

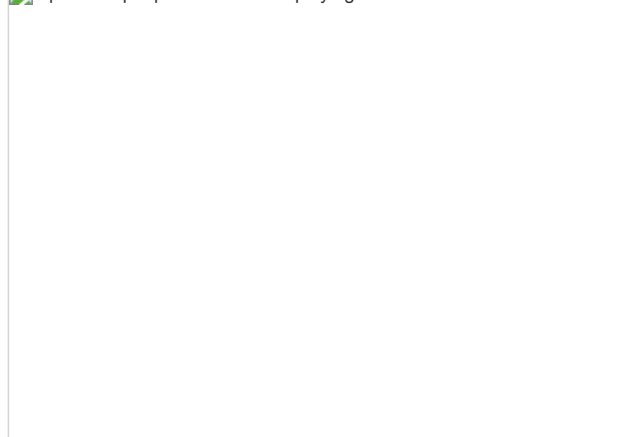
On the Mersey Beat: Liverpool Biennial 2010

By Mark Sheerin | 19 September 2010

Tags:

Article

A photo of people in black hats playing instruments



Pil and Galia Kollektiv in performance at The Royal Standard for the Liverpool Biennial

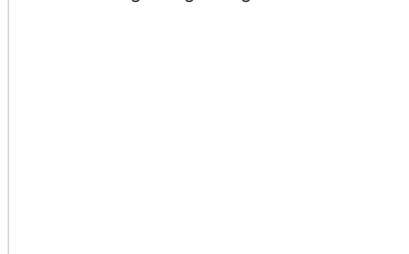
Festival: Liverpool Biennial: International Festival of Contemporary Art, various venues, Liverpool, until November 18 2010

At Euston station, an eminent art critic offers this advice: "Liverpool is quite doable in one day as long as there aren't a load of 40 minute videos." Several hours later, progress has been stymied by no less than five.

First there was Daniel Bozhkov at the Bluecoat. His installation, set in a mock up of the dressing room at Anfield, featured militant council members from the 80s, music by John Lennon, and for some bizarre reason many pandas.

Then there was a film by Christina Lucas at the disused Europleasure building on Duke Street. This featured mature Liverpudlians smashing the windows of said building with stones, while fairground music played.

A photo of a screen showing a man talking in a room lit with glowing red lights



Daniel Bozhkov, Music not Good for Pigeons (2010). Installation view

Next door was a more serious three-channel piece by Alfredo Jaar. His theme was the genocide in Rwanda and in particular the state visit by Bill Clinton on which the President claimed to have had no knowledge of the deaths of more than a million people.

Two more videos, featuring an intense

cut up performance on a double bass and some beatboxing, bird impersonating and spoken word poetry, were to be found at Phase 5. This venue stops you in your tracks with the amplified sound of construction and, once inside, it is not unlike a building site.

Curator Asher Remy-Toledo was putting up white plaques at the last minute and directing early visitors down some stairs to another sound installation by Ray Lee. In another part of the building artist Phil Jeck appeared to be feeding fish, but on closer inspection was floating 7"



visit our new site

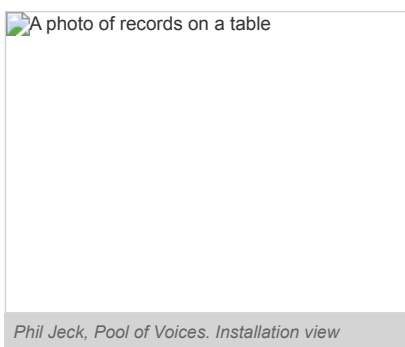


museumcrush.org

for museum stories, previews and listings

singles in the shallow pool of water. Giuseppe Stampone, meanwhile, had rigged up coffins to play the US National Anthem.

Other highlights were to be found at the Re:thinking Trade show in the former Rapid Hardware store. Here there was a room full of game equipment, flip flops and kids' furniture emblazoned with flags (Meschac Gaba) and a short film of a firework paid for by a bank loan (Karmelo Bermejo). It spelled out the word Recession. Also in the building was a neon-lit reading room devoted to Karl Marx (Alfredo Jaar, again).



Walking down Seel Street, a man with a waxed moustache slows down a fixed wheel bicycle to enquire if I am having fun, and adds: "There's a piece by Francis Yew at the end of this road. Look out for the chickens!" Sure enough, in a small gallery window there are live chickens, along with a photo reconstruction of the last supper, and a floor strewn with hay and fake bank notes.

A local youth, also drawn by the poultry, is rolling a cigarette and looking in the same window. He points out details of the installation and asks a question about the photo. "It's amazin' what they can do though, isn't it?" he says, then hits me up for 10p.

And in the Bluecoat there was a man in a baseball cap with a holdall full of paintings he did while on holiday in Wales. He is here to show them off to one of the gallery assistants. So there is no lack of enthusiasm for the Biennial among the people of this vibrant city.

But neither character makes it out to The Royal Standard later for a performance by the Pil and Galia Kollektiv. In the nearby garage of a friendly mechanic, four musicians wearing ironically futuristic outfits and play dirgy synth music. When they play a bastardised version of I Want To Hold Your Hand by The Beatles, it seemed just what you'd expect from Liverpool, and then again not.

Visit the [Biennial website](#) for the full programme.

Visit [Mark Sheerin's Contemporary Art Blog](#) and follow him on [Twitter](#).

All tags

More on the venues and organisations we've mentioned:

[Bluecoat](#)

[Back to top](#) | [Print this article](#) | [Email this article](#) | [SHARE](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Email](#) | [More](#)



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Copyright © Culture24 unless otherwise stated. Information published here was believed to be correct at the time of publication.

[Update your Info](#)
[Terms and Conditions](#)
[Sector Info](#)

[Accessibility](#)
[Sitemap](#)
[For Press](#)

[About Us](#)
[Credits](#)
[Culture24: Contact Us](#)