

# Culture goes into orbit!

**Young people in Liverpool discovered a whole new cultural universe in '08.**

The Orrery was developed by the Liverpool Culture Company to give young people a taste of the city's Capital of Culture celebrations. It reflected the city's position as 'The Centre of the Creative Universe', a reference to Beat poet Allen Ginsberg's comments following a visit to the city in the 1960s.

Inspired by traditional instruments which show how planets orbit the sun in the solar system, the mechanical, musical sculpture was a big hit with youngsters. It was brought to life by actors from Hope Street Ltd, and visited 40 primary schools and 10 artistic events during 2008, engaging almost 70,000 young people.

Ten of Liverpool's cultural institutions were represented by orbs – or 'planets' – suspended from The Orrery, and a cargo of 'cultural capsules' containing props and costumes, helped explain the role of each organisation.

The orbs could also be illuminated, transforming The Orrery into a stunning piece of public art.

Accompanied by a special teachers' guide, The Orrery educated, enthused and captivated thousands of young people during Capital of Culture year.



# Imaginations run wild

**Liverpool was taken over by dance, theatre, circus and carnival processions in August – and even welcomed an emperor and a tiger!**

Imagine, '08's spectacular, free festival for the whole family, brought a riot of colour, music and performance to the city.

A packed programme of events and performance began with the beautiful open-air theatre piece *The Emperor and the Tiger* in Newsham Park - featuring a giant tiger, costumed carnival dancers, drummers, and a spectacular fireworks display.

It paved the way for 10 days of festivities, from cinema to samba and from an interactive, theatrical, city centre circus to *The Brouhaha International Festival*, Liverpool's answer to the Notting Hill Carnival.

Imagine culminated with *The Liverpool Children's Festival*, as the city's secret and imaginary twin-town 'Roopville' sprang to life on William Brown Street, complete with a party bus, a beach, a 'laughter clinic' and a big parade.



# Designs on city's future

**300 foot swings from the Radio City Tower, roof-top allotments on every house, mini-golf in the city centre...**

Le Corbusier and Da Vinci inspired youngsters showcased their designs for happy, healthy, eco-friendly cities through the Generation 21 project.

Around 160 Liverpool schools took part in the scheme, working with local artists to create groundbreaking contemporary art and performance projects which captured their futuristic city visions.

The imaginative ideas included allotments on the roof of every home, rainbow areas to bring sunshine into people's lives and a city where residents can get around using water taxis and monorails.

The year-long project, part of '08's 'Creative Learning Networks' programme, ended with a huge exhibition at the BT Convention Centre. The children's work was also captured on a special DVD which will be a valuable learning resource for Liverpool schools.





## It's Not OK!

**A hard-hitting project has helped young people stand together and speak out against aggression and violence.**

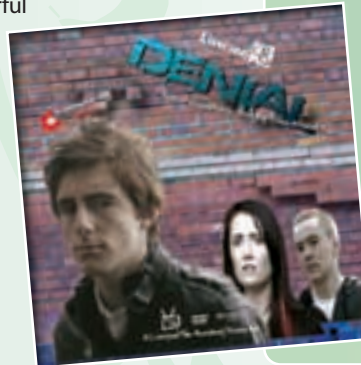
'It's Not OK' was one of the most critically acclaimed youth projects of '08. Launched in the build-up to Capital of Culture the project had a major impact on young people in the city, harnessing creativity as a vehicle to combat anti-social behaviour.

The initiative saw youngsters teaming up with Liverpool Film Academy Educational Trust and top Liverpool writers and directors to create specially-commissioned films.

'Street Heat', exposing violence towards the emergency services was released in 2006. 'Plastered', looking at teenage attitudes to alcohol was released in February 2007, closely followed in October by 'Senseless', focusing on the issue of race hate.

In 2008, youngsters finished work on the fourth film, Denial, a powerful account of homophobic bullying written by Liverpool writer Shaun Duggan who has worked on scripts for Eastenders, Waterloo Road and Brookside.

The final installment in the series is released this year. Entitled 'Da Boys', it explores youth gun and gang culture.



**When we were awarded the title of European Capital of Culture in 2003, I said that "Capital of Culture must - and will - touch the lives of every one of our citizens." Anybody who attended any of the events of '08 knows we have more than achieved this. It was a year when**

**the whole city was filled with pride, confidence, and creativity. Liverpool will never be the same again. We will never look back - only forward to a better future for the people of our city."**

**Councillor Mike Storey  
Deputy Lord Mayor**



## Youngsters unveil nation's 'Portrait'

**More than 500 teenagers from across the UK united at St George's Hall in November for a huge celebration of young people's cultural heritage.**

The youngsters received the red carpet treatment at the culmination of Portrait of a Nation - the biggest youth project of its kind. The two-year initiative for Capital of Culture

encouraged young people from 17 UK cities to learn more about where they come from, talk about what makes their hometown so special and look at what culture and identity means to them.

A raft of high profile guests, including influential US activist Reverend Jesse Jackson and Culture Secretary, Andy Burnham, MP,

were in attendance at the Hall, as the young people showcased the best of their work.

The 'voice of youth' was captured through two days of artwork, music, comedy, debate, podcasts, performance and fashion.

Headed up by the Liverpool Culture Company and the Heritage Lottery Fund, it is hoped Portrait of a Nation will influence a formal cultural manifesto.

