

Blue Bamboo

Workshop Records

Autumn Term 2011

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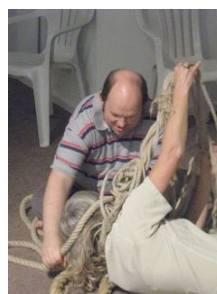
Ropes 'n' Pulleys

Environment: Thick twisted hemp rope winding round studio on entry. Pile of tangled ropes and cord in middle of studio, White sails, cloths and sheets on floor, with 4 ready rigged on pulleys to hoist up. Small soft strips of rope to twiddle and spin. Blue lighting change and microphone with echo effect.



Hemp Follow the twisted thick rope round whole studio, keeping together, crawling under sails, around curves and along straights, balance on, jump either side until you reach...

Tangled ropes Feel the different textures and smell the fibres. Tease out ends of ropes and pull, coil, flick and snap ropes. Hold and take weight, make bridges, rippling rivers, spirals and circles. Explore movement and sound qualities of different thicknesses. Step, jump hop and roll over strands of rope. Thread through wheelchairs and pull them round and round the space, spinning and turning. Find soft, short lengths and flick and spin, create floor patterns and pictures.



Puppet emerges and greets each client in turn. Plenty of time and space for intensive interaction and engagement. Individuals may want to animate the puppet themselves, greeting their peers. Can be shy and playful, gently persuading engagement.

Pulleys Find 'set' ropes and encourage individuals to pull (an action of strength that many find difficult) Sails and sheets rise and fall in response, focusing sightlines up and enabling play with rise and fall motions. As each 'sail' is fixed the space above transforms with angles and lines into a sheltered space. change to blue lighting and all becomes calm and safe.



Shelter Encourage group to gather under shelter and instigate individual mic work - each person having the time to play with sounds and hear their own voices echoing loudly round the space.

Chill Rest under blue sails, wrapped in whites and listen to soft sounds as the sails billow above.

Evaluation Deliberately simple spacious workshop enabled time and space to reaffirm individuals and settle new clients. Very playful ropes section with lots of exploration and fun. Also identified shyer members as actually quite bold and strong! Ropes and pulleys section really focused clients on looking up and watching results of their efforts. Much laughter when ropes are let go and sails fall. Also encouraged working together, helping each other. Gathering together at end unified the group and some beautiful mic work followed with people building rhythms and songs around the echoes of their voices. Workshop also enabled 'role-play' groups to develop storylines of their own - i.e. ship voyage, under the iceberg and so on.



Bamboo Roundhouse

Environment Low end - hessian cloths, baskets of raffia, shaker bottles filled with dried chillies, cinnamon sticks, lentils, pot pourri. Masked character. High end - roundhouse made with bamboo poles and fencing. Bamboo mats, cushions, resonance boards, wood xylophones and instruments. Star projections on ceiling and bamboo light.



Raffia and shakers Character draws group to 'hessian corner' - interacts with each person and encourages exploration of raffia, smell, touch spinning in lights, making hair, wrapping round, burying, dancing with etc. Introduce shaker bottles - watch and feel the contents as bottles are tipped, turned and rolled around - build gentle rhythms as shaken and tapped and dropped on the ground.

Roundhouse Sounds of music or character lead to enter bamboo house. Resonance boards on floor or raised on wheelchairs. Listen to sounds of Mbiras as the vibrations tickle fingers, toes, faces, bodies. Experiment with tapping sounds, scraping, banging, make stories or songs, play games with each other.



Woods Introduce wood instruments one at a time - listen to different tonal qualities, stop/start, rhythm changes, build to whole group piece with singing and chanting led by different individuals. fade instruments as evening falls.

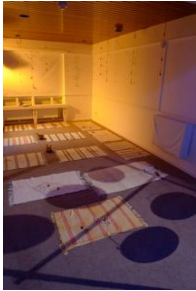
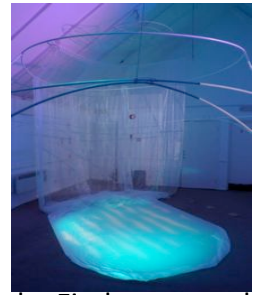
Chill Pull out stripey blankets/cushions and all lie down together as stars appear in the sky and beautiful music serenades you. Sing your dreams, make wishes or simply rest and watch the moving stars through the roof.

