



Artists' impression of *M-blem: the train project* for Manchester created by HeHe, commissioned by The Arts Catalyst and AND Festival 2012

## **HeHe, *M-Blem: the train project***

**29 August – 1 September 2012, 6-10pm daily**

**Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester**

**Admission free, book to participate in a 'ride' at**

**<http://www.andfestival.org.uk/events/m-blem-the-train-project/>**

The Arts Catalyst in collaboration with **Abandon Normal Devices (AND) Festival** are delighted to present *M-blem: the train project*, a new participatory commission by international public art interventionists **HeHe**. The project commemorates the birthplace of the world's first recognizable modern railway - the Liverpool and Manchester Railway (L&MR), a twin-track intercity public transport system which opened in the autumn of 1830.

HeHe (Heiko Hansen and Helen Evans) are creating a new autonomous vehicle to run on the tracks at MOSI (Museum of Science and Industry) housed in the buildings of the former Liverpool Road Station for the AND Festival. Open daily from 29 August until 01 September; audiences will be welcomed through the historic L&MR station entrance on Liverpool Road each evening during the festival (please visit [www.andfestival.org.uk](http://www.andfestival.org.uk) for booking details).

Inspired by AB Clayton's painting of the inaugural journey of the L&MR, which illustrates a series of small open-topped passenger carriages on the track outside Liverpool Road station, HeHe will run their vehicle *M-blem: the train project* on the historic track. In a project mixing past and future, the artists will present their mobile, light-weight, electric wheel-set along with solar charging stations, platform signs and passenger vehicle referencing the original carriages but using modern materials.



The artist duo have been working on the 'Train Project' for a number of years, criticising the car as the only option for autonomous transport and proposing personal rail travel as a temporary, imaginary prototype tackling the problem of locomotion as a starting point. The notion of personal rail travel has been explored as an alternative to collective transportation since the 1930s, when influential theorists like Bruno Latour reflected on the failure of Aramis (*Agencement en Rames Automatisées de Modules Indépendants dans les Stations*), France's ambitious attempt to develop a personal rapid transit system.

The 'Train Project' has seen HeHe develop temporary autonomous vehicles in the form of performances on unused or abandoned rail tracks. *M-blem: the train project* follows interventions in Istanbul with *Tapis Volant*, a battery-powered flying carpet, *H Line* on New York's abandoned High-Line and *Metronome* on the Petite Ceinture, encircling Paris.

HeHe's mischievous public art interventions are celebrated across the globe, from *Nuage Vert*, where factory emissions were highlighted with interactive laser light to *Is there a Horizon in the Deepwater?* a miniaturised global disaster scenario satirising popular responses to ecological issues. Their *Toy Emissions* video also lampooned the American SUV.

**For further press information, images and interview requests contact Jo Fells, [jo.fells@artscatalyst.org](mailto:jo.fells@artscatalyst.org) or 020 7251 8567**

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### **About HeHe**

HeHe is art-design duo Helen Evans (GB 1972) and Heiko Hansen (DE 1970), both graduates of the Royal College of Art in computer related design (1999). Their works rethink the existing technological systems that surround us, to give them a new social and critical usage. With humour, HeHe reinvent our ongoing technological adventures; from the transformation of energy, emissions, intoxication, rail infrastructures to electronically mediated systems of control. In developing poetic interventions about the limits and meaning of our technologically conditioned world, their practice reconciles the individual with the reality of their immediate urban environment. Their concept of reverse cultural engineering and the idea of aesthetising emission clouds in real time provides a theoretical framework for their installations on transportation (*Train Project*) and pollution (*Nuage Vert*, *Champs d'Ozone*). Working independently, HeHe bring theatre, engineering and design to their practice and collaborate with individuals from a diverse range of disciplines and interests. Their work has been exhibited at Edith Russ Haus fur Medienkunst, Oldenburg (2011); National Art Museum Of China (2011); Ars Electronica, Linz (2011, 2008); Lyon Biennale (2009); Centre Georges Pompidou (2007, 2006, 2004); Cité Internationale du Design, St Etienne (2010, 2006); Luxembourg European Capital of Culture (2007); Galerie Frédéric Desimpel, Bruxelles (2009, 2007); San José Museum of Art, USA (2008)

### **About The Arts Catalyst**



The Arts Catalyst commissions contemporary art that experimentally and critically engages with science. It produces provocative, playful, risk-taking artists' projects to spark dynamic conversations about our changing world and seeks new ways to involve artists, scientists and the wider public in a discourse about the impact of science in society. [www.artscatalyst.org](http://www.artscatalyst.org)

#### **About MOSI (Museum of Science & Industry)**

Housed in the buildings of the oldest passenger railway station in the world, built in 1830, and in a former 19<sup>th</sup> century market hall, MOSI is free apart from special exhibitions. The Museum tells the story of how Manchester started the industrial revolution and showcases some of the city's greatest innovations – from the first British aeroplane to the first factory machines, to the groundbreaking scientific discoveries of John Dalton, James Joule and Ernest Rutherford. Experience what life was like in a cotton mill, go for a ride on a steam train and marvel at the Museum's vast collection of planes, trains, cars and steam engines - from the nineteenth century to the very latest in digital technology in the new 'Revolution Manchester' gallery. [www.mosi.org.uk](http://www.mosi.org.uk)

#### **About AND Festival**

AND Festival was established in 2009, as a partnership between Cornerhouse, FACT and folly. AND has been funded by Legacy Trust UK, creating a lasting impact from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games by funding ideas and local talent to inspire creativity across the UK. AND Festival is part of WE PLAY, the North West cultural legacy programme for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. AND is supported by the National Lottery through the BFI and Creative England. AND Festival is part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

[www.andfestival.org.uk](http://www.andfestival.org.uk)

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