



Estate-based
Youth Theatre

Immediate
Theatre

Summer Exposure 2019

Fresh One

Written by Fintan Dineen with young people from Interactions youth theatre

Friday 16th August, 3pm and 7pm

Wally Foster Community Centre

Tickets FREE



Project Summary (This section will be used to create a front page)	
Title:	Exposure 2019
Dates:	5 th August- 16 th August
Location:	Wally Foster Centre
Hours per day/Total hours:	10.30am- 5pm, Monday - Friday
No. of Young Ppl & age range	17 young people aged 11 – 25 (inclusive of young people with SEND)
No. of performances:	Two at 3pm and 7pm on Friday 16 th August
No. of audience members:	Approximately 25 at 3pm and 60 at 7pm
Name of person completing report	Nadya Bettioui
Please give a brief summary of the project:	
<p>The process for this year's Exposure's project began in April when the team worked with three young people to complete a funding application for the Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) from Young Hackney. Following an interview on 17th April at Hackney Town Hall, our group of young people were successful in securing £4, 770 of funding towards the project in a year which we were advised was highly competitive. Young people went on to design a job advert for the role of a playwright to work with them, as well as a series of interview questions. Two young people were involved in the actual interviews, selecting Fintan Dineen as their preferred playwright. Fintan worked with our Interactions group (aged 12- 16) across four sessions workshopping ideas around the theme of 'Identity'. This resulted in the play 'Fresh One' which follows the story of Tatenda, a young girl from Zimbabwe who moves to Hackney aged 12. The play focusses on her at four crucial points in her life as she adapts to her new life and her quest to find her true identity. This process allowed young people to be fully invested in the project from the outset and ensured that their voices were really at the heart of the play. For those young people not involved in the initial process, there was an opportunity for them to read and input their own ideas at the beginning of the project which Fintan then incorporated into the final draft.</p> <p>The project was led by Nadya Bettioui in a production/director role, supported by Unique Spencer as the co-director and Kyarna Morris as a lead facilitator. The team was further supported by three Peer Facilitators (Isla Rainforth, Sean McCarron and Montell Pemberton) and a placement student from East 15 Acting School (Gina Harbour).</p> <p>We were delighted to be able to work with designer Amanda Mascarenas who came highly recommended through a previous designer. Amanda was able to work with Nadya to create a modern and versatile design concept which was excellently executed by Amanda and her design assistant (a participant on the project). The concept of utilising the cast for a series of swift and complex scene changes formed once we had met the cast and realised that they were extremely talented and could be challenged in this way. The concept also allowed young people to physically put their 'own stamp' on to the Hackney backdrop through using coloured pens throughout the play to add colour and 'breathe life' into 'their' Estate. Amanda supported young people to make their own T-shirts and accessories for the piece.</p>	

<p>The project culminated in two wonderful shows on Friday 16th August at 3pm and 7pm.</p>
<p><u>Key Aims of the Project</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support young people in developing social skills, confidence, team working and listening skills • Develop young people's artistic skills in both performance and design • Create a final performance which is inclusive and allows space for young people's voices and ideas to be expressed
<p><u>Impact & Outcomes</u> <i>Please give a summary of the participants involved incl. quotes.</i> Reflecting on the observations & goal-setting forms for participants, please comment on their progress over the course of the project – what changes occurred as a result of the project? i.e. improved quality of life, improved confidence, artistic ability etc.</p>
<p>Based on young people's goal setting forms completed at the beginning and the end of the project...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% felt that they had developed their theatre skills • 100% reported that they had fun • 100% felt that their confidence had increased • 80% felt that they explored issues relevant to them compared to 53% at the start of the project • 100% said that they enjoyed drama games compared to 45% at the start • 75% said that they enjoyed being able to tell a story compared to 33% at the start • 63% felt that they were more able to trust others compared to 23% at the start • 63% felt more able to take responsibility compared to 17% at the start • 100% felt more able to support others compared to 17% at the start • 50% felt more able to resolve problems with adults compared to 11% at the start • 63% felt more able to understand emotions compared to 40% at the start • 100% said that they enjoyed creating characters compared to 42% at the start • 100% said that they enjoyed improvising compared to 21% at the start <p>There was also a 57% increase in the average 'life satisfaction' score at the end of the project compared to the beginning.</p>
<p><u>Project Highlights</u></p>
<p>I feel that a large part of the success of this year's project was being able to implement learning from last year's evaluations. For example, developing a script ahead of the project allowed us to focus on raising the overall quality of the production. It also meant that many of the young people were already heavily invested in the project from the outset and shared this enthusiasm with the new participants. I ensured that I carefully read all of the evaluation documents from last year's project and implemented changes such as increasing the pace of the first week, communicating openly with the team and providing clear leadership of the project.</p> <p>➤ Witnessing the positive journey of all participants, but the following in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X has a range of learning needs and attends our regular Huddleston group. X has low literacy levels and a lack of confidence in delivering dialogue on stage, however, with the support of staff, X was able to learn and deliver lines clearly. X also took on a range of minor roles with complex scene transitions and was able to keep up with all of this at an impressive level. X showed commitment and dedication the project, especially as X was juggling this with a part time placement at Scope.

