

PARTY BY THE MERSEY ELEMENTAL TO OUTSTANDING SUMMER

- Liverpool to stage two massive On The Waterfront weekends this July and August
- Parties by the river inspired by forces of nature - air, earth, fire and water
- First weekend also explores war and peace with events celebrating Lennon and Picasso
- Second weekend will see new look waterfront host an international festival of dance

NATURE'S forces are set to combine to dramatic effect this summer when Liverpool draws on the elements of air, earth, fire and water in two incredible weekends of fantastic free events.

The '**On the Waterfront**' weekends of culture in July and August will erupt with a feast of family fun, closely followed by the biggest free dance festival in the UK this year featuring the cream of European outdoor dance, all tied together by the natural elements that have helped shape Liverpool into the great city it is today.

In addition, the world changing human elements of '**War and Peace**' will be explored using two giants of 20th century culture - **John Lennon** and **Pablo Picasso** - with events drawing on the landmark Picasso: Peace and Freedom Exhibition at TATE Liverpool, and the John Lennon 'White Feather – the Spirit of Lennon' exhibition at the Beatles Story at the Albert Dock; both icons were heavily influenced by the issues of war and peace in their work and lives.

Culture Liverpool, Liverpool City Council's culture unit, has joined forces with Walk The Plank to produce an outstanding programme of FREE live events on the city's £250m new look waterfront, further cementing Liverpool's place as one of the top visitor destinations in Europe. The weekend of **16 to 18 July** will be a show-stopping party of quirky live street theatre, visual spectacles, Picasso-inspired performance and Pirate palavers.

The spectacle starts with a bang on the evening of Friday 16 when Walk The Plank stage 'A Wave At Picasso' which will reflect the world of the great artist in and on the **water**, using light, **fire**, **pyrotechnics**, soundscapes, music, projections, choreographed performance and a series of **floating** sculptural images that will **ignite** the dock, stun senses, **spark** imaginations and leave a long lasting impact on the eyes, ears and minds of spectators.

The rest of the weekend is a packed programme of live street performance interspersed with ground-breaking visual displays including:

- A Picasso-inspired '**Peace Garden**' commissioned by TATE Liverpool, with artist Sophie Cullinan
- A giant dove of peace **sand** sculpture
- A specially commissioned **aerial** performance on a Tall Ship
- A mass Sense of Sound choir singing songs inspired by the sea and waterfront
- The timber-shivering 'Mersey Pirate Muster' – a free, family fun day (on Sunday, 18 July) complete with live Pirate **battle**, black powder displays and monster hunt.

The ambitious and spectacular dance weekend from **6 to 8 August** will showcase the very best of international outdoor dance and will be one biggest and best **open air** events in Europe this year. Music and strolling performances will build anticipation on Friday evening before the large-scale spectacular kicks off with world- famous Argentinian **aerial** company Voala.

The 18-strong troupe will perform a striking and lyrical **airborne** show, astonishing onlookers as cranes lift them high into the **air**. Original live music will form the perfect backdrop with poetry and magic entrancing the crowds.

Saturday evening will feature more dramatic performances including stunning **water** based choreography from Factoria Mascaro (Spain), whirling dervish Ziya Azazi (Turkey/Germany) and another chance to see the spectacular show from Voala. Dance highlights also include Axial, a UK-based contemporary dance duo who arrive, use and depart on an iconic 1963 Lambretta.

The excitement continues apace all weekend with live street theatre and a dynamic showcase of the best of new dance by Merseyside-based professional companies, along with dance demos and workshops. The festival will finally end with a gloriously lavish and extrovert Tea Dance, complete with Glen Miller Tribute Orchestra.

The On the Waterfront festivals will celebrate Liverpool, the **River** Mersey and its UNESCO World Heritage **waterfront**, itself sitting on land reclaimed from the sea, as the city's newly transformed image continues to wow visitors and residents alike making Liverpool one of the hottest destination for culture vultures in Europe.

Council Leader Warren Bradley, said: "Liverpool's magnificently transformed waterfront is one of the nation's great public spaces and these weekends will be a wonderful showcase for the city's unique ability to stage spectacular events of international artistic quality for free. The international dimension of this programme is also equal to anything we did in Capital of Culture year which speaks volumes for the city's appeal to continue to attract the best."

Claire McColgan, Director of Culture at Liverpool City Council, said: "Our constantly changing waterfront is Liverpool's calling card to the world and this programme is at the heart of reclaiming this space both for the residents of the city and beyond. The chance to showcase the work of the calibre of these artists is a real honour."

John Wassell, Creative Producer for Walk The Plank, added: "It's great to have the chance to build on the partnerships we made for the Opening and Closing Events for Capital of Culture, and to continue to work with cutting edge artists to produce stunning shows in extraordinary places. The Liverpool Waterfront is a fantastic and inspirational place to make art that is spectacular, innovative and which appeals to the widest possible audience."

ENDS

More details of the 'On The Waterfront' season will be announced over the coming weeks.

- **Free images of artists and Liverpool's waterfront can be emailed on request**
- **For further information please contact Mike Doran at Liverpool City Council Newscentre on 0151 225 2227 or Chantal Barton on 0781 455 7487 email Chantal@signaturecollective.com**

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- **'Culture Liverpool'** is Liverpool City Council's new Business Unit which funds and delivers culture and events in the city and manages international relations. Its aim is to help Liverpool build on the success of '08 by creating a dynamic programme that reflects the character and creativity of the city, placing citizens at its heart and inspiring all who participate and spectate. Liverpool's European Capital of Culture programme featured more than 7,000 events, 10,000 artists and

over 60 world or European premieres. The year helped generate £800m boost to the regional economy, attracting 3.5million first time visitors to the city with most cultural attractions recording a 30% rise on 2007 attendances. For more information visit www.liverpool.gov.uk/culture

- **'Walk the Plank'** is a creative force of artists and event engineers who specialise in weaving together visual images, fire, fireworks and music to create outdoor performance and specially-commissioned events. The company works across a variety of scales, from intimate installations to large-scale theatre designed for thousands. Through touring performances and tailored site-specific commissions, their events connect people with places, and celebrate special occasions. The company worked on both the People's Opening and the Transition (Closing) for Liverpool's European Capital of Culture celebrations. www.walktheplank.co.uk
- Between 2007 and 2013 the Northwest of England will receive a total of £521 million (dependent on exchange rate) from the **European Regional Development Agency (NWDA)**, this funding will enhance the competitiveness of the regions economy by supporting growth in employment and enterprise. Key targets for the NWOP include:
 - Creating 26,700 net additional jobs by 2013
 - Generating £1.17bn additional annual GVA by 2015
 - Supporting a 25% reduction in addition CO2 emissions generated by the ERDF Programme

For further information please visit www.erdfnw.co.uk