

# Calypso Gardens Public Art Competition

---

Working title: The Calypso Channel  
(A big telly)

**Chris Briggs**



**16<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

## **Proposal for Public Art Commission Calypso Gardens, Peckham**

**Chris Briggs (with some help from Jon Reardon) (1)**

### **Working title: The Calypso Channel (A big telly)**

#### **The Proposal:**

My proposal is to create a 3 screen large-scale television and bench within Calypso Gardens.

The structure will closely resemble a familiar widescreen domestic television set and stand.

Beneath will be a hardwood bench for residents to sit in the shade or shelter from the rain. The screens will initially show video images of Calypso Gardens initially provided by internal cameras.

Each screen will contain a 'locked off' video camera which is capable of uploading footage to a central hard drive. The system is always recording in real time.

The basic(default) setting for the piece is that recorded video shown in transitional rotation on each screen is what was recorded in the last 12, 24 hrs and also a live feed from the date the system was launched. (2)

A crucial element of the proposal is that the residents (principally the residents of Calypso Gardens, but not exclusively) will take editorial control of the content 'broadcast' through the system.

They will use a simple custom built edit, load, play web interface working off a T1 broadband connection.

The Calypso Channel will have the potential to...

- Show recorded video footage of the Gardens and events that have taken place there.
- Display messages from residents. (eg Happy 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Julie. Love Mum and Dad xx, or...Brian you're late. Your dinner's in the dog!)
- Display photographs.
- Display locally produced videos
- Advertise community events.
- Play audio.

It will not show:

- Live video of the gardens
- Broadcast television
- Commercial dvd's, movies etc.

**This is not a live CCTV system.**

#### **The Residents and the Community**

My intention is to create something that everyone in the community is familiar with, a television.

A key dynamic of the proposal is that it is open ended...in handing over the control of the Calypso Channel content to the residents and the community they will decide how it is used and evolves.

I propose a small steering committee made up of residents of the area. The residents committee will be the producers of what is shown on the telly, and it will be their 'job' to encourage contributions from the Community. The Committee will receive technical training which they can pass on to other members as things progress. The residents will be given legal guidelines on what they can and can't 'broadcast' and have access to further legal advice as necessary.

I feel the benefits of the Project are potentially far-reaching. From simply generating discussion between neighbours... to providing the community with a means of displaying their talent whether it's baby photos, birthday messages, news, or videos of local footie matches. Also, importantly, offering people the chance to use and have fun with up to date technology.

**Design, Build and location:**

See Visuals.

The materials used to build the physical structure are:

- Steel (framework)
- Aluminium and Stainless Steel (legs and finishing)
- Oak (the bench)
- Lifespan: at least 8 years with maintenance and insurance.

I feel the project can be elegantly re-scaled without diluting its fundamental value.

**Technology**

All elements in this proposal use readily available technology, however, assembled in a unique way.

**Budget:**

I have made provisional enquiries to the costs involved, this is my summary:

Pilkington non-reflective (UV tint) laminated public display glass	£8,000
Hardware: 1 terabyte hard drive plus back-up, 2x laptops (control units) cabling,	£1,400
3 x 1020i 72" Monitors*	£6,000 *
3 x Domestic HD video cameras	£1,800
Software: Video software development, testing and installation.	£5,000
Planning, fabrication, installation and project management	£11,000
Insurance & legal	£4,000 (2 yrs)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£37,200</b>

\*There are numerous options available to create the video display screens; including locking together numerous smaller and cheaper lcd monitors (with narrow edge bezel) to create video walls.

I have corporate and technical contacts who would be willing to be involved and contribute to this project at well below market rate, however I respect that Southwark Council will have a policy view on this aspect.

**Finally**

The Calypso Channel is a site specific piece. I have engineered it to work within Calypso Gardens and one of the main drivers for me is to try to create an intimate, familiar place ... like someone's living room, outside in the open.

I have been fascinated for years by the idea and potential of community broadcasting, but feel that even today it excludes many members of the community because of access to useful technology. My hope is that this proposal can bridge that gap.

**Notes**

(1) Having not produced a public art proposal for many years Jon Reardon kindly assisted me in building this document.

(2) The system will offer a timer so that the screens can operate on schedule for example: Start at 07.30 - closedown at 22.00 . Also 'kill' switches will turn the system off as required.

**Contact details**

Chris Briggs  
Flat 13, Cooper Works  
19-23 Sternhall Lane  
Peckham  
London SE15 4NQ

Telephone: 0796 888 9924  
Email: cbriggsy@gmail.com

**Visuals - Calypso Gardens Proposal (not to scale or oriented)**

Nighttime



Daytime



Aerial View showing confirmed screen orientation



End