



25/05/18 – 2PM  
ALEXION BUILDING

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Girl in a box

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Exploring the contrasting yet interconnected elements of light, projection, sound and movement to transform and connect people and spaces, using poetry that delivers messages across all levels of awareness.

## PLAN FOR PHASE ONE AND DEMO WEEK

To explore the contracting yet interconnected elements of light, projection, sound and movement to transform and connect people and spaces, using poetry that delivers messages across all levels of awareness.

Being one of the very rare INFJ personality types<sup>i</sup> combined with also having high functioning Low Latent Inhibition<sup>ii</sup>, I am in the unique position that light, projection, colour, sound and movement are all the same to me.

What I am trying to do with this piece and the subsequent play I plan to produce in the future is an expansion of my mind into the world outside of myself and create a set that places the audience into a feeling space, rather than a set that is designed to put them in a location within a specific time and space. The idea is that the audience is connected to each other and the space not by a specific experience or set of circumstances but instead by the emotional reaction or emotional state that the circumstances or the experience produces<sup>iii</sup>. In essence the feeling space is about 'what it is to be human' because the space is beyond superficial differences and artificial labels such as colour, race, religion, gender, age, ability, etc instead focusing on compassion, empathy, appreciation and joy.

The piece is designed to be transformative of both people and space. The content – images, sound and words are abstract, universal and open to interpretation<sup>iv</sup>. For this reason the juxtaposition that appears to exist with the images influencing the audience's interpretation of the words ceases to be, as the images are used to enhance the feeling place that the words describe. We do not see with our eyes, but with our brains,<sup>v</sup> and the other senses effect visual perception; therefore if the sound and words are placing the audience/participants in a feeling space consistent with the perceived feeling space of the images, then both senses – sight and sound; confirm in the audiences mind that the perceived feeling space is real and exists.

Everything we perceive involves visual illusion and this is the cornerstone of the entire play and the piece I wish to work on during Demo Week. In addition to what I have already outlined, this is one of the main reasons why I wish to experiment with projection. I have called this piece "Girl in a Box", but the essential thing to understand about the piece is that there is no box. The walls are used to define the boundaries of the performance, but are not intended to be interpreted as a box; the walls are not real, they are projection. Its connected to and another layer of the idea of 'what it is to be human', if we place ourselves in the box 'I am this colour, this race, this religion, this gender, this age, this able bodied', then we define ourselves by that artificial label and allow the others around us to do also. However, what if there is no box, no walls, no labels? We do not see things as they are; we see things the way we are, through the filters of our own experience.

I appreciate that this concept may sound novel and the nuances of the piece can be difficult to understand, it is for this reason that I wish to use Demo Week to provide a live example of this concept. This is important for two reasons; firstly this kind of play will open up theatre to a new audience. In these times people want to have new and exciting experiences, this immersive, digital theatre play not only provides individuals with a unique experience, but due to its abstract form each individual can have an experience which can be totally unique to themselves making it feel as though it has been created especially for them and they can feel as if they are the performer on centre stage.

Secondly and in summary, in order for me to explore this concept, I need to experiment with light, projection, sound and movement in front of an audience consisting of technical advisers, theatre producers/directors, light designers, video jockeys etc as well as the general public so I can narrow down my target audience.

## WHAT I KNOW

- There is no 'box'. The purpose of the walls is to define the boundaries of the performance. The area that the audience is observing.
- The space should be a room, that is an intimate and immersive space
- There should be three walls that are white or light coloured or can be covered in white fabric
- I need a VJ and equipment
- I need a DJ and equipment – live or prerecorded
- I need 3 projectors – The type of projector needed cannot be determined until I have had the opportunity to experiment and know exactly what I need.
- Wireless headset radio mic
- Lighting Rig – To experiment with fixed spotlight and general wash
- I need 3 days in the space for R&D
- I would like to work on 4 pieces with the audience and I imagine it would work something like the following:-
  - Perform Piece A
  - Gain feedback on Piece A in line with the questions in the "What I Don't Know" section of this document.
  - Perform Piece A again trying out the suggested feedback
  - Gain more feedback
  - Perform Piece A again
  - Repeat the above steps with Pieces B-D
- The four pieces are about the following feeling places
  - Compassion
  - Empathy
  - Appreciation
  - Joy
- The audience is part of the final play
- I do not wish my target audience to be defined by how I am perceived. To date and for reasons that were necessary as part of NRP's Abuse Victim Support Project, our brand has been about victim to Queens award winner and our target audience has been those affected by or working with victims of domestic and sexual violence and black women. Both these elements are still a very important part of who I am and I will continue doing those talks, conferences and events but I wish to broaden the scope.

