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NÉNUPHAR
НЕИПЬНАР

**MÉCANIQUE
VIVANTE** 

The Sirens' Song - Project Nénuphar

[Watch the teaser](#)



Photo Fred Lagrange

Project Nénuphar

Nénuphar (water-lily in English) is directly linked to Mecanique Vivante's vast experience producing shows in the public arena, notably in urban, architectural and aquatic environments.

The project came about 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).

Mécanique Vivante's *Nénuphar* stages and illuminates the river and its banks in a visual, musical odyssey, opening up a new public space. The company creates site-specific shows and invites the public to see their town with new eyes.

Nénuphar - the show

Imagine, if you will, giant water lilies, Mécannique Vivantes's *Nénuphar*, floating on a lake, where they come across a field of poppies, drifting islands of choristers and a soprano and a mezzo singing through giant-belled horns...

... And the Siren Orchestra with its enchanting soundscape accompanying a duet of percussion and guitar.

With *The Sirens' Song* and *Nénuphar*, Mécannique Vivante showcases its wonderful inventions: the world's only siren orchestra, virtuoso soloists and ground-breaking performances.



Photo Marjorie Truchet

Modus operandi

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

Be it completely water-borne or shared between the water, the riverbanks, the shore and the quays, the installation is entirely dependent on the site and the means available.

After a site visit, the company will draw up the outline of the show - its Staging, lighting and artistic content - and the technical requirements.

For almost thirty years Mécanique Vivante has been making tools and staging devices which allow the company to set up just about anywhere with perfect autonomy: in urban, rural and industrial landscapes, in ports and inland & coastal waterways, in sites of outstanding architecture. And now, with Project *Nénuphar*, bodies of shallow water. The company balances artistic integrity, feasibility and budget constraints for each new project.

Be it modest or ambitious, *Project Nénuphar* can adapt to each site and every event.

What landscapes are suitable for *Nénuphar*?

- Ornamental pools and shallow waters in urban or natural environments
- Ponds and lakes in parks and gardens; castle moats; natural lakes
- Calm rivers; canals

The *Nénuphar* require a minimum depth of 70cm. They are not adapted to sea water or fast flowing rivers.

The flotilla consists of 6 *Nénuphars*, a rowing boat and 6 semi-immersed floating platforms. It is separable, each element having an artistic or technical purpose.

Each *Nénuphar* is a small floating autonomous navigable stage, 3m60 in diameter, which can carry artists and instruments both large and small.

The floating platforms, isolated or linked together by articulated arms, can be fixed or mobile, and can each carry 6 artists or the equivalent in equipment.

The rowing boat is the stage for the guitarist.



Photo Fred Lagrange

Synergy with local structures

Collaborating with local artists

The *Nénuphar* show with the Sirens' Song lends itself to artistic collaboration and encounters.

Thanks to Mécanique Vivante's in-house composer, the company can work with musicians from all walks of life, be they professional or amateur.

Depending on the scale and ambition of the project, the existing repertoire (for choirs, opera singers, solo musicians and ensembles) can be adapted, or new pieces written, to create a uniquely local event.

Musical scores & recordings are sent ahead of time to allow preparation and rehearsal, then rehearsals are held in situ with the Siren Orchestra before the final show.



Divers to guide the Nénuphars in the water



Mécanique Vivante works with local clubs and associations, dive clubs, in particular. The participants are supervised by the company's divers ahead of time and trained to manoeuvre and guide the Nénuphars for the show.

Their presence is required for rehearsals and for the final show.





MECANIQUE 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. 25 years of research & development have culminated in the creation of a seven-piece, polyphonic orchestra of musical Sirens.

The Sirens' Song, as the project is known, is partnered by the French Ministry of Culture, the Regional and County councils, and has received EU funding.

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.

PARTNERS

Mécanique Vivante is partnered by the French Ministry of Culture since 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 Nénuphar comes from:

DGCA Ministry of Culture - DRAC Occitanie - Conseil Départemental du Gard

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

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