



## SCREEN BOASTS 5,000 PARTY GUESTS!

August 23rd marked the **1st Birthday of the Big Screen Liverpool**. The past twelve months have been filled with such a rewarding array of **innovative projects** that we were ready for a bit of a rest. A pint of Guinness and a broken cell phone would have made a welcome pairing.

But this is the Public Space Broadcasting Project, where anything is possible, screen managers need no sleep (having perfected the **open-eye power nap**), and surprises lurk around every corner dressed in a **grubby macintosh** with all the buttons missing.

On the day itself, we drafted in the talents of local dance school **MD Productions**. The purpose was simply to have fun, and if we could inform those watching that local opportunities were available in dance tuition and choreography, so much the better.

It's one thing to estimate approximate numbers, but thanks to our colleagues within the Liverpool Business Improvement District we have access to actual

footfall figures as registered by an automatic counter. The results were, quite honestly, **astounding**.

Over the two-hour lunch period pedestrian traffic **increased by 5,000** compared to that week's daily average, which the sea of people in the pictures above illustrate. The future is clear. The public have voted with their feet. With this in view we shall be pitching to host the first Big Screen Bare Midriff Expo as part of our forthcoming season...

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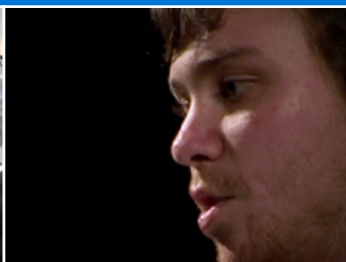
**NATIONAL EVENTS,  
REGIONAL CELEBRATIONS  
& GLOBAL BROADCASTS**



**1 PLATFORM FOR LOCAL TALENT. SATELLITE GALLERY SPACE. OUTSIDE BROADCAST POINT. PLUG & PLAY CAPABILITY. EVENT ARENA.**



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## THE VIEW FROM HERE

It's been a busy year. The screen launched in August to coincide with the **Athens 2004 Olympics** and was swiftly followed by an astonishing programme of digital video artworks as part of the **Liverpool Biennial** - the UK's only international festival of digital art. A brace of bank holidays kept us on our toes, kicking off with a rare outdoor screening of The Beatles in the psychedelic hit Yellow Submarine for the **Mathew Street Music Festival**. Dance fever broke out during **Black History Month**, with a tap-spectacular from the **Black Screen Film & Video Festival** and **Merseyside Dance Initiative**.

Out came the fairy lights as Autumn made way for the Christmas shoppers, and with the help of **Joulupukki TV**, Finland, we commissioned a

batch of personalised video messages, virtual reindeer rides and more from **Santa Claus** in the Arctic Circle! December evenings heralded the arrival of **Liverpool Swings** featuring **Caroloke** (live musical accompaniment courtesy of Liverpool Jazz Club) as part of the Liverpool BID rolling street entertainment. Daylight hours were reserved for Schools Carol Concerts featuring children from across the region.

A New Year brought outlandish surprises for **Red Nose Day** from **Sienta la Cabeza**, a performance hairdressing troupe from Barcelona. It wasn't long before the football season began in earnest with supporters cheering along for **England v Wales**, plus as many again as the **Aintree Grand National** thundered live across the 26 metre square screen. **BBC Blast** piloted a new project following months of talent workshops with

local teenagers for **Da Big Day**, aided by skills support from the BBC Bus team and BBC Project Merseyside. This culminated in an exceptional showcase of live performances hosted by **BBC Radio 1Xtra**.

Around this period - had you listened carefully - a sonic boom registered in the skies above Clayton Square as we burst the Big Screen ideas barrier. Months of planning, tinkering and brain-battering effort from **ICDC: The International Centre of Digital Content**, an extension of **Liverpool John Moores University** saw a day of interactive applications unveiled to visitors from other Big Screen cities. Demos included Virtual Football, Audio Jukebox, Rampant Lion, Voting, Musical Hot-Spot, Lemmings, Bluetooth, Pong, Molten Bubbles and more; all controlled by the public via movement alone.

No sooner had we coiled up our cables than the summer events season was upon us. Three exclusive live relays from the **Royal Opera House: Stars of the Royal Ballet, Rigoletto and La Boheme** with free tiered seating, **BBC Sport Academy** competition **Keepy Up For The Cup** and screening of **Wimbledon 2005** accompanied by the **My Wimbledon Roadshow**; including inflatable courts, tennis tuition and complimentary strawberries!

For the **RBS Formula One** season, BMW shipped over a driving simulator in the shell of a

genuine sports car and linked to the giant monitor; a popular event that was swiftly followed by the **RBS Open Golf Tournament** that had the public queueing to tee-off on screen thanks to the latest PlayStation technology developed by In2Games.

**Liverpool Young Culture Action Trust** were among the first to recognise the scope of the Big Screen in extending their reach, so with assistance from the **Greenhouse Project** pulled together a week-long series of film shorts to coincide with the Liverpool Children's Festival at nearby St George's Hall.

Sir Bob Geldof orchestrated the swift turnaround of **Live8** to highlight the plight of debt ridden African nations with the planet's biggest ever rock concert. Live from Hyde Park, London, it was watched by 200,000 in situ... and a further 200,000 at BBC Big Screen sites around the country; including here in Liverpool.

