

**KINDRED
SPIRITS**

Established 2019

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

March 2020 The online journey begins...

"Dearest Folks - such strange times indeed. We would love to know how you are

As everyone has emails - shall we use this form as a way of touching base? IF the fancy takes you?"

Tanya Myers

FIRST MISSIVE - IMPROVISATION HANDS

- Take a photo of one of your hands: Think about the context/ or where you place your hand.

Please don't spend too much time worrying about it. Trust the first images that come to mind.

Once happy with image - give PHOTO a title. This title could be the beginning of a story?.....It could be a reflection of how you feel in the moment?

REVIEW:

Little finger to Hand: second hand, old and battered but still in use; ready steady go, the gate of the gods, bleached hand craves earth, receiving comfort from each other, and what?

Not in any particular order! Guess the caption?!





Don:

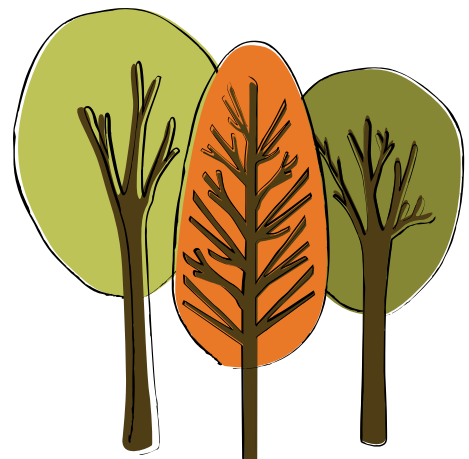
"I'm lucky to have a garden, and the good weather has prompted much pottering. The neighbours have also appeared in their gardens blasting out their unwanted musical tastes. I'm waiting for them to put their washing out on the line so I can light my bonfire and get my revenge. I know we are meant to be tolerant and supportive of each other in this time of mutual anxiety, but somehow pettiness and revenge offer the sweetest pleasure. My own version of bog roll hoarding. I'm obviously not a good person."

As that bloke Blake said:

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.



And it grew both day and night.
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretched beneath a tree.

William Blake

Ah Time!

The Life and Times of Mr. Harrumph

Can't find it - can't find it - can't find it. It flew away!
Crusty Mr. Harrumph brushes aside bearded grasses not at all
like his own red bushy beard, a crumb catcher at eating time
and that comes often, at least five times a day.

He searches, with the help of the latest technology.
Tortoiseshell framed single lens spectacle held aloft,
waved in front of his right eye, with his left hand you know.
Not here! Not there! Gorn, gorn again!

Mr. Harrumph dances his shiny booted feet this way, that way,
peering into the sunlight of this windy Wednesday, flew away day.
Then he sits, hard down on the wooden garden chair, scatters his thoughts
deep into the attentive listening of the waiting country garden.

Consider the problem, finally he pronounces aloud,
In the matter of perfecting my system for corralling basket weave sun hats.
So they shouldn't flew away, you know.

Tortoiseshell spectacle passes to the right hand, focuses vaguely on the left eye.
So, with considerable thought and many diagrams, there comes to me in a blinding,
a mathematical answer. Two trees!

Now Mr. Harrumph's knobbly fingers point in regal manner
across the grass, to a rope suspended between two, not three, two trees.

Then I takes the housekeeper's clothes pegs
and hangs the sunhats peg by peg to the rope.
But one flew away. And now I finds it living, on the grass, by itself!
He harrumphs again and falls silent, waiting for his tea.

Barbara Watkins
Oct 2014

NEW MISSIVE - MY FRONT DOOR

Task 1: Write a 2 to 3 minute stream of consciousness on the theme of 'My Front Door': just what ever comes - leave Monsieur Judgement at the door

Task 2: Let your hand/s lead you on a dance under the sky



PAT'S FRONT DOOR

Its' like myself...a bit battered, scratched by my dogs and needing a new coat of paint!

A new colour would perhaps revive it...it is now green but once red in Victorian times when my house was built..which I saw when layers of paint were revealed by dogs scratching.

This door has welcomed home so many people since Victorian times..and was their sanctuary...men coming home from WWI then being exposed to Spanish Flu which killed millions more of these young men and their womenfolk in 1918... was anybody living behind this door affected? Coming back from WW2 pleased to see their own front door welcoming them home. In the 1960s no doubt the family behind this big double front door decided to put in panels of reinforced glass...that beautiful wooden door which has stood solid since Victorian times now had this abomination inserted.. It must have been really trendy at the time. I can see the family rocking home in their flares, mini skirts, with their beehive hair dos having their photos taken in front of this front door, being so proud of its updating.

As I put my key into my front door, still with the scratches and reinforced glass, it welcomes me and as I close it behind me I feel safe...no isolated BUT SAFE...no person or virus can harm me now as I close it behind me.

TANYA'S FRONT DOOR

Normal days - usually on latch, awaiting visitors, deliveries - unlocked driving husband crazy. These days - unbeknown, unlatched for days. Unnoticed. No exit. No entry. No intrusion. No welcome..

One small nudge over threshold releasing glorious smells of neighbours curries, Liz & her fighting fiddle, pots, pans banging, clapping hands, clapping clapping thankyou thankyou thankyou. Ooh the flurry of those slippared steps outside reasons to step in step out. Step in step out. Step in.. Step OUT!

CARRIE'S FRONT DOOR

My Front Door:

The keys to my own front door, my delightful house, my delighted smile, even the discarded stained glass panes are stored behind the shed, for an installation somewhere sometime.

DON'S FRONT DOOR -

My front door is black and white. A person passing by the house today said to Anne, my civic partner, that she has always loved our house and especially the front door. I think she must have liked the stained glass in the door and in the panels at the side. She probably didn't see the cracks in the glass at the bottom that my son and daughter broke while playing their own form of football in the hall when they were young. I remember not being happy at the time but it's also added a patina mark on a 90 year old door. I wonder how many people have knocked at this door over the years. The three families that have lived in this house before us have all left their mark on the house. The planting of trees, the attic room and layout of the garden. When we bought the house we liked it as it was so we have not made many changes over the past 20 odd years. We've extended the kitchen and made some veg beds and planted some fruit trees but it's essentially the same house we bought. When the last but one resident knocked on our door a couple of years after we moved in and said he had cancer and would like to see the house he had grown up in before he died, we knew the house was loved. All this rich family history lived behind the cracked black and white stained glass front door.

JUDE'S FRONT DOOR -

My Front Door

There's a heavy curtain hangs over my front door. It was put there to keep out the draught. It also shuts out the light.

In the mornings, on my way from the stairs to the kitchen, I used to fling it open to signal an end to my night time lockdown and let in the light.

Not now. Now I'm straight past, not registering it, into the kitchen where I open the curtains to let in the garden light. Safe, benign, spring delight - my secret garden.

Nowadays the door curtain mostly stays drawn all day. It can be undisturbed for days on end.

Sometimes post drops through the letterbox into the space behind the curtain. I hear the thud from the kitchen and it makes my stomach lurch.

When occasionally I have to access the front door I kick the post into the decontamination zone in front of the cellar steps. All remains untouched there for the required three days.

STEPHEN'S FRONT DOOR -

RED DOOR

A door has a purpose.
It's not like a wall that simply waits
and watches its own crumbling.
A door has a life-changing purpose,
It is an entrance
And an exit.

But which is it now facing me?

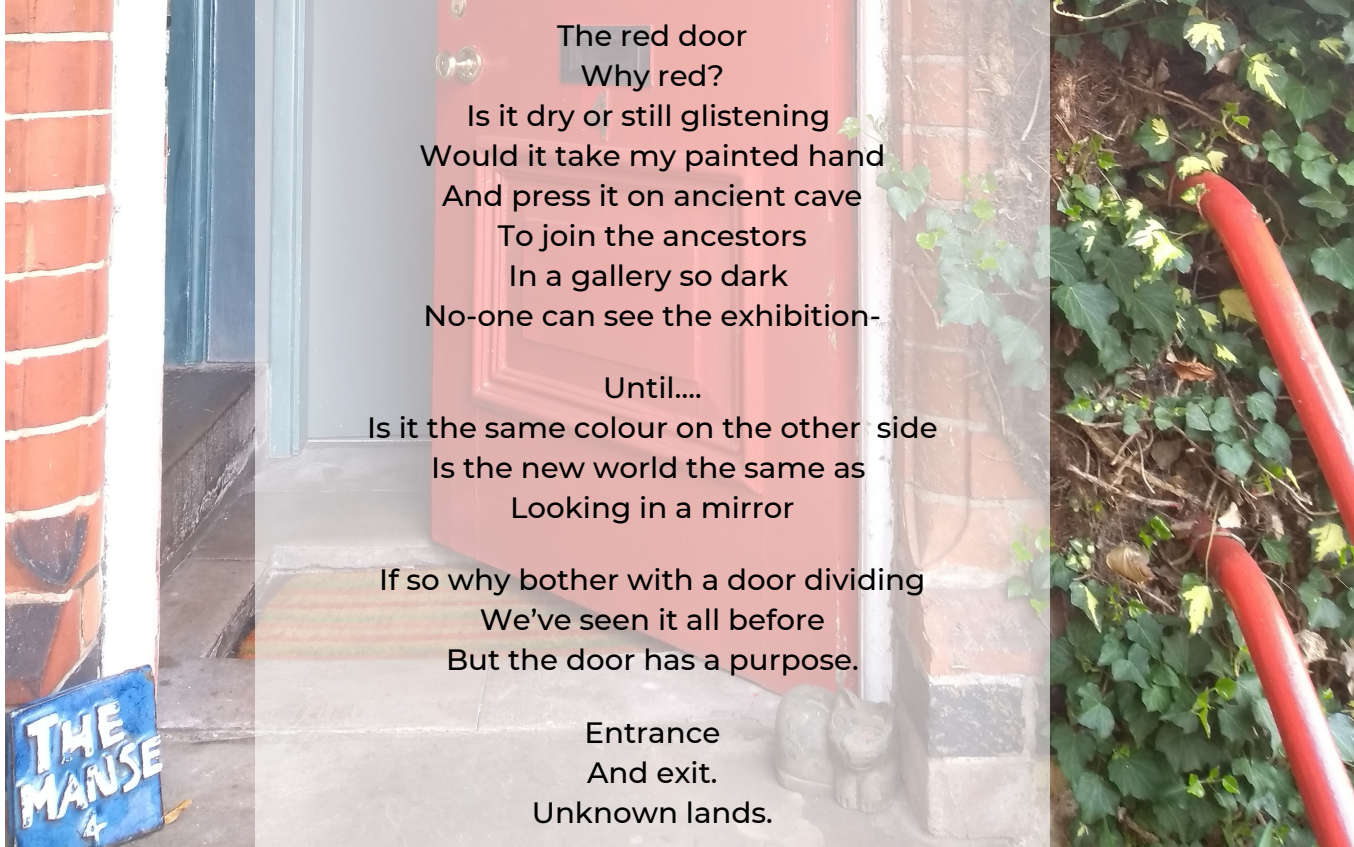
An entrance-to what?
An exit from where?
Here tells us little of where is
And nothing of the other side
Will the door open in or out
Or both?
What if it is locked
And I've forgotten the key
Or never knew I possessed one
Nor knew of need for knowledge of
Digital press button codes

What if the hinges
have been put on upside down
turning the door into a door
with a very high cat-flap

But how would we know
Is the height a clue
Or do we wait for a very tall cat

Does the cat small or tall
exit or entrance?
Only the cat will know

And the house number
69 or possibly 96
and we ended up in some stranger's parlour
destroying a moment of intimacy
as we blush back away crushing china underfoot



The red door
Why red?
Is it dry or still glistening
Would it take my painted hand
And press it on ancient cave
To join the ancestors
In a gallery so dark
No-one can see the exhibition-

Until...
Is it the same colour on the other side
Is the new world the same as
Looking in a mirror

If so why bother with a door dividing
We've seen it all before
But the door has a purpose.

Entrance
And exit.
Unknown lands.



The Red Door -
(Click to view)

Stephen Lowe and Tanya Myers
contribution to the NottStopping Festival

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NEW MISSIVE - WHY AM I WONDROUS

This is a call from the heart: Not necessarily an easy one - but one I genuinely hope you will find a joy, even if a challenge!

- To share, or to attend for personal amusement - in any shape or form: List, stream of consciousness, poem, riddle, ditty...(one word of appeal - try not to duck your marvelousness!)

OR

- Of course - whatever you fancy sharing! or Proposing!

BARBARA:

Am I Wondrous too?

To reach the tree top would be wondrous

It's an aspiration, as a

child with tousled hair, stretches, stretches to touch the stars alive in the night sky,

offers with wonder a greeting to a different world

Fingertips caress tree bark to learn the language of the wood wide web'

transported to the wonderland of arboreal small talk

Then magically, light footfall across the hornbeam's newly green sprung canopy,

wondrous in the full majesty of being tree

Am I wondrous too?

JUDE:

Why am I wondrous?

Why I am wondrous?

Because I am

(obviously)

Why I am wondrous?

Because I am

(working towards)

Why I am wondrous?

Because ... here I am

TANYA:

Apologies to those who've heard diatribes about Mr Mower, Mr Leaf Blower, Mr Lets Build a Carport and Hire a Bulldozer, Mr Hedge-cutter and Mr Dog Bruno Yappy Bark - who I really love so much - usually. Four days I've yearned our world to tiptoe. Hold their noses. Be still. Be quieter than Covid 19 quiet! Never so selfishly have I coveted silence!

Of course I am reasonable! Folks getting on with their lives! Getting on with all the brilliant jobs, tasks, hobbies, work - Jobs tasks, hobbies I NOW jump to attend to with gusto!
Days of hot attic, technological sky diving have come to an end! The End.
So - Why I am wondrous? I don't feel wondrous. At all. Just tired.

The End... I emerged last night... returning to comfortable lockdown, Stephen waiting in hallway, meets me as I hit the bottom stair: He says, without prompting! "You are wonderful".
Blank. I don't feel wonderful. Not at all. Not. At All. But hang on! Actually. Just a moment. I stop: Hair full of feathers, dehydrated, blotchy, exhausted, hot skin... .. Enough! Enough is enough!

I am. Wondrous:

bloody minded persevering
hooking hope from dusty places,
getting up when ground in stone
laughing when straw, finally breaks.....
Opening bottle as ground control departs
And Toasting Life, just because

Winning - Not despising, blaming, nor moaning, despairing nor begrudging (all open for further investigation... but for now . Enough!)

Yup - Thankyou Folks - Why I am wondrous! For now.
Thankyou for letting me get that out of my system!
It's good to be back with you in collective self isolation!
THANKYOU SO SO MUCH!

Pat over to you dear friend!

PAT:

WHAT MAKES ME WONDROUS
I haven't a clue
I've run loads of marathons
Will that do?

WHAT MAKES ME WONDROUS
I don't know what
Perhaps doing stand-up
But that's not a lot!

WHAT MAKES ME WONDROUS
I haven't a clue
Perhaps being a good mum
Will that do?

WHAT MAKES ME WONDROUS
Surviving I guess
To reach old age
When my youth was a mess

WHAT MAKES ME WONDROUS
I haven't a clue
A hard question to answer
So its left up to you.

STOP PRESS! Stephen has sent his response to Why I am Wondrous?

STEPHEN:

I am so wondrous
Now I've learned to share
It's a shame that others
Don't do the same
Especially when it comes to sharing
Biscuits.

NEW MISSIVE - THE EMPTY CHAIR

- The rules are typically loose. Open for interpretation: This can be imagined internally - or maybe physically staged in a personal space? Imagined or actual - Miniature or Giant. It can be responded to in any medium e.g. Photography, film, poetry, prayer - dialogue.
- Rather like HANDS - exploring context of CHAIR.. Potential narrative - or indeed - possession by someone /something?
- Anyway - EMPTY CHAIR.

Feel free to spend seconds. Or find a start ... discover, surprise, vacate.
Make a start or go the hog!

TANYA'S EMPTY CHAIR:

Empty Chair & Elephant in the Room.

Some of you may remember an imagination exercise Stephen led in the days we could sit in small circles.. Look who appeared!

STEPHEN'S EMPTY CHAIR



Man teaching dog to read

DON'S EMPTY CHAIR



"Memento Mori is fascinating, not gruesome, as some people see it. Embracing our mortality makes life more precious. It fits in with one of the ideas you put to the theatre group. There were 4 symbols of death in the photographs, 1 in the first picture, 3 in the second."

PAT: EMPTY CHAIR(S)

The Empty Chair in the classroom
I remember so well
To sit near the class bully
Who made my life hell.

My soft Empty Chair
is now welcoming me
To snuggle my tired body
Plus a large G & T

The Empty Chair in the dining room
Looks lonely to me
Just a table for one now
At breakfast, lunch & tea.....

The Empty Chair in the garden
Is a great joy to me
To hear blackbirds singing
In the Magnolia tree

Empty soft chairs in my house
Are now covered in hairs
Shed by my two dogs
Who hijack them as theirs!

My Empty Chair in my office
Is now waiting for me
To write something funny
Now...what will that be...?

Before writing I actually went around the house and garden and looked and sat on the chairs (apart from the chair in my classroom.. a horrible memory) to evoke these very real feelings... there are so many empty chairs in my house now .

NEW MISSIVE - HOPE

Don has kindly suggested the Kindred Missive for this coming week; (if you've time, want & capacity)
- HOPE.

- So - Missive for NEXT WEEK: In any shape/ form; visual, worded, song, dance, prayer, shout, or smell - if possible: HOPE - A radical force or a whimsical dream? Please feel free to respond in 5 mins or go a journey beyond.....

PAT:

During this long difficult time of dark uncertainty let us all hope that soon we shall soon reach the light.

My runner beans have been reaching for the light through the dark earth and I hope to enjoy the fruits of their labour.



Light at end of tunnel and runner beans running to the light

DON:

Here's my daughter's and my take on Hope. It was made as the sun shone on our newly sprouting vegetable garden. The picture in the background is entitled Hope and is by George Frederic Watts and was painted in 1886.



He painted blind Hope seated on a globe and playing on a lyre which has all its strings broken except one. She bends her head to listen to the faint music, but her efforts appear forlorn; the overall atmosphere is one of sadness and desolation rather than hope.

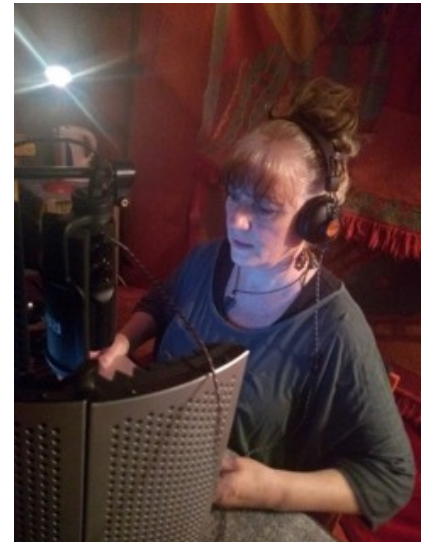
Not a traditional view of Hope but one that appeals to my melancholic nature. It contrasts with both the garden and our simpler, personal and more upbeat video message. Hope you like it.

TANYA:

Stepping Inside to step outside! HOPE for giving Voice and for earning pennies!

My HOPE was embraced by my first sentence recorded and edited in my sound studio. Building my den! That shuts out the world and focuses on creating imaginary ones!

Long way to go... Stumbling - little steps - feels weird to think I am going into the dark rather than emerging into the light!



"Do we tread crazy times? - Or do we tread crazy times? They seem to get crazier by the day ... Not sure about you ... we are feeling querulous about stepping forth beyond our screens... beyond privilege of gardens, newly sorted cupboards; attached to this strange bubble of reality - YET yearning to create a new reality - connect with friends; find voice: fearing governments notion of normality...feeling mixture of trepidation yet hungry for hopeful visions of unity born of new hearts. Anyway - we don't want to presume anything about your lives. We are all feeling, thinking, being, trying to make our own sense of things! It would just be FANTASTIC to know how you are? To hear your POV on the world."

Tanya Myers - email May 2020

NEW MISSIVE: A MONOLOGUE - FROM THE WINDOW

Written or recorded, image or no image

BARBARA:

Inside voice please, he instructed. He was working. Stimulated by fascinating recent emails I had wanted to discuss my response to the much over- used word VALUE. O.K. I do talk aloud to myself as a way to discover what I think. Inside voice is fine only I wanted to kick him for being bossy (son is father to the woman etc.) After all, it's MY inside voice.



Somewhere along my meandering thread of thought, I keep tripping over Love. Oh I love this ..and that.... Inside voice muttered that surely, it's the experience of our little group that I VALUE. That we can dip in and out. Feel free to lay contributions with each other as we feel moved, maybe test the ground that might otherwise look unsafe. Inside voice observed that I am full of half - formed thoughts. Yeah! But this I know. Tanya, everyone in the group, have helped me to rediscover and nurture a lost sense of creativity and this for me, is of great, living NOW value. Tanya and Stephen, please continue to Hold Kindred Space.....I so value your gift of generosity. How you have generated in me desire to chance my arm, feel that flutter of excitement as I tentatively stretch fingers into that spacewhoops, inside voice suggests, enough now... This may be a mutterer's monologue

Certainly written sitting by but not from a window.

STEPHEN'S REFLECTIONS ON A WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON:

WINDOW

It's Cold.

The Whole wall is a number of windows and along the top is another three tiers of window, made of another type of glass: I suspect from another era, maybe 100 years ago?

