Collaborative Theatre Project Student B (SL and HL)

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COLLABORATIVE THEAT RE PROJECT PROJECT

MY PERSONAL CONTEXT

During the theathe course I have been inspired by some quite contrasting theather forms and these have certainly contributed to the development of my 'personal context'. I am at my strongest when I approach theather work from the perspective of the performer. I have participated in guite a few practical workshops and productions in the role of performer and these have had quite a considerable unfact on Me.

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Collaborative Theatre Project - Process portfolio

1. My personal context

During the theatre course I have been inspired by some quite contrasting theatre forms and these have certainly contributed to the development of my "personal context". I am at my strongest when I approach theatre work from the perspective of the performer. I have participated in quite a few practical workshops and productions in the role of performer and these have had quite a considerable impact on me.

Workshops: Metamorphosis (Kafka/Berkoff 1969)

During a physical theatre workshop with the theatre class I played the part of Gregor Samsa, the unfortunate individual who awakes one morning to find himself transformed into a gigantic insect.

This bizarre and intensely physical play introduced metothe work of director and performer steven Berkoff, Berkoff, who was heavily influenced by

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Bertolt Brecht, Antonin Artand and

Jean-Lowis Barranlf (www.laintisher.com)

He trained at the Webber Douglas Arademy
in London, and later under the movement
and mine gurn Jacques Lecaq (www.wikipedia.org)in
Paris.

Berkott's theathe provokes an another to by creating grotesque images of characters and by employing exaggerated mime, movement and sesture (Robert Cross, 20th). I found this particular style of theather really exciting. While lengty creating a character and participating in (realists) drams, I am quite a physical and energetic person, and the aemands of this swipt really pushed me as an autor. I certainly want to explore this aspect of performance even surther in the collaborative theather project.

Workshops: TOTAL THEATRE

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This bizarre and intensely physical play introduced me to the work of director and performer Steven Berkoff. Berkoff, who was heavily influenced by Bertold Brecht, Antonin Artaud and Jean-Louis Barrault (http://www.iainfisher.com). He trained at the Webber Douglas Academy in London and later under the movement and mime guru Jacques Lecoq in Paris.

My experience of Berkoff's performance style

Berkoff's theatre provokes an audience by creating grotesque images of characters and by employing exaggerated mime, movement and gesture (Robert Cross, 2004). I found this particular style of theatre really exciting. While I enjoy creating a character and participating in "realistic" drama, I am quite a physical and energetic person, and the demands of this script really pushed me as an actor. I certainly want to explore this aspect of performance even further in the collaborative theatre project.

Workshops: Total theatre

Another style of theatre, which links seamlessly to the work of Berkoff, is total theatre – an idea that all aspects of theatre (movement, text, music, visuals) are deemed equal. This work was lead by our teacher, and at first involved each member of the group creating "non-human" objects and images. So making letters, coat hangers, trees with our bodies, and then developing this concept even further into practical objects that can be moved or manipulated – linking group members together.

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IN EXPERIENCE OF ERVORE

This physical theatre style was then taken a step further to metaphorical theatre, where we began to use our whole todies and voices, together with technical Theatre ele ments, to launch an assault on the Lender of our andvence. We reenacted a huricane in this way, playing recorded soundtracus along with intense tighting and a movement sequence of frantie running sumping and tristing along with screams of terror. This had a very Strong impression of on me and began to spark my interest in now an ANDIENCE can be engaged and challenged by heatre. (Artand, The theatre and the double).

MY APPROACHES:

As a performer, I am interested in PHYSICAL performances which prosh my skills and require strength, concentration and intensity. I enjoy using my voice in different ways and the challenge of creating sound effects and nonlanguages (as I had experimented during the total Theatre Mark).

OTHER THEATRE STYLET THAT INTERBTME:

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- In Yer to a Theatre: "the Kind of theatre that grabs the andience by the scrift of the ne ck and shakes It until it gets the nessage " (inverface - theatre. com) Cutting edge drama that emerged in the UK in the 1990s.

This "physical theatre" style was then taken a step further to metaphorical theatre, when we begun to use our whole bodies and voices, together with technical theatre elements, to launch an assault on the senses of our audience. We reenacted a hurricane in this way, playing recorded soundtracks along with intense lighting and a movement sequence of frantic running, jumping and twisting along with screams of terror. This had a very strong impression on me and began to spark my interest in how an audience can be engaged and challenged by theatre (Artaud, The theatre and its double, 2013)

2. My approaches

As a performer, I am interested in physical performances which push my skills and require strength, concentration and intensity. I enjoy using my voice in different ways and the challenge of creating sound effects and non-languages (as I had experimented during the total theatre work).

Other theatre styles that interest me:

- Epic theatre: defined by clear description, choral work and projection provide commentary. Making an audience aware they are watching performance. Particularly defined by Brecht.
- In-Yer-Face theatre: "the kind of theatre that grabs the audience by the scruff of the neck and shakes it until it gets the message (http://www.inyerface-theatre.com). Cutting edge drama that emerged in the UK in the 1990s.

