

Archaos
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It's an ill wind

THE wild-mannered French circus company Archaos is well-known for dramas, crises, and for presenting "the authorities" with some kind of desperate dilemma. Usually, this involves chain-saws, motorbikes or other potentially lethal devices. But the dilemma they offered the Dublin Theatre Festival was rather different: their tent was destroyed by a 60 mph gale, and the Festival faced financial ruin.

The trouble was that the Festival had invested £280,000 in taking the Archaos Metal Clown Show to Dublin. They'd also committed 60 per cent of their technical resources to it. And to balance the books, they had banked on attracting an audience of 2,300 people each night.

Tearful appeals over radio and television failed to find a replacement anywhere in Ireland for the circus dome, measuring 40 ft by 65 ft, and the first four performances had to be cancelled. But a suitable tent was found in Scotland, at Clyde Canvas, and shipped out together with a fast-working erection