



A NEW COMMISSION FOR LIVERPOOL CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2008

P R E S S K I T

FRIDAY 5 • SATURDAY 6 • SUNDAY 7
S E P T E M B E R 2 0 0 8



A NEW COMMISSION FOR LIVERPOOL CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2008

PRESS CONTACTS

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Press accreditation collection point:

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Lord Nelson Street - Liverpool L3 5QB

Opening hours

Wednesday	3 rd September	8am – 10am, 4pm – 6pm
Thursday	4 th September	9am – 11am, 4pm – 6pm
Friday	5 th September	9am – 11am, 4pm – 6pm
Saturday	6 th September	9am – 11am, 4pm – 6pm
Sunday	7 th September	9am – 10am



PRESS RELEASE

Giants come to Liverpool: largest piece of free theatre ever staged in the UK

La Machine: Les Mecaniques Savants

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th September 2008

(Prologue 3rd and 4th September)

Central Liverpool

Liverpool is about to experience the biggest and most spectacular piece of free theatre ever seen in the UK, commissioned for the city's European Capital of Culture celebrations.

Taking place over one magical long weekend, La Machine will feature a gigantic mechanical creature which will explore the city, accompanied by a team of scientists which will investigate its journey through the city's landmarks, trying to find out where it came from, why it is here and where it wants to go. The precise details of the event have been and will continue to be a closely-guarded secret until the creature is unveiled. The people of Liverpool have been kept guessing as to the creature's identity.

The show is the work of French company La Machine, appearing in the UK for the first time. The company is led by engineering genius **François Delarozière** who, in 2006, engineered and built the giant, 42-tonne mechanical elephant that captivated London in The Sultan's Elephant, a show by another French company, Royal de Luxe. Delarozière and his company have travelled from their huge workshop in Nantes to bring La Machine to Liverpool.

La Machine will be one of the most extraordinary theatrical events ever seen. This event is quite simply the biggest piece of free theatre ever mounted in the UK, and will feature a giant, and as yet, unidentified creature, 50 feet high and thirty-seven tonnes in weight, as well as a spectacular battery of special effects. The city is already being prepared for the event, with the removal of street furniture and even the odd roundabout to accommodate the giant creature.

La Machine is produced by maverick UK producers Artichoke, who also produced The Sultan's Elephant two years ago and The Telectroscope earlier this year:

The company's directors Helen Marriage and Nicky Webb said:

"We are delighted to be bringing the theatrical genius of La Machine to Liverpool as one of the flagship events in this year's Capital of Culture programme. Artichoke strives to mount events which, though spectacular and ambitious in scale, are appreciated by the widest possible audience. François Delarozière and his company have been inspired to create a new show especially for the people of Liverpool, to be played out against the landmarks of a great city. This event would have been impossible without the close collaboration and co-operation of many partners, including the Culture Company themselves, but also many other agencies and businesses."

Fiona Gasper Executive Producer for the Liverpool Culture Company said:

"La Machine is one of the major artistic commissions from the Liverpool Culture Company for 08 and is the centrepiece of the hugely popular free outdoor programme of events which has been running throughout the summer. We are expecting record crowds to flock into the city centre to see this amazing event which is guaranteed to intrigue and delight."

Cllr Warren Bradley, leader of Liverpool City Council and deputy chair of the Liverpool Culture Company said:

"La Machine is one of the highlights of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture and there is a huge sense of expectation in the city and beyond. We are very proud that more than 70 per cent of 08 events are free and I have no doubt that this unique show will provide even more excitement than usual!"

Peter Mearns, Executive Director of Marketing at the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), said:

"The NWDA is delighted to be able to support La Machine, one of the flagship events of Liverpool 08. Not only will this be a spectacular free show for the people of Liverpool, it will also put the city and the region in the international spotlight, reflecting the Northwest as the culturally dynamic region that it is."

La Machine was commissioned by Liverpool Culture Company, with funds from its major partners, including the Northwest Regional Development Agency, the Arts Council and Liverpool City Council. Artichoke is producing the event in association with Unusual Services and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, with the active collaboration of many event and operational partners including the ACC, Peel Holdings and Liverpool Vision. A complete list of partners can be found below.