- X lacked confidence in their own abilities, often hiding in their older sister's shadow. The staff team believed in X's potential and gave them two substantial roles in the play. To start with, X was reluctant and scared to take on the challenge, but with the support of the team, X ended up being one of the strongest performers and excelled in both roles. X surprised themselves and their family and was visibly proud by the end.
- X came to the project not knowing any of the other young people. X barely spoke for the first few days and was extremely shy, however, as they gradually became more comfortable, began to voluntarily speak. X had a 'breakthrough moment' in one rehearsal where they suddenly were able to remember lines, be clearly heard and remember cues; we were all very happy for X.
- X struggled throughout the project to remember lines or cues, this began to frustrate other cast members. This was surprising as they had managed to do this in previous projects. The staff team worked hard to develop strategies to support, encourage and challenge X (as we knew their potential) without ever giving up. X successfully pulled it together in the final performances which was extremely rewarding for everyone involved.

➤ **Excellent behaviour and conduct of the participants:**

This continued throughout the project and meant that the staff team could really focus on supporting the young people with their rehearsals. The lack of disruption meant that we were ahead of schedule for most of the project, with extra time before the shows to iron out minor remaining issues. Occasionally, there was some very low-level disruption, but this was dealt with swiftly and with minimal attention. The drawing up of the collaborative 'agreed ways of working' at the beginning of the week helped to support the behaviour, but it was mainly down to the young people choosing to conduct themselves well.

➤ **Inclusivity of the project:**

As in previous years, it was great to have a mixture of young people with varying backgrounds, needs and abilities in the group. Of the group of 17, four young people had a learning disability. It was impressive to see how all of the young people treated each other with respect, with no signs of discrimination or bullying of any kind. Young people all seemed to learn valuable lessons from each other, especially in how to support others (this is highlighted in the fact that 100% identified they were able to do this at the end of the project compared to 17% at the start).

➤ **Strong, supportive team:**

The team was fantastic throughout the project. All staff members were enthusiastic about the project and were clear on the overall vision of the piece. This allowed us all to support each other to achieve the end goal. I tried from the outset to identify individual staff members' skills and talents so that I could accurately delegate responsibilities to staff. I feel that this worked well as all staff members had a considerable amount of input into the process and were able to add considerable value to the piece. For example, Sean was in charge of choreography, Kyarna has responsibility for running energizer games and Isla worked with individual young people on scenes they were struggling with.

➤ **The final performances:**

The final performances received an extremely positive reaction from audience members, but what was touching to witness was how proud the young people felt of themselves. Many of the young people didn't believe that they'd be able to achieve the final outcome, especially as we made the show more ambitious once we understood the young people's capabilities, however, they all excelled. The final performances felt more polished than the other shows this year. It was rewarding to see my overall vision for the piece realised and for the design elements to complement this. Both performances were well attended, with a group of young people from the Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground attending the 3pm show. It was great to share a piece by and for young people with young people in the audience. Both audiences contributed over £95 in donations which was fantastic.