I was born in Sweden, and much of the traditional theatre in My home country is concerned with naturalists plays by Ibsen and Chekhov. I personally find that style of theatre rather style, and I have found the challenging and vicceral nature of personal theatre extremely liberating!

This desire to go against naturalistic theatre led me to

attrover the work of propessional collaborative theatre company,

Gecko. This company, first formed in 2001, creates and towns its then brand of physical theatre both in the MK and internationally.



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The highly physical, and often surreal style of Their performances made this company particularly notervorthy for me, especially as mery have crearly been introduced by the work of sturn Bernott and Lecay. As hermitiaes and Smart (2010) note in the chapter or bear in their book "Densing in process" note:

"Gecro's work has been in then led by Lahar and Nedjari's work with the David Glass Esemble. Along with steven Berlatt a long-time conceptator of Lahar and Nedjari, Glass trained under Lecog-A major idea with the David Glass Rosemble that can be seen in Gecro's work Bile importance of Participatory activities." (165-185).

I was born in Sweden, and much of the traditional theatre in my home country is concerned with naturalistic plays by Ibsen and Chekov. I personally find this style of theatre rather stale, and I have found the challenging and visceral nature of physical theatre extremely liberating!

This desire to go against naturalistic theatre led me to discover the work of professional collaborative theatre company, Gecko. This company, first formed in 2001, creates and tours its own brand of physical theatre both in the UK and internationally.

"With an expanding ensemble of international performers and makers, Gecko creates work through collaboration, experimentation and play" (http://www.geckotheatre.com)

The highly physical, and often surreal style of their performances made this company particularly noteworthy for me, especially as they have clearly been influenced by the work of Steven Berkoff and Lecoq. As Mermikides and Smart (2010) note in the chapter on Gecko in their book "Devising in progress":

"Gecko's work has been influenced by Lahav and Nedjari's work with the David Glass Ensemble. Along with Steven Berkoff, a longtime collaborator of Lahav and Nedjari, Glass trained under Lecoq. A major idea with the David Glass Ensemble that can be seen in the Gecko's work and the importance of participation activities" (pages 165-185).

This collaborative theathe project will, by its very nature, rely on PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES to ensure that the whole group have an input, role and sense of ownership of the sinished piece. I am interested in the process that the Gecko Company, which is relatively small compared to other companies of the same style, undergoes to create their work.

CREATIVE

ORIGINATIO1

REFLECTION

& RENEWAL

"The process for all the shows I have made starts by allowing the initial thoughts, Taleus and scenes, characters—
Whatever these might be—to emerge. The process can take a long time and you have to be patient "(The secus process*)
The Daniel Glass Rounble specialise in physical and visual theathe, making pieces that risk, experiment, unovate and celebrate (www.british.com.cii.com/arts)
METHODOLOGY!

Gecko facules on their personal experiences, relationships and emotional responses to the world for their ineptration.

Gecko attempt follow Glass' I deal methodology for creative development, which include five steps...

... As with most devided work companies, they rever consider any of their productions to be completely finished.

(ibid, 16S-18S)

CREATIVE

5RGANIZATION

MANIFESTATION/

PRESENTATION

This collaborative theatre project will, by its very nature, rely on <u>participatory activities</u> to ensure that the whole group have an input, role and sense of ownership of the finished piece. I am interested in the process that the Gecko Company, which is relatively small compared to other companies of the same style, undergoes to create their work.

"The process for all the shows I have made starts by allowing the initial thoughts, ideas and scenes, characters – whatever these might be – to emerge. The process can take a long time and you have to be patient" (The Gecko process. Amit Lahav, Artistic director. Source:

http://www.geckotheatre.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Gecko-Student-Resources.pdf)

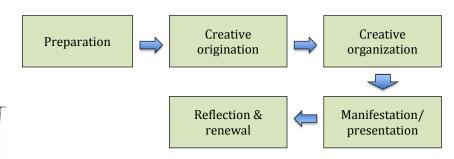
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...As with most devised work companies, they never consider any of their productions to be completely finished (Ibid, pages 165-185)

Methodology:



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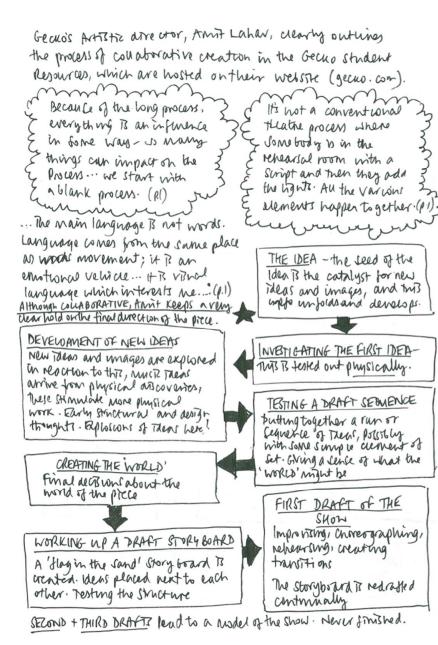
PREPARATION