Evaluation Tactile elements and character encouraged groups to use an often 'abandoned' part of the studio. Was cosy and inviting and felt unifying, particularly inclusive of muso. Shaker bottles very successful due to visual and tactile elements - plus good fun. Roundhouse was wonderful for incorporating whole group in a spacious but confined way. Resonance boards worked brilliantly with some groups - less effective with others. School groups particularly enjoyed them - one student whose arms are normally tight in spasm had completely relaxed them due to the vibrations he could feel through the board. Others lay down and felt tingles through whole bodies, others played sound games with each other - making stories. Wood instruments need upgrading - as many in different keys, or poor sound quality. However rhythmic musical section enjoyed by all. The star projections encouraged people to lie down (not easy for some) and look up and the chill was very successful with all groups settling, eventually. The bamboo light cast circular shadows and woke each person gently as the morning sun rose. Should have kept the structure for 2 weeks workshops!



Temple Baths

Environment Costumes - shiny white tabards. Low End - temple mats, Tibetan bells, hanging bells, singing bowls, little gongs, warm lighting. Gong stand and big gongs (covered). High End White material pool with white/blue gobos, voile waterfall with projection and sound, warm water tub, water bowls and towels. Vaporiser (lavender oil), talcum, hand and body creams and hand towels, big xylophone.

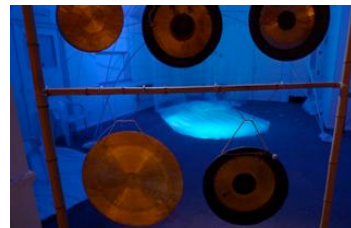


Temple sounds Follow the sound of the giant Yak bell to the temple. Find a mat and play the bell sounds, listening to each other as they resonate around you. Add singing bowls that hum and vibrate and reach deep inside you and tickle your fingers and toes. As ambience grows, add little gongs to complete the circle of sound while you relax and feel calmer.

Gong stand Big gongs are revealed and one by one you join the musician and play together, feeling the vibrations and listening to the sounds that go on and on, overlapping and filling the space.



Waterfall and pool The sound of a waterfall draws you to the pool and you see the water splashing down the voiles. Step into the pool, roll and swim in the 'water' as dappled blue light runs over your costumes. Bring bowls of warm water (and towels) and wash each individual's hands/feet, giving total attention and encouraging acceptance of touch. Then dry and massage with talc and/or cream - total pamper, total focus.



Chill When group is all calm and relaxed, lie down in the pool and listen to the water and xylophone, as the voiles float out above you and you lie and watch the colours of the waterfall.

Evaluation Costumes again transformed clients and being made of same material as pool meant they blended into water. Once again the low end became the focus for the first half of session, successfully holding whole group and even enabling those who usually prefer their own space to remain within this area. This was down to the quality and variety of the instruments used and the ambience they created. The gong stand worked as a bridge between the ends and in every session, due to the 'state' of the groups after first section, the gongs were played gently and beautifully, with lots of listening. All clients loved the individual attention of the 'baths' section. Even those who were reluctant at first, seeing the pleasure of the others, eventually came to the pool and joined in. One client, they initially didn't bring because she'd been agitated for three days, left the space calm and happy. Another who normally refuses touch, spent 10 mins massaging an artist's hand.



Igloo

Environment White box iceberg towers dotted around space. Kapok snow in white shelter, bells, ice-cubes in bowls. Sm white parachute as igloo dome. Wind machine and timps/beaters (covered in voiles). Mirror ball snow. Large white parachute. Furs and fire, seal/polar bear puppets, ice-cream.



Ice and snow Enter through iceberg landscape, tapping, scraping sounds on ice-boxes, find snow shelter, dive into snow, play the tinkly ice bells, feel and taste the cold ice-cubes, build towers, bridges, pathways with giant ice blocks (white boxes). Watch them melt and tumble and rise again.



Storm Introduce wind machine, hear the storm coming - play the timps as thunder rolls around the space and the snow (mirror ball) begins to fall and swirl (voiles). Feel the vibrations of the timps through the white boxes. Pull out white parachute as snow covers the ground, see it waft and billow over space, get lost underneath, roll and tumble into the white snowdrifts as the snow falls all around you.



