



It was with some trepidation that I celebrated new year 2008. There was a lot of negative talk floating around about Liverpool's Capital of Culture tenure but there was so much promise too. It hasn't been plain sailing but I do believe that Liverpool has done what seemed impossible and at last started to change perceptions about the city. Ultimately, I'll remember '08 for its big public events like La Machine, which created truly unique memories.



Andy Bonner
Granada TV

Reporting on Capital of Culture year has been an unforgettable experience. From the opening ceremony, people really got behind it and I saw first hand how the city's galleries, theatres and venues grabbed the opportunity with both hands. And as many of them would attest, it wasn't a matter of having hugely bigger budgets, but wanting to be part of the year, daring to think bigger, and wanting to make it something special in a way, looking back, it really feels only Liverpool could.



Vicky Anderson
Culture reporter, Daily Post

2008 seemed to go by in a flash. One minute the Tall Ships were sailing up the river, the next Pink was having a very public pillow fight at the Echo Arena.



Whether it was singing All Together Now at the Arena opening, trying out a Viennese waltz at St George's Hall, listening to Frank Cottrell Boyce read from his own book or relishing Roger McGough's joyous Tartuffe... my 2008 went by in a wondrous cultural whirl. And while we may not be the official Capital of Culture any more, we should be heartened that no one can take away the fact that Liverpool will always be a capital of, ideas, dreams and ambitions.

Catherine Jones
Culture reporter, Liverpool Echo

Liverpool's cultural currency

Phil Redmond, Creative Director, Liverpool Culture Company



Awareness. What value can we put on it? Thanks to '08 there's very few people in this country who don't have some knowledge and awareness of Liverpool's cultural offer - but what does this really mean for us?

Research found that 70% of people across the UK knew that Liverpool was Capital of Culture with 79% saying we were "a city on the up."

Much of this is due to the unprecedented media coverage Liverpool has had. The year

has generated more than £200m of global publicity, with over 12,000 positive articles in the press and more than 20 hours of primetime TV programming in the UK alone.

Be it the Nativity or Opening weekend, MTV or BBC Sports Personality of the Year, our new look Liverpool has been beamed into people's living rooms all over the world. There's also been great headlines abroad from the New York Times and Le Figaro to New Zealand Herald and South China Morning Post. Even the Manchester Evening News has been kind!

Being on people's lips these past 12 months, whether for amazing events or great new buildings, has a huge sleeper legacy. With the credit crunch biting and a weak pound, the UK is becoming a more attractive place to visit – both for overseas visitors and tourists at home.

And with the cruise terminal and even more links at JLA, it's crucial we continue to promote the city as heavily in '09 and beyond, because this year has consistently shown our culture and our city are popular. It's a story we need to keep telling. Raising awareness is helping to reposition Liverpool, nationally and internationally.

You can't put a value on that kind of awareness. Quite simply, it's priceless.