

Prometheus Awakes – review

National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London



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- **Lyn Gardner**
 - guardian.co.uk, Tuesday 26 June 2012 18.30 BST
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No limitations, just glorious liberation... Prometheus Awakes.
Photograph: Tristram Kenton for the Guardian

The opening outdoor show in this year's [Greenwich and Docklands International festival](#) is a reminder of how far both street arts and disability-led arts have come in the UK in the past few years. A collaboration between British company [Graeae](#) and famed Spanish tricksters [La Fura dels Baus](#), this 50-minute show drew on myth, fire-making and the creative possibilities of cranes to deliver a truly giant spectacle. Prometheus strode among us, as big as a house and lit eerily from within, while images were projected onto the facade of Queen's House in the middle of Greenwich park, as a carousel of volunteers in decontamination suits swung wildly around, high in the air amid smoke and fireworks.

It was a sight to behold, although the narrative was a mite hard to unravel, [even for those who know their Greek myths](#). I was very much looking forward to seeing Prometheus getting his liver pecked out, but perhaps that wouldn't make for good family entertainment. I

had to settle instead for a projected image of fierce bird eyes. At the end, Prometheus appears to be rescued not by the heroic Hercules but by humanity itself, in the form of a dancer.

Or maybe he isn't rescued. It doesn't actually matter because, more importantly, this disabled-led project feeds into more contemporary ideas about the quest for knowledge and perfection, most obviously [Mary Shelley's Frankenstein](#). And even more interestingly – as Graeae proved in a previous show, *Against the Tide*, which used sway poles – difference is often celebrated and accommodated within a circus or aerial tradition. There are no limitations here, just glorious liberation, as the performers fly across the sky and the world explodes all around them.