The **BBC Proms** live from The Albert Hall included a memorable evening of sea-themed delights by **The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**, again with free seating within our prime viewing zone. Eager to share and explore in the growth of digital art across the world, we teamed up with our sibling the BBC Big Screen Manchester and transatlantic cousins **Vibe 05: Video** in the Built Environment; a symposium based in Chicago. All 3 sites screened a selection of video artworks



created for urban areas culminating in a live video conference at The Cornerhouse in Manchester.

Glowing with success, our **1st Birthday Celebrations** were to have been a modest affair but for the talents of **MD Productions**, blazing sunshine and MC support by Helen Jones of **BBC Merseyside** who threw caution to the wind and performed a solo rendition of The Funky Chicken to the watching masses - all 5,000 of them. A special thanks is owed to **Liverpool BID** for their continued support, plus that of the surrounding stores and traders. We owe you all a slice of cake.

At this point we'd place a full stop on the year there if we could, but too much has happened in the following weeks for us not to shout about! **Nothing Rhymes With Poets** is a project developed specifically for the Big Screen by students at the **Liverpool Centre for Arts Development**. Working alongside local literacy agency **The Windows Project** and the **Dead Good Poets Society**, an open call for submissions went out to the region's performance poetry community. Following auditions a final 10 were selected, filmed and edited in a rewarding partnership with **Toxteth TV**. These mammoth rhyming ripostes are now showing daily throughout Sept/Oct before touring the UK on the BBC Big Screen network.

Another day, another public screen first for the start of the **Clipper Round the World Yacht Race 05-06** with the installation of a permanent remote camera point (more below) at the Pier Head, recently granted **Unesco World Heritage Site** status. Thought it was just a giant telly did you? Go and stand in the corner until you're ready to apologise...

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

In the run-up to European Capital of Culture in 2008, we are now approaching the close of Year of the Sea. Thanks to the generosity of the Maritime Events Department we were able to install a permanent, dedicated camera link at the Pier Head. This was the first such installation for any of the Big Screen cities, effectively creating a satellite event space / overspill viewing zone that will serve this



popular outdoor concert spot, adjacent to the Albert Dock and site of the future Liverpool Museum & Cruise Ship Terminal both. Audio and video recorded here can not only be beamed live to the Big Screen, but channelled direct to local BBC radio and television services, the national media grid (allowing for outside broadcasts without cumbersome satellite trucks), and even beyond.

For example: our feed of the **Clipper Round the World Yacht Race** was simultaneously webcast on [www.bbc.co.uk/liverpool](http://www.bbc.co.uk/liverpool) to audiences and expats across the world. Unfortunately our box of tricks doesn't yet make toast, while any bacon posted through the cable flap remains uncooked - but we're working on fixing this glaring omission.

## INTRODUCING

... your Big Screen Manager here in Liverpool, Bren O'Callaghan. That's me, surfing on Michael Owen's popularity below. Although based at BBC Merseyside, I am frequently to be found pacing a groove in the pavement between Clayton Square shopping centre, where I hunker over a stack of computers that look as if they should have access to Russian nuclear silos. They don't. I can also control the screen from home, although this isn't as lazy as it sounds when the phone rings at 3am with a message that "the picture has gone funny".

So what else do I do? I hold editorial control for all content. I make sure the screen works as it should, fix faults and create a weekly playlist, applying guidelines that govern BBC output to ensure taste and decency. I liaise with and on behalf of technology providers Philips, meet with the Capital of Culture team to plan events, assess health & safety considerations, coordinate visiting BBC roadshows and facilitate free access to the screen for all those who have a creative idea they'd like to develop.

Our software team is the best in the world, but happen to be based in Tel Aviv. We speak often, over a dedicated hotline that should be shiny and red but is actually a pale beige and frequently lost beneath a mound of video tapes. The screen is so much more than a simple monitor, and earlier in this document we detail some of the exciting interactive applications in development. The Pier Head link and birds-eye camera are already available for use now.



It's important to ensure that the screen carries as much locally generated content as possible, which requires targeting suitable groups, colleges and organisations. An open access steering group is in development, and I will soon be joined by a freelance digital curator to explore the potential of film and visual programming: regional in flavour, yet international in outlook.

I can see the end of the page approaching having only just started to scratch the surface! It's our job - my fellow screen managers and I - to make the impossible, possible. We climb and we clamber. We talk, we type, we dash. We edit, we liaise, we blag and we blather. We also sweat. A lot. Please don't let that put you off. It's good, honest Big Screen ooze generated by a desire to create a window through which each region can showcase the very best we have to offer.

The world is watching, not least because the BBC and our partner organisations are creating a stew of visual, aural and participatory goodness that cannot be sampled ANYWHERE else on the planet. Not Times Square, but Clayton Square. Not Berlin, Shanghai or Toronto, but Manchester, Birmingham and Hull.

***The Big Screen Liverpool is a joint partnership between the BBC, Liverpool City Council and Philips Technologies. Royal Bank of Scotland are our current sponsors and Liverpool Business Improvement District host the infrastructure and manage use of the public space in Clayton Square.***

COVER IMAGES

(Clockwise, far left to right) Big Screen 1st Birthday (all).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Got a question? Get in touch!

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