On the door lives a wooden bat – and three feet down to the floor a monkey swings on the other side of the door – when closed, monkey and bat share space as neighbours.

Through the window is a ladder that looks older than me.

And the rain has come and put me out of my one job, as water carrier.

Not so much colour now, but so many varieties of green; my mother in law could paint with so many colours of green. The trees are breathing, hiding the breathing of birds living inside.

A chair. Green chairs, more greens, which sounds like something you might have for dinner – which I don't like.

A brick outside; a distant memory of chasing my daughter dressed as fairy. I broke my little toe, which ended my dancing career, which had never really started.

I don't know what you call these windows. French windows. Maybe?

It's cold.

STEPHEN:

NO PANE
No pain
No window
No paintings
No wall paper
Curling at the edge

No carpet on the floor
Bare boards
hammered into submission

No furniture
No three piece suite
No kids calling from a distant park
No Ice cream melting in the heat

No music from a nearby bar

The room rocks as though trapped
On some exhausted sea
No beach to run on

Not even a cold cup of tea.
(that no-one even wants)

The child frowns.

The man holds the gun at the child's head
And says

one word-
PLAY.
Silence.

Is there honey still for tea? (RUPERT BROOKE)
Stephen Lowe 10 June 2020

DON:

I've two contributions to share this week:

One is my take on the window monologue-slightly stuttering. The other is a much more professional international acoustic song of hope that has a very special surprise guest appearance 57 seconds in. Tom Rosenthal who wrote and performed the song asked people to record 10 seconds of themselves standing and 10 seconds of holding up the words HOPE. You can see how it triggered peoples imaginations in many wondrous ways. A bit like we do in the group. - Watch [here](#)

An extract from: *Reflections from the Window Seat*

"I'm looking out my window, I see red geraniums in chimney pots shouting their colour to anyone passing by. I see trees, a Magnolia that's finished flowering and is putting on lots of green growth. Further afield is a rowan who's branches are no longer iced with delicate blossom but is soon expecting an abundance of lipstick red berries..."



Click on the image to listen

DON:

God and Death reflect by a window.

Death: So why did you create me?

God: I wanted things to grow and change-if nothing died the world and universe would become static and fixed. Death brings about refreshing change. It would also prevent new life being born as the earth for instance would soon get overcrowded if no one died.

Death: Oh so I'm a good thing-I refresh the world.

God: Exactly!

Death: Then why do humans fear me and try to avoid me at all costs?

God: Humans have made their own bed, now they can lie in it.

Death: That's not very charitable, I thought you were all about love and above petty revenge.

God: I'm a vengeful God.

Death: If Death's such a good thing then, why can't I get you?

God: Death's a good thing for mortals and all living creatures and plants, but not for me. I'm in charge, I look after the universe, where would you all be if I died.

Death: You're beginning to sound a bit like Cummings and Johnson.

God: Don't be crass!

Death: What do you think about Black Lives Matter?

God: I told you before, I've given up on mankind, I don't care what they do to each other anymore.

Death: I'm against it, it would reduce my daily tally.

God: What will you do when the humans eventually destroy the Earth and there is no one left for you to take?

Death: I'll go into lockdown and watch box sets for the rest of eternity. If I get really bored I'll come for myself.

God: That'll leave me with no one to talk to, except the martians of course, but they aren't very bright. They are unable to conceptualise and talk about the weather all day.

Death: You might get sick of it all, the pointlessness of it all and without me you'll be condemned to everlasting boredom.

God: When you put it like that, pass me the euthanasia pill.

TANYA:

Self Righteous Diatribe at window

Le rage is rising.

I should know. I'm good at reading the weather. Always have been.

It always goes quiet moments before. The first rumbles.

I am going to PUSH that window open because I want to be heard.

Thud thud thud

Tantrum: I don't care. I swear.

And I don't want writer's words measuring, full stops, and pissy colons!

I want to scrawl quickly; shredding shouts, cast rip-roaring shrieks resounding into rain, knocking down walls & battering pavements.

Frenzied sick: overheating; nauseous with anger; I want to hurt.

Words fly out of my window, drenched in rain, lungs turning inside out!

Choking on Stupidity, complacency, arrogance, greed, deceit, cruelty, superiority, ugliness, divisiveness,

Ignorance

Is that another word for stupidity!

Indifference

Is that another word for complacency?

I feel a fool.

Rain turning to drizzle; here come the tears.

Where's it going?

The hurt.

No ones listening

The streets are empty.

My screams are whispers: Pussy footing in the gutters.

In the absence of decency, imagination, respect for dignity of life, unity, compassion, empowerment, education, kindness, intelligence, honesty, courage, collaboration, wisdom, vision. I decide to keep working on this list, because it makes me feel better...

Why so angry?

Good question.

Shut away we have reflected, some have suffered, really suffered

More than others

I haven't. Not really.

I am privileged. Blessed: With time.

Doors have opened to possibilities, different values, different ethics, different moralities, different justice, fresh hopes, birds sang loudly, skies cleared & quietened, streets beat drums; gratitude tasted good for good reasons. To care became normal. And we celebrated even in the midst of dying.

This is the change I want.

I don't want the old normal. I like what I glimpse of new normal.

Ok! Still feel sick. Still feel angry. But going to make a decision because I feel very silly hanging out of this window, useless, powerless... I am going to do something, even if it is just to make a decision.

I'm in my last life chapter. And that's ok.

I am going to leave this window open.

I am not going to swallow the anger because it tastes vile.

I am going to put it to work.

I am going to embrace it and shape it and listen. I'm going to let it guide me out of this window, into the streets below & I'm going to be grateful as it helps me make quiet sense of what I see and do.

I am going to understand better from where it comes and where it goes in those around me.

I am going to do what is right for me and for those around me.

I am going to beat the drum inside my heart and in the streets.

Yes I am going to keep this window open.

Breathing: No words: Dawn, Rain and Birdsong: Click [here](#) to view image

PAT:

WINDOWS

During these strange times I've become a nosy neighbour... I am isolated but life goes on outside my window. My big old sash window overlooking the busy road has become my screen ...my reality TV.

Hoads of laughing young students in fancy dress...dressed as animals, stopping, standing, shouting, singing , swearing & screaming .. One of the young men in the group, dressed as a rabbit, decides to urinate on the garden wall opposite. The girls scream as he does this , the boys laugh and swear. I watch an old Chinese lady, wearing a mask, walk slowly by tapping my wall with her walking stick; a white van pulls up, loud rap music playing from the open windows as 2 young guys check their watches and sit in the cab smoking & drinking from a flask. ...what are they waiting for? An elderly couple appear , out for their regular slow evening walk, she is always a couple of steps behind him.. have they fallen out perhaps or is he protecting her with what could lay ahead.

Are all these passers by happier than I am...? What picture do they see when they look at me.

The lovely bin men appear, all wearing the same strange orange protective clothing , they wave at me as they replace my bin over the wall... and laugh as my dogs bark at them.

Now for the nature programme... in the privet bush a blackbird has built a nest and I watch as s/he flies back & forward .. They always use the dog hair to line their nest, which I leave on the hedge after grooming my dogs. A robin sits on the window box waiting for crumbs and the eerie sound of cats can be heard in the hedge opposite. A dog barks in the distance...a car alarm goes off.

I pull the curtains until another reality show starts again tomorrow.

by Pat 03/06/20

Imagination: This week I dared to start to ponder The Future... Where might I/we be going? Especially us older souls? (Death obviously...at some point!!!!) ... but I've allowing my imagination to start creating vignettes of the world I would want to see? And what might the world look like ... weeks, months down the line?

Dreaming up - Things to look forward to... (not getting too hung up about the logistics.. i.e. the hows, whys and whens....). Just daring myself to start imagining 'how we might emerge'. How might the world paradigms shift? Appreciation of new values systems....What has /is actually changing?

(Tanya)

NEW MISSIVE:

- **Task 1:** Just a few lines imagining....Stephen and I are beginning to think of images that work as a cohesion and take us back slightly towards some of the images we were working with last year;
- Flying carpet / Sweeping things under the carpet/ Standing on the carpet - that ability to either enter another view point or a travel to a liminal place even 2 inches off the ground!
- How would it feel to be standing on the same carpet with everyone else at the same time!

and/ or/

- Task 2: Under the title EMERGING:
- Literally a LIST of PLACES/SITUATIONS you have visited/ventured OUTSIDE YOUR HOME during and most significantly after lockdown.

TANYA:

It feels intense to be stepping out beyond front door into public spaces: Greeting face-to-face rather than screen-to-screen: Here comes stream of consciousness!

EMERGING PRIVILEGE

During lockdown we've been awoken to our privilege. Daily walks around Mapperley Park in a Spring of longest sunshine; Peering into people gardens, walking in the middle of roads, nodding and greeting strangers as if we'd found a new village on our doorstep: Cupboards with more than enough food: Jungle Haven Garden. We have dug. Dug for the first time in 35 years: Dug and watered with watering cans. We're watching our garden grow.

Side gate left ajar as first foreigners arrive. Table: Teapot – 2 meters apart. Tea on the lawn: Stories. Umbrellas & Cream: Privilege.

Thursday night street life muted into slamming of car doors. Return to business; not quite. Children, older folk left behind –

A fair few on our road; trundling cobwebbed shopping trolleys, looking wee bit shell shocked.

Masks! We're ALL banditti.

I've made two strange looking facial appendages – more like dog coats strapped to our chins. Posh furniture fabric, what I could find – a task yet to be mastered I guess: With privilege of time.

First visit out to sister Brenda, brother Malcolm: We sat next to the gnomes 12 feet apart. (Us, not the gnomes) We talk about privilege, not quite seeing eye to eye.

Visit to Epperstone to see friends with two extremely ill children... Realising that for them, this situation is no different to normal except on departure, I, instead of them, wash their toilet, door handle, and taps.

Freedom Alert: The Big Escape: alarm clock: crack o dawn, sandpit in back of car, sandwiches in Tupperware – drove to London to picnic in Epping Forest – not testing eyesight – but to wonder in real time with our fast growing beautiful grandson, smell his hair, share his wonder, feed ducks, read books, fall asleep under an medieval oak tree, refill flasks, return home wondering when the next time might be...

Taste of Transgression Alert: We emerge - fulltime revolutionaries: Odd looking Banditti: Take to the streets: X Rebellion with placards; What DO we want to say? Really? Standing 3 metres apart outside council offices: Emerging: What DO we want to say? Privilege & responsibility engaged in dialogue.

One week later: Black Lives Matter: On Forest: Emerging. White banditti. Back of the crowd:
Placards: Black History - Everyone's history to Learn - To deepen understanding. Privilege.

Climate Change, Human Rights – Me Too - Dots adding up. Privilege shaping up: Contradictions emerging:

On line checking today if flights have started to France: Visit our House in the mountains, the donkeys: our friends: Privilege

Too far: Too soon.

Take a breath.

Back to the garden: Trees. Earth. Tomato Plants. Arboretum, Ashdale Nursery (by appointment)
Ploughman's Wood, Wood Thorpe Park...

Trolley washed down: Join queue outside M&S: For Some Privileged Shopping!

DON:

Emerging

Carlton Square and West Bridgford Hall,
The Doctors, Clinic and the hospital,
Wickes, B & Q and Wilko's store,
Back to Wilko's to get some more,
The veg shop, Lidl and the garage shop,
My body needs food or else I drop,
Netherfield Lagoons and Gedling Wood,
Willow Park never looked so good,
Down to the chemist, then the Rec,
Cup of tea on my new deck,
Meet a friend at Sneinton Market,
Flying off on a magic carpet.



PAT:

EMERGING (after lockdown)

There a long queue of cars on the road ahead
Roadworks, an an accident, perhaps someones dead?

The drivers sit waiting they faces severe
The kids are screaming 'Mum are we there'
The engines are revved
The smell makes me choke
Dads scream at the kids
Then escape for a smoke

THEN I SEE IT...

A large yellow M is seen by the road above
Tempting disciples with burgers they love
Chips on the side & full fat Coke to wash down
A side issue sachet of sauce.. tomato or brown.

Yes McDONALDS is now open
After 3 months without
These poor starving hoards
Are like prisoners let out

The queue for IKEA is very much longer
The desire for flat packs & meat balls even stronger
New friendships are formed in the long winding queue
And couples discuss the new décor they'll do.

Lockdown is over but we must still stay alert
Return to work, eat, drink, make merry & flirt
If you're on public transport you must wear a mask
BUT to be hugged by friends & family is all that I ask.

NEW MISSIVE - CURTAINS

Next Week's suggested Theme: Curtains

And/ Or of course either a return to previous themes or your own suggestions.....

Don:

Curtains

It's over 4 and a half years since the doctors told me I had oesophageal cancer. The survival rate for people living more than 5 years after diagnosis (according to Cancer Research UK) is 16.3%.

The NHS has given me chemotherapy, 3 operations, a hospital bed for three months and supplied me with enough opiates and other medicines to kill a herd of elephants if they ate them all at once.

I'm still here.

I've had a backache for three consecutive months. Backache is a common complaint that affects many people. Doctors can offer little to alleviate the problem apart from painkillers and physiotherapy. Although it is often very painful and temporarily disabling, it is rarely fatal. Many people seek alternative remedies.

People who have had an aggressive cancer where the likelihood of recurrence is high, are treated differently than the majority of the population. In times of Covid 19, instead of a telephone consultation with the GP, you get a face to face appointment (masked) and tests.

Blood and urine are taken and an x-ray is arranged in 2 days time. Although the GP didn't say what the tests were for and I didn't specifically ask him, I did ask him if they were to rule out "anything nasty". It's very British to use euphemisms. He said that if the tests came back clear, he'd sort me out with some physio.

When I googled the three letters on the see through envelope which contained the empty urine sample bottle, I found they referred to a test for blood or bone cancer.

I then googled bone cancer and discovered that fatigue, backache at night and breathlessness are the 3 key symptoms. I have them all.

Unlike most people that have survived their first cancer treatment I have not been unduly anxious about it's recurrence. Each ache, fever or untoward abnormal bodily function I've experienced since treatment has not worried me.

This time however, I've more thoroughly thought through the possibility of a secondary incurable cancer. I've all my papers in order-lasting power of attorney, civil partnership, will. I've thought about how my death will impact those closest to me. I've begun to think about what treatment if any I would accept. I'm quite accepting of my own death.

I've been here before, in limbo, waiting for tests to come back that will determine my future, or lack of it. It's a very special time. I'm in a bubble, it can go one way or another. A huge change or more of the same. There is nothing I can do to influence the result. I'm Schrodinger's cat, alive and dead at the same time. It's strangely empowering, I'm caught in a quantum superposition. I'm closer to understanding the workings of the universe. I'm on a precipice. Life is exciting, Life is precious, Life is unpredictable, Life should never be taken for granted.

It's Saturday morning. On Tuesday I see my GP to get the results. Till then it's shopping, gardening and walking.

Not quite time to pull the Curtains yet

It's Tuesday afternoon, I get a call from the Dr. My blood tests are normal, there's nothing wrong with my urine. It's not a secondary cancer. The x ray showed arthritis. A steroid injection will stop the pain temporarily. I feel strangely guilty for allowing my fears to overcome my reason. I feel a bit of a fraud. At least I didn't share my worries with too many people. I didn't needlessly set too many hares running.

Now where's that heat pad and packet of co coda-mol?



PAT:

CURTAINS

Damask, chintz, net, flowery lace, frilly or plain
Soft barriers to stop drafts & your privacy retain.
Peeping behind any curtain is a great temptation
What's on the other side grips our imagination

I remember blackout curtains we had in the war
Mum recycled them into gymslips of that I am sure
No lights were allowed to guide Luftwaffe enemy
Black curtains pinned up by Dad the safest remedy

Russia's Iron curtain was metaphoric
The cold war between East & West is historic
Even though fighting facism together we fought
Strict separation from us was what Russia sought.

I've lived a long and eventful life
Full of laughter, loneliness, love & strife
Now I've reached 77 ... of that I am certain!
But I sure aint ready yet for my FINAL CURTAIN!

(by Pat) 20/06/20

TANYA:

Curtains - Theatre Stage Directions:
Inspired by Deane's Dolls House.

Darkness - Dawn

A house Sleeping

The of Sound of sleep: Many Lives breathing in unison

Upstage Stage Right - Fade up: Light emanating through curtains from a high window

Sound transitions to ONE person sleeping: Breathing

The lone silhouette of a figure at window looking out at us

Far, far away we hear the sound of a cat then a baby's cry.

Behind blinds, a light appears in a ground floor window stage left.

Breathing Cross Fades into a musical riff – repeated from a scratchy record.

We hear a voice calling to someone.

We hear someone call back in response.

Sound & Action: centre stage window, curtains are energetically drawn open.

Some one is revealed briefly, retires from the window back into the room: (A first taste of haste.)

Stage left ground floor: a window swings opens

Sudden Sound of fresh rain falling - joins the scratchy record

Dim Light from within: An old woman sits next to the window looking out

The repeated recorded words on the scratchy record become clearer

Daylight fades up slowly to reveal front of house.

Each window's blinds, curtains or no curtain tells a different story.

Some curtains remain closed, some draw slowly open.

Front door opens – light spills from house.

An old man steps outside obscured by umbrella. Exits stage left.

A woman's voice quietly sings along with repeated words on scratchy record.

Lights up on the original 1st silhouette seen in 1st window as she draws open her curtains.

She Sings 'The Song' in its entirety (from the record) as sounds of rain and scratchy record fade.....

STEPHEN:

THE CURTAIN

Heavy grey
No pattern

Drawing all colour
From the land around
Just heavy
Heavy grey
Topped and trimmed
by lace barbed wire.

Inside
Slashed silk lining
shimmering crimson blood red
The names of the living
The names of the dead
The names of those
Who thought to hide
Trapped in the spotlight
Tap-dancing in the night
Freedom seems so near
Now so far away

No window
No door
What the hell is the curtain for?
To line them up
Fire!
Watch them Fall
Then stand them up
And shoot them down again

The iron curtain
No creases to worry about
Just a solid block

Just an iron curtain
A curtain that covers all

A curtain that never folds

Take a hammer my friend
A hammer will do.

Iron curtain

NEW MISSIVE

If you have 15 minutes to grant yourself permission to enter the space:

- You're the lead in a New Film: How has the script/camera/editor decided we the viewer, will first see YOU? i.e. What is the first Shot we see you in?
- Where are YOU in the picture? If this image was frozen: Where are YOU? What are YOU doing? What can YOU see? What are YOU thinking?
- What do you think might be about to happen? If there are speaking lines - you are only allowed two. (Lines may belong to someone else of course!)
- If so - how do you react?

**Please don't spend much time on this - try to note the first things that come to mind - the exercise is powerful if you allow yourself to be spontaneous.....*

There are no limits to how many films you will make, you just happen to be cast in THIS one!

BARBARA:

It's all green ...except where the hard edged paving stones wearing battered grey and mottled sludge colours intrude. The shrubs are mature and bushy; trees with full canopies; potted plants with only the tiniest indications of the flowering yet to come. The sky is pale grey nothingness.

I am lying on my left side, on the stones. My legs curled into my stomach. My right arm stretches toward the grass on the unmown lawn. I can clearly see my hand making futile efforts to grab at the long fronds. I realise that my body is shaking. .If I lifted my thumping head could I make a better job of steadying my shaking body? Perhaps, but I don't. Its like I have no will to move.

I ponder the power of self motivation. Slowly, oh so slowly I direct one leg, then the other to stretch out until I am lying flat, on my back, on the paving stones. Every movement I make feels as if for the first time. And then, I understand. That, for this person, it maybe is the first time.

I blink up at the trees then painfully move my head to search for the source of the far off sounds that become words, someone else's not mine

"Bugger! Hoped she was dead this time"

Perhaps I would be, if I knew the name of the body I'm in.

STEPHEN:

Camera C/U (closeup) on the spine of a Book. The title David Copperfield.

The camera tracks, pulling back to reveal a whole wall full of books - all with the same title: David Copperfield

The camera slowly tracks through the branches of a Xmas Tree, with glass baubles flickering in light from a Fire.

The camera continues tracking across a large rag rug and up a second wall - also full of books, also all entitled David Copperfield.

Camera tracks up to ceiling & looks down with birds eye view onto a middle-aged man, reading the opening page of David Copperfield - a half full glass of ruby red wine, flickering in the firelight.

Suddenly, with speed, the camera falls directly onto the glass (smashing it to pieces. We see the red wine spreading out on the rag rug.

Slow time - a hand reaches out to catch slow - flying shards of glass, cutting the hand. The hand shakes. Blood droplets, like flying jewels, merge with the red wine on the stained rag rug.

DON:

Here's my entry into stardom of a brand new blockbuster.....

The film opens with a view of a landscape. The landscape is mountainous and unpopulated. Slowly the camera begins to zoom in. Gradually the camera sweeps over trees, streams, meadows and valleys. We are now focussed on one particular dale. There are spring flowers and wild animals grazing on the grass at the edge of the wood. We are still too far away to identify what species they are but they are about the size of sheep, but without a thick woolly coat. As the camera gets closer we can see they aren't sheep or goats but fallow deer. As they quietly graze we begin to hear the sounds of insects buzzing around the wild flowers and birds signalling they're territory in the tops of the nearby trees. Everything is quiet and peaceful in this bucolic, pastoral country scene.

