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Showcase



Harley-Davidson takes it to the streets in their 100th anniversary celebration tent

The custom designed “Machine Tent”—the traveling Harley-Davidson celebration event tent—was generated from the superimposition of a typical Harley bike. The shape of the structure accommodated the exhibits in the necessary cross-section. One exhibit was designed in the shape of a gas tank. The natural bulge provided the necessary space for the exhibit.

Developing a world traveling structure involved incorporating the logistics of varied codes, equipment and manpower. Time for design, engineering and fabrication also made the project difficult, as it was less than 20 weeks.

To be able to fulfill all of these needs, a team was brought together that could take on multiple responsibilities. The team first agreed on the basic design




Self-erecting, the Harley-Davidson Machine Tent uses traditional circus tent language in the overall shape, the internal support masts and the method of hauling fabric up to the mast points.

criteria. Because quick set up was needed, the team decided to detail the structure using circus tent language, which allowed for flexibility. They brought in Canobbio, a tent manufacturer, to help them with the design.

“The Machine Tent” was designed to be virtually self-erecting; the erected members have internally mounted motors and winches that haul its components up. The circular configuration is broken down into six fields, which allows for quick fabrication and installation.

The structure is circular in form, with an internal clearance of 48.77m in diameter. There is a central mast and six secondary masts, capped with custom arch segments to give the canopy its unique form. The fabric is PVC Précontraint 1002 series 8000 by Ferrari.

Whereas the Harley Davidson World Tour 2002 celebrated the company’s 100th anniversary, the “Machine Tent” celebrates the greatness of the machine called “Harley Davidson.” 

Project data

Exhibit Designer: Pentagram

Tensile Structure Design & Engineering: FTL Design Engineering Studio

Tensile Structure Owner and Facilitator: United Rentals

Tensile Structure Fabrication: Canobbio S.p.a

Fabric: Précontraint 1002 series 8000 by Ferrari S.A.