2) The Gecho Process

Amit Lahar,

Artistic Director

www.geckotleatre



Gecko's artistic director, Amit Lahav, clearly outlines the process of collaborative creation in the Gecko Student Resources, which are hosted on their website (http://www.geckotheatre.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/05/Gecko-Student-Resources.pdf)

Because of the long process, everything is an influence in some way – so many things can impact on the process... We start with a blank process (p.1)

e main language is not words.

nguage comes from the same place as vement; it is an emotional vehicle... it risual language that interests me... (p.1) hough collaborative, Amit keeps a very ar hold on the final direction of the ce.

ew ideas and images are explored in action to this, music ideas arrive from tysical discoveries; these stimulate

ore physical work. Early structural id design thoughts. Explosions of eas here!

reating the "world"

nal decisions about the world of the ece

<u>'orking up a draft storyboard</u>
"flag in the sand" storyboard is
eated. Ideas placed next to each other.
esting the structure.

It's not a conventional theatre process where somebody is in the rehearsal room with a script and then they add the lights. All the various elements happen together. (p.1)

The idea – the seed of the idea is the catalyst for new ideas and images, and this unfolds and develops

<u>Investigating the first idea</u> – This is tested out physically

Testing a draft sequence
Putting together a run or sequence of ideas, possibly with some simple element of set.
Giving a sense of what the "world" might be.

<u>First draft of the show</u>
Improvising, choreography, rehearsing, creating transitions.
The storyboard is redrafted continually.

Second and third drafts lead to a model of the show. Never finished.

6

THE FORMATION OF MY GROWP

In discussing the formation of our ensemble, I was very hoppy to Flentify other number of my class who were or excited about the Physican and Shreeten elements of Personnance is me, and who shared and Idea of the POTENTIAL for this style of twentre to have an impact on an audience Forthis coll aborative project I will be working with:

OECE

· Alena

me will be sharing the toler of directing, choreographing and blocking, but as we have such clear strengths will be allocating responsibility for specific actions to individuals to lead

· Me (Alex) dancer, Very good at movement · Carmen nound inke to choreograph some sequences 7 very strong at mime, also interested in no rement segnences. working in sound effects or sound tracks to accomp any any movement is also a strength.

> A good character ador. Not a lot of physical experience but very good with har roile. Excited by the non naturalistic textures of the voice Lots of experience in haturalistiz' roles. will help with floshing out a little depth to roles.

From the outlet of that process, the group had immediate agreement that we wanted to weak an INTENSE and ENGAGINF piece of theatre that muld resonate with our anatorce on a VISCEREM (with how they feel routher than how they think) lenel.



My group, Mind Mapping Tdeas

A very early possibility as a Start-point form was MENTAL MINESS! This theme is present in a lot of the work that inspores in . linked to Artand, Swan Kane and Berkott, but we get this was too bread. In narrying down the theme in to cuting rites, Ele suggested INSOMNA. This ideas lowing took hold undist we our feet secure - this was one starting point.

The formation of my group

In discussing the formation of our ensemble, I was very happy to identify other members of my class who were as excited about the physical and surreal elements of performance as me, and who shared an idea of the potential for this style of theatre to have an impact on an audience. For this collaborative project I will be working with:

- Me (Alex)
- Carmen: dancer, very good at movement. Would like to choreograph some sequences.
- **Ele**: Very strong at mime, also interested in movement sequences. Working on sound effects or soundtracks to accompany any movement is also a strength.
- Alena: A good character actor. Not a lot of physical experience but very good with her voice. Excited by the non naturalistic features of the voice. Lots of experience in "naturalistic" roles. Will help with fleshing out a little depth to roles.

We will be sharing the roles of directing, choreographing and blocking, but as we have such clear strengths we will be allocating responsibilities to specific sections to individuals to lead.

From the outset of this process, the group had immediate agreement that we wanted to create an intense and engaging piece of theatre that would resonate with our audience on a visceral (with how they feel rather than how they think) level.

A very early possibility as a start point for us was mental illness. This theme is present in a lot of the work that inspires us – linked to Artaud, Sarah Kane and Berkoff, but we felt this was too broad. In narrowing down the theme into categories, Ele suggested insomnia. This idea slowly took hold and we all felt secure - this was our starting point.

EXPLORATION OF THE STARTING POINT: INSOMNIA



"WHEN YOU HAVE INCOMNIA YOU'RE NEVER REALLY ASLEEP ... AND YOU'RE NEVER REALLY AWAKE.

NOTHING'S REAL . EVERYTHING'S FAR AWAY. EVERYTHING'S A COPY OF A COPY OF A COPY "

(Fight cub, chuck Palahnink, 1999)

we would at quite a few health websites which told us most people Softer from insumia at some point in their was. I in 3 people have bouts of theomore regularly (www.nhs.co.we) (sleep.com) LIPESTALE is a big influence on sleep patterns. (Insommia' caught our Umaginations as a starting point because of the many different reasons someone vigor have for developing insomma or be experiencing the symptoms, and the potantial these have for being INTENSE and ENGAGING for an anaichce.

Possible courses of Insummia.