Igloo Use the ice-blocks to build the walls of a shelter/igloo. Help each other, passing blocks and balancing them on each other 'til the round igloo shape is all around you. Bring out soft furs, feel their textures, lie on them, wrap yourselves up warm and safe. meet the seal-pup and polar bear who are sharing your shelter.

Fire Bring out the fire and light it with magic, see it flicker and glow in the dark as mirror ball light snowflakes dance over the roof and walls. Find the cool bag with ice-cream supplies. Taste and enjoy the cold ice-cream, then light down and listen as icy sounds twinkle around you and the snow falls.

Evaluation The white cardboard boxes were an excellent resource, completely changing the space in several different ways - angular icebergs, bridges, pathways, a ship, a white ice wall. even the most difficult to engage clients found ways of using them, building, knocking down peeping through, making sounds, feeling vibrations etc. and they made brilliant walls of the igloo - a task which all joined in, helping each other and having fun. Many clients were fascinated by the wind machine - the sound, the circular movement, the slats and the timps were enjoyed, specially by those who can only manage little movements which still made BIG sounds. Others enjoyed the billowing of the parachute, hiding beneath, rolling over as the storm reached its climax. The igloo space felt safe, warm and cosy with the mirrorball snow falling outside and many did not want to leave! Some lovely, caring interactions with animal puppets. Ice-cream a big hit as always



Cave

Environment : Torches and high vis. jackets. Boxes and screens make tunnel leading to cave drawings end - 2 giant blackboards + small boards, lumps of chalk and stone from the quarry. Sound cave - dark voiles swooped across ceiling/walls. hanging stalactite chimes/ beaters. Tank drum, black chimes. Skelebones corner, blacks, spiders, webs, skulls and skeleton hands + 'well' containing treasure - gems and light crystal.

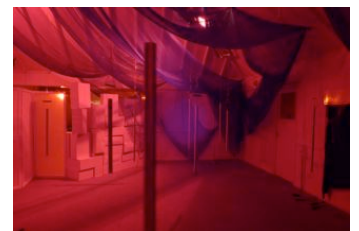
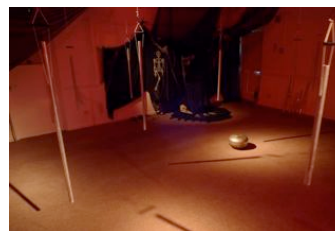
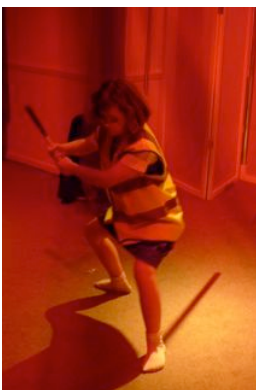


Torches and Tunnels Make giant shadows as you move down the tunnel into the small cave. Explore walls, floor, each others faces, hands, baskets of white rock and drawing on wall.

Cave Drawings Find boards and chalk and make your marks - tapping, scraping, drawing, writing. Listen to the sound sand extend movements to cover the board with white patterns and shapes of all kinds. Use small boards on laps/ floor, create rhythms and sounds, sing as you tell stories with pictures.



Sound Cave Peep thro' the gaps in wall and shine torches into the big sound cave. Knock through the rockfall and enter through stalactite chimes. Move around and play the chimes, create a resonating soundspace all around. Explore different sound qualities, held/unheld, hear the sound wobble as they swing to and fro. Add the tank drum and listen to its magic as the sound builds and fills the space.



Spiders and Skulls Skeleton corner is lit and we find spiders, skulls, skeleton hands - playful, interactive, inducing strange sounds. See skeleton shadow, lit behind screen. Add microphone for vocal work

Gems Find treasure in the well. Look at gems in torchlights, see them glitter and sparkle. Light crystal is found and spreads its changing colours over hands/feet/floor - magical, special. Black chimes may support this section with gentle melodic sounds as you rest in the cave.

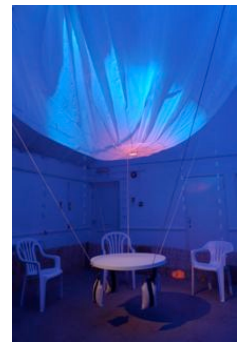
Follow the torchlights back down the tunnel and home.