"[The best bit was] seeing the overall performance come to life. It felt like the kind of work we were producing several years ago. It had a certain energy and colourfulness to it. It's something we've been missing from Exposure for the past couple of years and it's great to have it back" **Charmain Humphrey, Participation Manager**

"[The best bit] was seeing the young people connect with the script to make it their own. The fun they seemed to have with it and the investment they put into it over time. I particularly enjoyed the comedic bits hitting home" **Fintan Dineen, Playwright**

"[The best bit was] Seeing the young people thrive, enjoy themselves and being really proud of what they have accomplished" **Fiona McGregor, Marketing & Administration Intern**

"Overall, my experience at Exposure was amazing. The young actors we worked with were determined, talented and respectful which made the goal at hand easier and fun to achieve" **Sean McCarron, Peer Facilitator**

"It was amazing to see the growth in some young people who might not have had the confidence at the beginning but then blossomed by the end. The overall project warmed my heart to work with local children in a borough I was born in" **Unique Spencer, Co-Director**

Audience Feedback

Out of the 35 audience feedback forms received, 94% of audience members rated the final show as 'very good' or 'excellent'

"One of the best Immediate Theatre shows I've seen ever! And I've seen many!"

"Good script, excellent directing and amazing young people"

"Enjoyed every minute"

"Breath taking"

"Lovely to see young ones stepping out of their comfort zones and doing well to portray an important message"

"Loved the work of the ensemble class and the transitions between protagonists. A wonderful message of truth over adversity"

"Amazing acting and very touching and inspiring story"

"My daughter absolutely loved it"

"The joy from the participants was evident throughout"

"Love that it was inclusive and diverse, well done to all involved. I got the point of the play - leaving your home country to come to a foreign land and then you integrate. Was fantastic having all the young people involved"

Staff Comments

"I feel like I achieved an improvement in my communication skills. Sometimes in order to get things done in a short time, you have to be short and strict but say things in the correct manner and tone"
Montell Pemberton, Peer Facilitator

"The best part about exposure was meeting new participants and understanding/getting to know their personalities and many talents (which clearly showed in the final show)"
Chloe Chilvers, Peer Facilitator

"I feel like I designed a successful set with an amazing assistant. I was able to achieve a functionable and practical design. I feel like I gained new connections with a great theatre company and met some awesome facilitators along the way. If X didn't turn up I would have written that you need an assistant designer if not more than one. This is something I strongly believe you should incorporate into your programme"
Amanda Mascarenas, Designer

"My favourite part of the project was being able to be a director for scenes and show what I am capable of producing. As a peer facilitator I wasn't really expecting to lead on scenes so having the opportunity and seeing my work be put into the final outcome was great. I loved leading"
Sean McCarron, Peer Facilitator

"Seeing some of the [young people] being helpful and respectful towards the SEN members of the group was encouraging to see. I think this might have even given those young people a shade of maturity"
Fintan Dineen, Playwright

"[The best bit was] getting to know the young people and observe how attached they were to the play. For many, Finn's craft is very relatable as it depicts a current contemporary identity crisis occurring in today's world"
Kyarna Morris, Lead Facilitator

"It was a pleasure to see every young person shine and contribute no matter what their access needs. I felt that we as a team made everyone feel included as an ensemble but also highlighted their strengths as individuals. I left the project with confidence of being able to lead, direct and be assertive"
Unique Spencer, Co-Director

"I think everyone felt involved, valid and listened to. I definitely saw a growing confidence in some of them. They also seemed to develop a certain knack for initiative and a creative way around problems"
Fintan Dineen, Playwright

"My greatest challenge would be the pressure I would feel when leading. Although I was honoured to direct scenes and lead in games, I also felt a lot of pressure in doing so. My team really are the people who helped me overcome it, the check ups and support was great. I knew in the end that everyone had my best interest and these are things I have to do and learn to pursue the career I'm after"
Sean McCarron, Peer Facilitator

Lessons Learnt

Identify and obstacles & challenges you encountered over the course of the project and how these could be mitigated in the future.