WORK MONEY SEX RELATIONSHIPS IDENTITY FAMILY DEPRESION ADDICTION ILLNESS FRAMS STUDY REPORTEDINTY DRUGS

PEAR TECHNOLOGY (SOLATION UNEMPLOYMENT

TEDIOUS UPE

ABUSE MNWANTED DRIZNAN CO

- crying

- Sharking

From our mind map we underlined the causes which really interested in . Next we explored possible symptoms, and loss is where our Them for practical explorations, covaracters and scenes really lit up:

- twitching -tiredness - yawning
 - blurry willon
- changed appetite -apprehlisor - Sweating
- anciety

TROUBLED PAST

- restlemen - noning - Slumed Speech -tension
- bags under eyes - Short attention span
- cursiner - Withermens - Addiction to coffee
- Addiction to gaming
- -shouting

Exploration of the starting point: Insomnia

"When you have insomnia you're never really asleep... and you're never really awake. Nothing's real. Everything's far away. Everything's a copy of a copy of a copy" (Fight Club, Chuck Palahniuk, 1999).

We looked at quite a few health websites which told us most people suffer from insomnia at some point in their lives. One in three people have bouts of insomnia regularly (sources: http://www.nhs.uk/, http://www.sleep.com). Lifestyle is a big influencer on sleep patterns. "Insomnia" caught our imaginations as a starting point because of the many different reasons someone might have for developing insomnia or be experiencing the symptoms, and the potential these have for being intense and engaging for an audience.

Possible causes of Insomnia

Work Sex Relationships Identity Family Stress Money Depression Addiction Illness Exams/study Responsibility Fear Drugs Technology Isolation Unemployment Abuse Lack of purpose Troubled past Food Haunted Tedious life Unwanted pregnancy

From our mind map we highlighted the causes that really interested us. Next we explored possible symptoms, and this is where our ideas for practical explorations, characters and scenes really lit up:

 Tiredness Yawning

Aching

Tension

Twitching

Blurry vision

- - eyes
- Apprehension Changed
- Anxiety appetite
 - Sweating
 - Restlessness
 - Slurred speech

- Bags under
- Short attention span
- Clumsiness
- Listlessness
- Addiction to coffee
- Addiction to gaming

- Crying
- Shaking
- Shouting
- Groaning
- Fighting
- · Self harm

once we had shared our research on the approaches of Ingersional companies who collaboratively create original there, we unanimously agreed that the most effective way of kicking off the process wasto get practical as foun as possible. Gecus theathe begin by physically exploring the first iden, so we would do the Jame!



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we strong a very short sequence together and improvised around this (as this trated above).



PRACTICAL + PHYSICAL EXPLORATIONS



we experimented with white sheets—wing these not only to cover me (playing the role of a character tossing and turning in bed) but all a to cover others in the group who were using their bodies to provide the outline of a hed.

very early on in the process we created a nice moment where I was unthing trying to get to fleep mile the rest of the group-hilden from view-provided a nocturnal sound scape, creating sound effects of dripping taps, ticing crocks, mutted speech and ominous writes. This would certainly be something to nether to.

Practical and Physical Explorations

Once we had shared our research on the approaches of professional companies who collaboratively create original theatre, we unanimously agreed that the most effective way of kicking off the process was to get practical as soon as possible. Gecko theatre begin by physically exploring the first idea, so we would do the same!



We immediately started selecting images that came to mind from looking at our mind maps. We strung a very short sequence together and improvised around this (see sequence above).

We experimented with white sheets - using these not only to cover me (playing the role of a character tossing and turning in bed) but also to cover others in the group who were using their bodies to provide the outline of a bed.

Very early on in the process we created a nice moment where I was writhing trying to get to sleep while the rest of the group – hidden from view – provided a nocturnal soundscape, creating sound effects of dripping taps, ticking clocks, muttered speech and ominous noises. This would certainly be something to return to.

From these early experiments me were able to begin to prece together a rough structure to our prece in the form of a narrative. We all realised from our research that ALC collaborative creators of theather make significant afterations and additions to the work during the process, but it was enectful to commit to a DRAFT structure against which me would be able to construct our Insomnia world. Looking back of my theatine Journal we wanted our prece to present the following:

OUR CONOEPT: One character - Brian (to be played by me)

An ensemble to play all other people in the

'insomnia morid' and to pungs, cally

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(to be played by the 3 girls).

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Life isn't the glossy magazne he predicted it moud be!

To cope with this,
Brian Takes SPIRAL
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17 Brian eventually recoi ves 'nedication' to sedate

reality of 21st century life!

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Brian is failing to keep on top of things at work. Pressure it stacking up. He hasn't got the reloances to cope.

The depression of viorin is making the steeping pattern even worse

Throughout this me see maffective leaders, medical practificiness and colleagues at looking out for themselves Brianks victim of this, but Takes the blame. Very similar to Berkofts "The Trial" (adapted from Katka).

From these early experiments we were able to begin to piece together a rough structure to our piece in the form of a narrative. We all realized from our research that ALL collaborative creators of theatre make significant alterations and additions to the work during the process, but it was essential to commit to a DRAFT structure against which we would be able to construct our INSOMNIA world. Looking back at my theatre journal we wanted our piece to present the following:

Our concept: One character - Brian (to be played by me)

An ensemble - to play all other people in the

'insomnia world' and to physically create the objects and environments (to be played by the three girls).

