Moon Convoy

Welcome to this audio introduction to **Tour de Moon**, commissioned as part of Unboxed: creativity in the UK.

The following introduction will take about 10 minutes to listen to and includes information about the Moon Convoy, and descriptions of floats and models included in the convoy. All VocalEyes introductions are available as a text document section on the event page at VocalEyes.co.uk/whats-on.

The website provides an introduction: 'Tour De Moon is a direct response to the current world we live in - where history is unfortunately repeating itself. Tour De Moon invites you to ask: WHY can't we imagine a new way of thinking/dreaming/doing? We need to use radical imagination to create alternative futures. Tour De Moon provides a platform for plurality, fresh thinking and new ideas … By creating a space for people to come together as a community, new ideas will be born'.

The Moon Convoy parades through towns and cities in England, synthesising and linking the whole of the Tour de Moon festival. It features big floats and interactive pieces, which are designed to surprise, spark and stimulate awareness of Tour de Moon and all

the magic and intrigue that surrounds it, complimenting the immersive installations of Moon Experiences.

The **convoy** consists of eight vehicles, including two flatbed trucks, 2 trailers and vehicles to tow them, and a float with a digital screen. The vehicles are a snaking line of brilliant colours, decorated with vibrant psychedelic designs. The marbled patterns suggest spilled paints swirling and mixing in fluid pools and rivers of colour; red, pink, gold, green. Images of creatures in bright hues are superimposed onto the patterns, such as a squid and bats.

One flatbed truck displays models of a Giant Squid and the Moon.

The life-sized model of the **Squid**, has been sponsored by the Natural History Museum; it's a full size replica of nine metre-long Archie The Squid who resides at the Museum. The creature has a lozenge shaped body about 3 metres long, by a little under a metre in diameter, tapering down to a small, flat tail. It appears as a carapace, which is a shell from which a squat head protrudes at the other end, with a large round eye on either side. Growing out from the nose are eight 'arms' and two long tentacles. The sweeping, undulating arms are of different thicknesses and lengths, anything from over 2 metres, surrounding two slender tentacles that stretch to about 4 metres.

The model has been constructed out of the rubber from tyres, fixed and moulded around a lightweight metal frame. The tyres used are from bicycles, cars, quad bikes and motorbikes. The skin's tactile effect is realistically leathery but still yielding. The squid is coloured vivid salmon pink, like the real animal, mottled with white and with an iridescent sheen. The luminous round eyes are made from resin with a curved surface, about 20cm across.

The squid is displayed on its side, at a slight angle. The two tentacles are reaching out gracefully to envelop the model of the moon.

The website introduces the **Moon**. 'The Moon acts as our blank canvas where anything is possible. It's where things don't just appear as they are, but also as they could be…The Moon centres all of us on this journey, acting as a confidante, but also facilitating true reflection and clarity.'

This realistic representation of the Moon is made from fibreglass, 2.4 metres in diameter, and painted in the planet's pale, glowing hues. A further, shell-like surface covers areas of the sphere's skin, textured to create the mountains and craters of the lunar landscape, within the smooth expanses of the lunar 'seas'. The planet rotates, mounted on a sturdy metal stand, a central pillar around 60cm tall anchored by flat feet which extend from it.

A second flatbed truck carries the large model of a shiny scarlet **Telephone**. It's an old fashion dial telephone. Made from fibreglass, the cube like body is approximately two metres square, with a top that slopes downwards. A round dial encircled with the holes for fingers lies flat on the top. The 3 metre long receiver has bulbous speakers on each end of the handle, and is cradled horizontally on the top of the phone.

A semi-circular cutout in the front edge of the phone echoes traditional American phone booths. The phone is raised high enough for users to sit beneath in a fully accessible space as if in a phone booth. Within is a receiver and a large red button, which will play recordings, so that listeners can receive messages from moon dwellers.

The two large colourful trailers provide interior spaces. One is a **Recording**
Suite. The walls inside are lined with black felt and brightly patterned curtains drop across the open back of the trailer. There are banks of flashing lights. At the rear is a recording desk, and the trailer is equipped with state of the art equipment. People can enter and make their own recordings in time slots of 3 to 5 minutes.

In the immersive **Sound Experiences** trailer, there is velvet and flocking covering the interior walls, which are textured with lumps and mounds. This is a 360 degree sound experience, and there is a light up floor buzzing with tv static.

The same striking patterns are used for some pop-up gazebos and tents, which will be set up when the convoy reaches the end of its route.

Vintage baggage trunks and suitcases will be filled with zines produced by young people from the communities.

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