- **Recruitment & marketing materials:**

The marketing materials were produced much later than usual which made it difficult for us to be able to publicise the project properly. This stemmed from the fact that the team invited one of our recent work experience placement students to design the flyer. This was based on the excellent work he produced during his placement, however, he also received a great deal of guidance during this time. However, with this assignment, I do not feel that he was provided with adequate guidance or copy which meant that the process took longer and the end product was not of a high enough standard (in my opinion). The flyers were printed a couple of weeks before the project which meant that we couldn't distribute to schools before the end of term or organise an effective distribution strategy. I feel that this impacted our recruitment on to the programme which was a shame as we had the capacity to welcome more young people, especially those who are harder to reach. This resulted in some of our Peer facilitators having to step into roles due to a shortage of participants. Next year we should aim to have all marketing materials ready by the end of June at the latest and produce the materials in-house.

- **Timing of the project:**

As in previous years, I feel that it would have been much more beneficial to have a one week break between the Breakout and Exposure projects. This would allow some time for the team to fully debrief and evaluate the Breakout project before moving on to the planning of the Exposure project. Not having a gap was tiring for members of the delivery team who worked across both projects who would have really benefitted from this time. Next year we should try to ensure that there is a break between the projects. Some team members this year felt that the day was too long for the young people, which I tend to agree with. Most of the young people were exhausted by 4.30pm after working hard all day, so the final 30 minutes was never very productive. I would suggest finishing at 4.30pm rather than 5pm going forwards. In addition, we should advertise 'dummy start times' going forwards, e.g. 6.45pm as the majority of our shows start at least 10- 15 minutes late.

- **Communication with the venue:**

At times, it was very difficult to gain assistance and support from the venue staff. This felt frustrating, especially as we had a meeting with them ahead of all of the projects to agree on the terms of use. Whenever I attempted to contact the main member of staff, my calls and messages were never returned. It emerged that the staff were happier to liaise directly with Charmain on all matters. Once this was established, communication became easier and our requests were dealt with, however, it would have been useful for this to be established earlier on. Aspects such as cleaning were not clearly communicated at the initial meeting, as were then asked to clean, vacuum and empty bins, which was not in the original agreement. In the future, perhaps there should be a more formal contract which is signed by all parties to ensure full compliance.

- **Lighting and sound:**

It was unclear from the outset as to what lighting was functional in the space, this was mainly resolved through us hiring additional lights, but still presented challenges the day before the show when lights we were informed would work, were not. Not having access to the sound desk until the day before the performance also presented some challenges as it meant we did not have enough time to practise the sound cues in rehearsals. This also meant that I was unable to delegate the role of sound engineer to another staff member, so I had to operate it myself. This wasn't ideal, as I would ideally have liked to watch the show. In the future, it would be great to have information and access to this equipment earlier on.

- **Staff training:**

Although the team worked very well together, not all staff attended the training session the week before. This was disappointing as time and effort had gone into organising the training and I had to repeat a lot of the information individually to staff members at the start of the project which was time consuming and felt disjointed. The agreed date for the training was also decided too late, this was due to me spending more time than expected organising the Breakout project. Next year, the date for staff training should be decided much further in advance.

- **Building exit strategy:**

This worked well this year as the office team worked hard to gradually empty and re-organise the storage cupboard during the course of the last week. This meant that on Friday evening, there was minimal work to do. The office staff returned on the Monday to do the final clear out and storage run which was most helpful.

- **Assistant Designer:**

Having a young person in the position of Design Assistant was incredibly helpful. Next year we should advertise two 'Design Assistant' positions available to young people on the project.