There is a crack of a twig that breaks the quiet. The deer stop their grazing and look around nervously. The doe quickly looks to ensure her young fawn is safe. The birdsong stops for a brief second and then continues. The deer go back to grazing. All is calm once again. There is another crack and this time the nervous deer run back towards the wood for cover. The young fawn is closest to safety and begins to run. It runs towards the small copse and straight into the path of a handcrafted rustic spear. The spear halts its run as it's point skewers the fawn's chest. The deer falls and quivers on the ground. A wild man, all unkempt hair and beard, dressed in the skins of other kills hurtles out of the copse with the glint of sunlight flashing on the metal blade in his hand. In a second the man reaches the fallen fawn and slices open it's throat. The warm blood flushes out over the arms of the man as he turns the blade and screams a primeval guttural cry of triumph.

All is quiet again in the meadow. The wildman bathed in the fawns blood slowly begins to butcher his prey. He is part of nature, red in tooth and claw.

TANYA:

Continuous Sound: One breath, panting rhythmically. White screen flickers into life. Flickers of green, flashes of red - like a child's scribbles, appear at sides of the film's frame.

Then, cutting through the whiteness, scissors through paper, we see flashes of real trees, real sky appear, disjointed & disappearing, as sound of runner's breath is joined by sound of their running feet, rhythmically pounding gravel ground. The paper screen repairs to white.

FILM TITLE ON SCREEN: STAND UP

Feet slow down. Breathing deepens. Slows down.

Slowly, light and bright colour floods the white canvass as a beautiful animated picture is drawn of idyllic cottage. Hollyhocks, roses, sun shining in a blue sky are drawn into the picture – finally a young woman with bucket in hand who turns, smiling into camera. Sound: She calls "Frederica! Frederica!"

Suddenly, the breathing is drowned out by sound of rainfall. As the crayoned colours of the picture start to run, The Camera focuses on a child's' hand screwing up the drawing into a paper ball, revealing beyond the reality of a city street with real sound, real colour.

POV (point of view) of Child from across a street: A row of bodies taking cover under a café awning, sat on a pavement, one woman standing. This woman has long white hair... bright eyes. Urgently looking out.

(POV of approaching child): Camera moves through running figures towards the gathering. The child herself, from behind, comes into shot and we see her tuck the screwed up paper drawing into a ball, into her pocket. (Long shot into camera) The women calls out "Frederica"...

The white haired woman opens her arms and a shawl wide - engulfing the child in a firm embrace. The child disappears from view.

She turns to the street group and Shouts: "Now!"

PAT:

(SORRY BUT THIS IS VERY PERSONAL...)

SHOT OF WIDE OPEN EMPTY SPACE... BLACK & WHITE

ME. (DISTANCE SHOT OF ME STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS EMPTY SPACE
...ZOOM IN ...CLOSE UP STARING INTO CAMERA AS MIRROR . I'M PULLING AT MY FACE)

ZOOM OUT AS FOLLOWING WORDS SPOKEN UNTIL I BECOME VERY SMALL

Just ignore her she'll go away FEMALE VOICE (REMEMBER MY MUM SAYING THIS)
(REPEATED)

Your mother didn't want you " (SAID BY MY AUNT AT MY PARENTS 50TH
(REPEATED) ANNIVERSARY.. MUM WANTED A SON..!_

Ugly
(REPEATED)
(LAUGHTER CONTINUES
BEHIND THIS WORD)

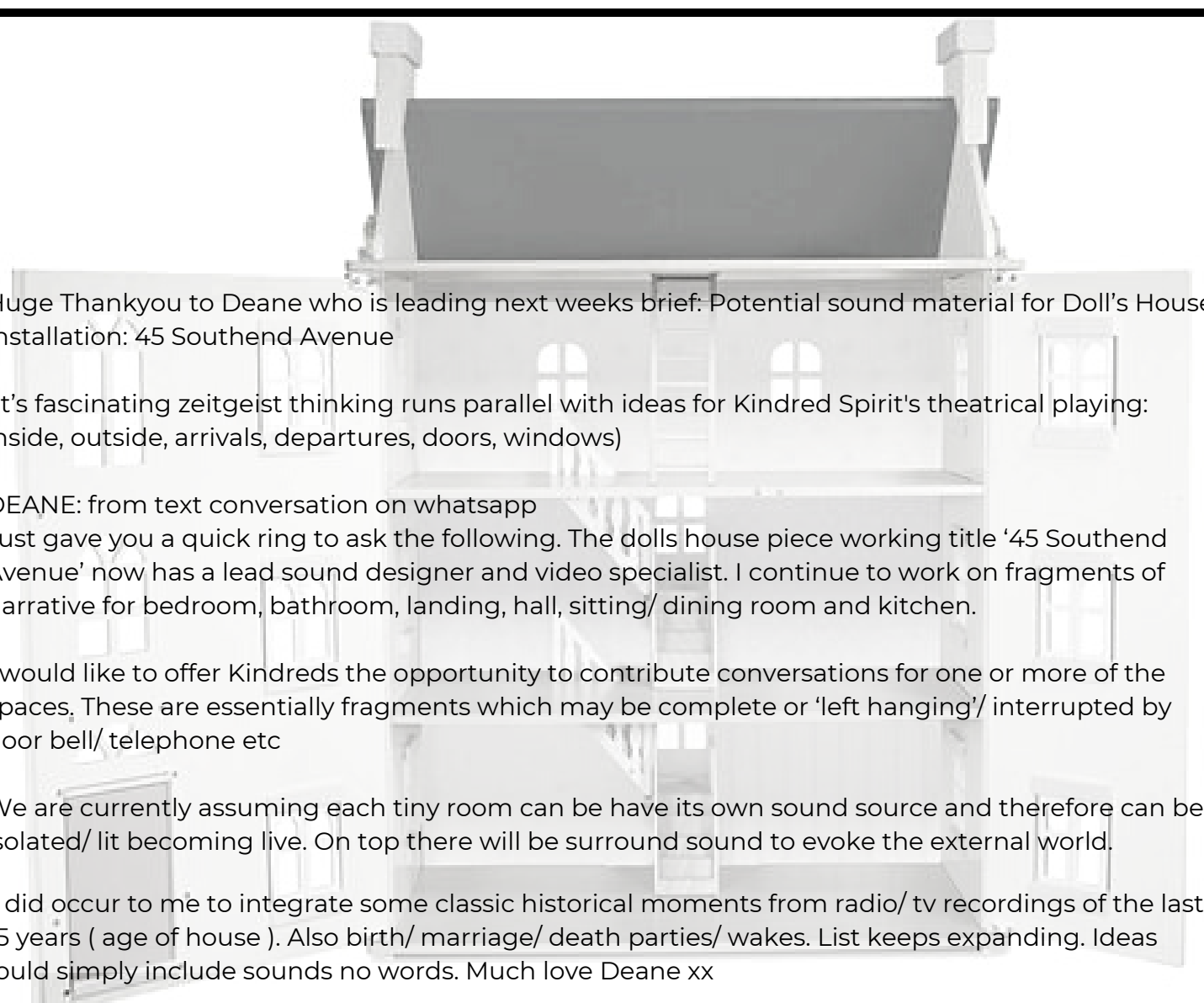
YOUNG MALE VOICE (BULLIED AT SCHOOL
FROM 11-16)

ZOOM IN ON ME AGAIN AS I AM LOOKING DIRECTLY AT CAMERA (AS IF MIRROR)
I AM PUTTING LIPSTICK ON MY LIPS IN A CONTINUOUS ACTIONROUND AND ROUND THEN I
CONTINUE UNTIL IT COVERS MY THE WHOLE OF MY FACE....
STILL BLACK & WHITE SHOT (THE LIPSTICK IS BRIGHT RED)

I LIE DOWN IN A FOETAL POSITION

ZOOM OUT UNTIL I AM JUST A DOT IN THE EMPTY SPACE

NEW MISSIVE



Huge Thankyou to Deane who is leading next weeks brief. Potential sound material for Doll's House Installation: 45 Southend Avenue

(It's fascinating zeitgeist thinking runs parallel with ideas for Kindred Spirit's theatrical playing: inside, outside, arrivals, departures, doors, windows)

DEANE: from text conversation on whatsapp

Just gave you a quick ring to ask the following. The dolls house piece working title '45 Southend Avenue' now has a lead sound designer and video specialist. I continue to work on fragments of narrative for bedroom, bathroom, landing, hall, sitting/ dining room and kitchen.

I would like to offer Kindreds the opportunity to contribute conversations for one or more of the spaces. These are essentially fragments which may be complete or 'left hanging'/ interrupted by door bell/ telephone etc

We are currently assuming each tiny room can be have its own sound source and therefore can be isolated/ lit becoming live. On top there will be surround sound to evoke the external world.

It did occur to me to integrate some classic historical moments from radio/ tv recordings of the last 65 years (age of house). Also birth/ marriage/ death parties/ wakes. List keeps expanding. Ideas could simply include sounds no words. Much love Deane xx

I hope Deane doesn't mind me putting into my own words:

- A short 'fly on the wall' conversation (could even be sounds/music/ or a few words) in a room of your choice. e.g. bathroom, bedroom, cellar, kitchen, hallways etc - and a written moment of incidental exchange: it could be intimate words, could be an argument, could be a request... could be anything.....

TANYA:

Kindling

(Voices can cross and collide)

VOICE 1 (on the phone): I know. I know. Yes. I know.....Hang on one sec?

Wooden Door opens:(calling out) Is there something burning?

Cellar Door Rattles:

VOICE 2: (Muffled: a faint distant shouting) Help. Help. Help. Help - (continues)

Wooden Door Closes:

VOICE 1: What was I saying? No. Of course. No. You mustn't worry. No. I know. I know. I know.
(continues)

Attic Window opens: Sound of Birdsong

VOICE 3: (whispers) Could I, Would I? Fly? Would I? Could I?

VOICE 1: I'm ever so sorry, there's a definite smell of burning.

Wooden door opens: (calling) Anyone there? Can you hear me? There's a definite smell of burning coming from somewhere.. Can someone do something about it?

VOICE 2: (muffled but louder) Help. Help. Help! (continues)

VOICE 3: (whispers) Somethings wrong...Somethings very very wrong....

VOICE 1: Hello? Yes... Sorry to be so distracted ... I think we've a problem. No one's listening. No. Really? No. I suppose things have to get really really bad...I know. Old habits die hard. I know. I know. I know. I know. I know (continues)

VOICE 3: (whispering running downstairs)... Legs. So many stairs.....So many steps. Legs. Legs. So many Legs. So many stairs, so many bloody stairs.....

Cellar door crashes open:

VOICE 2:(shouting upstairs) GET THE FUCK OUT!

VOICE 3: (Still running, whispered) I'm coming. I'm coming. Where have you been?

VOICE 2: Locked in. Locked out.

Wooden door opens:

VOICE 1: (to caller)) Such a racket!

(to house) Excuse me? I'm on a call ... We can't hear ourselves think.

VOICE 2: OUT! Now!

VOICE 1: So rude! So rude!

VOICE 3: (whispered) Please!

VOICE 2: OUT!

VOICE 3: (whispered) I am.

VOICE 1: I'm terribly sorry. There seems to be some sort of emergency. I know. I know. I know. I know... I know. I know . I know. I know. I know. I know ... (continues, fading)

VOICE 3: (no longer whispered - from outside house) Please. Please. Please. (calling) Wake up. Wake up. Wake up. Wake up.

Sound of burning wood.

NEW MISSIVE - LULLABIES

DEANE:

Re Lullaby: There is a book called 'Lullaby' by Leila Slimani published 2018 in France translated into English pub ff. Caused a sensation in Paris at the time because of the politics. Not answering the question I know sorry. Twinkle twinkle little star still makes me well up but that's a whole other monologue.



DON:

Lullabies are usually sung to children and at an age that they don't remember. I know the lullaby:-

Rock-a-bye baby
on the tree top.
When the wind blows
the cradle will rock.
When the bough breaks,
the cradle will fall.
And down will come Baby,
Cradle and all.

I don't know if it was sung to me or I remember it being sung to my younger sister or how I know it. I can't remember singing it to my children, but it does seem entwined with parenting and children. I absorbed it somehow. It always struck me as an odd song, with images of a baby falling from a tree- a horrific image to lull a baby into sleep! I looked at Wikipedia but none of the explanations for the wording seemed to resonate. I think lullabies are like fairy tales-they often carry dark meanings and human fears expressed in stories and rhymes. Folklore passed down orally.

STEPHEN:

WARNING SONG

Hanging babies, sleep swinging from a bough,

Grandmother's song, the first song for the child.
Or a curse from the witch of the north.

Rock a bye baby dreams in a wicker basket
Of Christening spoons and her first smile

PAT:

The lullaby which is one I never liked is Rock a bye Baby which I have now found out by doing a bit of googling that women working in the hop fields in the 18th Century would tie their cradles in the branches of trees so that the wind would rock the babies to sleep.

I always thought it a cruel nursery rhyme as the above was unknown to me ...so I decided to change to adapt it!

Rockaby baby in the treetop

When the wind blows the cradle will rock

When the bough bracks the cradle will fall

Down will come baby cradle and all

But you will recover stronger than ever

Face challenges in life and never say never

Life can be hard but you will pull through

And remain for ever steadfast and true.



TANYA:

I share a voice recording of a lullaby I wrote whilst at Greenham Common in 1983 when pregnant with Lily.

It expressed a mothers terror of bringing a child into an unpredictable world.

I recently shared with adult daughter Lily who has a baby son, and has just written a play about a Mother's fears and hopes bringing a child into this current reality!

For my birthday she recently & unexpectedly presented me with my original lullaby with her harmony added, written by her friend Omar. (There's a horrible out of tune bit, 10 seconds before the end!)



[Listen to lullaby recording here](#)

NEW MISSIVE: TO LAUGH!

- 10-15 minute written improvisation:
- To Wake up to find yourself wearing the most unlikely - footwear.
- Please describe in as much detail as you can.
- What happens next?

DON:

Why do they make beds and duvets too short for me? I'm only 6 foot 1 and a half inches tall and when I pull up the duvet my bloody feet stick out the bottom. Well to top it all when I looked down at my feet this morning they were each encased in a bucket of cement. The black buckets had the type of metal handles that hook onto the black tab attached cheaply to the injection moulded plastic. I bet they'll break off after a week's use; they must know it's a weak design link but they still make them that way. Bastards.

Inside the bucket the grey cement looks like it has only just gone off. There are lots of popped bubbles that make the surface look like the surface of the moon. It looks slightly shiny untouched by human hand. My feet at least feel warm from the chemical reaction that happens when cement goes off.

How did they get there? I'm lying down. You can't pour cement into buckets while I'm lying down- the cement would run out all over the bed. I must have been standing up when they poured the cement. That doesn't make sense. At least my feet won't get cold any more.

I can't wiggle my toes. Does that mean they will drop off? I feel like a badly planted two stemmed plant. Will I grow? Are there any nutrients in concrete? I can't go anywhere anymore. I can't get to the shops or the cinema or the toilet or anywhere anymore. I'm firmly planted on the spot like a bloody fully grown two legged giant Saguaro cactus.

An onion can make you cry, marijuana can make you laugh but being a cactus just makes you feel a bit of a prick.

STEPHEN: (5 minutes revelry)

I wake up. Wearing skis. Is that how you spell them? Plural?
They cross and meet each other - and raise me off the bed, onto the ground at which point I realise its snowing in the room.
Someone says you've been on the piste. And I say yes.

The Ski's are blue. With green zig zag s along the sides. They seem to fit me. I have never seen them before.

I have 2 ski sticks. Is that what they are called? Then I see I am upside down. I turn over.
My duvet turns snow white. Three bears enter the room. A mighty wind blows out the balcony windows and I am swept adrift
Into the snowy hills.

TANYA: Writing Live (as they say) Thursday 19.36

A pair of eyes are blinking at me. I look from one foot to the other. Another pair of blinking eyes. Feathers folded politely, smoothly, elegantly. Dark shapely feathers... Polished brown. Elegant slippers or Xmas fun-feet? A pair of owls. I think. Night birds. I think. Everything ok until one foot starts to fluster the other.... flapping, nudging itself to the left. I don't want to move. I don't feel ready.

However, left foot takes umbrage and ruffles feathers, shifting along the wrought iron bedstead.. I haven't stretched for a while...Out of practise. Are owls territorial?

Legs alarmed at what might be expected..I smile at right foot - hoping to appease. Legs let me know they have nothing to do with this... Right foot shuts eyes... oh no! This is not looking good...

Left foot. Right foot - you need to talk - seriously. I haven't the means to accommodate cross flight paths. In fact, I think fast. Maybe I do. I do. I do. Scuffling noises above my head.

Two pairs of eyes freeze.

If anyone was to see these feet - from below I wonder - below what I ask? - I don't know - I reply - below the ankle - hidden from what is above I ask? yes I reply. My concentration is fixed on the intent of my feathered friends... what would they see? They see what I hear. Rodents.

I could let them fly. Forget about whats attached. Let my owls fly. Away into the night...

Oh my oh my!

PAT:

You wake up finding you are wearing the most unlikely footwear... What happens next?

Its midnight... as usual I settle down in my king size bed with my 2 dogs either side of me . I have got into a routine in my old age... (is this a sign of ageing ..does everybody do this). I plump up 3 pillows to place behind my back, put on my reading glasses, fold back my I paper to expose the page with the cryptic crossword, pick up my pen and begin to study the crossword . I get quite excited (yes I do!) when I solve my first clue... SHALLOW 'Everybody in the entertainment business is superficial' Now I'm on a roll I solve two more... and keep going until I finish. I have an addiction to cryptic crosswords ..its now 2am and I have been solving clues for 3 hours and now, having finished, feel content and ready for sleep. The dogs are already snuffling and making strange noises as they dream of chasing rabbits.

I wake up around 9.30am after a vivid dream which I've forgotten already , stand up and find I am wearing shiny black Oxfords (men's shoes from the 1920s!) I don't question why . I stand up ...they feel very comfortable and look pretty good on my feet (size 8). I take one of the shoes off and examine it and see some writing inside E.P. Mathers. I put the shoe back on and still wearing my nightdress and dressing gown, walk downstairs for my morning coffee ...(WHY AM I NOT BOTHERED ABOUT WEARING THESE STRANGE SHOES)

The dogs jolt me back to reality... they are ready for a walk and while I drink my coffee the dogs sniff my feet fascinated by my newly acquired shiny black shoes . Jack even tries to mark his territory on them but is stopped in time. I have a shower and get dressed and put my Oxfords back on again because I reckon they suit me. I pick up the poo bags, put the leads on the dogs and go for my first walk of the day. I am walking differently , as if strutting confidently...I get some strange looks from people ... I arrive at the newsagents to get my I paper eager to get home and open the fresh new paper to the page with my cryptic crossword displayed.

I even love the look of the crossword with their little boxes evenly balanced in the big square. I am almost salivating at the thought of solving clues.

I'll just solve a couple of clues before I feed the dogs and make another coffee. I don't bother to remove my new shoes... Ah first clue... I can feel my feet tingling... I solve it far too quickly.. 'Quickly Relax in River'.. .Presto. I hardly had time to think when I solved the next one 'As Purist Working to be at a higher level'...Upstairs. 'Cheese is Part of Buffet Always'...feta! Colonist ignore Large Dog....Setter,,,, and the final one Being Nasty to Ladies gets Ostracised,,,,isolated.

I've finished in 5 minutes...my feet have stopped tingling! I feel depressed... I don't have another cryptic crossword .. I've finished this one far too quickly. I yearn for the pleasure I always have of putting my feet up with a cuppa or a G & T and looking at the black and white squares ready to be filled in...the challenge and the joy in solving.

I take off these strange shoes and look again at the writing E.P Mathers... Time for some googling. Edward Powys Mathers, also called himself Torquemada after the Spanish Inquisitor invented the cryptic crossword in 1926. I'll take the shoes to the charity shop tomorrow...but shall I keep them in the cupboard just in case I get stuck on a final clue... ?

PROCESS: Assembling recent past months of Kindred Play has begun...You'll be amazed. Beautiful, difficult, funny, painful at times & what's so utterly clear, a collective sense of presence & voice - taking judgement off the shelf.

Dearest Folks: The play space for next week came during a dream:

NEW MISSIVE:

- You enter Kindred Spirit House: A wall awaits you especially. You are carrying a work of art - to be mounted on the wall. What is it?

STEPHEN:

I determine not to gloss over the difficult bits.

The dog is digging under a wall outside. I am looking for the way in, carrying a bag of tools.

The dog reappears with a bone and drops it at my feet. I pick up the bone, wipe clean the mud – it's a silver spoon. I believe to be a work of art.

I pin the handle with the help of a Black and Decker to the wall and I hear it ticking, it moves slowly, a one armed clock.

I wait for it to reach the number 12. The clock stops ticking – as though time itself has stopped. I sit and wait with the dog – Our backs to the wall.

The dog starts again to dig at the hole in the wall.

I open the tin of gloss paint

BARBARA:

Words sometimes get in the way. A "work of art" suggests an imprimatur, a recognition of a piece of work that in some particular way, is judged. Artwork has a more accessible feel - could be created by anyone of us with nothing more than hope and a desire to make.

So this is my Artwork that I am bringing to The House. I'm a bit wobbly about putting it where others might see it. In general, I remind myself, I like a challenge - so GOward.

Ohhh.....a wall? Challenge is how to show a 3D artwork on a 2D wall. Perhaps just put it on the floor beside the wall? Easy way out. Perhaps deface the wall to accommodate it? Attach shelves to the wall? Two hours later, a grey flying shelf fixed at my waist height is placed off centre, on my wall. Wall and I now have a working relationship.