Evaluation A workshop of two halves - visual and aural. Many clients responded well to the visual stimulus of white chalk on black, covering the boards with strokes and swirls, or pictures and patterns. Others preferred the aural qualities, tapping the rocks, making rhythms/scraping sounds or loud thuds - sharp contrast to chime sounds. Chimes worked really well, filling the space with resonating notes - good vibrations to feel - beware of swinging - suggestion of T-shaped beaters to enable some clients to play. In many workshops tankdrum became focus for 'perfect moments' of pure listening and enjoying the sounds. Vocal work needs its own space for best effects. Sometimes problems hearing themselves. Seemed as though the 'moving/swinging space' encouraged people to move around - good in some ways - difficult to get focus at other times. Skeleton shadow helped to refocus groups. Could have used the little mirror balls for treasure? Might have worked better (with torches) than the smaller gems? Most coped surprisingly well with confined, resonating space, tho' a couple of auties did leave and not return - more down to carers we think!



Tea-bet

Environment Tibetan flags fluttering in breeze from electric fan. Wind machine. Tiny village on rolling green (faux) grass hills, birds. Wind streamers, whirrers and fans. Tablecloth mountain on pulley. Hammock swing. Cuppa tree, strings of teabags, covered trolley with teapot, sugar and biscuits. Tea in flask. Milk bottle puppets. Balloon - white parachute, lit, with mobile, swinging tabletop underneath. Paper cup strings. Bamboo fence basket. White gauze clouds. Bet-tea the Yeti costume. Sound effects - wind/balloon.



Windy mountain Feel the breeze and see flags flying as you enter space. Sound of wind machine. Play in the wind with streamers, make breeze with fans, hear sounds of whirrers, blow, make sounds down the tubes, calling each other. Play in Windy mountain under, around, inside the voiles. Travel through to find



Balloon Climb aboard and take your seats, prepare for lift off and count down. Balloon 'lifts', lights and sound effects. Feel the table move and swing as the balloon goes higher or sit in the hammock swing with feet off the ground. Paper cups swirl in the air and Tablecloth mountains disappears from view as you travel through the clouds (gauze). Prepare for landing - countdown, land and lights and sound cease. Where are we?



Cuppa Tree Find the tree filled with cups and tea-bags - strange place. Milk bottle puppet appears and greets each person, then his friends arrive and all play and interact with each other, having fun...but.... no milk! How can we have a cup of tea?

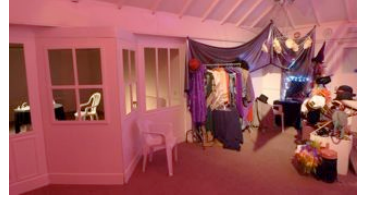
Bet-tea the Yeti suddenly appears - wild, exuberant and v. friendly! Welcomes all and engages with each client on their terms. Very popular. She has special milky tea and invites group to join her for tea and biscuits. Everyone chooses a cup from the tree and settles down for a lovely snack. Soon time to leave so goodbyes are said and the balloon lifts off again and we enjoy another swinging journey home.



Evaluation Windy section difficult, until we moved swing to a new place. Village little used - except by young kids groups and Jackie! Streamers good, but got tangled up, whirrers difficult to make sound, but great for focused 1-1 work, calling, blowing down tubes, making sounds on wind machine. Fans great for making wind. Wind machine visually v. engaging, drew many clients to explore lights/shadows on slats and sounds as it turned. Balloon was amazing. All enjoyed the swinging table feeling - gave movement to this section as parachute and cup strings all swayed as well. Puppets were engaging tho' many preferred to make sounds with them, by banging together or on table! Bet-tea was the star of the week! Had some unusual interactions with people who seldom engage actively in that 1-1 situation i.e. Yitzchok finding hat for her. Brilliant - need to revisit at some point.

House

Environment Low end partitioned into a room with windows and door, masked character, table with cards, jenga, hand cream, fan etc. High end - topsy turvy house, chair, window, door on ceiling, mirrors, 'change your image' corner - costumes, hats, wigs, masks, make-up. Computer with 'photo booth' app.



