

The Last Kingdom

Environment Grass fence running length of studio + reed shakers. Horses hooves sfx in distance. Grass shelter with furs inside, blankets on floor round firepit with grill. Wooden plates/trays, terracotta air-drying clay. Chopped up grass stems for decoration, pattern-making. Udu drum and lyre. Terracotta jug and dish for bread/cheese and 'mead' (apple juice)



Flight The Danes are coming, hear the horses hooves and hide behind the grasses, (playful hide and seek), peep through the stems, feel their textures, hear the sound as they shiver in the breeze. Repair the holes in the fence with sheaves of grasses, shake them and hear them rustling, add shakers for rhythm work, dance with them. Carry them to the village and repair the inner fence and the roof of the shelter.



Clay Settle round the fire and begin work with clay: dropping, patting, slapping, kneading, rolling into balls/sausages/pancakes, rolling in bowls, making holes in, decorating with patterns, poking in sticks, throwing, catching, holding in fingers and squeezing, making pots/plates/spoons/cups, jewellery - bangles, rings, necklaces, making sounds on plates and trays. Place on grill over fire to dry, with fingers or using sticks.



Chill round the firepit, watching the glowing coals, listening to and playing the udu drum and lyre, smoothing clay paste on hands and feet. Taste bread, cheese and 'mead', then lie down by the fire as the sun goes down.....and rest, 'til morning.



Observations Concerns over challenging nature of fence screen proved unfounded. Everyone managed to navigate the 'changed' space either through or around. Hide and seek section was fun for some groups, but not others, who preferred the tactile/sound exploration of grasses. Some were marched to village by their carers! The settlement had a 'holding' feel to it. Clay - took a long time for some of the clients and carers to become comfortable with the feel of clay but good to introduce more challenging props now and then and tactile qualities greatly enjoyed by many - therapeutic. Udu pot had a big effect creating the mood for clay section. Minimal sound background which supported the activity. Circular 'holding' of group round fire