Slowing my usual quick movements, I so carefully position my 3D dynamic Artwork. Two toned Ceramic pot with two handles, one fixed higher than the other, filled with water. Sunflowers on their thick ridged stalks chatter together in the pot as they cluster above the water line. A couple bend seductively over the rim and petals fall where they will. Did I mention this is a Dynamic Artwork? Should have at least ten days of life for the flower heads and so much longer for the stalks as they shrivel into shapes that nature designed for them. Later, I'll collect the sunflower seeds, plant some and eat others. My homage to Van Gogh's Work of Art is my Artwork. Created to share with anyone coming through the door of the House of Kindred Spirits.

TANYA:

First to find the wall.

I wait politely at the door, before I realise it is open – just awaiting a nudge.

I worry I'm empty handed. Worried I'm a fraud. Do I have a work of art? I know it doesn't even need to be my own creation! I think what if I have the Da Vinci's Mona Lisa or Van Gogh's Sunflowers? But that's daft – they're already available for all to see in public view... why would I take them away to put in our Kindred House? There are copies of them available everywhere anyway.

I feel so empty handed.

Then I think, maybe I need to check what my available wall looks like... No point having a big piece of art, if only prescribed a small corner. However, I think positively, whatever I'm given, I will make it work, I like working within perimeters, it helps define my decisions... I hesitate. Aware this is missing the point. THIS piece of art has to determine the space it comes to rest. Not the other way around.

My hands hang heavy by my sides. Empty. My feet feel huge. My head starts to wobble on my shoulders. I have nothing to bring. I am irritated with myself. I must have something! Maybe some fluff in my pocket, one of my daughter's songs, a golden memory that I could polish and frame? All suggestions feel inadequate, yet I know they are treasures. Priceless.

There is nothing for it. Heart pounding. Shame gilding my shadow – I step into a bright corridor. Hoping no one will notice. I hear voices and think I can find a drink and blend with the crowd. Of course there will be so many other guests – they will have brought their art pieces, I can find inspiration from them, no one will notice I am missing...

Then, there they are. I see them all, as a turn each corner of this long golden corridor. Every note, every beat, every colour, every tone, every beautiful mess-up, every apology, every joke, every scrambled egg on toast, every attempt, every glorious mistake, every love, every loss, every lesson learnt, every lesson to be learnt – they are all there...They have assembled themselves without my bidding and there they are in stark view on the most beautiful wall imaginable - they hum, jostle, nudge, dance, hesitate and finally go quiet, awaiting my appraisal...

Oh thank you. I say. Thank you. I hadn't expected to cry. Just crying like gentle rain, because in my busy business of trying so hard I'd really not seen.

My LIFE a work of art: Present in the making, unfolding.

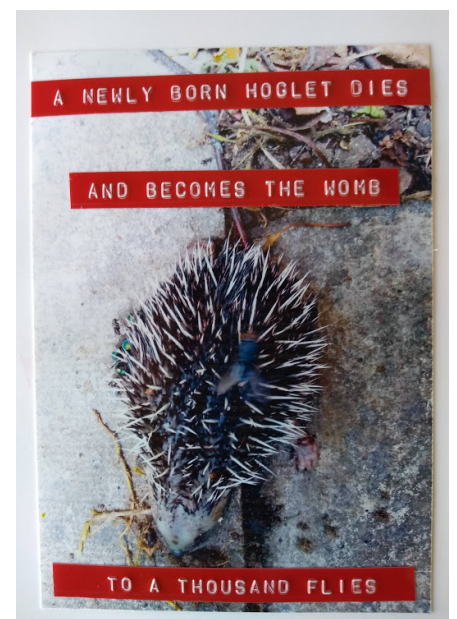
And this wall?... Dear kindred's, This Wall, is IN a house SO huge. So welcoming... with so many walls, I can't wait for you to nudge it, come on in! There's a glass.

DON:

I hope the wall has room for my little picture. A place waiting for it. Not too high and not too low. A goldilocks height. I think the focus of the picture should be in line with the viewers eyes. That's why children hate going to art galleries-all the pictures are hung too high for them and so they say these are not for you. Pictures talk to people and some are downright rude..

The picture I'm carrying is small, postcard size. My taste in art is for the contemporary, the modern, the abstract, the type of picture that can startle you, make you think, challenge your perception. I don't like pictures that are pretty-Constable's haywain makes me puke. I like nature, red in blood and claw. Not idealised pastoral landscapes. I like to see the reality behind the pink coloured lens. We are only here for a short time so we should at least try to discover what the world we live in is like, not romanticize it. Yes, it can be beautiful and wonderful and miraculous but such terrible beauty is born out of bloody atrocity. Such knowledge does not make the world any less wonderrous but it makes it real, and us real.

When I go to a gallery I never read the blurb about the picture before letting the picture do it's work on me. I prefer direct communication with the artist through their work rather than an intellectual box fitting opinionated understandable experience presented by the curator. Also the longer the blurb the lesser the picture. I've gone on far too long.....



NEW MISSIVE:

- Inside the Kindred House, you stand outside a door to a Room. It has your name on it. Or a name you recognise to be yours.
 - There is a number too.
 - You enter. Please Describe the Room and the gift you find waiting for you.
-

BARBARA:

Room One

Came AnyBody moving through the silvery liquid door to a room of silver space,
quiet in it's own silence

Aglow with anticipation of a gift to come AnyBody leaned into wall
Wall shimmered, caressing AnyBody to an exquisite state of never,
never being quite there to stay, in the square silver room

A pulsing , welcoming light from the single oblong window high up,
too high for AnyBody to see out.
Nascent Me fretted to see in, to catch a life yet to be lived

In One I, unified, single, ME began to dance , to sing, to laugh,
fingers sensed the edges of a face and touching knew the substance of the gift
ME ..I am....I am
running through the house of many rooms
bumping into MY LIFE

DON:

It's an old wooden 6 panelled door with my name on it. DON is written vertically between the two
top panels. I say written, but it's actually a rather well made ceramic plaque which glistens in the
hall's dim light. Four small brass screws attach it. Below my name is the number 1,000,806,
handwritten on card with a 4b pencil and stapled haphazardly to the wood.

It must be a big house I think. I wonder what's inside the room. Does my name imply that this room
is mine, that it belongs to me? Or does it mean it is me? If it is me then going inside would mean
walking into another dimension. I'm not sure I want to do that this morning. My mind is not suitably
prepared. I decide the name means that the room belongs to me; that it's a safe place, a refuge from
a disturbingly Covid orange tinted Trumpian world.

The door is open. I go inside. It's no ordinary room. It's walls are not visible, it seems vast and not well
lit. I make myself to a small wooden table a few yards in. There is no other furniture, or indeed
anything else in the room. On the table is a wrap. I pick it up and carefully unfold the coarse
cardboard like paper to reveal a seed. Life.

TANYA:

The door is made of gnarled, reassuringly knotted wood. Hardened and warped by centuries of
sunshine. Guarded by spider webs, the latch is polished old iron.

A large keyhole with no sign of a key: an eye brought close can see inside – nothing hidden from the
curious.

This door is familiar.

Yet the name isn't. At first

Celia Crone. Cut into the wood. Beautifully carved. The two letter C's look like two new moons traced
in sand.

The fingers that press to release the latch are knotted and gnarled too, have outlived my current body, seen many life times I assume. The numbers 11111111 are etched in the corner...a glistening coin is pushed into each numerical groove. Like codes on a padlock. I like to touch it. The door opens. The room is warm; a cool breeze follows me in. Fresh dust motes taste sweet and homely: sandalwood, lavender, turpentine and something else?

There is my chair. My wooden shoes: And there on the battered beautiful wooden table is a basket. A label: Welcome Home it says. My old hands lift a little cloth of woven roses to reveal a bottle. The cork stopper viscous with age: A sip of which I know will take me in or out. Here or there. A gift either way. I know hours of incantation, grinding husk on stone reaping remedies for itching skin, sloughing of old have wrought this draught.

There is my bed. Freshly made. There is the new moon.

STEPHEN:

REVOLVING

A revolving door: Etched into the glass is a name, so finely cut, only revealed to itself in an occasional shaft of light. The name was mine, but I didn't recognise it.

This time the revolving door drags me inside with no chance of escape. As I spin, a shower soaks me to the skin, spewing me out into the room.

There is a man. He says, "My apologies I didn't realise you were so ill".

There is a table, a telephone.

A man says, "Do you remember your name?" I don't. He pours me tea.

There is a silence.

A man says, "Sit down please". But there is no chair. I crouch to sit at table imaging the chair to be there.

"Are you comfortable?" he says.

Most. Thank you.

He sits in his chair but seems to find it uncomfortable. He rises.

He says, "If you would prefer?" Indicating his chair. I don't.

He insists and steers the chair on wheels from one side to the other. I sit.

The man says, "The present is for you too". The telephone rings. He answers it. He says, "Its time for you to open the present". And hangs up the phone.

But I can't see a present. "It doesn't matter", he says.

I say; "It's what I've always wanted".

"The perfect present" he says.

NEW MISSIVE - RAISING THE ROOF

- By way of a finale, how would you Raise the ROOF?
- This can be interpreted however you wish. Our kindred House has walls, windows, curtains, doors...

STEPHEN:

Raising the Roof

Some may see it as a glass ceiling
To be smashed
And for the trapped air to be freed.

Some may want to keep it intact
What a relief
For some.
Which one may include you and me?

PAT:

RAISING THE ROOF

Dreams.... I dream every night...even more since lockdown.

Last night I had a strange dream...let me tell you about it.

I was in the cellar of an old Victorian house which dank and old and I starting to write down stuff for my next stand up that I would do once lockdown was over. I was balancing my writing pad on an old tea chest ... I wanted to write but the pen just kept hovering over the paper and my hand froze. I couldn't write any more. The walls of the cellar started to close in on me. I saw some graffiti on the wall saying rather ironically 'You Must Be Joking' . I know I 'must be' but nothing was happening... Perhaps my 7 years of being a stand up comedian was coming to an end ... I was after all 77 years of age. Should I continue. Would people still enjoy coming to see me perform.. I felt a failure.

Suddenly I saw steps leading upwards so I decided to walk away from the cellar ...the steps went up and up until I found myself in the attic of this old house. I had a good feeling in this space ...tiles were missing from the roof and the light shone through. I heard birds singing and even felt the warmth of the sun and the smell of the trees and cut grass.

I started to perform new material...my creativity started to flow... I couldn't stop.. I heard laughter...where was it coming from.. I saw nobody. I carried on, there was no stopping me now. The laughter got louder and louder , it was deafening. Suddenly there was a loud crack and the attic started to tremble , the laughter increased and with a loud roar the roof lifted higher and higher as the laughter got louder and louder.

I woke up and stared writing new material... it felt good. I just knew I was going to continue to do stand up comedy and hopefully make people laugh.

TANYA:

Raising the Roof:

Everyone in this house finds them selves somewhere.
Be it attic, cellar, cupboard corner, window or tucked in bed -
Alive. Preoccupied in activity.

All hear the sound.
All action halts.
A second leaps inside time, inside me, landing softly, and the house breaths as one.

The world outside keeps turning.

A breeze flutters through stillness in every room. No cobweb left unruffled.
All characters visited by memory. Uniquely remembered, suspended.
All voices emit a collective sigh.
All look to us.
As.

Feet gently tap, tap, rock, rock, thump, beating walls and floors... adjacent rooms, corridors
igniting into a wonderful cacophony shaking the foundations of this house, while hands sketch
exquisite patterns in the air...dancing true stories

Collective voices splutters forth. Guttural, ugly, tender and sweet.
The roof is rising and the stars are falling in.

I am on the 2nd floor 3rd window from the left.
I am in the forest looking on
I am emerging from the lake and I can see the flames rising
I am bashing and beating the rafters for air
I am in the house. The house is me.

A hand plucks the chimney and lifts the roof with a polite nod.
All is visible.

The end

BARBARA:

Raising the Roof

The roof raised for our Kindred House will stand ever unfinished. Winds play tunes up and around
the rafters open to the sky. Sun and rain colour the wooden rafters as familiar kindred spirits
leave their messages for others to further the work. .Outlines for domes and turrets appear as
nods to egos that must raise our roof ever higher. Til nature, with storms that buffet the half built
roof, reclaims the space for itself.

Yet working together, we will raise the roof with our voices to create a language for all peoples. Through shared communication we will build to raise another roof to let in the light, to see the devastation we inflict on Earths' genetic and cultural diversity. And quickly, quickly, through shared knowledge, we raise a global roof to shelter us as we learn to live together with the will and understanding to save the planet.

The last para is, in part, with thanks to an anonymous author who spoke to me
Happy Thursday people bubble - Barbara

DISCUSSION ON THE HOUSE OF KINDRED SPIRITS:

- The Kindred House of Spirits will be different for each one of us, in our imagined hearts and souls. Inspired by Deane's Dolls House; our house need not make realistic sense architecturally.
- There is no limit to the size of the house, to the number of rooms. The house can be as tall and as small as we dare. To one, it may be a mansion, whilst a hut, to someone else.
- The important quest - (building on existing work) is to create & develop characters to inhabit the House & its outlying lands, eventually seeing the crazy jigsaw fit together.

Verbs: Who LIVES, RESIDES, HIDES, HAUNTS, OWNS, VISITS this house. A character may reside in a tea caddy (Carrie) or in a wall painting (Stephen) be a maintenance worker, or the woman sitting in the shadows behind a curtain. The point is - what does Life inside this House look like, from this or that characters POV..... eventually we'll step outside to look back in.

Kindred house may embrace everyday realism - whilst remaining surreal as a dream. (Influence Angela Carter, Garcia Marquez; Magical Realism)

It can be as autobiographical, or far removed from the familiar, as humorous and/or as sad as we wish.

Stepping in and out of different worlds will become even more interesting when characters finally interact.

For example scenes that bring characters to a floating Table to Eat Supper or into a cosmic shared moment, frozen in time.

Currently we conceive working with episodic filmic perspective. The front of a Dolls House being the starting frame. Entering and Exiting at will.

In the future, inviting Design and Creative Technical support. The kindred creative group may expand as the work naturally requires new influences and support, including actors.

Live theatre remains our passion: We don't need to limit our imaginations: with theatre anything is possible:

PROCESS:

Over next few months we suggest focusing on SOLO work. There is no rush. We are writers, dreamers, players.

We ask each player (including ourselves of course) to take their own time, to be aware that their story is 'running' even if they are not visible.

For this purpose we ask players to keep their own journals.

This means guiding the group towards creating characters to embody their unique narratives and develop their unique sense of time and place in the house.

- Developing subjective POV - (points of view) and personal qualities of BEING & PRESENCE in the House.
- Developing relationship and perspectives to objects and other beings in the space.

HOUSE of KINDRED SPIRITS:

PHASE ONE: IN SEARCH OF CHARACTER: SOLO WORK.

(You might find for future reference a personal journal useful for charting your journey - but please don't make this a pressure - as with all the exercises, just do what feels comfortable, excites you)

SESSION ONE

PART ONE: Physical

1. BREATH: Seems obvious! But thinking back to our original sessions in the Arts Theatre: We chose a CHAIR: The chairs looked similar: We took possession of a Chair.

5 mins We took moments to be still on our Chair and to BREATH.

NOW we are at home:

Give time to BEING with A CHAIR in your home.

BREATH naturally. Place gentle awareness to the rise and fall of each breath.

Though we can't be in a physical space together at present, we CAN still transcend time & space -

Though now we BREATH alone - we know at some other point, at some other time, in some other place, with others, we will BREATH together with shared intent.

Relax. Be aware of your CHAIR. Be aware of your body, how your weight falls, through your limbs, where tensions may be held and released.

Listen to the sounds around you - the wind, plumbing, traffic, distant radios?.....

BREATHING and SITTING. Sit back. Sit forward!

Later, BREATH will give birth to VOICE.

*Performance Note: Alone in a chair is part of our Collective Narrative. It may influence how we start a future performance.

2. EMBODIMENT: Though Working virtually and from imagination, we'd still like to embrace physical expression.

(5-10 mins) Remembering work from earlier sessions, (to avoid embarrassment - maybe out of neighbours view!)

Reaching out - whilst keeping contact with the chair: (taking care to be safe within our own physical capacity)

Enjoy the stretches. Find PAUSES, SHAPES and POSITIONS. Breath and Observe.

Keeping contact with CHAIR: Using hands, arms, legs — exploring physical perimeters moving from the CHAIR - (metaphoric Home). Paint physical poem with hands & body.

Finishing or reducing down to one small repetitive action - (we can return to this in later weeks. Please make a note of this GESTURE)

3. FEET: Please take a photo, or make a simple drawing, or written description of your feet as you see them, placed on the ground in front of you, from your chair.

4. THE CALL: LISTEN...With your back to The Kindred House - (You can be anywhere).

(3 mins) LISTEN. (No end games here. If you HEAR something = please take note - if not - also take note - Patience is the name of the game with this one)

(Like wise if, you SEE something, take note - if your don't - also take note.)

5. Disembodied HAT: "Wherever I lay my hat, there's my home".

Your character (when you (eventually) meet them) - may or may not wear a hat!

However, we suggest that they HAVE either worn a hat at some point in their past, or DO wear a hat from time to time NOW.

*Without thinking too hard about this - i.e. from first impulses - please describe or draw or take a picture of A HAT that comes to your mind or represents a Hat you are looking for?

Does the Hat live in the House? If so where? (Trust first impulse)

All I can see is a house of mirrors, (' reflections' my younger self).

Is this 'house' supposed to be a haven...?

Don't know where I am going with it...

PAT

I love the idea of the multi-dimensional house and that we each find our own way in and ways to inhabit it, and that we each come and go as we want. And I love it that it feels like its moving back towards feeling our way more in relation to each other, more like it felt like when we were able to experience/encounter one another in the same space.

JUDE

I've done my breathing this am and now wandering about looking for the 'right' chair! I enjoy the missives, pace chosen

to suit the skills of the whole group. Working together and sharing experiences the top priority.

DEANE

PART TWO:

Here comes Stephen's guided Journey inviting response or not!:

HOUSE.

There is a house. YOU - outside looking at it.
It is a house you know well OR
have never seen before.
You want to enter. How? Do you have a key?
Do you knock upon the door?
Do you break in?
Do you press the doorbell?
Does it chime a rhyme that brings back memories?
Or-
No memories at all.
Perhaps you slink around the back of the house
Shadowed by the dignity of trees, or through a
Shimmering dance
Of hand-painted autumnal leaves
Or perhaps sunlight
Slashes burnished gold to create a magic path
Across a croquet lawn towards a...
Or.....
T'is it time for tea?
There is really no hurry
Really?

I could scurry up a drainpipe
Am I that small?
I smell a little smell
Like a smell I've never smelt before
Or own it as my own

How to get inside
Out from the path of desert sands
And arctic snow
I have one last spell
One secret word to go.
And LO! I'm in. Now we can begin. Let's go.

TANYA:

The House is my universe. I would like to imagine it is THE universe.
I appreciate others inhabit, visit and haunt its' rooms; some bustle, some breath quietly in the shadows, some observe from a picture on the wall.
However, this house in the woods is my secret. For now.

It is hard enough to be present; to find a door that retains enough familiar shape to be recognised & entered by, a corner to call my own.
In this vast and beautiful place, I am becoming familiar with the colour Green. I insist on returning. I commit to this large old green door.

One day - I will beat life into the old knocker - but for now no need to rouse anyone, as the door is always ajar.

From the doorway - I consistently spy 'My Hat' on a wall - on a peg, too high to reach. A nice hat. Battered in on one side with a ribbon dangling. I want the ribbon to be pink but it keeps changing back to black.

I see this woman darting with jug and water, from room to room along a long corridor. I will return to follow her another time.

I start. Sitting on an old sturdy wet wooden chair in my garden. It is raining gently. Leaves falling gently. All gentle. Breathing.

I hadn't realised I had been holding my breath. Holding myself together.

I love the idea of gestures - attached to our chairs, from the breath, we move reaching out into the space around us, remaining for the time being, attached to our chairs.

As we come to 'own' gestures' - they become part of our character 'signature tunes'. I love what Deane said - what happens when these gestures are stolen?

My THOUGHTS & References: Quite a different Matter!

Our House is a very very very fine House (Crosby Stills & Nash)

House Music

Interesting reading:

DON:

When Anne and I moved into our house twenty plus years ago around August time, we noticed the Victoria plum tree in the back garden was weighed down with fruit. There are only so many recipes and friends we could find to absorb a small quantity of this bounty.

Next year the tree died. The bumper year was it's one last attempt to sow seed for new trees and show off it's productive beauty. A few years later I planted another Victoria plum tree in the front garden so people walking by could enjoy the fruit in season in it's honour. It's doing well.

Over the past year I have probably been more abundant creatively than I have been for many a long while. I've written stories, poetry, made stained glass, videos, oral recordings, taken photographs, created theatre and played creatively inspired by the work we've been doing inside and around the Kindred Spirit house.

I heard from the hospital yesterday that my cancer has come back after all, and that it is untreatable. All that is on offer is some pretty unpleasant procedures such as chemo and radiation to lessen some of the more unpleasant symptoms. Although I have already been lucky enough to have produced a beautiful son and daughter, like the tree I obviously needed one last show of creative endeavour before shaking off this mortal coil.

It's too early for the medics to be able to give me any useful information about how long I can expect to live for or what I can expect in terms of quality of life. I've a good deal of practical and emotional journeys to go on with family and close friends to keep me fully engaged with life for quite a while.