Brian is overworked, depressed with the tedious life he has. Life isn't the glossy magazine he predicted it would be!

Brian can't sleep. He is plagued by visions.

Brian is failing to keep on top of things at work. Pressure is stacking up. He hasn't got the resources to cope.

The depression at work is making the sleeping pattern even worse. To cope with this Brian takes sleeping pills.

These have strong adverse effects – the nightmares become more surreal and vivid.

Brian eventually receives "medication" to sedate him and becomes a clone of the others who inhabit his world - machine-like, exhausted and emotionless - the reality of $21^{\rm st}$ century life!

Throughout this we see ineffective leaders, medical practitioners and colleagues, all looking out for themselves. Brian is a victim of this, but takes the blame. Very similar to Berkoff's "The Trial" (Adapted from Kafka's "The trial", 1914)

TARGET ANDIENCE



The ideal annience follow for our piece would be school leavers and young adults. The hard-hitting life might not be all that you are expecting it to be message and thanks of identity, stress and lack of sente of purpose would hopefully resonate with that age group.

- INTENTIONS. To create a piece of intence and engaging the atte which analysis the anaisence through the we of highly physical and somited performance techniques.
 - "To push ourselves as actors to the limits, to July me our bodies and voices to engage the and ince in a SLICK fer formance.

THE COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR PIECE

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Target Audience

The ideal audience for our piece would be school leavers and young adults. The hard-hitting life "might not be all that you are expecting it to be" message and themes of identity, stress and lack of sense of purpose would hopefully resonate with this age group.

Intentions

- To create a piece of intense and engaging theatre which challenges the audience through the use of highly physical and stylized performance techniques.
- To push ourselves as actors to the limits, to fully use our bodies and voices to engage the audience in a slick performance.

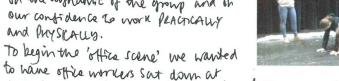
The collaborative development of our piece

We mutually agreed that our piece should centre around the central character of "Brian" very early on in the process and this decision seemed to work well. Alena had the idea that Brian's insomnia should be as a result of having done everything "right" in life, and yet still feeling he has a lack of fulfillment. This straight-A student had secured a good job as an accountant but the grind and stress of life was sapping him of every ounce of enthusiasm or hope for escaping the drudgery of a 9-5 office job!

We experimented with ways of illustrating a busy and demanding office environment with only four actors, which was quite a demanding task.

Attnough carner took overall responsibility for the direction of the office scene, it was important for us to collaborate and feel able to make inggestions or recommend afterestions to ench scene. This balance would be essential Throughout the process. commen wanted in all to feel comportable roung our bodges in each scene, and for us to be relaxed when making contact with ench other. She led a few exercites to help us

develop Must and to begin creating Strong physical images. This early work certainly has a positive effect on the dynamic of the group and on Our confidence to work PRAGRICALLY and Physically.



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One of the creatine Tolay we had for the office was to have one person as the chain and desk, providing tripping notes and office 'hub-bub' in the bacuground. Another person then sits on their knees and mines typing (wong the tingers of the chair person as a Keyboara) as I have shown in my sketch.

What I really loved about creating this scene was how quickly we all more able to add snow detaits to "scene to make it even More clear: Sequences of numbers, using the hand of the "chair as a telephone receiver etc...

Although Carmen took overall responsibility for the direction of the office scene, it was very important for us to collaborate and feel able to make suggestions or recommend alterations to each scene. This balance would be essential throughout the process. Carmen wanted us all to feel comfortable moving our bodies in each scene, and for us to be relaxed when making contact with each other. She led a few exercises to help us develop trust and to begin creating strong physical images. This early work certainly had a positive effect on the dynamic of the group and on our confidence to work practically and physically.

To begin the 'office scene' we wanted to have office workers sat down at desks, but certainly didn't want to clutter the performance space with any unnecessary items such as chairs or tables.

This linked particularly with our intention for the performance to be slick. We didn't want blackouts or set changes which would slow the pace of the piece. This wouldn't be helpful to make an engaging piece if the audience was constantly waiting for set changes. Physical theatre companies such as DV8 and Complicite rarely slow their work with blackouts or unnecessary set.

One of the creative ideas we had for the office was to have one person as the desk and chair, providing typing noises and office 'hub-bub' on the background.

Another person then sits on their knees and mimes typing (using the fingers of the "chair person" as a keyboard) as shown in the sketch.

What I really loved about creating this scene was how quickly we were able to add small details to the scene to make it even more clear: sequences of numbers, using the hand of the "chair" as a telephone receiver, etc.

The blanty of being able to make furniture so simply with our bodies (such as a table and chair for the doctor, straing doors for the train and the structure of the bed) was that the mages could so quickly and simply be evoked. The audience would have to "tune in to being able to interpret these mages, but once They were ontoward with the concept, the pace of the trushe piece could realize pick up and more along.