"Having to write [the play] in quite a short space of time was challenging. But a challenge I enjoyed and ultimately felt improved my practice. Writing for such a large cast again was challenging! And sometimes not knowing how many people we were working with, then having to edit the script accordingly was a bit disorientating. Knowing I can do it gives me more confidence as a writer going into the future" **Fintan Dineen, Playwright**

"[A challenge was] not being able to be in the Hall with young people as much as I wanted as opposed to being based in reception" **Charmain Humphrey, Participation Manager**

"I know this is dependent on funding but another week or even just three days would have made it a really slick show. Would have been nice if they could have done another performance too" **Fintan Dineen, Playwright**

[A challenge was] staying out on reception and not watching all the rehearsals – it was such a nice vibe that I wanted to be in the room" **Fiona McGregor, Marketing & Administration Intern**

"I think at times there was too many people trying to direct the play so next time we should be clear on people's roles and what they will be doing on the day and how to respect each other's positions" **Unique Spencer, Co-Director**

"My greatest challenge was trying to juggle learning lines, remembering cues as well as being a good peer. It did help me improve my skills and attitude as a person" **Chloe Chilvers, Peer Facilitator**

Team List (please list the role of each person)

Nadya Bettioui- Director/ Producer
 Charmain Humphrey- Participation Manager
 Unique Spencer- Co- director
 Kyarna Morris- Facilitator
 Isla Rainforth- Peer Facilitator
 Sean McCarron- Peer Facilitator
 Montell Pemberton- Peer Facilitator/ Volunteer

Gina Harbour- Placement/ volunteer facilitator

Fintan Dineen- Playwright

Amanda Mascarenas- Designer

Pete Moorland- Lighting

Comments on staff team working

Feedback and quotes

This year's staff team was excellent. All members of the team worked extremely well together and had a shared passion for the play and the project. There were some early concerns as not all members of the team attended the training session, however, all staff made an effort to study the materials that were sent out in advance. Briefings and De-brief meetings were held daily.

"[It's important to] always make sure that your staff reflect the community you're representing as every young person needs to see themselves in people in high positions" **Unique Spencer, Co-Director**

"I believe that the team were amazing. All of our energy bounced off each other and there was never any major issues" **Chloe Chilvers, Peer Facilitator**

"I was still able to be a part of the team even though it's been a challenging month for me in my personal life. I was still able to contribute to the pastoral care and pick up participants every day to support their families" **Charmain Humphrey, Participation Manager**

I feel like the team worked well together as we fed off each other and supported one another throughout this project" **Montell Pemberton, Peer Facilitator**

"The team was great, love every single one of them. We really looked out for each other and everyone got along straight away. It didn't feel like I had to get through several walls to get to know each person and it didn't feel like anyone had their guard up which overall made me feel very comfortable around everyone" **Sean McCarron, Peer Facilitator**

"I think the team worked really well together. There seemed to be a really good bond within the group, I've worked on productions similar to this one before and they have not all run as smoothly" **Amanda Mascaneras, Designer**

"I thought the team was excellent. I don't remember any tiffs or tantrums. Everyone was really supportive, positive and willing to help" **Fintan Dineen, Playwright**

"I think we all worked really well together, everyone was supportive of one another and the team de-briefs were really positive. I liked that I got to be included in the de-briefs for Exposure, I think it's helpful for all staff to be involved in de-briefs no matter the role" **Fiona McGregor, Marketing & Administration Intern**

"I think our team understood each other's roles very well" **Kyarna Morris, Lead Facilitator**

"I think overall the team worked really well with each other and there was a good balance of being able to motivate the young people. Working with Nadya was an absolute pleasure as she gave me confidence in being myself and supporting me in becoming a leader" **Unique Spencer, Co-Director**

"This was a strong team, everyone had something to contribute and was young people centred. One of the best teams we've had in a long time. It would have been nice if the team had some more time together before the project. Depending on funding, maybe even the co-director involved in the writer workshops" **Charmain Humphrey, Participation Manager**

"Unfortunately, our volunteer from UEL only attended for two days of the project. This was a great shame, as I feel he could have gained a great deal of valuable experience. He formed a close bond with one of our participants who has learning disabilities who was then very upset that he did not return. I feel that had he attended the training, he would have maybe been more invested in the project and understood the needs of our participants in greater depth" **Nadya Bettioui**

Please select up to 6 photos that represent the work