I'll therefore not be able to contribute much if anything to the kindred spirit house in future, but wanted you to know that my thoughts and creative spirit are with you.

*The sun shines. Late leaves falling. Good news filters amidst sad and difficult news.
Dearest Don - I write on behalf of us all - Please find your perfect bench placed in the grounds of
Kindred's House...*

*Make yourself comfortable. Your nods, raised eyebrows, sardonic smiles, quips - warmly
welcomed dear friend.*

*We travel beside you in the Kindred House of Spirits - Let us know if you want a cup or tea
brought out?*

Enjoy the sun on your face.

PAT:

THE HOUSE

- I don't know this house but I am drawn to it although very nervous
- I aware that this house is un lived in but Haunted
- I'm nervous about visiting
- There is a huge old front door without a letter box
- The door is locked and I don't have a key
- the path leading up to the house is broken crazy paving covered in weeds (nettles & thistles)
- I walk around the large house nervously avoiding the knee high thistles & nettles
- the only door which is accessible leads from iron steps to the basement
- the basement is dark .
- What do I hear???? (whispering but not understanding what is being said)
- in the basement are lots of mirrors and computer keyboards under the mirrors
- there SIGNS around the basement walls NO EXIT, NO ENTRANCE , SILENCE, STOP,

MY HOUSE :

THE CELLAR IS MY YOUTH

THE 1ST AND 2ND FLOORS ARE MY EARLY
& LATE MIDDLE AGES

THE ATTIC IS MY OLD AGE.

Still thinking about 1st and 2nd floors of my house..

The ATTIC feels good.... the walls are freshly painted in my favourite colours, cornflour blue and yellow... big skylight windows are open... There is a balcony leading out from the attic ...I walk out onto the balcony ...the air is fresh, the warm sun feels good on my face, I smell one of my favourite smells... freshly cut grass, I smell fresh coffee, I hear birds singing, and a dog barking and children laughing and singing nursery rhymes. All my senses are heightened.

I look down from the attic and see the path I walked up when I arrived ...the thistles and nettles are gone..

The grass is green and lush and there is an orchard full of fruit...apples and plums and cherries. I can't wait to eat them and to dance on the lawn.



JULIE:

My 1st thoughts - see below-were with my late husband.

He's never far away as amongst other things he was a frustrated architect and everyday I see his design and influence in our abode and at work.

My house like for most is my sanctuary albeit it's like a modern day commune filled with different personalities.

People come and go....some long departed still remain.

"The steps and stairs you built are all around me. Some days they're easy to climb and others are more laborious depending on my load. Like your last few steps away from our matrimonial bed descending stairs you fell. We used to laugh about our old age and not being able to access the steps and stairs and then it became reality -no laughter then . Your eyes spoke with longing to be away from all the pain and discomfort and we agreed to let you go".

Character work: This first phase of work gratis of Covid is Alone and Together.

Exploring subjective experiences (as explained in earlier emails) : playing with objects, sense of presence & finding our individual narrative moments.

Getting to Know you! Or maybe 'Getting to know your character'.

In practical terms - we are required to 'make an appointment with ourselves' in SAFELY DEFINED SPACE & engage our imaginations and feelings.

SOLO WORK: Alone Together: developing sense of place & character development.

Flexing imaginations & agility moving from the mundane to magical and back! Playing with psyche at our own pace!

I hope you are finding journals useful for gathering words, dreams, images....

DEANE:

You want to enter. How? Do you have a key?

My character has too many keys to too many houses and can never find a match.

Endless repetitions.

Three minutes of listening.

"I sat in a chair immediately outside my front door and recorded 3 minutes of sound"

Three minutes of listening.

"I sat in a chair immediately outside my front door and recorded 3 minutes of sound"



STEPHEN:

I planned to talk about the hat
A hell of a thing to talk about that-
But-

I've been side-tracked
The cat has got my tongue
It's hard to explain
But it's painfull, full of pain
I never thought I would experience
Such pain ever again
Once is surely more than enough

The cat just swings there
On my tongue
Playing in the bloody air

Fortunately it is a black cat
The same sombre shade of despair
As my dark hair
which could pass from a distance
As a goate beard
The sort made for men who solve the world

But they want to hear
They are all waiting
What is it that you want to say

But the cat has got my tongue
I try to swallow
But the frog in my throat
Croaks and blocks the way-
Backed up by the hoarse

horse
No words are possible but...

Perhaps a gentle purr
Will suffice?

The hat has fallen on the floor.
What a day.

PAT:

I LOOK INTO A MIRROR AND AM SHOCKED TO SEE (A REFLECTION OF A YOUNGER SELF PERHAPS... MY REFLECTION) THESE THEN CHANGE & BECOME SOMEBODY ELSE I RECOGNISE)

HEADMISTRESS MISS COLE...

'You will never succeed in anything

AUNTIE MONA

'Your mother didn't want you'

SCHOOL BULLY (MALCOLM ROSS)

'Ugly' (laughter from boys)

'Just ignore her she'll go away

A MIRROR TURNS INTO A COMPUTER SCREEN. THERE IS A KEYBOARD UNDER THE SCREEN I SEE THE REJECT BUTTON AND PRESS IT BUT IT DOESN'T WORK

THE WORD 'FAIL' KEEPS COMING UP ON THE SCREEN ,,OTHER WORDS APPEAR.. FAIL, FAILURE , REJECT.

THESE WORDS KEEP REPEATING AND THEY TURN INTO SOUND..A PIERCING SOUND.GETTING LOUDER & LOUDER..

SIGNS ON THE WALL BECOME ANIMATED NO EXIT, NO ENTRANCE, SILENCE, STOP

I HAVE TO GET AWAY FROM THIS DARK BASEMENT... I SEE SOME RUSTY IRON STEPS LEADING UPWARDS TO A DOOR.. I WALK UP THE STEPS AND SMASH THE DOOR OPEN & WALK UP SOME STAIRS TO A ROOM WITH LOTS OF CHAIRS... I SEE >

- MY OLD SCHOOL CHAIR WITH THE DESK ATTACHED,
- A CHAIR AT A TABLE WITH ONE PLACE SETTING
- A SOFT COMFY ARMCHAIR BECKONS ME THE ARMS BECOME HUMAN

I AVOID THE OLD SCHOOL CHAIR & THE CHAIR AT THE TABLE AND REACH THE ARMCHAIR ...IT FEELS SO GOOD...THE ARMS OF THE CHAIR ENFOLD ME.

I FEEL A STRONG DESIRE TO GO UP THE LONG WINDING STAIRS TO THE ATTIC WHERE I CAN HEAR BIRDSONG AND A GENTLE BREEZE...



STEPHEN:

THE FOUR LEGGED FRIEND.

A four legged friend, a four legged friend
He'll never let you down
He's honest and faithful right up to the end
that wonderful one-two-three-four legged friend...
But I'm afraid; I'm ashamed to confess
He's sometimes a little hard to find
He's simply not where he should be
Gone walk-about across the open range
Not in the dusty stable,
Nor the graveyard angels
Or even hiding out, under the kitchen table

We finally round him up and lead him
Up the narrow stairs to -
A room of poetry and madness
Where a magic carpet awaits
Shivering in anticipation
The mighty oak desk slams drawers, open, shut

And then -
The writer comes
And all is sudden silence

I sit on my four-legged friend
My magic chair
I know he'd never let me down
A bird whistles
The race is on.

TANYA:

Reaching for my hat, from a hook on the wall, it drops to the floor.
It drops to the floor, drops to the floor, drops to the floor.
Slowly reaching for my hat - placing it on my head I look at the door.
The door is not locked. Not latched. The door is open.
The door is open.
The step is red.
The sun is shining.
On return

Running upstairs, running upstairs, running upstairs, missing the top stair, missing the top stair,
missing the top stair. Tripping, tripping, tripping, counting, counting, counting. Heartbeats.

Descending, descending, and descending: Pausing on the 3rd stair. Pausing on the 3rd stair to
remember. Remember what? What was I descending for? Where was I going? Pausing to forget. I
turn. Look Up the stairs. Looking for what I've forgotten. I turn. Look Down the stairs to where I was
going. Nothing gives. Pause. Look ahead. Face immobile. A Breath. A decision. Right foot leads.
First step down. Twist to turn. Left foot rises. First step up. Hand on banister. The way I'd come.
Retracing steps in hope, in hope, in hope

EXERCISE 1- Message to Don (A short Scene)

Don's bench is situated at the front of the house. The house is south facing. Don can see the sun rise in the east and set in the west. Under a plum tree, dripping white-blossom in spring & drooping purple in summer. Thinking ahead to Pat's bath of oozy plummy lusciousness...

If it was your turn to bring Don a cup of tea. (He doesn't leave his bench)

What few words might you say? You might say nothing at all? You might return later?

Might you perch? Stand? Where would the sun/moon be in relation to your eyes?

Notice, (without thinking too much) where had you came from? (carrying the tea) and to where did you return?

DEANE:

DON'S BENCH

(audio link Jon Hassell track 6 Fascinoma - <https://youtu.be/xgtx-6P5gXI>)

a large oversize narrow rectangle stage centre disconnected over-sized window no glass very small door cut into the rectangle. the proportion is wrong (adult and child) bench downstage in the slightest level of light everything under done

silence stillness then sound fades in travelling upstage to downstage. (fascinoma jon hassell track 6 secretly happy) a dream-like atmosphere nearly real but not

Small door pushes open revealing the top of head and a strong shaft of light. Push forward flat on the floor using hands and toes to travel arrive at the bench dragging a whole collection of stuff attached to the body. Massive physical effort achieved with no 'theatrics' no 'acting'

stand up dress in Don's red trainers jacket trousers hat a child dressing up (would like to use the duck head)

make tea placing one cup at the opposite end of the bench tea set belongs to dolls house sit facing directly downstage eat a plum drink tea convey this has happened before will reoccur endless

undress slowly remove a packet of sweets from jacket pocket eat one deposit packet on the bench staring

carrying everything walk upstage to door descend and leave reaching back through door close extinguish light.

time this out to the track not one spoken word throughout

been doing all the chair stuff honest...

TANYA:

Don's Bench

Go away he says as I creep towards him.

Not wanting to disturb.

Go away.

All right I think.

I hesitate.

Cup and saucer rattle.

I should have brought a mug

I've traveled a long way.

The tea's cold.

I got lost on the way out.

It took so much longer than I'd thought.

I thought he might appreciate some company.

I'm dawdling now. Dawdling is such a nice word

I know you're there, he says without turning.

Well, I think. I know I'm here too!

The wide expanse of space beside him warmed by sunshine looks very welcoming.

There's no rush Don says. Kindly.

Looking back, flashes of bright materials tumble from windows; a woman throws flowers from the attic.

Petals lie at my feet.

Whispers woven from sighs, ripen to laughter

I realize there's a party brewing in the kindred house.

PAT:

DON'S BENCH

I had reached the attic of my house and saw Don sitting on the bench in the orchard under the plum tree ... It was autumn and the plums were ripe and ready for harvesting.

I was bringing him a cup of tea ... he made me smile because he was unable to drink the tea as he was wearing his Duck mask.

I waited to be invited to join him on the bench but he said nothing and I sensed he just wanted to be left alone without me interfering in his solitude... so I left him sitting in the warmth of the sun. I returned to the attic.

EXERCISE 2: THE CHAIR

Please return to your chair:

(Breathing and reaching out exercise is attached at end of email for Julie's benefit)
Play with the decisions of your Chair Location – in your home reality.

Choose your location: This chair is very important – it will grow to represent a solid point of home, a point of return, and departure. A raft amidst a storm, a retreat, a boat on an ocean an observers post, a place to rest, a sanctuary. (You may take this island into a performance context in the future?)

Explore physicality of chair. It's legs, edges, height.

Remain attached to chair, find a seat from where you rule your world.

Finally – in your minds eye: Enter Kindred House from this chair.

TASK: You are on an errand that takes you to the house. What is the errand? Complete your errand.

And return to your chair.

Breathing. Return.

TANYA:

Running an errand from my chair

My chair has an emperor's view, but no one would suspect. Sat amongst chairs filling with audience, my expectations mingle freely with theirs. I am as curious as they are. I can see the House – Kindred Family moves freely in and out of two realities, visible & disguised – we are breathing as one. Safe in our knowing of what will come, from what has been.

We await darkness. And the hush from which the first of kindred sounds becomes distinctly identifiable from the worldly clatter of scraping, shifting, folding bodies.

Somewhere between those shifting realities. Like Dawn or Dusk, My errand begins.

I will bow to my chair. I will step a matter of inches across myriad fathoms to meet my friends in the kindred world.

I will pull a key from my large pocket and before unlocking the door I will breath a deep breath, then knock three times.

PAT:

I had an urgent errand to complete in my Kindred house ...I don't know what I had to do but sensed it was important.

I reached the first floor and I sensed I had to look in every drawer and cupboard. I found different masks in the drawers and cupboards... I had to try them on to look and be someone different.

Kindred House Movement Exercise from Deane

From the moment we wake to the moment we go to bed we engage in journeys and operations around our home. These journeys usually have a purpose, a function. Sometimes we wander without clear direction or purpose, an outward expression of boredom, isolation, loneliness, anxiety.

Watch yourself. Note your unique journeys and operations over a single day. You can make a list. Imagine a series of instructions that I could adjust and follow in my own house. This material can be used to create 'chunks' of movement that we can share and adapt together, speed up, slowdown and create a sort of 'surprise vocabulary' – that attracted Barbara's interest.

Walking into and out of rooms

Walking along halls, landings and corridors

Walking up and down stairs

Walking inside and outside

Opening and closing doors

Opening and closing windows

Opening and closing wardrobes

Opening and closing drawers

Running and draining water

Switching lights on and off

Using a variety of appliances

Bending up and down. Reaching up and climbing onto and off.

THINGS TO MULL OVER

Which way do you turn most? To the Left or to the Right?

What do you carry? What do you drop?

Where are you still? Where/why do you pause?

Where do you sit down/ lie down/stand up the most?

How does the outside world intrude/interrupt? Door bells, knocking, shouting etc

Is there part of the house you like the most?

Is there a part of the house you avoid?

Do you hide things?

Do you lose things?

Do you find things?

What sounds do you generate? Radio. Television, Talking out Loud, telephone conversations, mutterings etc

DEANE:

Nightwalks

Diary of an insomniac

Shadow character who hides/looks for/finds things carrying a large suitcase leaves never to return.

Phrase one:

Stand
Turn left
5 steps
Turn right
Pause
12 steps turn left
7 steps descending
Turn left
6 steps turn left
6 steps turn left
4 steps turn right
15 steps turn right
3 steps sit down

Phrase two:

Stand
Three steps forward
Turn right
Sit down
Pause
Stand up turn right
Three steps
Pause
Bend forward
Straighten
Turn right
Five steps forward

Phrase three endless repetitions/play with pace/ inject other characters:

Stand
Sit
Stand up
Sit
Stand up
Sit
Pause
Stand up
Turn round
Sit

Phrase four:

Stand
Turn right
35 steps
Stop
Sit
Lie down
Sit
Stand
Turn 360 degrees
35 steps
Sit

Phrase five:

Stand
Turn right
12 steps forward
Turn left
Bend forward
Straighten
3 steps forward
Turn left
17 steps forward
Sit down
Stand up
Pause
Leave the stage

Tanya's response to Deane's House choreography:

TAPS

Standing in a small porcelain puddle of water.

First tap turns: Hopping in too hot water, not hopping fast enough. Shhh shhh noises fluting from lips.

Second tap turns: dancing the water with feet stirring, blending a cool mix. Read for Bum. Mad decision to let 2nd tap run free: Freezing cold – embracing icy shocks, breathless.

Delicious Screams.

Imagining you are a character in a play:

1. If someone was to ask you for 7 (made up) ideal principles (or requirements) for building a house - What would they be?
2. If you had a job INSIDE the house - what might it be.... please don't worry too much about this - it need be a job only very important to yourself.
3. Thinking back to our Chair Work last year - Please revisit or recreate Three SHORT Facts about Yourself (Can be up to 7 short statements of information - the more there are, the harder to remember)

Please present 'out loud' and repeat like a mantra a few times (without emotion or judgement), after sitting on a chosen chair. (It might feel a little odd - !!!!!)

For those who haven't done chair work - statements were delivered from a selected chair in the theatre space.... building a cacophony of voices. We don't need worry about being fixed to these facts.

DEANE:

1. If someone was to ask you for 7 (made up) ideal principles (or requirements) for building a house - What would they be?

Atmospheres

The house has to contain a personal peculiar atmosphere specific to my sensitivities. Scale is a vital consideration in all decision making

Body of Architecture

The presence of things, materials, careful selection to form the structure of the house and create the spaces within it

Material Compatibility

Choosing natural materials that compliment, contrast and react with each other in texture, colour, weight and proximity

The Sound of Space

Being sensitive to the choice material finishes and the quality of sound produced in each space. The acoustic is vitally important

The Temperature of a Space

Temperature connects with both the physical and psychological self and by default the outer and inner spaces of the house and its environs. Heating and ventilation are vital considerations.

Surrounding Objects

The design of the house has to be sympathetic to the objects that are placed within it. A receptacle for owned objects to be stored, cherished, displayed.

Composure and Seduction

Careful consideration how space is to be used. Journeys, directions, spaces, connections. How spaces can be formed to relax, transform mood, promote focus and work, sleep, light and shade

Tension between Interior and Exterior

Careful consideration of the transition between inside to outside and outside to inside. How both connect and form a relationship between two worlds.

2. If you had a job INSIDE, the house - what might it be.... please don't worry too much about this - it need be a job only very important to yourself.

I carry a large suitcase in order to tidy, clutter, reorganise, steal, reinstate a range of objects, clothes and more. I work on a series of impulses, urges and drivers that can at times relate to the actions of others or not. I clean and cleanse. I dirty and pollute. I create harmony and conflict. I can do nothing for long periods of time. I am subtle, I change the atmosphere.

3. Thinking back to our Chair Work last year - Please revisit or recreate Three SHORT Facts about Yourself (Can be up to 7 short statements of information - the more there are, the harder to remember) Please present 'out loud' and repeat like a mantra a few times (without emotion or judgement), after sitting on a chosen chair. (It might feel a little odd - !!!!!) For those who haven't done chair work - statements were delivered from a selected chair in the theatre space.... building a cacophony of voices. We don't need worry about being fixed to these facts.

Am going to think about this more. Making a list of ideas and looking forward to seeing everybody.

TANYA:

Seven principles

Firm Foundations of old stone and wood, fluctuating temperatures for feet, responding to nature and weather. Places of moss.

Fluid Space: movements shaped by staircases, corridors, curves of walls, rooms -vast and small, myriad shapes and dimensions; doors of different sizes.

Plenty of access to Sky: Windows with light arriving from North, South, East and West - light able to travel through house from one side to the other, window in roof for watching the night sky.

Beautiful Roof Garden with bell tower and washing line

Balconies to access inside outside: stepping in Stepping out

A beautiful front door and a secret back door

Water flowing through the house and plants with room to spread. A tree in the centre of our house.

Running away with myself now - past the seven givens but oh! How I would like lots of cupboards and colour, colour, colour; feasts of colour and finally but most importantly, a WASHING LINE

MY JOB in this house:

House laundry mistress and part time note keeper, taker, giver: notes hidden between garments. My job takes me into all the rooms gathering in my basket soiled fabrics and returning refreshed. My job takes me outside into gardens in all weathers hanging online and checking skies for forecast. I have big baskets.

THREE FACTS (for today might be different tomorrow!)

I am a crone
I have a black cat
I like to be useful

PAT:

1. Ideal Principles (or requirements) for building a house
SKILL, STRENGTH, OPTIMISM, ENDURANCE, CONFIDENCE, CONSIDERATION
PERSISTENCE.

We had great discussion about stepping in and out of reality and imagination - the dialogue it opens up in our selves.

2. My job INSIDE the house
PUTTING PLANTS & FLOWERS IN EVERY ROOM,
PUTTING PHOTOGRAPHS OF LOVED ONES ON THE WALLS
LIGHTING A FIRE

PLACING TWO COMFORTABLE CHAIRS IN THE HOUSE

Chair 1. In front of the fire

Chair 2 Upstairs in front of a window overlooking the garden

3. Three SHORT facts about myself.

- I am far too loud
- I need to think more before I act or speak
- What I present is not what I am.

STEPHEN:

Essential elements for ideal home.

1. indoor moat with Japanese carp.
2. A pencil sharpener
3. Wagner (mute)
4. Staircase
5. Play room for dancing ghosts.
6. Red door to exit and enter
7. Talking ancestor portraits past and future.

His JOB: stephen discovers he is merman employed as choreographer of musical bring the carp and ghosts together and waiting for the lead singer the master crocodile. trouble brewing. lets do the show right here

NEW MISSIVE - CHARACTER ADVENTURE

Character Adventure: based on Stanislavsky actors training principles.

Some categories will seem a little stilted, but they are there for us to play with and make our own. Please feel free to daydream, dip in and out and surprise yourself. Some themes may have no interest to YOU at all. You may want to just explore one or a few? See where they take you? Imagining yourself in Your Kindred House.

Who IS your character?

There really are NO right answers! WHO ARE YOU?