This sequence was interacto be a ringthmix, fast-paced as splay of efficiency from Brian's day-to-day office job Ece created a soundtrach of simple drum heat, clacking type-writers and telephone noises to accompany the action, him GARAGEBAND.

This added layer of sound and clear rington gave an added dumension to one human-made sound effects we were making line.

Interningled with this office environment me also trongent it was important to show the covaracter of British and give an intigrat to his past as a "perfect" stragent and young man filled nith softwarters and potential.

we decreed to infert a brick siene into the action very earny on a monologue framed as Brian's valedictorian speech at his high-school graduation ceremony - centred around the concept of them something' - which would clearly be inour when the audience fully grasps his current depression and lace of sey fulfirment.

An early draft of My Monologue as Brian.

My fellow graduates. His an honour to be standing heside upon today, as we ready onceynes to take the new step into life. We stand here having reached our full potential. And now it's time for us to do something with that potential. To be so mething, whatever you do, do it with when it's Make it count.

The beauty of being able to make furniture so simply with our bodies (such as a table and a chair for the doctor, sliding doors for the train and the structure of the bed) was that the images could so quickly and simply be evoked. The audience would have to "tune in" to be able to interpret these images, but once they were onboard with the concept, the pace of the theatre piece could really pick up and more along.

This sequence was intended to be a rhythmic, fast-paced display of efficiency from Brian's day-to-day office job. Ele created a soundtrack of a simple drum beat, clacking typewriters and telephone noises to accompany the action using GarageBand. This added layer of sound and clear rhythm gave an added dimension to the human-made sound effects we were making live. Intermingled with this office environment we also thought it was important to show the character of Brian and give an insight to his past as a "perfect" student and young man filled with aspirations and potential.

We decided to insert a brief scene into the action very early on – a monologue framed as Brian's valedictorian speech at his high-school graduation ceremony – centred around the concept of 'being something' –which would clearly be ironic when the audience fully grasps his current depression and lack of self fulfillment.

This is an early draft of my monologue as Brian

My fellow graduates, it is an honour to be standing beside you today, as we ready ourselves to take the next step into life. We stand here having reached our full potential. And now it's time for us to do something with that potential. To be something. Whatever you do, do it with integrity. Make it count.

SPECIFIC EXPLORATIONS LED BY ME "The NIGHT MAVE"

Having researched into TOTAL THEATRE and the in-yer-face Style of performance. I was particularly interested in directing the group for the 'night marke' sequence. After a visit to the medical practitioner. Brants prescribed armys to help settle his nerves and send him to sleep! Alends research into medication for INSOMNIA indicated that some of the armys can cause hallucinations and night moves. This was perfect for the shocking and chaveriging features we were noping for , we purchased some bakes of Snau mints which would nork effectively on stage as "pilis".



directed the girls to franticulty withe around tuning to sleep, snowing the anaience that more than just the central character of Brian. The moment Brian decides to take one of me tablety, I dipected the girls to freeze - creating a contrast to the frantic movement, and to build tension as I shahe

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out a handful of prus and swallow them. onco I had swallowed the prus all 4 of w Covered ourselves up under the White Sheet Currich had been need to delineate the stage space At this Moment, I derected the girls to begin loud

brenthy sounds, exhaling, and begin to repeat Brans name again and again, as I (as bian) began tritching and cuaptry folling into the aneam. * I later directed the girls to do this with the sheets over Their faces, which made them more ghost like and biz arre when they timally SAT WA.



we carried out a few experiments to see just how Shocking and notence we could get with the nightware without making the scene commicne or unbelievable. we experimented with the girls moving towards me like hampies and wapping me in the sheets, binding me, and actually creating a nose with one of the sheeps and hegunning to strangle Me - Symboliz of Brians

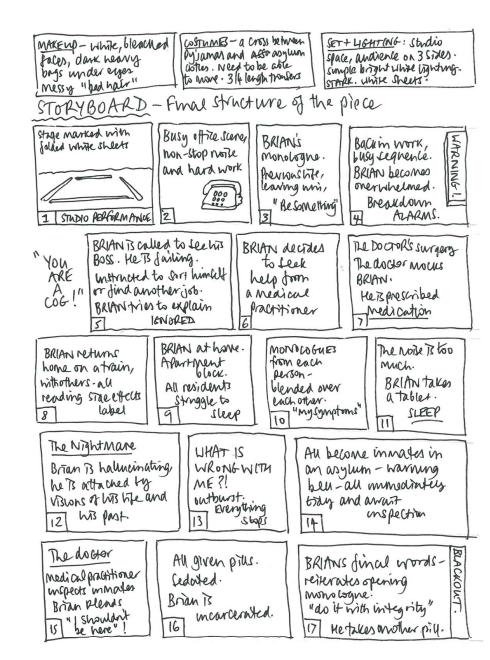
restrictive and unfulfilled life. I then decided to repeat my monologue from earner in the place to fully inustrate Brans struggle and innerturnoth with a sureter and surreal soundtrack created by the on Garageband, this sequence became really effective infulfitung our Fentions.

