just wishful!