

BLAST THEORY



A MACHINE TO SEE WITH

About the work

Have you ever wanted to rob a bank?

A Machine To See With is a film where you play the lead. There are screenings every 15 minutes. You sign up online and hand over your mobile phone number. On the day, you receive an automated call giving you the address you need to go to. Once you arrive on your allotted street corner your phone rings. From there a series of instructions lead you through the city. You are the lead in a heist movie; it's all about you. As you move from hiding money inside a public lavatory, to meeting up with a partner in crime and onwards to the bank, the tension rises. It's up to you to deal with the bank robbery and it's aftermath.

A Machine To See With is a combination of high culture with low culture, of genre clichés with the reality of the urban environment. It is about the global economic crisis. With the attempted robbery of a bank at its heart, money is a recurrent part of the work. It contrasts the agency of a film star, of a protagonist in a heist movie with the reality of the financial crisis. It places the adrenaline rush of revenge against the steady impotence of citizens confronted by global capitalism.

A Machine To See With starts from the premise that the city and the mobile phone are both cultural spaces. It combines elements of location-based games, theatre and a city tour. Each visitor follows a similar route but interacts in their own way. Mobile phones are

used to direct and control while inviting reflection on this system of control. The simple act of receiving a phone call on a city street becomes an immersive narrative; the audience are placed at the heart of the story and must act and drive it towards its daring conclusion.

A Machine To See With premiered at the 2010 O1SJ Biennial in San Jose going on to sold out seasons at New Frontier Sundance Film Festival (Jan 2010) and Walker Art Center Minneapolis (Apr 2011). Having its UK premiere at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Aug 2011) followed by a month long season at the Brighton Digital Festival (Sep 2011).

Selected Press

"They have done it again ... Blast Theory keeps challenging our use of space and identity by using pervasive technology. This time it is through mobile phones that they involve us into their spatial narrative."

Sandra Gaudenzi, Interactive Documentary

"I loved walking through my surroundings with a heightened sense of my actions, enjoyed moving through my banal surroundings as if I was on a movie set, my every street crossing another tracking shot."

Eric Hynes, Sundance Be Here

Tour requirements

Size of company

2-3 on the road. 1-2 Artists and 1 Production Manager are required for the get-in. 1 team member is required once the show is up and running.

Scale of venue

Two spaces are needed:

- 1 - A control room with 3 desk spaces, plus space for mapping.
- 2 - A quiet space suitable for recording audio.

Both should be near or within the performance area in the city. The show takes place throughout the host city. Liaison between the hosts and the artists in the period preceding the show will allow mapping to be carried out and agreements to be made over public spaces to be used.

A car is needed as part of the show and is to be provided by the venue. It must be parked in the same place throughout the run.

Session times

The show runs for 2-8 hours each day, for between 3 and 28 days depending on the context of the event. 24 people can participate each hour and the experience lasts 50-75 minutes approximately.

Site Visit

1 member of Blast Theory will visit for 3 days, to document routes and spaces for the walks. The site visit must be carried out at least 6 weeks prior to the start of the show.

Freight

None required.

Working with local performers

There are opportunities for 1 or 2 local artists / production interns / performers to be involved in the presentation of the work. Please contact the company for further details.

Language

This work is written and performed in English. It can be presented bilingually in the language of the host country (if not English). Please note that language translations will incur additional costs due to the time taken to translate and record in a second language. A second language will also involve a longer Get-In period. Please discuss further with the company.

Participation and ticketing

Audience members are required to use their own mobile phones and they must register online for a time-slot in advance. On the day of the show they receive instructions of where to go to start. Alternatively, audience members can start the work from a dedicated Front of House at the venue. Loan phones can be provided by the venue for international audience members.

Depending on arrangements with the host venue, tickets can either

be free or purchased in advance or on the door, but it is advised for the audience to book in advance.

A Machine To See With is recommended for 16 years and over.

Call Costs

A Machine To See With incurs call costs for sending voice messages to participants' mobile phones. There is a cost per user which can be included in the overall fee or can be covered by the host organisation. Generally this cost is between EU2-EU3 per audience member. Audience members are charged to make calls at their standard network rate.

Availability

Ongoing.

Artists' presentations and workshops

The artists are available to provide talks, presentations and workshops. Please discuss options with the company.

Production

Detailed technical specifications and insurance information are available on request.

Previewing the work

A DVD of *A Machine To See With* is available on request from Blast Theory. A copy of the script is also available.

Further information and photos are also available here:

- <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/a-machine-to-see-with/>

Contact

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Credits

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