

projet
NÉNUPHAR

ИЕНУПНАР

Création 2024

**MÉCANIQUE
VIVANTE** 



Photo Mécanique Vivante

Mécanique Vivante

Created by Franz Clochard in 1989, Mécanique Vivante has been at the frontier of artistic invention and technological innovation for over 30 years. Amongst their flagship projects, the Musical Siren, a brand new musical instrument, developed from the air raid siren. Partnered by the French Ministry of Culture, the Regional and County councils, and the EU, the project has culminated in the creation of a seven-piece, polyphonic orchestra of musical Sirens.

The only one of its kind, the Siren Orchestra travels the world, performing in environments that are as varied as they are surprising, bringing its novel soundscape and harmonic texture to new audiences.

Project Nénuphar

This project is directly linked to Mécanique Vivante's vast experience producing shows in the public arena, notably in urban, architectural and aquatic environments.

It is born from the observation that there are very few lightweight and easily manoeuvrable structures which allow for the exploitation of shallow water (ornamental pools & lakes in urban or natural environments, docks, ponds, castle moats, canals etc).

With *Nénuphar*, Mécanique Vivante turns a body of water & its shores into a stage. This new artistic space invites the public to share and participate in a unique experience and discover their town in a new light and from a new angle.



A water-based show for every district

With *Nénuphar*, the aquatic environment is transformed. Be it a simple riverborne parade or a made-to-measure night-time show, the sight and sound of the Nénuphars gliding through the water shrouded in mist adds a completely new dimension to any body of water.

Mécanique Vivante creates a new public arena, shared between the quays, the docks, the riverbanks and the water. The installation depends on the geography of the site and the creative means available.

After a site visit, the company will draw up the outline of the show - its staging and artistic content. If lighting has always been a major element in live shows in general, with *Nénuphar* it takes on a particularly fantastic dimension, rendering each site unique, graphic and global.



The show, navigation and community involvement

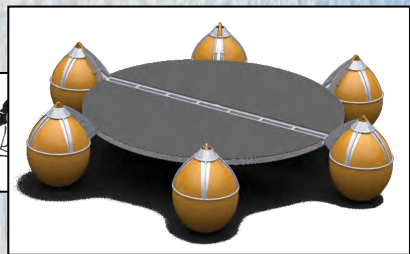
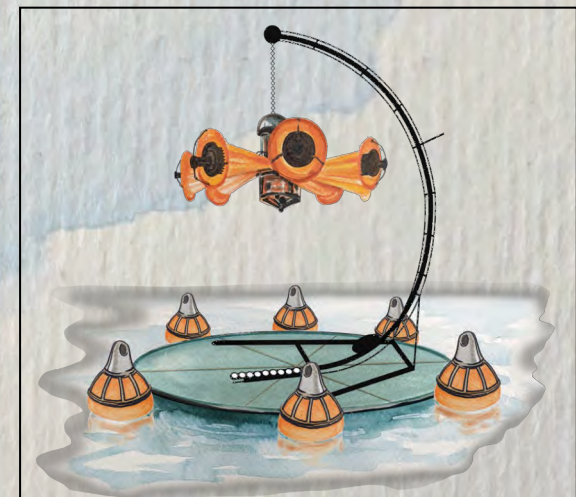
Nénuphars are autonomous, easily manoeuvrable floating stages that have a platform diameter of 3.6m and load capacity of a 650kg. The flotilla is formed of 6 Nénuphars, a rowing boat and 6 semi-submerged floating platforms.

Four Nénuphars connected by small walkways carry the Siren Orchestra and spotlights. Two independent and autonomous Nénuphars carry the soloists and their instruments.

The show relies upon local help : divers to push the Nénuphars, gondoliers to punt them and guide them through the water, and small boats to carry fog into the scenographic space.

Mécanique Vivante works with local clubs and associations (dive clubs, dance associations, the local sailing club etc). The participants are supervised by the company ahead of time and trained to manoeuvre the Nénuphars and produce the choreography of the show.

The *Nénuphar* show with the Siren Orchestra lends itself to encounters and collaboration. Mécanique Vivante's inhouse composer can create new pieces, working with choirs and instrumental groups, be they pro or amateur, to create a uniquely local event.



The soloists and performers associated with the company :

The Bellringer's Arch : Statuesque and graceful, the bell-ringer sets the rhythm, awakening the audience and hailing the sirens into the public arena.

The Divas & their giant horns : Posed on the riverbank amongst the public, two singers lure the Sirens to come join them. There follows a mechanical ballet where the songstresses and their horns spin, creating Doppler effect & sending waves of song across the public.

The Musical Metronome : like the pendulum of a metronome six metres in the air, a fog-horn adorned with an umbrella sways from side to side, tempting a guitarist out into the open. The foghorn sways drunkenly until the guitarist plays; and then ends the sequence on a majestic, haunting note...

The flight to the foghorn by chainsaw : This is the chainsaw myths are built on, the legendary chainsaw of the circus Archaos, progenitor of New Circus in the 80's. Like a real-life Spiderman, it's creator Franz Clochard flies 15 metres into the air and triggers the foghorn from the famous ocean liner France - an act that will leave the whole town gasping and buzzing.

Virtuoso Timpani : usually hidden away at the back of the orchestra, orchestral timpani take centre stage. Borne high on her Nenuphar, the percussionist plays timpani, temple block (1), Crotales (2) and a set of gongs.

The Final with the Sirénium : together on stage, the musicians perform the final number around the Sirenium (3).

(1) An eastern Asian instrument with a limited range. Mécanique Vivante has developed a 2 octave chromatic Temple block.

(2) Ancient percussion of Greek origin, made in bronze at Mécanique Vivante . The sound is close to that of bells but the Crotales have a sustain all of their own.

(3) A digital instrument of mechanical fabrication which allows live improvisation and interpretation of one or more of the sirens.

Distribution

Sirénium : Franz Clochard

Percussion : Lucie Delmas / Laurence Meisterlin

Guitar : Eric Lorher / Seb Martel

Tubular Bells : Millie Dolan

Chant : Fenna Ograjensek / Marylène Duprey, sopranos - Lien Haegman, mezzo

Concept : Franz Clochard

Lighting design : Pierre Wendels

Sound engineer : Rémy Gonin

Production : Millie Dolan

Musical composition : Patrice Colet - Benoit Louette





Illustrations et graphics - Laure Boin

*Nénuhar, from the Greek nymphae; beautiful, wily spirits - carrying powerful Sirens; fantastic creatures of myth and legend.
In an urban role-reversal, Mécanique Vivante makes the silence of nature resonate and the din of the city recede, creating a sense of the unreal.*

PARTNERS

Mécanique Vivante has been partnered by the French Ministry of Culture since 2002 for its research and development of a new instrument, the musical Siren. It is also supported by the Occitanie Regional Council, the Department of the Gard and Alès Agglomération.

Additional funding for Project Nénuhar comes from : DGCA Ministry of Culture, DRAC Occitanie, Conseil Départemental du Gard

The project is co-produced by : Le Cratère, National Theatre, Alès - Alès Agglomération (Metropolitan District) - Association Mécanique Vivante

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