CONTAGIOUS

WILDFIRE

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DESIGN

Janet Echelman + Aaron Koblin /
Unnumbered Sparks

To celebrate TED's 30th annual conference, artist Janet Echelman and Google's Data Arts Team creative director Aaron Koblin partnered to create Unnumbered Sparks, a giant Google Chrome web browser projected onto a rope sculpture dangling in the sky. Made from ultra-light fibres, spanning 745ft between buildings in downtown Vancouver, Canada, spectators could interact with the piece through their smartphone, using their finger to trace magnificent coloured paths, which appeared above them in real time.
www.unnumberedsparks.com

Google X / Flux

Google X, the lab behind the search giant's science fiction-sounding ventures such as driverless cars and smart contact lenses, is setting out to bring smart data to construction. Backed by $8m in VC funding, Flux is a platform that will help engineers and architects use data and algorithms to create environmentally friendly, cost-effective, site-specific and energy-efficient buildings. Flux will be available to the public in early 2015.
research.google.com

Wu-Tang Clan /
The Wu – Once Upon A Time In Shaolin

American hip hop act Wu-Tang Clan have gone one better than limited edition on their latest album. Only one copy of the double album *The Wu – Once Upon A Time In Shaolin* will be produced, encased in a handcrafted engraved silver and nickel box created by British-Moroccan artist Yahya. Frontman RZA described it as 'like somebody having the sceptre of an Egyptian king', and offers for the unique artefact at the time of writing had topped $5m. The band is planning to take the album on tour to museums, galleries and festivals. Wu fans will be able to pay to hear the music and see the box, but not before submitting to elaborate checks to confirm they can't record and illegally distribute the tunes.
www.wutang-corp.com

DigitasLBi Paris and Klépierre /
The Inspiration Corridor

DigitasLBi, Paris and European shopping centre Klépierre have joined forces to create The Inspiration Corridor, a concept retail experience. An infrared Kinect camera scans the bodies of shoppers as they enter, creating a personalised mood board of products based on factors such as current outfit, size, age and past purchases. Displayed in the corridor on interactive touchscreens, the items are available to purchase within the shopping mall.
klepierre.com

UNIT Studio / A8 Music

New Chinese music download company A8 Music has placed music-reactive LEDs on the front of its skyscraper. Designed by Shenzhen-based architecture firm UNIT Studio, the facade visualises the musical heart of the city, pulsing and changing colour based on real-time data about the tempo and genre of tracks being played by A8 site users. The installation uses a system known as the Scriabin keyboard, where notes and tones are assigned a specific colour, to visualise sound.
a8.com

Natsai Audrey Chieza / Faber Futures

Hacking bacteria sounds like the opening scene of a zombie movie, but London-based and Zimbabwe-born designer Natsai Audrey Chieza has discovered that certain bacteria can be extracted from herbs to produce rich vibrant colours when cultured. Chieza worked with University College London's Professor John Ward to nurture the bacteria to create colours that she then used to dye fabrics using traditional screen-printing techniques, with spectacular results.
thisisalive.com/faber-futures

Miguel Chevalier / Magic Carpets

French artist Miguel Chevalier has created an interactive light display projected onto the floor of the former Sacré Coeur church in Casablanca, Morocco. The installation draws inspiration from biological microorganisms, contrasting the rapid collisions and random shapes with regular pixels, set to French composer Michel Redolfi's music.
www.miguel-chevalier.com

University of Bristol / SensaBubble

SensaBubble blasts aroma-filled bubbles into the atmosphere. Developed by a team at Bristol University's computer science department in the UK, the bubbles can be used as visual displays, with letters or symbols projected onto them until they burst, releasing the scent. The size of the bubbles and the scent inside can be specified, meaning that they can be adapted for games, events or education, becoming more or less intrusive as the smell and display varies.
tiny.cc/sensabubble