For all press enquiries, please contact:

Ben Chamberlain at The Corner Shop PR

tel:020 7494 3665 / 07931 723 988

email: info@thecornershoppr.com

Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th September – Prologue Notes to editors:

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th September – The Show

www.lamachine.co.uk

A full schedule for the event with press calls clearly marked can be collected at The Liner Hotel, Liverpool. Press pass access will be available for photographers and camera operators only. This access will allow 'front row' views of the event at certain key stages. Press passes can only be issued to people who visit the press accreditation centre:

The Liner Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool, L3 5QB

Press Desk opening times

Wednesday	3 rd September	8am – 10am, 4pm – 6pm
Thursday	4 th September	9am – 11am, 4pm – 6pm
Friday	5 th September	9am – 11am, 4pm – 6pm
Saturday	6 th September	9am – 11am, 4pm – 6pm
Sunday	7 th September	9am – 10am

www.artichoke.uk.com

Security

Artichoke would like to advise visitors that in any crowd vigilance is important. Please supervise young children at all times and keep valuables out of sight. We advise that visitors should not leave any property unattended, or on show in parked cars. Please help us by reporting any abandoned property to police or show stewards. It is not permitted to consume alcohol in a public place in the city centre; anyone carrying alcohol will have it confiscated. Visitors are reminded that event stewards and show ushers are there to ensure the smooth running of the show and the safety of the public. Please comply with their instructions.



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FACTS & FIGURES

THE CREATURE

Weight – 37 tonnes

Height – 50 feet high

50 hydraulic axes of movement

Made from steel and reclaimed poplar

Moves at 2 miles per hour

Took 1 year to build

SPECIAL EFFECTS

7 different special effects:

Water • Flame • Smoke • Wind • Snow • Light • Sound

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

16 different cranes:

25 tonnes - 300 tonnes

300 different crane lifts

6 Forklift Trucks

8 Cherry Pickers

PERSONNEL

66 people in the French company

20 British musicians

250-strong technical and support crew



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INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO LA MACHINE

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th September 2008, Central Liverpool

Artichoke, producers of *La Machine*, have released the information below in order to help visitors to the show over the weekend enjoy the experience.

HOW TO VIEW THE SHOW

It is not necessary to be close to the action to enjoy the show - in fact it is often better to observe from a distance. The show will move through the streets and public spaces of Liverpool.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Please also be aware of the spectacular special effects that will accompany the creature: these involve water, pyrotechnics and loud bangs and flashes. You may want to bring a raincoat even if the weather is dry!

SCHEDULE

The following times and places give an indication of the best moments to see the creature in action:

Friday 5th September

- 11.30am – 1pm Outside the ACC, Albert Dock
- 6.30pm – 9pm From the ACC to the Cunard Building, via Salthouse Dock

Saturday 6th Sept

- 11.30am-12.30pm Cunard Building
- 3pm – 9pm From Cunard Building to Concourse House, via Water Street, Castle St, Lord St, Parker St, Ranelagh Place

Sunday 7th September

- 3pm – 4pm Concourse House
- 7.30pm – 10pm Concourse House to Queensway Tunnel entrance

ROAD CLOSURES

If possible use public transport to see the show. However, if you are travelling by car please be aware that some roads will necessarily be closed to traffic during the show, and that there will be some disruption.

Friday 5th September, 6pm – Saturday 6th September, 4pm

The Strand will be closed. There will be access to the Strand Street car from the South only. There will be no entry between 6pm and 9pm. Exit is maintained at all times.

Saturday 6th September, 2pm – 5pm

The junction at Water St, Dale St and Castle St will be closed, including Derby Square.

Saturday 6th September, 5pm – 10.30pm

Ranelagh St will be closed from Great Charlotte Street to Church Street & Bold Street, to include closure of Copperas Hill, Brownlow Hill, Renshaw Street, St. George's Place as far as St. John's Lane, and Lime Street as far as the junction with London Road.

Sunday 7th September, 6am until 2am Monday

Queensway Tunnel will be closed, including including Byrom Street, Hunter Street and Old Haymarket

Sunday 7th September, 1pm – 11pm

Lime Street and surrounding roads will be closed to traffic.

TRAVEL

The best way to see the event is on foot.

Local train, underground and bus services will run throughout the weekend, although there will be some changes to services due to road closures. Visit www.merseytravel.gov.uk for details.