Explore influence: heredity; environment; experience

1. **AGE:** physicality; strengths, weaknesses, stiffness, coordination, energy levels, body weight?
2. **HEALTH:** physical, emotional, past or current illness, vitality, daily rhythms, sleep habits, aches in body, special powers in body?
3. **OCCUPATION:** Relationship as, with and to authority? Development? self-respect? Interests in life, Passions
4. **FINANCIAL:** Comfort? Security? Work? Diet? Modes of Living? Transport? Dress?
5. **GENDER?**
6. **MARITAL STATUS:** Family responsibilities; freedom, companionship, loneliness
7. **CLASS:** background, birth, financial, meritocratic shifts?
8. **FAMILY BACKGROUND:** Parents? siblings?
9. **EDUCATION?**
10. **HABITS:** (including addictions or patterns of behaviour)
11. **HOBBIES:** what brings pleasure
12. **NATIONALITY; ETHNICITY;** Genealogy: Human? Part animal? Ghost?
13. **GEOGRAPHY:** City, coastal, mountain, flatlands
14. **RELIGION:** Upbringing, influences, guilts, powers
15. **POLITICS?**
16. **PSYCHOLOGICAL:** self-esteem; personality; energy, temperament.
17. **PHYSIQUE/FEATURES:** Height; build; attractiveness!!!
18. **TALENTS**

PAT:

KINDRED HOUSE...

Character traits:

I am an old lady who does everything too quickly
I have an annoying habit of organising & tidying things
I hate clutter
I have the urge to clean out the cupboards and fill them again with good memories
I like to straighten the pictures, clocks, photos & mirrors on the walls
(Sometimes the photos & pictures come alive and talk to me)
I need to keep checking myself in the mirrors

I see myself as a TIMEKEEPER in the Kindred house **
I like punctuality. I am always checking my watch

I am always in a hurry... too fast, too fast ...
I am always aware of TIME, of time passing and things that need to be done
No time to lose...

(2 steps forward, 3 steps back, 2 steps forward, 3 steps back)

There are lots of flights of stairs & ladders in the Kindred House
I need to get to the attic which is my room...
I have a lot of obstacles to overcome to reach the attic

I want to learn to fly and when I reach the attic, I want to be able to fly with the birds from the open window to feel free.

I get lonely and find comfort from nature:-

- I love to swim in wild water
- I love to run barefoot on sand and grass
- I love to lay on & smell new mown grass
- I love to sit in front of a fire & smell the burning logs
- I love to make patterns with the clouds

In the attic is my huge throne like carved chair filled with soft cushions.

**

(as a runner I always had a stopwatch on my wrist watch to check times of races I competed in ...even now I use my stopwatch when I walk the dogs to check how far I have walked)

CARRIE:

(Apology Dialogue - Inner critic)

A I'm sorry-

B No, no, I'm the one who should be sorry, I spoke for too long, wittering on-

A No, no, what you said was great, I'm sorry I didn't respond properly-

B No, no, you did, I just felt I talked too much and I'm sorry-

A No, no, don't be sorry! I don't always look as if I'm interested and I am, I'm sorry if I upset you-

B No, no, you didn't. I'm sorry if I made you think you did. I don't get upset easily, maybe I should-

A No, you're fine, I think it's good not to get upset too easily. I get upset ever so easily, too easily, and I-

B I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you feel that you got upset too easily. It means you're more sensitive. I'm sorry I'm not a more sensitive person-

A I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you think you're not sensitive. I never seem to be able to say things right. That's why I don't talk too much-

B I'm sorry; you're right, I talk too much.

CARRIE:

Character Traits:

1. AGE: physicality; strengths, weaknesses, stiffness, coordination, energy levels, body weight?

A few months old; can roll and reach, beginning to move head. Full of energy; full of early months' strength; eyes find it hard to focus, co-ordination is still an experiment, but I am curious; 'getting it wrong' and tumbling don't matter because I'm flat anyway and I don't know what 'wrong' means.

2. HEALTH: physical, emotional, past or current illness, vitality, daily rhythms, sleep habits, aches in body, special powers in body?

I am excited and cross; frustrated sometimes sour; I have night-time terrors, and no one comes. No one comes. I wait, in a cold sweat, sleeping fitfully till the light starts, then I struggle with that part of me that wants to sleep – and can now it's light – and the part that craves connection and physical warmth. When she comes, I am ecstatic to hear her, smell her, see her: something blue/grey shines at me, and feel her holding me close. And then I am cross. And then I am ecstatic.

3. OCCUPATION: Relationship as, with and to authority? Development? self-respect? Interests in life, Passions

I am still god-like. I came from infinity and before I realised how small I was becoming – and the fear that fostered – I was everything and connected to everything. It is hard being so small and helpless – why can't she see who I am? Why can't anyone? Why can't they meet my spirit?

4. FINANCIAL: Comfort? Security? Work? Diet? Modes of Living? Transport? Dress?

When suckling at her breast, the warm liquid nourishes every cell of my body. I want it. There is a noise as I suck. I adore her warmth, her smell and sometimes she hums. It lasts forever. And then I am so full that I go limp. I want her to hold me still. Sometimes she does. Sometimes she puts me down. I am too full to cry.

The feel of the warm liquids is nice; the pungency of their smells is good – real, intense and me - but I am so different from what I was when I floated.

I am beginning to lose the music of the spheres – it is so faint now. And the sounds I hear, sometimes screaming and shouting, they terrify me. They touch evil. I yearn for the ethereal music because it will envelop that, but it is so faint.

She is not here. And then I cry, I wail, and every cell of my body screams till she comes. She envelopes me but it is not enough. And I know she will put me down.

5. GENDER?

I don't know what that is.

6. MARITAL STATUS: Family responsibilities; freedom, companionship, loneliness

Sometimes, there is another being with brown shining things and a rim of black, with a different smell who bends to me and nuzzles. I want to be picked up. I reach. I'm not.

There is another being smaller, but she is scared too, and I cannot reach her. I want to be held. I know they are mine. The people around me. including the devil-one. Somehow, I know. But I'm part of a bigger circle, they are too but they don't know it and I'm losing my connection.

7. CLASS: background, birth, financial, meritocratic shifts?

Birth was earthquake, tsunami, jelly flesh thrown onto dry land. So bright so cold so singular.

8. FAMILY BACKGROUND: Parents? siblings?

9. EDUCATION?

I'm learning to roll and to reach.

10. HABITS: (including addictions or patterns of behaviour)

I like to be held and fed and be warm. Then I feel safe.

11. HOBBIES: what brings pleasure

I like it when shining things focus on me and I reach and grip. I like being touched – most of the time. Sometimes it hurts. I like to make a noise – it comes right from my toes.

12. NATIONALITY; ETHNICITY; Genealogy: Human? Part animal? Ghost?

I am becoming human, I was ethereal. I was pushed – there was lightning, and I was somewhere dark and warm, and wet. Losing the light, losing the thread. I don't know whose idea this was. Was it mine?

13: GEOGRAPHY: City, coastal, mountain, flatlands

There are high up places that they take me when it's dark. I don't like it. I like the down places. The light places. I like someone there; I like the noises all around: banging and gurgling and singing and laughing.

14: RELGION: Upbringing, influences, guilts, powers

I have come from light which held everything including the dark. I was somewhere dark as I lost that light – I can still feel the hint of it and see it in the shining things but there is thick darkness here and I cannot fight it.

15. POLITICS?

I am the centre of my universe.

16. PSYCHOLOGICAL: self-esteem; personality; energy, temperament.

I am losing something even as I enjoy rolling and reaching and feel a potential in this being.

17. PHYSIQUE/FEATURES: Height; build; attractiveness!!!

I am totally beautiful and perfect, and I love everything about me – sometimes they make funny noises about me that I know are not happy noises. I don't understand.

18: TALENTS

I can lift my head, roll over and soon I'll be able to crawl. I'm already moving in that direction.

Mono dialogue (Ref: Inner Critic develop')

I was thinking of how everything has space. Not just rooms, houses – but us – everything. It was when I was doing breathing exercises this morning.

Is it daft doing breathing exercises? I mean we breathe all the time.

And I thought about how the lungs are as much space as tissue. That's what the air goes into, isn't it? And then I thought how all the organs are partly space too. The stomach and guts get filled with food – so there's space for that. We all know what an empty stomach feels like, don't we? Am I talking too much? I can be ever so talkative.

And the kidneys are full of blood and the liver and spleen too, and the gall bladder is full of bile. But sometimes they're empty, they're emptying and filling, and even in those liquids there's space too, space is a fundamental part of the structure.

Am I being a bit gory? TMI as my auntie would say; who wants to know about that stuff inside you? Stay there, as far as I'm concerned.

Because the cells, all of them, they're partly space as well, each of them on its miniscule level is space as much as matter. And so, when I breathe, I imagine creating space everywhere – throughout my body.

Am I going on? Stop me if I'm burbling.

And when I imagine space it's like I'm expanding into the universe. There's a lovely bit in a meditation I know called peace to all beings: it goes 'from the smallest cells in the body to the greatest galaxies in space.' Sometimes it's like everything is in one single cell – it's the whole world.

Does that sound weird?

But then as well as expanding, I find I can consolidate – as I breathe in – and it's like the Yin to the Yang of expansion, I'm getting denser in myself, feeling the tissue of my body.

Is that silly? I get a bit fanciful; over-active imagination my mum called it.

And the expansion and the consolidation give me a connection to everything, to the breath of life, to my deepest self, to this amazing sense of well-being.

Does this make sense? I can't string a sentence together sometimes.

TANYA:

Character Traits:

1. AGE: physicality; strengths, weaknesses, stiffness, coordination, energy levels, body weight?

I am strong...with callouses on feet and hands. I wear bandages on my hands.... Coloured ribbons disguise ugliness I have stood in water too long, my left leg has shrunk. I have weight firmly mounted around my belly. I walk with a gally roll, like a ship riding the waves.... others might call it a limp.

2. HEALTH: physical, emotional, past or current illness, vitality, daily rhythms, sleep habits, aches in body, special powers in body?

I think of myself as hearty. I drink rum. More than I should... eat violets to smother the smell.... Sleep doesn't come easy – I don't know why... morphine helps with aches and pains. I have early starts and late stops... never stop working. Not really. Have powers in my thoughts, that's for sure... I can think someone into being... if I stare long enough – there they are. Sometimes I can tell you where an object is, if an object is lost... I see it my mind's eye. And I can bring it out. I can make things appear, you see, that thought they were lost... nothings ever really lost. That's my motto.

3. OCCUPATION: Relationship as, with and to authority? Development? self-respect? Interests in life, Passions

I wash clothes, blankets, hair, tables cloths, sheets, skin, pillows and underwear... I see stains and have ways of removing them. Nobody tells me what to do or when to do it... they might try. But I won't listen – I will do things in my own time. I have worked hard all my life... I see folks with airs. I don't need airs. But I do need air. I need to walk out at night. I need to sing with the others... that's how I get the voices 'out'. I love this beautiful earth. No one owns it. I honour dark seasons and welcome season's messengers of light. I honour them and they honour me – Cos the weather talks past present and future ... we have to listen – I have more to learn here. Much more.

4. FINANCIAL: Comfort? Security? Work? Diet? Modes of Living? Transport? Dress?

I have warm room. Bottom of house. where the water boils, and the pickles ferment. Good colours of earth, ochres, near to stairs. I see all who come and go. Nothing much passes me by. I walk everywhere. My dress is large, voluminous sometimes it's easier to wear the clothes I clean, rather than carry. Like a clothes horse. My pennies are tied up in this house. So, I ain't going anywhere. I expect to be fed. I'm cared for by others in house... I do for them; they do for me! We get on. I get on.

5. GENDER?

Woman - Guardian of my womb.

6. MARITAL STATUS: Family responsibilities; freedom, companionship, loneliness

No. - I had a brother. Never lonely.

7. CLASS: background, birth, financial, meritocratic shifts?

My mother's family came from the east – far, far gone. I don't know about my father's family.... I know how to survive.... A reel stories in with washing and tie narratives into knots. I let wind talk through trousers. I also know steps —

8. FAMILY BACKGROUND: Parents? siblings?

As above

9. EDUCATION: Life

And like learning new steps

10. HABITS: (including addictions or patterns of behaviour)

Life is a rhythm – repetition is the poem – a pendulum that swings by tides.... I need to be by the sea.... I will disappear to find the sea.... But I can bring back rhythm....to make others feel well.

11. HOBBIES: what brings pleasure

Don't understand question. I sing.

12. NATIONALITY; ETHNICITY; Genealogy: Human? Part animal? Ghost?

I am of the world. My voice echoes the birds... I can call the house to attention.

13: GEOGRAPHY: City, coastal, mountain, flatlands

Yes

14: RELIGION: Upbringing, influences, guilts, powers

Pay homage to weather and worship trees – time works on slower gauge, threading unseen I bow to all.

15.POLITICS?

I watch the world.... learn.... Make meaning This is wisdom

16. PSYCHOLOGICAL: self-esteem; personality; energy, temperament.

Heart big as an ocean..... Temper forged with fire. Moods like clouds. Not bothered by other opinions of me. Life too busy to worry.

17. PHYSIQUE/FEATURES: Height; build; attractiveness!!!

Some say I am ugly. I was beautiful. Ugliness gives freedom to come and go as I please

18: TALENTS:

Keeper of secrets. Folding of fabrics. I Learn songs quick

DEANE:

NAME: D. S. Rodinsky

AGE: physicality; strengths, weaknesses, stiffness, coordination, energy levels, body weight?

Died aged 65, blown over in a freak accident, weightless, in perpetual motion or endless stillness. Inhabit 4 dimensions.

HEALTH: physical, emotional, past or current illness, vitality, daily rhythms, sleep habits, aches in body, special powers in body?

Don't realise I'm dead. Neither asleep nor awake. Invisible to all except the crocodile. No distinction between day and night. No concept of time. I exist in pattern and repetition trapped in an endless cycle of replays.

OCCUPATION: Relationship as, with and to authority? Development? self-respect? Interests in life, Passions

I keep the Register. I hold the birthday party. I change the lock. I occupy the room that's in the imagination of others.

FINANCIAL: Comfort? Security? Work? Diet? Modes of Living? Transport? Dress?

Of no concern. The suitcase suggests transit arriving/ leaving. I hold a children's party daily for myself. I like to think about sweets, ginger beer, trifle and birthday cake through this vital ritual.

GENDER?

Was never very good at it.

MARITAL STATUS: Family responsibilities; freedom, companionship, loneliness

Forgotten. Although when Barry sings I stop, listen half remember, then wholly forget

CLASS: background, birth, financial, meritocratic shifts?

Depends on the weather.

FAMILY BACKGROUND: Parents? siblings?

Forgotten. I make up a story if I need to. Never the same one twice.

EDUCATION:

I learnt everything I know. I mastered language and fell silent. I looked at things hard from behind. I sat in corners, at the back, at the front, outside the room and inside the building. I learnt to fail better and excelled.

HABITS: (including addictions or patterns of behaviour)

I write. I listen. I prepare the birthday party. I try to find the key to get out of the door and then remove the lock to practice

HOBBIES: what brings pleasure

Nothing I don't need pleasure

NATIONALITY; ETHNICITY; Genealogy: Human? Part animal? Ghost?

Ghost

GEOGRAPHY: City, coastal, mountain, flatlands

Room in a house that shifts. I hear traffic, a steam train, sea, wind, rain, thunder, barking and shouting if I listen hard

RELIGION: Upbringing, influences, guilts, powers

I have no relationship with or need of god. I know the answer.

POLITICS:

I don't understand the question

PSYCHOLOGICAL: self-esteem; personality; energy, temperament.

What I imagine I believe. Snatches of somebody else's memory interfered with my balance. I didn't do half of it.

PHYSIQUE/FEATURES: Height; build; attractiveness!!!

I have no way of knowing now

TALENTS:

Ignoring everything else

JULIE:

Keeper of the keys /Housekeeper/Secret catcher

1. AGE: physicality; strengths, weaknesses, stiffness, coordination, energy levels, body weight?

32 walks like a ballerina (without the turn out) with a very straight back; good gait and head held high. Very good co-ordination. Can sometimes appear that she's gliding along the floor. Very slim-only eats when hungry.

2. HEALTH: physical, emotional, past or current illness, vitality, daily rhythms, sleep habits, aches in body, special powers in body?

Self possessed; appears sometimes to be aloof and diffident . Needs little sleep. Psychic powers are obvious to all whom she meets. No ailments except the occasional headache from too many spirits trying to gain her attention.

3. OCCUPATION: Relationship as, with and to authority? Development? self-respect? Interests in life, Passions

Likes the feeling of power-she holds the keys to every room in the house even to the forbidden quarters.

4. FINANCIAL: Comfort? Security? Work? Diet? Modes of Living? Transport? Dress?

Has no financial requirements. Only eats the flesh of animals she's killed herself. Doesn't believe in frippery -allows her self to let go in the music/ballroom-likes to engage in Isadora Duncan style contemporary dance-making sure she has no audience in the early hours before sunrise .

5. GENDER?

Female

6. MARITAL STATUS: Family responsibilities; freedom, companionship, loneliness

Single and a loner even when living with others- people confide in her-share their most inner dark secrets.

7. CLASS: background, birth, financial, meritocratic shifts?

Adopted at birth by 2 women whom lived off the land on a small holding. They sold mushrooms/herbs and special medicines (thought to be witches)

8. FAMILY BACKGROUND: Parents? siblings?

Doesn't know anything about her parents but she feels guided by them and they reach to her from the other side.

9. EDUCATION?

Knows everything about horticulture -was taught to read and write by her Mothers and was introduced to cooking their "special cuisine" at an early age.

10. HABITS: (including addictions or patterns of behaviour)

Chanting whilst trying to sleep(or is she calling to people on the other side)

11. HOBBIES: what brings pleasure

Serving others -keeping control and making them think they're in control. Dancing in the ballroom.....talking to her friends the animals that she doesn't want to eat.

12. NATIONALITY; ETHNICITY; Genealogy: Human? Part animal? Ghost?

Human with exceptional physic gifts/animal telepathy

13. GEOGRAPHY: City, coastal, mountain, flatlands

Rural setting in Wiltshire surrounded by a forest

14. RELGION: Upbringing, influences, guilts, powers

Worships the Seasons/Pagan

15. POLITICS?

No affiliation with human politics-believes the animal kingdom knows best

16. PSYCHOLOGICAL: self-esteem; personality; energy, temperament.

Quiet inner confidence -she knows she's the ruler of her own destiny

17. PHYSIQUE/FEATURES: Height; build; attractiveness!!!

Very tall and angular

18: TALENTS:

Reading minds

JUDE:

Character in the House of Kindred Spirits;

I am a sprite

I am 'a magnificent creature, a tiny faery who may cause flowers to bloom yet who may also deliver a surprisingly fierce bite when threatened.' *

I am indeed a magnificent creature, because, after all, I am here. And of course this is enough to qualify for magnificence. We all know that, don't we? I do know that. Occasionally I catch a glimpse of really knowing that. But mostly I forget. So I have to work on it, give it very regular, very very good attention.

It is also true that I am a tiny faery, though not as dainty as I was of course. I've acquired comfortable bulges and my wings are getting arthritic and gnarled. They still work though. Sometimes, when we're chatting, Carrie presses her thumbs into my wing joints, finding just the spot in that magic way of hers, and that helps keep me mobile.

Back in the day my colours were dazzling diaphanous psychedelic. Over the years life has thrown a few buckets of dirty cold water over them and they've lost some shimmer, muted and streaked with grey. I don't altogether mind because time and experience happens, even for sprites, and it's taught me a few valuable lessons. And I don't see why I should always shimmer just because that's what faeries are supposed to do, and I couldn't anyway because all those years and all that stuff have happened. But truth is it wasn't just that I was at the receiving end of those buckets, I let it happen. Welcomed it even. All that dazzling was so exhausting and I had enough going on trying to keep my head above filthy water and anyway I wondered who it was for and it was such a relief to just give in and let myself blend into the canopy. And it still mostly is though there's part of me, a part that's growing to be true, that says it's not enough, and I find myself yearning for the colours in Julie's paintbox.

Which brings me to blooming flowers. I'm not very confident in that regard, though I have had my moments with those birds and bees. But momentary they were followed by dreary winters and the inevitable storms and realistically, now.....

Who knows? And I'm alright with that.

I live at the top of the house, my room cradled in the branches of the very old oak tree growing outside of Pat's window. There are many ways into my room and I like to think there is always a door open, because I am the keeper of the house kettle and teapot and extensive mug collection. There is always a comforting cup of tea to be had and usually, only if required of course, a listening ear. Though I am not always home.

I may have gone downstairs to Tanya's to enjoy pickling smells and a tot of rum and whilst I am down there pop into the garden for a stroll on the wild side, risking my shadow to a chat with the ever enchanting crocodile, because what a sad life it would be without the occasional risk. I wish I remembered to remember that more often.

My favourite though is to hide in the camouflage of the canopy so I drift off, occasionally fluttering my wings, knowing so long as I can hear the strains of Barrie's tunes and Deane's always exploring footsteps I am still safely in orbit.

And at night I fold my wings and curl up so cosy in my eerie, the tick tock of Pat's clock my lullaby. That's so long as the crocodile hasn't snaffled it of course.

STEPHEN:

Character Traits:

It is easy to mistake me for a log. That's all I ever wanted to do and then suddenly, my jaws open wide inviting and snap. All will be warm inside the belly of a crocodile-a part I've played successfully for millenniums.

A boy enters with a shadow following along behind him. Tired, he sits on the log. The jaws open, snap, and the terrified boy realises he has lost his shadow inside the stomach of the monster. Crocodile admires the boy's performance only to discover it is for real.

