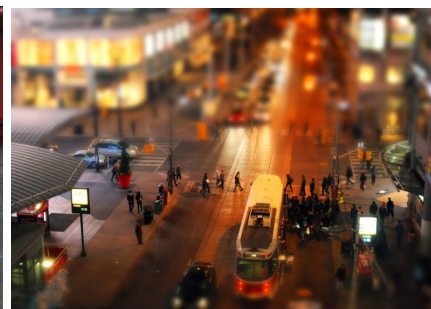




A @ShrimpingIt Project Proposal

Morecambe Minilluminations

Starting Small



by [Cefn Hoile](#) on 5th July 2016

The Illuminations at Morecambe's Happy Mount park once competed with Blackpool to attract visitors alongside an installation of 400,000 bulbs running the whole length of the promenade, and with lights switched on by celebrities such as George Formby, Roger Moore, Morecambe and Wise and even Angela Rippon!

The council has expressed regret that modern proposals for lighting on that scale cannot be funded, suggesting a radical alternative! With self-deprecating humour, what we lack in scale, Morecambe residents and artists will make up for in miniature.

Proposal



@ShrimpingIt will complete a series of maker workshops from their new home in West Street inviting the community of the West End to conceive their own illuminations, at a scale of 18 inches high, constructed in the classic vintage style described by Wikipedia as “set pieces made out of wood studded with light bulbs” in which “the characters and objects portrayed seem to “move” by way of winking lights”.

Once completed the estimated 20-25 installation pieces will be presented as a miniature-village-style promenade installed in a sequence beside the pathway in the darkened grove of trees in Alexandra Square.

This presentation will synchronize with other activities planned on the night of the Lantern festival, and will provide an additional destination for the lighted procession, ‘taking back the night’ for local community members.

The Minilluminations will then be moved to the upper windows of the Exchange studio for display through the remainder of the winter.

By choosing the classic vintage style of construction, the pieces will combine with a consistent kitsch and deliberately ironic aesthetic of yesteryear, whilst depicting Morecambe-specific and even edgy themes, perhaps in the tradition of the contemporary and controversial effigies of the Lewes fireworks.

However, it will also make the construction truly democratic, with open public workshops inviting people to create their own depictions with MDF boards, acrylic paint and simple build instructions.

Examples suggested so far from informal consultation with members of the Exchange Creative Community include an animation of the famous Morecambe and Wise skipping dance, a deliberately copyright-evading and satirical Mr Blobby, a lucky Chinese waving cat, alongside various sunshine-themed, boxing-themed and marine-themed tableaux, and even short-form text sculptures.



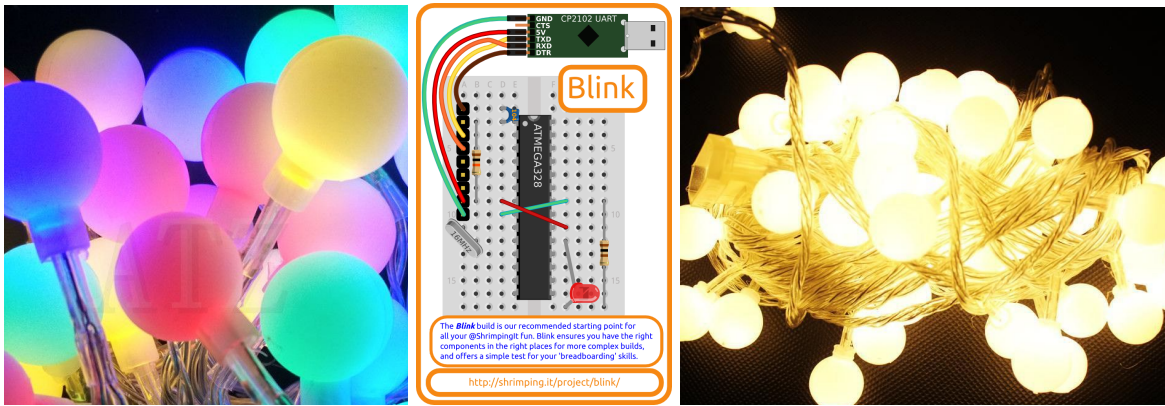
We can also stimulate community-contributed illuminations concepts following the model of the recent, successful, ExchangeCIC #FromMorecambeWithLove B&W postcard competition. If contributors do not wish to build their own concept, all submitted ideas are made public, providing a pool for others to draw upon.

From experience of the burgeoning drop-in artist community at West Street, we have absolute confidence that West End residents will rise to the challenge.

We will also be open to, and expect to contribute our own miniature-themed set-pieces, using funds beyond the WEM pot such as a full-scale, illuminated Polo-tower, or tiny audience members installed to look at the illuminations.

Although the simplified fabrication approach ensures that all community members can succeed, we also expect to financially and logistically support more ambitious makers, who might for example wish to use vacuum formers and glass-paint to improve the look of their sculptures, or servo-operated armatures to create moving parts, where those extensions are consistent with the vintage aesthetic.

The Build Process



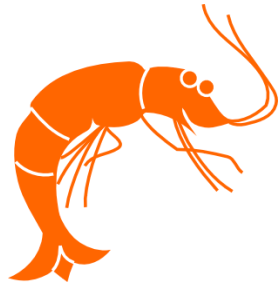
As commercial specialists in teaching novices to construct programmable devices, we will prepare a standard build process and prepared 'illuminations' kits equivalent to the step-by-step builds of our retail hobby projects. See <http://start.shrimping.it/#project> for examples of our previous projects. WEM funds will allow us to distribute these electronic materials to community members free at the point of access, alongside the craft materials used to create the lighting boards.

Power will be centrally provided by one or more safety-checked mains->5Volt 20Amp ATX power supplies which will be isolated from the Morecambe weather. The remainder of the publically-exposed wiring will be completed at just 5Volts, making it extremely safe for deployment.

Lighting will employ commodity light strings available in Warm White, Red, Green, Blue, Yellow, Pink and Purple with the majority of projects expected to use Warm White bulbs on colored acrylic. These will retail at \$17 for each 40 lights, meaning a typical project budget should allow for £50 total.

Control will be based on our classic @ShrimpingIt 5Volt-compatible Arduino-programmable circuit, combined with high-power MOSFET switches to switch the large banks of LEDs installed by community members in their depictions.

Although we believe the depictions should belong to the makers once the winter display season has completed, we have storage for any volunteered illuminations to be kept as a public resource for installation in future years. We will be inviting all creators to bring their creations back to be fixed up and re-installed the following year., and they may be persuaded to make another!



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