National rail services to Liverpool are operated by Virgin Trains. The West Coast line between London Euston and Liverpool Lime Street will be subject to some disruption on 6th and 7th September due to engineering works. Visit www.virgintrains.co.uk for details.

PARKING

Strand Street Car Park

On Friday 5th and Saturday 6th the Strand Street car park will be the closest to the show and offers accommodation for up to 2000 cars. It's a great place to park if you're planning to see the whole event. Please note that from 6pm on Friday 5th to 4pm on Saturday 6th, entry to the car park is from the South only. There will be no entry to the car park between 6pm and 9pm on Friday 5th September.

Queen Square

On Sunday 7th September, the Queen Square car park will be the closest to the show site and will provide the most convenient parking for anyone coming to the show. However access will be limited so that visitors will need to arrive before 1pm and will not be able to leave until after 10pm.

St John's Centre car park

There will be no entry to the car park between 5.30pm and 10pm on Saturday 6th, and the car park will be closed on Sunday 7th between 2pm and 10pm.

SECURITY

Artichoke would like to advise visitors that in any crowd vigilance is important. Please supervise young children at all times and keep valuables out of sight. We advise that visitors should not leave any property unattended, or on show in parked cars. Please help us by reporting any abandoned property to police or show stewards. It is not permitted to consume alcohol in a public place in the city centre; anyone carrying alcohol will have it confiscated. Visitors are reminded that event stewards and show ushers are there to ensure the smooth running of the show and the safety of the public. Please comply with their instructions.

ADDITIONAL ADVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The three-day performance consists of moving parades which begin and end with large scale static set pieces. The parades take place in the city centre with audience members following the creature through the city centre. Access for these parades is as in daily life following the level access routes through the city. The structures are huge, up to 50 feet high and are often best viewed from a distance. The show is of a highly visual nature with live music but no spoken narrative. There is no seating provided; if you have difficulty standing for long periods of time, please bring a folding chair.

For the set pieces, we advise wheelchair users to arrive in advance. The best viewing points are suggested below.

Friday 11.30am - 12.30pm

Set piece at the Arena on the piazza. Best viewed from the terraces in front of Arena. Info ushers will escort wheelchair users to the viewing point.

Friday evening

The performance happens in 3 stages, with the most spectacular performance happening in the Salthouse Dock (7pm - 8.30pm). We would therefore advise disabled clients to prioritise this portion of the performance and to view from the edge of the Dock closest to the Arena.

Saturday 11.30am -12.30pm

Musical performance outside the Cunard Building.

Saturday 7.30pm – 9.30pm

The performance takes place on the side of Concourse Tower, best viewing is from St George's Plateau.

Sunday 7.30pm-9.30pm

The spider moves from Concourse Tower to the Queensway Tunnel entrance via William Brown Street. The first part of the show can be viewed from St George's Plateau, the second part from outside the museum or the bottom of St John's Gardens.



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PHOTOCALL NOTICE

YOU ARE INVITED TO PHOTOCALLS FOR:

LA MACHINE: Les Mecaniques Savants

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th September: The Show

(Prologue: Wednesday 3rd – Thursday 4th September)

Central Liverpool

A show by Company La Machine

Produced by Artichoke

Commissioned by Liverpool Culture Company European Capital of Culture

La Machine will be taking place in Liverpool over 3 days with a two-day prologue, with a number of photocalls throughout the event. It will involve a giant mechanical 50 feet tall creature exploring the city, created by the same master craftsmen that constructed The Sultan's Elephant, which visited London in 2006 (seen pictured).



There are two principal photocall / filmcall moments:

- WEDNESDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER, 8AM
CONCOURSE TOWER, LIME STREET STATION, LIVERPOOL
The creature appears suspended from the Concourse Tower block, outside Lime Street Station in Liverpool. There will be interview opportunities with members of the artistic team, representatives from Liverpool Culture Company, Artichoke and other dignitaries.

The main press call for La Machine will take place on:

- FRIDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER, 11.30AM
ACC, MONARCHS QUAY, LIVERPOOL, L3 4FP
The creature will wake up for the first time and move around. There will be interview opportunities immediately following this at around 1pm.

The event continues until the evening of Sunday 7th September.
There will be a series of photocall moments throughout the weekend.
Details of these moments are included in the press kit.