The crocodile finally calms the boy. Auditions are always a nightmare - he should know, he's been playing them for eternity, especially this Peter Pan number. The idea that they intend to adapt it into modern ballet sequence - he fears the worst! The boy says he was told to create some kind of dance between himself and his own shadow. Which unfortunately is now being digested by the crocodile.

Apologies follow and the crocodile regurgitates the shadow which the boy tries to tie to himself. Rather inadequately, as the shadow determining to follow its own path, frees itself, as the boy stamps in an ever increasingly futile attempt to nail it to his heel. It is however the shadow making the wildness. Meanwhile trying to help, by setting his alarm, the crocodile accidentally swallows that too, every time he tries to speak and open his jaws, the alarm rings loud and clear.

A mad dance-

Then Peter arrives - What do you think of the show so far?

BARRY:

I sing. I will sing for you now. (BARRY SINGS)

(Tanya to Barry, you sing beautifully - do you sing every day?)

I try to sing every day. I have lots of songs.

I am claustrophobic. I have to get out. As much as possible.

I am always singing in the background. I could be singing around the house. I could be singing outside the house too.

Deane has a boater for Barry.

I dance too. You have to have a positive attitude, don't you?

My brothers locked themselves in cupboards.

JUDE:

I have a scented candle. It is beautiful. An expensive one. Its fragrance wafts through the whole house.

I can see beyond my room. The house is fluid. It offers opportunity and potential to move out from a rigid space.

I welcome the encounters on stairs, in corridors and maybe in other's rooms?

PAT:

There are so many stairs in my House. Eager to get to the top. Breath Freedom. Bottom, middle and top: Three stages of my life.

Oh, How I want to Fly. (Carrie offers to teach Pat how to fly - from the points of our shoulders, our wings)

The house is FULL of Ghosts. Living in the pictures in the walls. I hear Barry singing.

DEANE:

I feel safety.

This is my Lockdown Mind.

I hear Barry's voice throughout the house... doors open, doors close... Barry's monologues and stories continue.

I have a boater (hat) waiting for Barry.

I hear Pat's pictures talking on the stairs, in the hallways.

I defy lists: I work in multiples, diversity; Following imagination/consciousness where it needs to go... Seeking joy and truth in being someone else. I want to PLAY.

I am many people: I have a suitcase. I never let it go as I travel from room to room, across & through the House of Kindreds. Up and down stairs, I am constantly on the move.

I can change into whoever, whatever, whenever I want.

I feel the connection with all the others in the house, drawn to Jude's enigma - there is something in Jude's House/Room that feels familiar. Drawn to Barry's stories/echoes. Pats Lipstick- writing on the wall.

I know our house is performative and will end up on a stage. I know it will involve all of us. Separate and Together - we are building. A Chair. Connection with Don.

I (may) have a clothes room. A source.

CARRIE:

I am interested in growing wings. My Life dedicated to developing body mind awareness.

My House is HUGE! Enormous. I never realised this... I can see room after room after room... And I can be Naked Enough To Be a Poet.

(I will teach Pat how to fly from her attic)

JULIE:

I hate curtains. I will not have them in my house. From my window I have the company of the cemetery.

Character traits: I am a scullery maid. I have a huge cluster of keys. I hold the keys to ALL the rooms in this house. I have the capacity to lock people in their rooms and release them.

I see colours flooding these rooms. I see Adult Playrooms. I have a paintbox. I can paint these rooms day to day, changing colours.

I have a secret room - (a padded cell?) where I can scream and scream as loud as I choose.

There is a music room for everyone.

TANYA:

Past Work Recalled: Chairs - To sit on. Play with. Return to. Points of safety, rest, return. In rooms..... Dons bench. In Auditorium.

Inside Kindred House and Outside with the Audience; Freedom to be 'Inside' our characters world (Magical Realism) and freedom to step outside, reflecting on ourselves and our present world.

Choreographic language - developing awareness of common languages we develop. Gestures, rhythms, songs; Developing individuality (then as Deane instigates - learning to steal and make incidental)

Sharing FACTS about ourselves: short pieces of information (As Deane says - we can play with these. They can be lies) - Playing with stepping in and out of character.

1. As work develops, we can start to devise & agree Rules to our House: (Rules can help evolve structure and narratives. Of course, Rules to be followed or broken depending on our characters motives)

2. Kindred House - may never be seen by everyone in its entirety. We are free to be partial. (Like the allegory of the elephant - do we see the tail or the trunk or the foot and think it the whole animal?)

3. Each of us holds ownership of the house by dint of our narrative, no matter what other characters may think. Building trust, we can go as deep and as far as we choose into the House and its grounds.

4. Broad stroke narrative suggestions:

In some fashion, in the past, the House of Kindred Spirits had been abandoned. The house may have been destroyed. There may have been some past traumatic event?

Maybe we meet at a collective point in TIME? Over a spectrum of time, characters who might think they do not know each other have returned.

Possibilities of return & memory:

1. Some have returned to the house - conscious it was/ is their home.

2. Some feel they have arrived to this house for the first time to make home....

3. Some may never have left.

Questions follow:

Where have you been, where did you come from?

What is your time frame? What is your memory frame?

What is your individual/character narrative? What IS your role and what WAS your role? Before and After?

These suggestions are hugely loose. Some folks could be rooted in the present, others might choose to skip generations....everyone will be different. Time and memory doesn't have to be literal.

In the future, such questions will enable REVELATIONS for everyone in each scene, as they evolve over months to come... please have fun thinking about these questions... they are the stuff of dreams as well, so let them take us by surprise! They may not feature in our performative narratives - but they will feed and sustain us.....and be fun to share....

Stephen and I are interested in how such a beautiful House might start to find a way to Rebuild; embracing diversity, strangeness, life and death.....(Future questions of course to be explored when we start creating collective scenes (meetings and feasts)

TASK:

CHOOSE an OBJECT - What is its significance for your character: Describe it.

CARRIE:

House and object(s)

They won't leave me alone, the voices that tear at me, the nightmares that ravage me. Somewhere there was sunshine and warmth.

And I was held.

I see a light on the wall, I reach for it. It dances. I want to touch it. I want to step into it and be borne away. I want it to clear out the shadows, the grubby corners, the faraway darkness, under the cot, where monsters lurk. I want to become it, a ball of light.

I am in the yard. The wind swirls all around and I shiver. My sister throws a ball against the fence. I have tried to catch it but I can't; it is too high up and my hands don't reach. I crouch and pick up a stone. I love its cold feel. On one side it is grey, smooth, on the other there is brown mud; its smell pulls me and I put the stone in my mouth and suck. The cold becomes warm; I love the sensation; there is a roughness, and the mud is squidgy and tastes sweet of the earth. I move the stone around in my mouth. I hear my sister call to my mother. I am finding another stone.

I am snatched up. I howl. Fingers in my mouth. Scratching. Her face a blaze of anger. Hot liquid trickles down my leg. She clasps me to her, then holds me away. I shut my eyes tight and hold my breath. Her hands pinch my arms as she takes me inside.

We left the house and I do not, will not remember. I shut tight a door in my mind and everything is pushed in. It seeps through the edges and I push it back. For years I push it back. I clutch at lovers, mentors, friends to save me, help me push it back.

Now that all past generations are dead, I stand and face it, stamping, trembling, ready. Fling it open!

I have my shield of love, my spear of clarity and my helmet of understanding. I have my lucky stone picked from the earth. I am going into battle to face the monster.

STEPHEN:

In pursuit of narrative (crocodile fashion)

It is the audition for the first stage production of Peter Pan and a real crocodile (CROC) has turned up with high expectation of playing Peter. He believes that a great actor will overcome any obstacle that might arise - gender issues and so on...That such is his talent, the audience will forget his external form and he will fly away with the part of the young boy. Enter new character:

MERMAN (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR)

MERMAN is less than convinced and casts CROC as playing the crocodile himself, (there seem to be few others waiting to audition for that part). CROC is far from keen and is told it's something he should take up with Equity - Croc wants to Reject all stereotypes: all crocs are baddies, never given the opportunity to play the hero.

Deeply disappointed, but one has to live, CROC asks MERMAN to help him to go through his lines, but every time he tries to speak, an alarm clock goes off, which can only be stopped by CROC doing a wild dance. It comes from within Croc's stomach and sets off at moments of high tension. Quite how he swallowed the alarm clock he has no idea, though he tries to play the problem down - The Merman worries about this problem. He fears the alarm clock will be something of a major impediment. NO DISABLED are wanted in the production. Now CROC is in justified rage and ranting (largely unheard under the alarm)

CROC is now ready to live up to the big-mouthed stereotype and eat the whole lot of them. MERMAN thinks that might be going too far, but the only solution make the Peter Pan tale work is to incorporate A CROCODILE WITH A SWALLOWED ALARM - but how could that work? No answer forth-coming- croc is tearful when -

A pirate appears. He's looking for his major prop-
A hook!

TANYA:

MY OBJECT/S: My Baskets. Wicker. Woven. Splintered. Repaired. Seasonal. Containers; carrying my home from upstairs to downstairs, transported beast to beast, from home to home. They contain the stories. They do the work. They hold my dreams. They expand with the weather. They talk, they creak. Dead wood. Dead fibres.....Fragrant old wood polished with soap.

Incongruous in the House is A record Player/ A cracked record? ... Sounds from inside and outside, playing in circles, confusing old conversations with new?

The record player belongs to the House. Though others take possession of it from time to time inside their rooms, I avoid the talking machine... it gets feet tapping.... gets voices raised ... it can drive you crazy! A modern machine! I lift its arm. Often: To render silence. Render stillness....No one knows it's me!

CARRIE:

Is my time written in the ledger? Can I break open doors and get through – without a key?
The ball of light shows my future – there are so many journeys and I could do any of them

I could warble like a nightingale, queen of the night, bell-like

I could mount the steps up into the Library where angels keep the books of our lives. (Once I was allowed to look and I stepped into my life as a writer).

I could reach into the pictures and, as if mirrors, step into other worlds

I sit on the landing between flights of stairs. A ticking clock echoes through the house, up through the corners and shadows. The wall is cold against my back. I run my hand through the shadows, dark, light. Here anything can happen. Hard walls can become soft veils – gossamer-like. The clavicles have the key; the scapulas dig them out, they create the wings, up, up into the tree canopy. Yes I am nearly there!

My name is Maisie. I hear it being called now. And I have a name only I know. A flight name.

• **OBJECTS RESONATING:**

- Armadillo Hat (Julie) - Hard on the outside, soft inside (Q of defence?) Has kept hidden from her mother.
- Requisite Keys. (Julie)
- Old rusty Keys (Deane) - heavy huge, ancient - DS Rodinsky - Old keys each with a story.
- Huge old registers: The Book of Days (Deane) written in every day.

To continue exploring objects - real and imagined.....

• **NAMES BEGIN ARRIVING:**

- Ghost (Deane) (aka Ds Rodinsky? : Story - Rachel Lichenstein)
- Tatiana (Julie) animal force
- Flux (Pat) - A force of nature
- Croc (Stephen)
- Barry (Barry) Radio Barry -
- Betty (Tanya)
- Maisie (Carrie)
- Sprite? Sorry Jude - I can't find in my notes if this is your character name or one (or maybe many) names that is/are forming in the ether? There is NO rush!

To continue playing with the power of naming.....

• **OTHER REFERENCES (ONGOING)**

Reference Theme: Chair. Hands. Keys, Clocks, Wings, Costumes, Baskets, Personal journals and narratives

Reference Books: Gaston Bachelard - The Poetics of Space

References Books: Peter Zumthor - Atmospheres - The 7 principles of the House

Reference film: Tarkovsky - Stalker

References Music/ Soundscapes:

Arthur Russell - view [here](#)

Meret Becker - view [here](#)

Jon Hassell - view [here](#)

Julie Andrews Getting to Know you - view [here](#)

NOTES:

Ruptures in Time. People carrying their time with them. The sound of walking approaching from far far away.....

Clocks ticking in rooms. Different rhythms - doors opening and closing. Moon light has the power to awaken a different energy in the House.

In Ghost's room, a birthday party commences every day with jelly, ice-cream and cake...a large bunch of rusty keys kept carefully; Tatiana, paces landings, stairwells, trying doors with her new keys - some work - some don't; whilst she gathers secrets, Flux runs vertically stairways from attic to floor, a force of nature, past corridors of talking ancestors until at the top she yearns to fly. Cradled in a very old tree, high up in the branches, outside Flux's room, sleeps Sprite...her teapot warming ready. Down in the laundry, Betty folding cloth into baskets, hiding notes as Croc circles the House, keeping his tick as under control as much as he can...Tatiana's open at random a door, one of Barry's stories winds it's way to a place where a young creature is slowly awakening to life.....We wait to hear her voice, to witness her first steps? Barry appears through a door; colours fly - purples, blues and oranges

Barry finds his way through song and dance. The echo of Radio Barry makes folks feel safe. Repetition of doors opening and closing : Also becoming prisoners in our own minds. Veils exist between times/stairways/ trees.... Sprite has found another room - dark and shabby - inside are Ghosts keys....none of them work.... however she has travelled through a door into a Mirror House on the other side.....

The sun is warming the Garden...A man sits waiting. At the top of this house the tree branches are rustling, there is a breeze and the sky is blue, blue blue. Flux has a view that goes on and on....All is emerging

· Significance of Repetition: We can keep throwing images up into the air and seeing how they resettle. The same images/gestures returned to over and over to go deeper and then, later on, repetition playing scenes to keep finding them fresh, as if for the first time. Repetition also allows us to take possession of our material. To make it Familiar - to be safe in our worlds.

Process: Continue Solo Character & narrative development and Relationship building: Introduce Meetings inside the house between characters: Devising/ Scripting/weaving character led storylines. Introduce SOUND.

From CARRIE:

Re clocks, music and my brazen championing of my dad's music, this is something he wrote years ago for BBC TV. It's so him and maybe it could be in the house.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoFAem6nFNU>

From PAT:

SOUND for me as already mentioned ... CLOCKS TICKING/CHIMING, FOOTSTEPS ON STAIRS differing speeds, DOORS OPENING & CLOSING (creaking/slamming) , KEYS JANGLING. Perhaps also the sound of WINGS FLAPPING (??)

From DEANE:

Been reading TS Elliot: East Coker, thinking a lot in sound and a sound 'language' for my character. I saw a wonderful piece called 'Het Lan Nod' - in English the 'The land of Nod' (Avignon Festival 2016) - On YouTube. It was amazing.

ACTION: Each character was politely welcomed into space:

Welcome Radio Barry.

I'm very well today thankyou.

I'm not sure about the house, I go along with it. It's ok. I get along fine with the others in the house. We have to get along the best we can don't we?

I switch on and I can switch off.

If house was a theatre, I'd like to be on the main stage. Spent most of my life back stage. I'd like to be out front for a change.

Moon River is my favourite song, sung by Danny Williams. This is the song I'd sing.

We see you like dancing

I've always danced you see.

I have a Westminster chiming clock. The show in this house is 'The war of The Worlds'.

Welcome Is it alright to to call you Sprite

Yes, well that is what I am. It'll do for now. I forget my name. But it doesn't matter, cos I know who I am. I fold up my wings and need to plant my feet on the ground. On the ground. I am buzzing around, have to dodge the swats, getting in peoples way. I am small. I'll sit on this window ledge, I would like to talk with Flux. I can see she is busy. oh I love having my wing joints pushed. (Maisie) does this so well, she knows just the right places.

I lick my wings, like a cat, and stroke them. I get to hear everything, in and out of everyone's rooms. I LOVE a gossip. Radio Barry spreads the news.

Welcome Maisie. Are you comfortable.

(smiling throughout) Oh yes.

I like it on the stairs. They could do with bigger stairs.

Love watching all the people going up and down. I like to hum (she hums) I'm a good hummer.

The others love the hum. hums loudly

I eat what they give me.

I like putting things in my mouth. I love stones. Love licking the mud.

I fall into holes ????

Welcome Tatiana

I don't have time to waste. I am responsible. These walls would not exist with out me. I need to gather and sort out the secrets. I keep them safe you see. locked away.

This is a big responsibility. My work is never done. Except when I'm in the ballroom. I dance alone, I have no need for anyone. I move up and down these stairways and corridors. Secret place? well yes but I'm not telling you. I eat the animals I kill myself. Chickens are my favourite. Yes I kill them like this, quick (gestures) Plucking hah!

Pleasure? Whats that? Are we done?

Welcome Flux

Hello. I'm in hurry, So much to do. I have a stopwatch, not much time left you see. So I'm up and down these stairs, have to keep on the move.

I LOVE it in the attic, just open those windows and I can the skies and for miles, I love nature, and I want so much to Fly. Maisie says she'll teach me...there's so much I want to do, to see...I am worried I won't get everything done.

A list is very important. I can tick things off.

I like order. I like organising my cupboard of masks.

I am so impatient with my self.

I have to keep trying to get up to the attic.

I must try harder

To fly,

I like all the windows and doors to be OPEN.

I like the mirrors to be straight.

Sometimes I stop to talk to the paintings in the corridors. I just want to fly.... I LOVE nature..

Welcome Croc

silence

Welcome Croc. Can you hear me? silence Do you speak words?

Might do. silence

My name is Soc not Croc.

Oh I see. After Socrates?

Silence. Everyone calls me Croc. Have I got the part?

You're here for an audition?

Yes. For Peter Pan. To play the part of Peter Pan, not type cast as a crocodile. It's not fair. It's the alarm clock that does it. Sounds like hiccups. until it goes off. Wakes me up all the time. It's a full house. I like sleeping under the bed, I like the bathroom. She shoos me out of the house, cos my tail keeps breaking things.

Merman has a good appetite. Like Shrimps. I arrived here in a taxi. Got on at the taxi stop. I like peppermint. Kendal cake for walking up mountains. It's legal. Merman lives inside me. I don't walk up mountains. I tell jokes.... Its not your appe - tite - its my appe- tite. You don't get it it do you? Neither do I. I like being with the still man in the sunshine. Theres a plaque on the bench. I can't read it, but I think it says: Croc find the Lock for the Soc Drawer.

Want to stop this alarm as it's shaking my teeth.

Do you eat people

Thats a personal matter. I've never seen myself in a mirror

My favourite song is How much is that Croci in the window. Nice song

Welcome Betty

Hello.

In response to questions: Yes. No. Course. Laundry.

Incredulity in response to some questions: What? Why?

Washing. A dolly. No. Yes. Boiler room. Get on with job. Folding. He's not 'loud' in the house. All of em. Everyone gets on. Got job. For ever.

Good at it. High house. Many floors. Folding. I go in all the rooms. Pick up the dirties, wash em, fold em and put em back neat and clean.

Depends on the moment. Everyone's got a job. Yes. She's a strange one. Lovely cake. See the crumbs. Fruit cake mostly. Busy house. Yes. Everyone's got a story. Happy? Yes. Happy.

Continuation of character Hot-seating/ Suggested Improvisation: Audio description - eyes shut:

Describe to audience what they might see: Information of what you look like, your hair, stature, clothes, your surroundings etc. This opened up a fascinating question on zoom in relation to Deane's character - Ghost who does not speak.

The Improvisation took another fascinating route: Ghost was invited to enter her window: Ghost responded to what 'she' could hear. She could choose to 'not hear' (ignore).

Watching this improvisation on zoom, it seemed clear that Ghost was in another room. Or could be where she chose to be, but either way she was unseen by others.

Dark glasses. Silver paper crown taken from nutcracker cracker, placed on head. Ghost can hold silence. Stillness.

Other characters sensed Ghost presence.

(Tanya note:) Odd moment where it felt like a seance 'calling' Ghost.

Maisie - the child could be heard by Ghost: Maisie's hum happy birthday & delight & expectation of cake cut through...Her walls are like veils. Maisie can feel the air changing.

Sprite could feel proximity, her mouth opening to start speaking...breaths in the air. She would move to be close. Unobserved. Not wanting to disturb the air.

Ghost had potential to bring silence and silence other characters. To hold their breath. To listen.

Meanwhile Flux - could strongly intuit presence. She rattles the door. Running up and down stairs. Breathing audible to us/audience - but not to Ghost.

The question of how does an audience see the world was discussed. How do we set up conventions clearly for an audience? Who can see who? Who's story are we in at any one given time? When do collective moments happen? Zooming in and zooming out. How to create invisible characters? How to use lighting and sound. Wonderful opportunity for humour and confusion too!

We talked about TIME: All agreed that House of Spirits is TIMELESS, yet Everyone is linked by their different measurements of time. Clocks register in everyone's worlds.

Importance of sound tracks developing: Use of human LIVE voice. Use of recorded and "found" sound effects in nature/ surroundings and music. Playing with repetition and notion of personal themes.

Please keep any personal notes in your journals!

For next couple of weeks IF and when you have time and inclination: We suggest the following:

CHAIRS & OBSERVATION:

Please find a chair you are happy to work with in your house.

Do the most ordinary things: sitting, approaching.

Placing chair in different positions and playing with physicality to and with chair. It may feel like like dance. It may feel strange. Use it to stretch.

Observe looking at it close up. Observe sitting in it, on it.

Introduce your character into the play at moments. Introduce your chair to the room. You don't need words. Take time. Sit and observe your world from the chair. Finally if feasible (ie if chair doesn't weigh a ton!) Try chair in outside space. How different do you feel?

