



talking birds presents

CAPSULE



a talking birds project



Creative Outline

The audience enter a wooden pod and are met by a sailor who shows them to their six seats. Luggage is stowed, a fog horn sounds, a lighthouse appears on the horizon, and the ship sets sail. The audience then go on a journey which sees the pod transform from the creaking ship's hold, to a submarine, to a mine, to a spaceship, to a cable car, to a helicopter, and back to a ship again, where it docks at sunrise in New York city.

Through the window of the pod, glimpses of the changing landscape are seen - presented by what appears to be a large cast who play the part of the dock hands, the astronauts, the planets, and who manipulate the puppet fish, throw the fake snow, and guide in the helicopter.

When the 15 minute journey is complete, the audience are led onto the 'shore' where it is revealed that the show they've just seen has been performed by the previous audience. The previous audience takes a well deserved bow.

The new audience are then given lights, props, and costumes, and the highly enjoyable task of performing Capsule to the next audience.

How audiences engage with the work

Capsule is a simple yet inventive show which brings the audience backstage and allows them, in a very friendly, and accessible way, to experience a show from both sides of the curtain. They enjoy knowing the 'secret' of the performance, and experiencing the pleasure of trying to make the show as pleasurable for a new audience as it was for them.

They are facilitated in the performance by 3 staff who tell them moment by moment what to do and when. Participation is not forced, and the situation is not one where audiences feel exposed or embarrassed.

“What an **exciting journey**, it gives you all these different feelings in 15 minutes ”

“Excellent - The promised surprise was **totally unexpected** and great fun to participate.”

“Thank you so much!! Loved it - **hugely imaginative**. Great show - Thoroughly enjoyed it.”

“Fantastic idea I **thoroughly enjoyed** the show! It is something completely different to anything I've seen before and was **great fun!**“

“What a **great idea**. Totally **enjoyed** it - wish it was a bit longer - wondered why some of the cast weren't wearing blacks!”

“Great fun, imaginatively put together to tell all sorts of stories and **great to be part of the performance** - just brilliant!”

“Brilliant to be in and outside of the capsule. A **compelling** narrative, followed by **carefully guided** expedition of an entirely different nature.”

[Audience Comments]



Brief biog of company

Talking Birds is a theatre company based in Coventry, UK, known for its astonishing acts of transformation. It has created work using a unique brand of humour, music, and visual flair in venues both conventional and unconventional across the UK and internationally - from the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, to Kilkenny Livestock Mart, Ireland, to a giant underground car park in Scarborough, to a decommissioned hospital in Coventry. The company's Whale - a gleaming tin whale which swallows audiences up one at a time, has seen over 5000 people pass through it.

Capsule was originally made in its FarGo space - a curated warehouse space for artists. And then developed and performed at the Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry.

Talking Birds "that fine Coventry company who pioneered site specific theatre" (The Guardian) has been a Regularly Funded Organisation of Arts Council, England since 2002.

www.talkingbirds.co.uk

Accessibility

As well as being wheelchair accessible, Capsule is accessible through the company's innovative digital access tool, The Difference Engine, which offers audio description and subtitles for each performance delivered via wifi to smartphones and other mobile devices (handsets are also available to borrow).

Given part of the performance in the capsule is in complete darkness, we recommend an age restriction of 8 +

Track record

Talking Birds has a 25 year track record of successfully managing productions in a wide variety of contexts both inside and out, and with engaging with the public in formal and informal contexts. It has worked in partnership with various organisations to deliver its work including local authorities, heritage organisations, city events teams, schools, galleries, theatres, and festivals.

Technical Specification

Capsule requires an indoor space with min dimensions in the region of 10m x 10m x 4m high - it can be adapted to fit different shaped spaces, so please check with us if you are unsure.

The space should have the capacity to be blacked out.

A basic PA and lights system is preferable, though the show can also be effective in low-tech 'dirty' spaces like warehouses, as long as there is electricity.

Show length: 15mins, plus 15mins performing, so audiences get a 30 minute experience.

Get-in/get-out:

Get-in time is 1 day. Get-out time is 3 hours.

Number of shows per day/capacity:

Up to 8 shows a day can be presented, giving a capacity of 48 per day. Capsule requires 3 or 4 volunteers for 15 minutes at the beginning of the day to stand in for the 'previous audience'.

Crew/Front of house:

3 performers and 1 stage manager look after Capsule. FOH staff are required during performances.



Insurance:

Talking Birds has public liability insurance to the value of £5 million.

Referees:

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