Photocalls will be either fixed or mobile:

- **mobile photocalls:** In the case of mobile photocalls, the creature is in motion and you are invited to follow the parade and experience the show amongst the audience.
- **fixed photocalls:** The fixed photocalls will take place during pauses in the parade, when a wider perimeter is set up around the creature. You will be allowed within the security cordon upon presentation of your press pass. Once inside the cordon, it is important not to block the view of the audience behind you, so we ask members of the press to stay either seated or kneeling.

Press passes and a hard copy of the press kit can be obtained in person from the press accreditation centre at The Liner Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool L3 5QB.

Opening Hours

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For further information please contact The Corner Shop PR on 020 7494 3665 or:
Ben Chamberlain on 07931 723 988 or ben@thecornershoppr.com
Kasey Glazebrook 07726 279 784
Ryan Petersen 07785 904 283



IT'S HAPPENING IN LIVERPOOL EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2008!

Liverpool is a remarkable city with a proud history and 2008 marks the beginning of an incredible new chapter in the city's story.

As European Capital of Culture 2008, the city has had an amazing year so far, celebrating the very best in arts and culture; over 200 events have already taken place. More than six million people have visited in the first seven months of the year for a unique line-up of events and exhibitions, which have included a weekend-long opening ceremony starring Ringo Starr, a sell-out Paul McCartney gig and a four-day festival marking the start of the Tall Ships' Races.

Liverpool has a proud maritime heritage and a world-class waterfront. The majestic River Mersey and the iconic buildings which surround it set Liverpool apart from any other European city.

Liverpool boasts more Grade I and II listed buildings than any other British city after London. It also has some of the finest modern architecture in Europe. Its world famous skyline, defined by the Three Graces - the Royal Liver Building, the Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool have helped make Liverpool a World Heritage Site, joining an elite group including The Pyramids at Giza, Stonehenge and the Great Wall of China.

Liverpool is a leader in the arts field, and birthplace to a wealth of art, music and literature pioneers. This fine artistic heritage is celebrated in its stunning museums, galleries and music venues.

At the heart of it all is the city's most valuable cultural asset, its people. Liverpool's vibrant, diverse communities are helping us deliver a spectacular Capital of Culture year which is 'quintessentially Liverpool'.

European Capital of Culture 2008 gives Liverpool the chance to share its unparalleled cultural offer with the whole world. And with millions of extra visitors already descending on the city this year, there's never been a more exciting time for the city.

For more information on Capital of Culture events, visit www.liverpool08.com.



La Machine

La Machine was formed in the early 1990s as a collaboration between artists, designers and technicians. Now led by Artistic Director François Delarozière, the company creates extraordinary theatrical machines, permanent installations, and also its own theatrical productions.

La Machine has created many theatrical machines including the series of giants for Royal de Luxe. Over a period of 15 years, from 1991 – 2006, Delarozière and his engineers designed and created a host of huge performing creatures, which walked the streets of European cities, the characters including Giraffes, Rhino and the giant Gulliver. Most famous to British audiences was the Sultan's Elephant, which transfixed audiences in London during its visit in May 2006.

In 2003 La Machine launched their show *Symphonie Mécanique*, a collaboration with composer Dominique Malan in which classically-trained musicians perform with industrial machines to create a live theatrical event. *Symphonie Mécanique* has been seen in cities all over France and in Spain, and will be in Paris at the end of September.

Also in that year the company created *Le Grand Répertoire*, a theatrical exhibition of extraordinary machines created for public places. It was seen in Nantes, Calais, Antwerp, Toulouse, and Marseille, and was visited by 50,000 people in Paris in 2006.

In 2007, Delarozière and long-term collaborator Pierre Orefice opened *Les Machines de L'Île* on the site of an old shipbuilding yard at the edge of the River Loire. A gallery containing models and designs for many of their machines is open to the public, together with a giant mechanical elephant on which members of the public can ride. In 2010 they will open another permanent attraction there, *Le Carrousel du Monde Marins*, a merry-go-round of fish and sea creatures.

Earlier this year they created *Le Manège Carré Sénart*, a square merry-go-round of insects and buffalo, commissioned by the town of Sénart, just outside Paris. It will visit Madrid later this year and St Petersburg, Russia, in 2009.