Specific explorations led by me "The Nightmare"

Having researched into total theatre and the in-yer-face style of performance, I was particularly interested in directing the group for the "nightmare" sequence. After a visit to the medical practitioner, Brian is prescribed drugs to settle his nerves and send him to sleep. Alena's research into medication for insomnia indicated that some of the drugs can cause hallucinations and nightmares. This was perfect for the shocking and challenging features we were hoping for. We purchased some boxes of small mints which would work efficiently on stage as "pills". I directed the girls to frantically writhe around trying to sleep, showing the audience more than just the central character of Brian. The moment Brian decides to take one of the tablets, I directed the girls to freeze, creating a contrast to the frantic movement and to build tension as I shake out a handful of pills and swallow them.

Once I had swallowed the pills the four of us covered ourselves up under the white sheet (which had been used to delineate the stage space). At this moment, I directed the girls to begin loud breathing sounds, exhaling and begin to repeat Brian's name again and again as I (as Brian) began twitching and clearly falling into the dream. I later directed the girls to do this with the sheets over their faces, which made them more ghost-like and bizarre when they finally sat up.

We carried out a few experiments to see just how shocking and intense we could get with the nightmare without making the scene comical or unbelievable. We experimented with the girls moving towards me like harpies and wrapping me in the sheets, binding me, and actually creating a noose with one of the sheets and beginning to strangle me - symbolic of Brian's restrictive and unfulfilled life. I then decided to repeat my monologue from earlier in the piece to fully illustrate Brian's struggle and inner torments. With a sinister and surreal soundtrack created by Ele on GarageBand, this sequence became really effective in fulfilling our intentions. 14



- Makeup: white, bleached faces, dark heavy bags under eyes. Messy "bed hair".
- Costumes: a cross between pyjamas and asylum clothes. Need to be able to move. 3/4 length trousers.
- Set and lighting: studio space, audience on three sides. Simple white bright lighting. Stark. White sheets.

Storyboard - Final structure of the piece

- 1. Stage marked with folded white sheets. Studio performance.
- 2. Busy office scene, non-stop noise and hard work.
- 3. Brian's monologue. Previous life leaving him. "Be something".
- 4. Back in work, busy sequence. Brian becomes overwhelmed. Breakdown alarms.

"You are a cog!"

- 5. Brian is called to see his boss. He is failing. Instructed to sort himself or find another job. Brian tries to explain. Ignored.
- 6. Brian decides to seek help from a medical practitioner.
- 7. The doctor's surgery. The doctor mocks Brian. He is prescribed medication.
- 8. Brian returns home on a train, with others. All reading side effects label.
- 9. Brian at home. Apartment block. All residents struggle to sleep.
- Monologues from each person blended over each 10. other. "My symptoms".
- The noise is too much. Brian takes a tablet. Sleep. 11.
- The Nightmare. Brian is hallucinating; he is attacked by 12. visions of his life and his past.
- What is wrong with me? Outburst. Everything stops. 13.
- All become inmates in an asylum -warning bell- all immediately tidy and await inspection.
- The doctor. Medical practitioner inspects inmates. Brian 15. pleads: "I shouldn't be here!"
- All given pills. Sedated. Brian is incarcerated. 16.
- Brian's final words reiterates opening monologue. "Do 17. it with integrity". He takes another pill. Blackout. 15

MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE PERFORMANCE)

Monghout the preparation process I fet that I contributed Smakeantly and effectively to the development of our piece, both as a performer and a fellow coudsorator, attempting to formy talance my creative input and my supports, responsive and public role as a number of the insemble. This successfully supported my confibration to the final performance in the Fente that had developed a positive, open and responsine relationship with my sellow group members, which enabled is to seed safe and supported during one live performance, as well as feeling that had credible ownership over my share of the piece, which I truly feel helped make us each home assertive, committed and parsionate as performers. My role required me to play the character of Brian throughout the plece, and to use my physical and vocal skins to communicate a growing sense of desperation, complete and niterexhaustion, a fixed and frozen state when others were the Jours of attention and strong and supple movements to transition between scenes. I was also required to confast this with a flush ach to my character in his younger days, fresh faces, bull of entirestrasm, energy and passion. I was required to maniformate my skins and sustain each of where characteristizs out given points throughout my performance. I besieve I was able to show there characteristics by wapting my voice the slow, sturred and heavy speech of an insomnies, the quick, high pirched rant of a disperate man, spitting every syllable, and the purned anguishe brian of the night nime scene, finding a low, harsh tone or I want My speech as the girs slowing begin to strange me. I communicated were scenes through the use of my bound and my posture; contasting the bouncy, energetic and garatyne Brian of the past with hunched, acting, weavy-footed and slow paced character who was disperate for sleep. Byle contact is escential faitmentiful performances (betieve, and I mm some to fix my eyes in a staring, blank expression when creating frozen purgoical orgects, to prend with my eyes pinned sharply on the character of my boil and the medical practificner, and to engage face to face with seated another members for the sequences of narration or pleading. believe these actions enabled the andrence to engage more deeply with my performance and assisted the group in our shared intentions.