## WHAT I DON'T KNOW AND WISH TO LEARN DURING DEMO WEEK

- Technical specifications, details and requirements
- Target Audience
- Number of performers
  - Should there only be the narrator?
  - Is the DJ part of the performance?
    - Should the collaboration be part of the show, even if only for one piece?
  - If there are other actors, should the narrator be necessary as a protagonist?
- Should the audience be a “4<sup>th</sup> Wall”, or should they be the centre of the action, i.e. “inside the box”?
  - If audience inside the box, what are the visual and technical implications? And can they be resolved?
- Should there be lights on the costumes, as we use for illuminated carnivals? If so how would they interact with the projections?
- Do I wish for the performer to be seen? The original idea is that the performer is only seen with the light that escapes from the projection, when I walk into the fixed spotlight or via the lights on the costume.
  - Would this be enough to anchor the audience to the piece or would the audience need to see the performer as a protagonist.
- This is a transformative piece for the audience, as such could the performer be viewed and treated like the VJ and DJ as stage crew, i.e. facilitators of the experience that the audience is having, i.e. the audience members are in fact “the actors”?

## **ENDNOTES**

i As a child I was often misunderstood by adults who thought that I spoke in riddles, resulting in me undergoing various tests over my life. Having undergone both the Biggs Myers and Jung personality tests it has been determined that I am INFJ: Introverted iNtuitive Feeling Judging which make up less than 1% of the world's population. Common character traits that are relevant to my art are that INFJ's are word mechanics, astonishingly good orators, whose prevailing functions are feeling and intuition. This combined with me also having high functioning low latent inhibition is the reason why it has been hypothesised that I think simultaneously in feelings/intuition, images (both moving and static) and words, and all these things are the same to me.

ii To explain low latent inhibition, I need to first explain that Latent Inhibition is the term used to describe how observation of a familiar stimulus takes longer to acquire meaning than a new stimulus. With low latent inhibition an individual almost treats familiar stimuli in the same manner as new stimuli, for example, think of the details that you notice when you see something for the first time, how it grabs your attention and the questions that arise in your mind, the more you answer the questions the more you understand the new stimulus, and the more you understand the new stimulus, the more logical connections you can make between the stimulus and others around it. With low latent inhibition, that is occurring with everything all of the time; by nature my brain proliferates "Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?" until I get to the root cause of anything, everything (rules, thoughts, a person's intentions, a person's actions, equipment, machinery, society, nature etc). For this reason I am very good at problem solving, data analysis, creativity, artistic expression etc, this combined with my INFJ personality type has led to my Queen's Award Winning Company NINE RED Presents...<sup>(C)</sup> all of its projects and all of its achievements. My LLI is classified as high functioning because it is accompanied with an IQ of over 130 which leads to high creativity; an IQ level below 130 leads to a range of mental illnesses due to the brains inability to handle the constant processing of stimuli.

iii The rationale for the idea stems from the way that readers have interpreted my work in the past. A piece that I wrote at the age of 15 was re-titled seven years later to "Different Everytime" because every readers interpretation of the piece was different, but after many years the same readers had a completely and often sharply contrasting interpretation of the exact same piece and were convinced that I had changed it. This is something that occurs across most of my pieces, because unless a piece is written for a specific purpose, there is no mention of location, event, circumstance time or space; the interpretation is subjective to the reader who understands and relates to the piece via the filters of their own experience, giving the piece their own meaning and connecting to the piece on a level that is exclusively personal to them. The idea of the play set in a feeling space is to extend this concept of this personal experience, so that the audience members are not just the observers of the work but participants and in many cases assign themselves as the lead role. The best example I can provide for this is one of my pieces "Silence Shouts" which I wrote at age 13, this piece has been interpreted by readers to be about, 1.being in prison, 2.being paralyzed but very highly mentally active and being unable to communicate 3.The death of a child 4.Having substance abuse issues 5.Having mental health issues, 6.Being homeless etc. you get the idea. The piece means something completely different to me, readers think I have understood and grasped their situation, but at the time of writing I had no way of comprehending many of these experiences, so they are not viewing these circumstances through my eyes, but through their own senses, so they are not on a journey with me, they are on their own journey; but because of emotional connectedness we walk that journey together, as reader/writer or in terms of the play audience/participant.

iv Each piece of text and image is abstract with no reference to location, person, event or thing specifically; focusing solely on the feeling, emotion or sensation that the piece is about.

v In "Eye/Brain Physiology and Human Perception of External Reality" David Rudd Cycleback states '...humans do not see a direct representation of external reality, but a translation formed by their eyes and mind' In this article which is an introduction to the physiology of seeing, Cycleback provides a brief overview of the process that occurs when light from an object enters the eyes, travels through the cornea, pupil, retina, optic nerve to the brain which translates it into a single image that we perceive, or 'see'.