La Machine is based in two locations: in Tournefeuille, near Toulouse, and also in Nantes, in Brittany. *Les Mécaniques Savants: part 2* will visit Yokohama in Japan next year.

www.lamachine.fr



Artichoke is a creative company, based in London. Artichoke puts on extraordinary shows that change the way people look at the world, working with the best creative minds to produce events that live in the memory forever. The company works in unusual places: in streets, public spaces or in the countryside, putting on shows which, though technically complex and ambitious, speak to the widest possible audience.

Artichoke's most recent project, in May-June 2008, was the brainchild of the visual artist, Paul St George, *The Telectroscope*. A strange optical device installed at both ends of a secret tunnel between London and New York enabled people to see through the earth to the other side. During the month long installation over 50,000 people looked down the Telectroscopes in London and Brooklyn to reunite long lost family members, make new friends or simply to gain a glimpse of life on the other side of the Atlantic.

In May 2006, the company mounted the biggest piece of free theatre ever seen in London. Hundreds of thousands of delighted spectators followed the show, set against the city's magnificent landmarks. Created by French theatrical magicians, *Royal de Luxe*, *The Sultan's Elephant* featured a vast, time-travelling mechanical elephant, and a giant girl, twenty feet high.

Artichoke was founded by producers Helen Marriage and Nicky Webb. Before Artichoke, they worked together at the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT), and launched the first arts programme at Canary Wharf in the early nineties, before transforming the Salisbury Festival from a local event into what *The Times* called 'a miracle of modern British culture.'

www.artichoke.uk.com



CREATIVE TEAM

François Delarozière *Artistic Director*

From his early work studying at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Marseille, François spent over 20 years exploring the world of theatre in all its forms. His artistic influences are many and varied:

"Leonardo da Vinci, Jules Verne, Gustave Eiffel, Antonio Gaudi, surrealism, dadaism but also everyday architecture, bridges, shipyards, railway bridges or my training in fine art. My father was a cabinet-maker, but he also built houses; that's how I came to brickwork, to plumbing, welding and mechanics. But I think what inspires me most is a study of nature; before I invent, I observe life."

This life-long exploration of theatre has led to collaborations with major French and international companies from the worlds of traditional drama to experimental street art. Throughout his career, he has followed a relentless quest to push the boundaries of theatre, his work becoming a melting-pot for ideas and forms of the genre.

Dominique Malan *Composer*

Dominique Malan originally trained as a percussionist, and began his career as a drummer in a rock band which toured extensively in France and released several successful albums. His collaboration with François Delarozière and Thierry Loridant began when all three played in another band.

Malan is not a classically-trained composer, but takes his inspiration from nature and from the power of natural acoustic. Musically he cites influences from punk to Bartok, Ravel and Stravinsky. He composes in a way which allows the performer freedom; he doesn't produce written parts but creates a series of themes which can be interpreted by the musicians. For this show, he has tried to evoke the spirit of the creature; he is creating a form of chamber music where the musicians are suspended around the creature.

Malan's career has spanned many disciplines – he has worked as a musician, graphic designer, actor and sound engineer. For the last 15 years he has concentrated solely on music and sound design. He has composed music for theatre, set Bukowski poems to music, created sound designs for theatre and soundtracks for film. He created the music for La Machine's *Symphonie Mecanique*, in which music was played by machines with unusual special effects and pyrotechnics.

Thierry Loridant *Special Effects*

Thierry initially trained as a plumber, developing his skills as a musician at the same time. Later he joined a performance group, which created sculptures live in front of an audience. This experience inspired him to use his training as a plumber to create machines for performance and special effects, and the experience of the live foundry to control flame and use a combination of water, gas and pipes to create music and rhythm. These skills were further developed, when he created an organ using gas cylinders.

At the core of his work is the relationship between rhythm, movement and special effects. For him the effects and the machines are like characters: they all have names and are treated as individuals.

He collaborated with François Delarozière and Dominique Malan on La Machine's *Symphonie Mécanique*, creating special effects which played a starring role in the performance.

In addition to his work with La Machine, Thierry creates effects for film.

Gaëlle Choveau *Costume Designer*

Gaëlle trained in fashion design and History of Art. After working as a fashion stylist, she worked in the costume department of the Opera de Nantes before establishing her own line of children's clothes, Zigotocareau, which is sold in shops throughout France. She combines her work as a children's fashion designer with work as a costume designer in theatre.