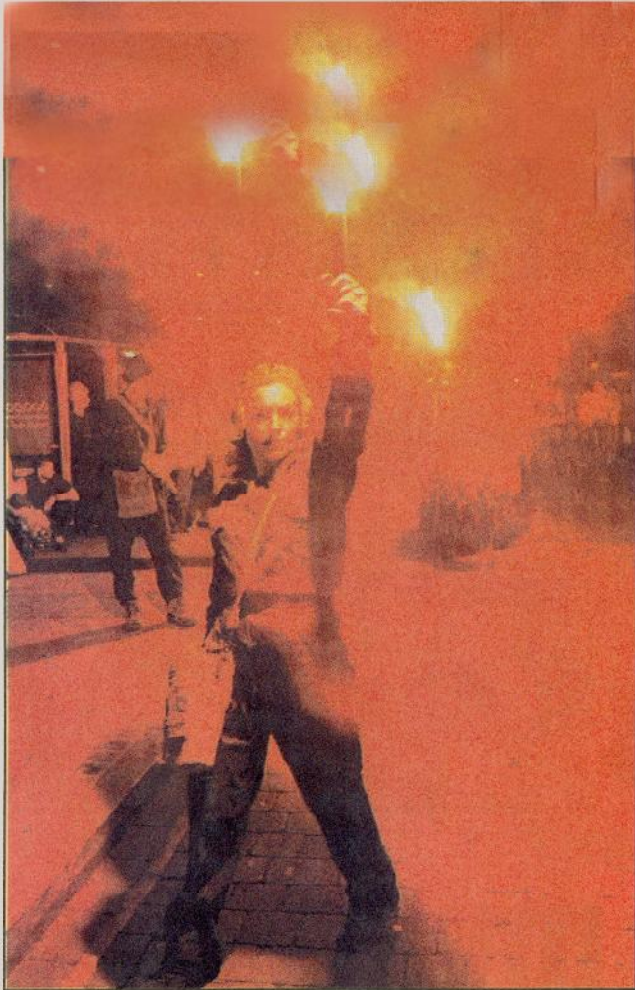


Mesmerising spectacle from across the Channel brings curtain down on summer festival

Town's lit by French flair



Fired up: A member of the theatre company helps light up the parade

**Story by Jen Bishop
Pictures by Richard Bloomfield**

A SPECTACULAR giant mobile was suspended from Taberner House as the Croydon Summer Festival drew to an impressive close on Sunday night.

Hundreds of people flocked to The Queen's

Gardens for the finale of the show by France's leading open air theatre company Transe Express and local drummers.

Lacher de Violons, which was created by Transe Express, formed part of the Millennium celebrations in Paris four years ago.

On Sunday, they brought their magic to central Croydon as a fitting finale for the successful summer festival, which saw tens of thousands of people flock to Lloyd Park the previous weekend for

the World Party and ever-popular Mela.

The show began with an unusual parade - a live band, acrobats, and a wave of drummers from all over Croydon - starting at St George's Walk and making its way through Park Street, High Street and Katharine Street.

At The Queen's Gardens, the tambours rolled and a large, suspended mobile lifted the company's acrobats and string section into the air, thus creating a mesmerising spectacle against the

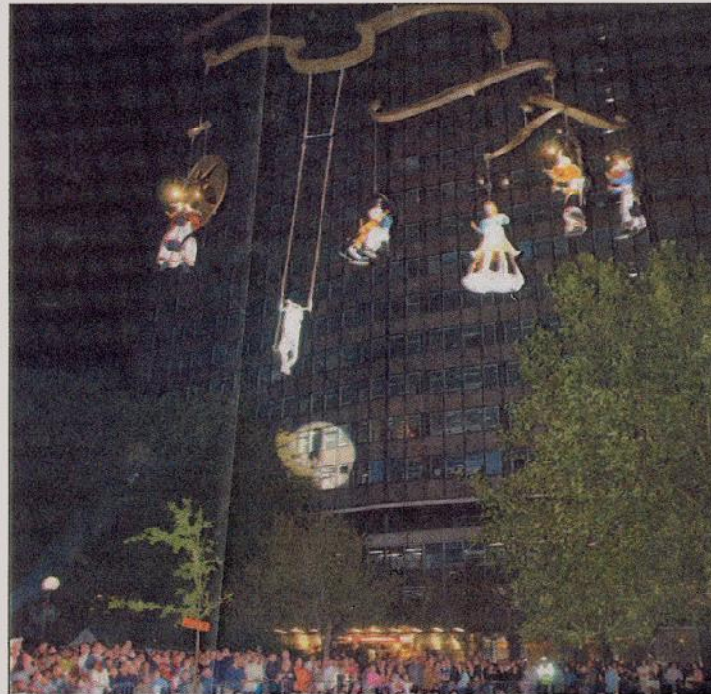


Photo: N1731C2 **Magic in mid-air:** A giant mobile suspended in front of Taberner House

town's evening skyline.

Drummers from all over Croydon worked with Transe Express in the months leading up to the festival to perfect the finale.

Festival director Susanna Rowland said: "It was fantastic to see the amazement on people's faces as the vibrant parade made its way through the town centre, picking up extra people en route as it passed bars, restaurants and pubs.

"Queen's Gardens was packed with people,

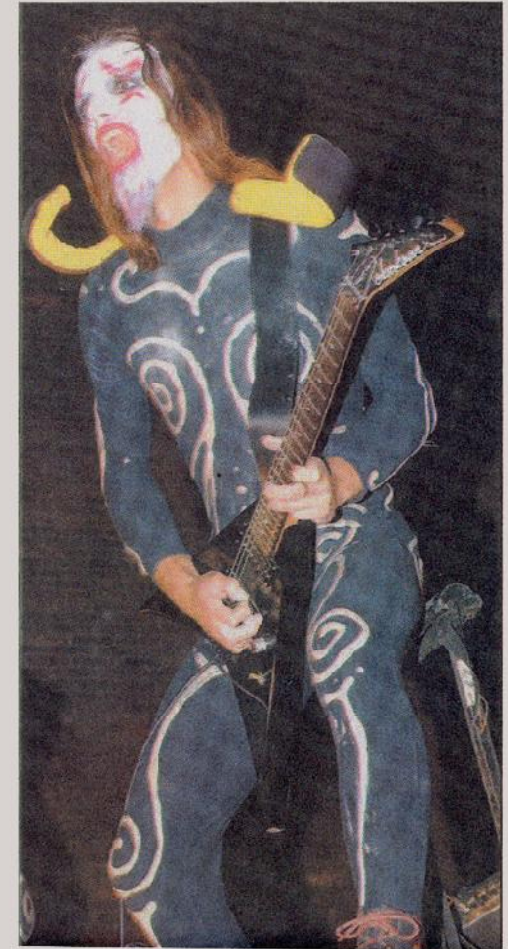


Photo: N1731C11 **Live music:** A guitarist in eye-catching costume

with an audience of around 3,000 watching the spectacular performance in the sky.

"Local participating drummers said it had been a truly wonderful experience and that they plan to keep the drumming group together, so watch out for them appearing somewhere in next year's festival.

"This was a brilliant end to this year's festival and we were thrilled with the turnout at all events."