My contribution to the performance

Throughout the preparation process I felt that I contributed significantly and effectively to the development of our piece, both as a performer and a fellow collaborator, attempting to fairly balance my creative input and my supportive, responsive and pliable role as a member of the ensemble. This successfully supported my contribution to the final performance in the sense that I had developed a positive, open and responsive relationship with my fellow group members, which enabled us to feel safe and supported during the live performance, as well as feeling that I had credible ownership over my share of the piece, which I truly feel helped make us each more assertive, committed and passionate as performers. My role required me to play the character of Brian throughout the piece, and to use my physical and vocal skills to communicate a growing sense of desperation, complete and utter exhaustion, a fixed and frozen state when others were the focus of attention and strong and supple movements to transition between scenes. I was also required to contrast this with a flashback to my character in his younger days, fresh faced, full of enthusiasm, energy and passion. I was required to manipulate my skills and sustain each of these characteristics at given points throughout my performance. I believe I was able to show these characteristics by adapting my voice: the slow, slurred and heavy speech of an insomniac, the quick, high pitched rant of a desperate man, spitting every syllable, and the pained, anguished Brian of the nightmare scene, finding a low, harsh tone as I wail my speech as the girls slowly begin to strangle me. I communicated these scenes through the use of my body and my posture, contrasting the bouncy, energetic and youthful Brian of the past with hunched, aching, heavyfooted and slow paced character who was desperate for sleep. Eye contact is essential for "truthful" performances, I believe, and I was sure to fix my eyes in a staring, blank expression when creating frozen physical objects, to plead with my eyes pinned sharply on the characters of my boss and the medical practitioner, and to engage face to face with seated audience members for the sequences of narration or pleading. I believe these actions enabled the audience to engage more deeply with my performance and assisted the group in our shared intentions.

I believe that the video clips from our performance evidence there skins effectively. I have selected the opening scenes, from the office environment and the introduction of Bran, which leads into brins breakdown. This, I feet, evidences how me attempted to make the piece SLICK- with the smitt and fund movement between scenes, and engaging. I am purifications impressed with how were our skins appear to be evenly pitched in the pyrtomance. Something we spent agreet deal of three on - giving the anatence a surfer will as a united, possibled and coyaborative group of storifeller - I begieve this siene uses music, movement, sound effects (verbal) and action to RNGAGE the anatonce effectively.

The selvond scene I have selected from the whole video re coording 13 the scenethat personally led, the NIGHTMARE Scene. Here betiene the recording aemonstrates how me contrasted Silence, recorded sound, stillness and action to build the sense of the night mare woming. The sounds of the girds laughing as they leap on the with the write Mostersat, and the sniking unage of the noote around my neck and the nedication being tipped oner me contributes well to a stocking and troubling sience, hopefully making the andrence question if the surrent events they are intrusting are real or imagined by the character of Brian. I am very mond of how there 2 moments snow us united and foused as a group and how their hopefully give a flavour of the TOTAL THE ATRE and My My physis and / Stylized palece of treatre we were aspiring to create we were encouraged by our teacher to reglect in our Theatre yournals what we would each do differently if we were to go Turangh this process again. I'm quite confident that as a group we would have It's aimed to wearfe a piece of heatre the this again, but would certainly have benefiten from More time, fairindarly working in the chosen and performance spaces I feet that Eco and a fourtaintie Job with the Soundtrack, but again more time with this before the performance day would have heart we could have sorted the sound levels more sometimes too land, other too quiet) and also heen risk confident about man sections Started or Stopped otherwise I was after by delighted with what we created.

I believe that the video clips of our performance evidence these skills effectively. I have selected the opening scenes, from the office environment and the introduction of Brian, which leads into Brian's breakdown. This, I feel, evidences how we attempted to make the piece slick, with the swift and fluid movement between scenes, and engaging. I am particularly impressed with how well our skills appear to be evenly 'pitched' in the performance. Something we spent a great deal of time on, giving the audience a sense of us as a united, polished and collaborative group of storytellers. I believe this scene uses music, movement, sound effects (verbal) and action to engage the audience effectively. The second scene I have selected from the whole video recording is the scene that I personally led, the Nightmare scene. Here I believe the recording demonstrates how we contrasted silence, recorded sound, stillness and action to build the sense of the nightmare looming. The sound of the girls laughing as they leap on me with the white material, and the striking image of the noose around my neck and the medication being tipped over me contributes well to a shocking and troubling scene, hopefully making the audience question if the surreal events they are witnessing are real or imagined by the character of Brian. I am very proud of how these two moments show us united and focused as a group and how they hopefully give a flavor of the total theatre and highly physical/stylized piece of theatre we were aspiring to create. We were encouraged by our teacher to reflect in our theatre journals what we would each do differently if we were to go through this process again. I am quite confident that as a group we would have aimed to create a piece of theatre like this again, but would certainly have benefitted from more time, particularly working in the chosen and performance space. I felt that Ele did a fantastic job with the soundtrack, but again more time with this before the performance day would have meant we could have sorted the sound levels more (sometimes too loud, others too quiet) and also be more confident about when sections started or stopped. Otherwise I was utterly delighted with what we created.