

aerostat
past times
Machines Volantes



*In the June edition of Aerostat we featured a photograph of a fantastical airship on display in an Austrian department store. Shortly after publication we were delighted to hear from **Reynaud Marchesin Creations** who built this 'African Queen' airship and run an artistic workshop in the south of France where they combine artistry, fairytale and aviation.*

Serge Reynaud is a romantic artist with a humorous streak and a background working with marionettes. In 1978 he met Claude Marchesin and together they decided to create flying machines in the spirit of the early pioneers of aviation with more than a hint of Jules Verne.

"We create and realise little flying machines of our fantasy," says the duo.

Their catalogue of work reveals a world populated with weird and wonderful balloon and airship inspired contraptions. The realism of the detail in the constructions gives them great plausibility and an irresistible appeal to collectors all over the world. With most of them wings flap, pilots wave their arms or make rowing movements, their little heads whirl and propellers spin. They tend to be much smaller than the African Queen – their biggest creation – which is over thirty feet long, and mostly they are just a few feet high.

If you want to see the African Queen installation you will need to get to the Braunsberger furniture store in Wels, Austria.

The flying machines have appeared in many international exhibitions in recent years and in 1988 the Dapy Gallery in New York exhibited seventeen of the Machines Volantes and more recently they have been on show at Friedrichshafen – hometown of the Zeppelins. ●

