

FROM BIUNIAL TO TRIUNIAL

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We have always wanted to own and use a triunial, as that was the lantern that we used to perform with during our whole time with Herman Bollaert and his *Galantee Show* (see TML 27). As part of the company, we rather got used to the triunial being there and a central part of the show.



The single lantern by Walter Tyler

So we asked around to see whether we could acquire one, but at the same time we read the different MLS publications on triunials and looked at all the illustrations from catalogues, etc., that we could find. We noticed that some were actually constructed in two parts – a biunial plus a single lantern.



Arie gets to work on the single lantern assisted (right) by Dominique



Then we noticed some other lanternists had 'reassembled' or assembled a triunial themselves. Using all this information we decided to look for a single lantern with as near identical a mahogany casing to our own biunial as we could find. After an intensive search on ebay, Etsy and various upcoming auctions, we found one with very similar dimensions and lens. As it was on ebay we could contact the owner who supplied the exact measurements and additional photographs. After checking everything thoroughly, we decided to buy the lantern.

We then realised that we needed to mount the single lantern upside down on the biunial, as the lens angle on the single lantern could only be adjusted upwards, while on the triunial it needed to be adjusted downwards. However, this meant we then needed to turn the inside of the lantern 'right way up' again, as well as the rear part of the frame in order to have the correct positioning for the lamp.

We called in our Belgian friend Arie De Keyzer (who actually builds Flemish bagpipes – also Irish bagpipes and flutes) to help. Then we started the process of completely dismantling the single lantern, removing the top and bottom plate, turning most of the parts (about 75%) upside down and then putting the whole thing back together again, using authentic materials at every stage.

With the triunial essentially in one piece we adapted the illuminants to LED lamps. Martin Vliegthart had provided us with pictures of how to install LED lamps and that is, eventually, what we installed in the triunial. Next we needed a control unit that we could plug into a 230V supply. As these are no longer manufactured we found a second-hand unit on ebay thanks to

Henk Boelmans kindly supplying some pictures of the different units he had at his museum.

Finally we put the whole thing together and finished it off with some new paint on the top and chimney, together with a brass band to connect the two lanterns and a small plate at the back. We had, at last, assembled a complete triunial.

We have already performed with it. On 3 March we gave four performances of 20 minutes each at our local music and theatre school – our first success with our own triunial. Altogether, it was very exciting to build but then being able to perform with it – that felt really good!



The triunial gradually comes together