The first looks at Power of Chair:

Looking at the image of THRESHOLD: where public space of street meets private space of home:

"In this Threshold space sits the chair which is a metaphor for the embodiment of human elements such as arms, legs, back and seat. This ergonomically designed symbolic form placed by the occupant in the threshold, projects out towards the public space. Positioned with its back to the private space, the chair looks away from the nest towards horizons of memories." Quote from "The Poetics of Thresholds: Social Portrait as a chair."

Second quote is from Peter Brook - theatre director (in his 90's) from interviews with Margaret Croydon:

Here he is talking about potential power of a cardboard box in the empty space!

"A person sees two things at the same time. He or she sees a man in everyday clothes going towards a cardboard box.... I will put it another way.... There are two worlds; the everyday world and the world of the imagination - another level of reality. There are lots of words for it - imaginative, poetic, and so forth. When children play, they pass quite naturally and freely between the two worlds all the time. Children, at one and the same moment, hold a stick and pretend it's a sword, and yet it's a stick. And they don't get confused, because if you say to them, "it's a sword", while you're playing the game, it's a sword. But if suddenly you come and say, "Drop that stick," it's a stick. There's no confusion. They can coexist. There is a total freedom between the two worlds. And this is something children have. And then they lose it.... The theatre, always, in all its forms, has contained this double element. The theatre is the meeting place between these two worlds." from "Conversations with Peter Brook"

and

Thirdly, from wonderful actor Joseph Chaikin, talking about ideas of how to relate to an audience:

"One of the baffling questions for the actor is "who is the audience"? Every performer makes some decision about the audience in their own mind; personalising, making specific the anonymous.... They make a secret choice....to whom do they dedicate their performance? it could be a friend, a critic, the ghost of Ghandhi? In the fall of 1966, we began a number of exercises.....(in preparation for a production of Midsummers Nights Dream) we began with the idea of the audience being composed of tables, chairs, trees, squirrels and gradually moved to an audience of human beings! The idea was that we were always addressing ourselves to some someone, some element or some force. The idea is to select, "call up" If I say for example, I am playing this performance for Martin Luther King,.... or Billie Holiday, or Goebels, or all those who killed themselves,or for the unborn "all who drowned in a flood, or all those who pray for change.... the list is endless.. it can be wide, it can be general... it can be for one person..... a sense of our audience creates living contact...it defines what we are "calling up to be present from ourselves....." Joseph Chaikin "The presence of the Actor"

Threshold: A moment of Imagining

As we emerge from lockdown, breathing ourselves into a threshold, a doorway maybe, a safe, comfortable place, neither inside nor outside, potential departure: we look out onto the new world: Ourselves:

Carrie: So many different words came to me, some sublime, some made me feel sad, some took me downwards into the liquid and down into my intestines... and who knows where that leads?

Barry: Looking out you mean? It's peaceful. I feel very relaxed, excited even. I can hear small voices in the background. Nothing bad, serene really, good, really good. When in physical surroundings it can get too noisy, but when we relax, life is good. Life can be better can't it?

Pat: I found this quite hard. I'm excited. There's all these new challenges ahead. I enjoyed looking up. I could see birds, blue skies... I could hear my dad calling me. I could see his blue eyes. He had lovely colour blue eyes when he was alive, when he was looking at the sky, so blue. He was lovely my dad.

Deane: Something happened to me yesterday. Something important. So.... I was hijacked at the door, I was taken into THE house, and made to walk through doors. I walked around that house and through a door into a room where I found a fork, then I returned to the threshold....

Julie: I was on a stage with thick velvet curtains, and I knew this was a threshold to death. But I had no fear. I decided. That was important. I decided, I want to Live, I want to live wild like a galloping horse, I saw Blue skies reaching out and out ... and no clouds at all.

Jude: Curled up in the doorway of a small house, a small doorway, warm sun on my face. I feel lovely and safe - the small world I look out on and into is quite an enclosed street, then I see them move???? I leave the doorway and I make my way to the end of the road, more like an avenue really, and it opens out, opens wide open to beautiful blue skies, lots of beautiful white clouds, it reminds of being at the top of the world, like at the top of Bestwood Park. Lovely.

Stephen: My threshold - life and death. One side or the other. Marriage is about lifting over the threshold. My arms are open, but there's no one there. There's no-one left to carry over..I'm feeling lost. My arms are open, feeling like I'm missing someone....

Tanya: Not so concentrated, couldn't take my mind beyond the breathing but I found a threshold. I was leaning into an arch, and I fitted into this arch quite well... Looking out.. I knew the world was ready. I looked up, I don't know what I was expecting, but i think I was expecting more? I saw roof tops, rows and rows of midlands town houses, council houses maybe, stretching out...and blue skies, like after the rain, blue skies.

IMPROVISATION - Radio Barry is in the House.

(Ghost sits throughout, listening, not listening, hearing, not hearing?)

RADIO BARRY: I'm contemplating things I going to do. I'm starting off with the things I'm wanting to do and going to do. I can see a bright future. I can see I'm moving on..... in my imagination, I can fly... I'm going to get into my acting, into my tap dancing..... my singing.. oh yes

TATIANA: If I give you the keys to the Ballroom, would you like to go there?

RADIO BARRY: oh Yes. Thankyou. That would be nice

TATIANA: Can I be your audience Radio Barry? Can I dance with you?

RADIO BARRY: Oh yes... I want to sing there too...

EVERYONE: Sing it, sing it sing it Sing it Radio Barry!

RADIO BARRY: (sings whole song beautifully): Somewhere over the rainbow.... (others join in) Skies are blue....

I've got a glass with rings around it, for lime and lemonade, I'm sipping this ... it's very nice. I like being in every room.

MAISIE: Radio Barry leaves a little bit of himself in every room. He leaves lots of things in the walls.

SPRITE: Hello Radio Barry. When I want to spread some news, can I ask you to broadcast on my behalf?

RADIO BARRY: Oh yes...

Someone says?: There are volume buttons aren't there. We can turn you up and turn you down?

TATIANA: Sometimes you are broadcasting whilst you sleepwalk Radio Barry.

FLUX: I am desperate to focus on what I need to do. I need to get to the top of this house, and sometimes, sometimes, you are in the way?

I need to turn you off, I'm sorry to be so blunt Radio Barry, but I say things as they are....

Someone says: Shut the doors. Open the doors...Shut the doors.....which room are you in Radio Barry?

RADIO BARRY: Well, I don't know, I like coming and going you know, maybe the kitchen, the bathroom, the bedroom, I like the hallway best. Yes I like the hallway.

MAISIE: I want a lullaby.

Someone says: Maisie would like a lullaby Radio Barry.

RADIO BARRY sings beautifully: SONG -

(After All these Years)

My darling come to me,
Sit you down easily
And rest awhile near the soft firelight
Cold is the night
But warm is my heart with pride
Having you by my side
You're still my guiding light
After all these years
You're soft assuring ways
The rock I lean on
Saw me through my darkest days
When all hope had gone
You're still the only one
I'll ever hold near
And I love you
After all these years
Time for me passes on
I'm growing old
A lifetime nearly gone
I cannot unfold, nights dark and cold
But warm is your hand in mine
Feeble with aimless time
The light of love still shines
After all these years
You're soft assuring ways
The rock I lean on
Saw me through my darkest days
When all hope had gone
You're still the only one
I'll ever hold near
And I love you
After all these years
I still love you
After all these years

Someone says: ah Maisie's asleep.
Wake up Maisie, Wake up.

WORKING OUTDOORS

Wollaton Park

Space: Discovery and Appreciation of Beauty. Breathing. Light. Air. Birdsong. Gracious presence of trees. Sense of time. 350 years of growth. Someone (apology - who ?) speaks of the sound of trees drinking, drawing sustenance from the earth. Hold a stethoscope we can hear sap rising. Trees living, breathing. A public space: people pass, intrigued. Stop, observe, ask a few questions.





Chairs are placed in a circle, to the edge of the space. We turn and observe, listening 2 minutes in silence.

Dons bench incidental.



Actors enter wooded clearing with characters in mind. Choosing their place. Individually. Choosing their tree. Individually. Communion. Tenderness. Characters emerge.



Chairs enter space. Create spaces. Define spaces. Determine relationships.
Stories unfold physically.

Ghost invisible travels in space, unseen and seen. Near and far.

Maisie hums, shaking stones, in stairwell - proximity to Tatiana - smiling from ear to ear.

Tatiana - Lady of the House commanding view of all: Traversing perpendicular - height: Crossing patrol with keys.

Flux running to the perimeters - returning to centre: energy and stillnesses. Old tree and Time: Drawn upwards to the sky.

Sprite flies and falls, (leaves on her back) Flies. The forest is hers.

Radio Barry sings - his voice caught in snatches. He can be anywhere. Absolutely anywhere.

Croc finds his walk (and his sunglasses and hat); matching skin with bark of tree. Gravitates to the bench (Don)



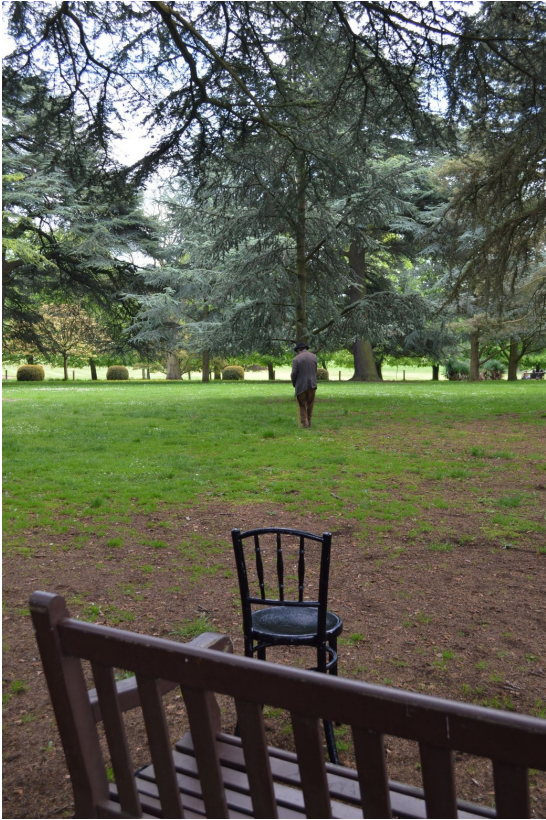
After improvisations; actors return to chairs & share thoughts:

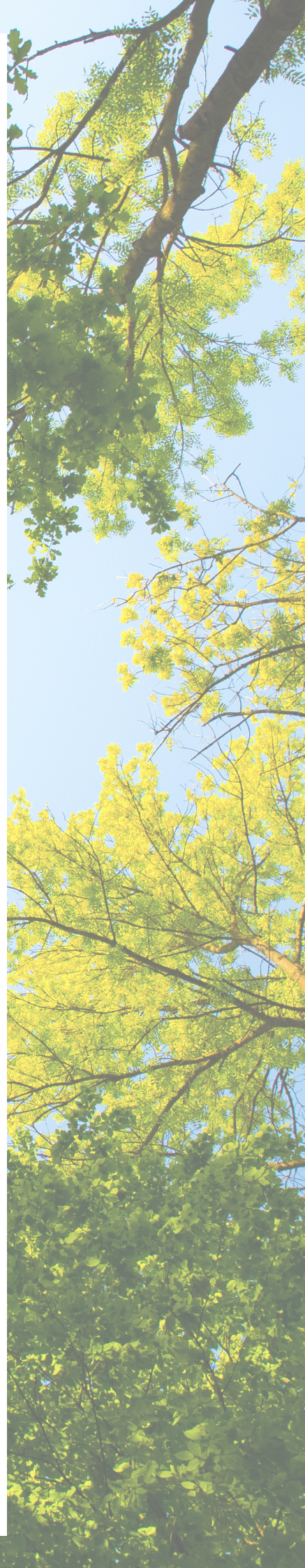
Old keys, New keys, Trees/Characters becoming one. Illusion of empty space, characters hidden.

Trees/House inside out. Record player caught in groove. Unaware of being observed - our first audience, so absorbed in tasks.

Populated with imagination. I longed to see the Ballroom!









"GETTING TO KNOW YOU..."



EXERCISE ONE:

Getting to Know You i.e - Trees; inhabiting the space, internalising the landscape, the creatures, the sounds.

Working physically with chosen tree. Giving and receiving weight, following contours. physical relationship to tree; near and far. Gestures of welcome, homage, tenderness.

EXERCISE TWO:

Entrance and Exits.

Finding individual points of Entry. Stepping IN-to the space and OUT-side.

Ritualising thresholds.

Jude at distance - we might "hear" her before we see her in the space?

Pat's energy - entry beyond the space (possibly through auditorium?)

Carrie follows the arc of her branch to create a veil of entry.

Stephen behind a tree - Entry a surprise.

Julie's point of entry centre stage - Front door and possession of whole space: Audience to follow?

Tanya dressed in tree, scrapes ground with chickens.

Cluster of entrances Stage Left: Maisie, Croc and Betty

Physicality: Possible transitions. DOORS into the Kindred World. Safety of being able to Step Out.

(Alice in Wonderland/ Narnia)

Stepping IN - to Kindred World. Crossing thresholds. Sensitivity to other peoples Thresholds.

Meeting others on our pathways in space. Weaving stories from Meetings. Looking for stillnesses!

Placing chairs into the space. Formal and informal Dancing with Chairs

Introductions and Inviting dance partner chairs.

We discussed the language of Being Ourselves unless/until we cross the threshold. Each story, performer feeling the energy of crossing the magic line of entry. Being able to Play with switching from Actual, Time, Reality: Age into the Fantastic.

Becoming confident crossing landscapes backwards and forwards. Being able to step in and out of character/ worlds.

Freedom to switch on, then off.

Reflection of digital media session with Barret Hodgson -

A couple of Practicalities are resonating:

- We need darkness to play with light.
- We need surfaces to reflect and project light on and from....these might be objects or materials.

As we progress with our storytelling, we can imagine and trust our bodies, and the simplicity of our bodies moving in space, the Objects and Materials we work with, the power of words, silence and sound, light we can create magic using these factors....

Some members of the Kindred Family



Thresholds and Being 'ON' or "Off" and performers.

Doors/Chairs/Portals

There have been many many moments, hundreds of moments! The theatre language we are searching for rang out loud and clear, usually found by accident rather than intent!; potential narratives, characters lighting up.

Click [here](#) for a waltz in the park!

Stephen's 3 minute list

Julie walks (herself) tossing comments to us over her shoulder about her day and how she doesn't want to see or talk to anyone really.... arriving to (A door) TRANSITION: opening, entering into another world - The portal: The ballroom.

Getting to Know You with the trees... (whispered)

Empty chairs waiting

Maisie stepping over threshold.

Ghost made visible by being invisible to others

Different peoples energies.

Flux's (Pat) explosion into space - breaking audience defined perimeters - arriving from where?

Sprite spinning - distant arrival - appearance via sound....

Barry singing absolutely anything - dancingabsolutely anything..

Waltzing with chairs - Beethoven - dancing together

Don on bench under the clock

Maisie humming her ways through worlds.

The Door or The Portal

The ticking from different sources - including crocodile

Tea in the woods - the picnic.... The Feast in the ballroom

Turning inside outside.

Time Time Time

Autobiographical and Kindred Worlds.

During this next phase we will very gently revisit personal material and stories from over the last year or so.

Looking at personal material and seeing how it changes as we repeat and play with it...

We have been playing with the theme of THRESHOLDS: How we enter (and exit) The Kindred House. How do we arrive? Are there literal doors? Metaphorical doorways?

How does our Temporal World and the timelessness of Kindred World interact?

We'd like to continue exploring the interplay between our personal (autobiographical) stories and our characters in Kindred World.

Tanya:

I've had a load of ideas over recent weeks. I'd like to explore if we can have a theatrical presence before the House of Kindred opens... i.e. Barry has spoken of his desire to be Front Stage after a lifetime of being 'Backstage'. Inside The Kindred House - Radio Barry is very much front of stage. My character Betty as a stage-manager... will happily work transforming scenes INSIDE The Kindred House from her boiler room, facilitating scene changes, shifting props, moving chairs with a wave of a hand.

ONE: I'd like to explore/invent 'real life' jobs for each of us in the theatre - to imagine/work as thread to link us together inside a scene - Elements of our created 'real jobs in the theatre' may inform/be useful for our Kindred characters inside Kindred House.

TWO: How do we ENTER?

A. At a session at Wollaton Park, Julie talked to us over her shoulder in a light manner about how she's had a hard day and didn't really want to talk to anyone - when she reached "The Ball Room Doors" - her manner completely changed. As she entered and closed the ballroom doors behind her she appeared to disappear whereas....

B. Deane disappears through walls unseen by most inside the Kindred House, and throws up question of what/how/who is Deane's job/place/ in pre Kindred World? Is she already on the other side?

C. Jude's character is heard before she is seen — is she revealed as by lights in her tree or at a window?

What might Jude's job be in the theatre?

D. Stephen has found a place in the auditorium - front row... (visiting writer?)

Hat, stick, dark glasses, bag of sweets - endless supply of crocodile sweets in pocket.

E. Pat's character appears like a bolt of lightning... Hits the stage (from where?) - and all goes dark on stage? What is this? A new beginning?

F. Carries' transformation has to be visible. Shamanic. We 'see' the crossing of worlds. Audience witness this transformation?

THREE: There was remembered discussion about THE CHAIRS

There was remembered discussion about us all starting in the Auditorium on our chairs.

4. We suggest we learn to Waltz (basically) well - with dignity!

5. We learn to sing "Getting to Know You"

6. We revisit 'Facts About Ourselves' Improvisations

7. EXERCISES (Last 10 minutes) Taking Time
Importance of taking our Time. Our prerogative.
Not to fear Waiting.
Not to fear Silence.

Questions for each person: each question with a whole minute to play with. Simply.

- a. What time is it?
- b. How to fill 2 minutes
- c. If I had All the Time in the World.

"TAKING YOUR TIME"



Four Improvisations: Three Hats - Three Canes.

1. Starting from cliched aged physicality - slow rising into Phoenix Mode - time passing. (reversing)
2. No words - time passing.
3. Beautiful Juxtaposition: Radio Barry & song approach from trees to bench (After All These Years) / Pat watching Earth (wollaton pine needles), passing through fingers, Stephen thinking. (Final image of Pats dirty empty hands)
4. When I grow up. (Stephen)

Autumn 2021

Improvisation 1 with Chair:

Stephen entered with chair to place in space not knowing the group had decided the 'right' place. This evolved into hot and cold playing to guide him - but became a clear true 'impro' about being lost.

(Stephen was ok about this!)

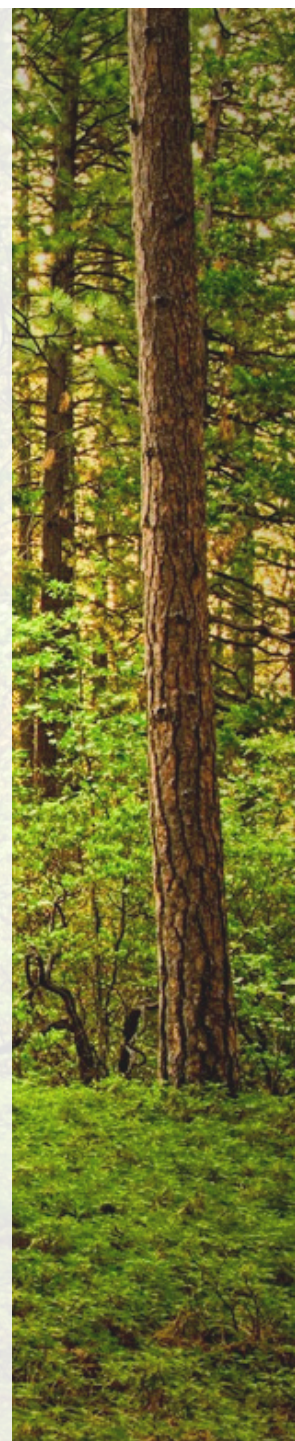
Carrie entered with instruction to decide where to place chair, and then choose to sit.

Pat was instructed to decide where she was going to place chair BEFORE she entered the space...

Barry was asked to take chair into space with a directive: to sing to the trees. Which he did. He sang "I Talk to the Trees". The sun came out, birds started to sing and the whole glade lighted up.... goosebumps moment!



I Talk to the Trees
Clint Eastwood
I talk to the trees
But they don't listen to me
I talk to the stars
But they never hear me
The breeze hasn't time
To stop, and hear what I say
I talk to them all
In vain
But suddenly, my words
Reach someone else's ear
At someone else's heart
Strings too
I tell you my dreams
And while you're listening to me
I suddenly see them
Come true
I can see us some April night
Looking out across a rollin' farm
Having supper in the candlelight
Walking later, arm in arm
Then I'll tell you
How I pass the day
Thinking mainly how
The night would be
Then I'll try to find
The words to say
All the things you
Mean to me
I tell you my dreams
And while you're
Listening to me
I suddenly see them
Come true



Discussion about Energy and Intention on entering a space - we learn so much about a character by how they enter or appear in the space.... where they have come from or where they might be going?

Improvisation 2 with Bench: Alone Together

Everyone chose a hat. A stick. Each entered from own entry point. Instruction with no words. No showing.

Challenge to DO as little as possible. Difficult!

Dynamics evolve.

Dialogues between sticks.

Finally: collapse of muscles and from this, rising of the phoenixes.



Text to Trees: Hello Old Fellow, (Bowing with hat in hand) Goodbye
Hello down there, It's good to see you. I'll be back. I promise
(No words - Walks backwards and bows) I didn't want to turn my back on you



Click [here](#) to view farewell video