Character Look through windows, see character sitting at table. Each person has the opportunity to enter room and interact with masked character in whichever way they choose. Rest of group, focus and watch.



Mirrors Find mirrors - look at own image, broken images, bendy images, body parts, big mirror image. See self and others in mirrors - in front, behind, beside, above, below.

Makeover Use costumes, wigs, hats, make-up to change your own image, change it over and over. Take photos, see images with 'effects' on computer. Have fun dressing up and becoming someone else. Interact with each other in your new persona.



Evaluation Surprising and extremely interesting workshop. **Every** person, (except one child), entered room and enjoyed interacting with character. Many did not want to come out and several went back in later in the workshop. Gave time, space and focus to a short, very intense bit of role play. Slapstick proved to be the favoured medium of choice for many pmlD clients! The musicians excelled at supporting these very individual pieces of improvisation. Also brilliant, sustained focus by rest of group, concentrating, watching, enjoying their peers. High end provided a good contrast to the first section, being colourful, flamboyant and playful. Provided further scope for role play for more able groups, and offered many textures, smells and sensory stimulation for others.



Rooftop

Environment Low end - bedroom, bed, chairs, quilts, cushions, pillows, lamp, books, cuddly toys, microphone. High end - Rooftop, upside drum chimney pots, lit skyline, clear plastic corrugated sheets, sunset, moon, Chimneys, cat puppet and kittens, star projections, mirror ball stars, flashing light balls, starman puppet, polystyrene balls with UV scarves and smells inside (cloves, juniper etc)
UV facepaints, blankets and flask of mulled apple juice.

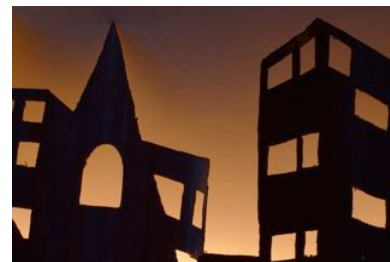
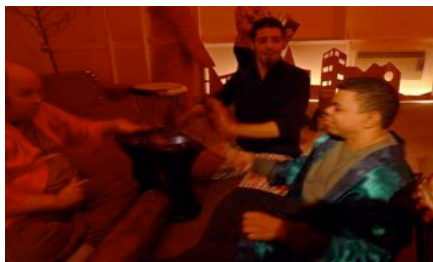


Time for bed Snuggle up in bedroom, look at storybooks, use microphone to tell stories, sing lullabies, play with soft toys, try and lull each other to sleep - count sheep!



Rooftop See lit skyline through windows, climb out through window onto roof, call down chimney pots, dance on rooftop, play the chimney pot drums. Up, rhythmic section, fun, rocking out!

Cat Find cat puppet and kittens - gentle caring section with individual 1-1 work



Stars Sun sets and stars come out, spin the mirror ball and see the stars moving, bring out 'lightballs' and dance with them, or roll them down the plastic sheets - onto floor, laps, wheelchairs, another sheet.

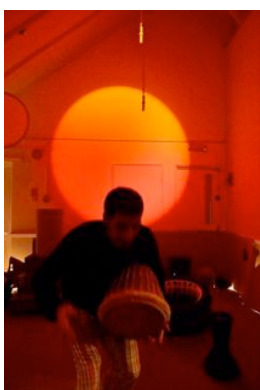
Starman puppet appears - interacts with each student, encouraging tracking, touch, dance, play. Lights the star tree.



Moons - Brings out polystyrene moons for each person, open and enjoy the different smells, dance with the scarves

UV If time, light the UV scarves and introduce 'Starpaints' - bright stars on hands, feet, cheeks - glowing magically in the dark.

Chill Bring out blankets and flask of warm mulled apple juice. Share and rest under a starlit sky



Evaluation Contrasting dynamics of each end work well. Bedroom so cosy, often hard to encourage people out! Chimney pot rock worked really well for raising the energy and many clients who often find playing instruments hard joined in with smiles and laughter. Cat section successful - induced caring and touch. Light balls particularly effective - visually arresting, accessible to all clients including wheelchair users. Starman puppet with lights on head held the attention of most clients. Smells worked well, though' really needed topping up by Friday. Little time for UV section - only used it once. Mulled apple juice enjoyed by all!