

The Memory Project

Watch, play, remember

Performance and workshops for young people experiencing bereavement

What is The Memory Project?

The Memory Project is a joint project between Lunabug Theatre and Ellie Harrison. It brings together their respective theatre shows *Dreams of Philomina* and *The Etiquette of Grief* with accompanying workshops for children and young people who are experiencing bereavement and their families. Over the course of a day the young people taking part experience a high quality performance followed by creative workshops that draw on the ideas and issues raised in the show.

The package of performance and workshop can be offered as a one day workshop for both age groups. Alternatively, each of the shows with accompanying workshop can be offered as a standalone experience for the specific age group.

The Shows

The Dreams of Philomina

For ages 4 and up

A charming tale of love and loss, with a whole lot of silliness in between!

Philomina is a lonely widow who gets one last opportunity to say goodbye to her husband before he moves on to the next life. Her adventures take her on a magical voyage through an unfamiliar land-where things aren't always quite what they seem...

Combining storytelling, puppetry, and live music, this heart-warming show asks what would you say if you could speak to the person you loved one last time?



"a gentle family hit about love and loss" (The Star, Sheffield)

"Really amazing show - dream like quality, beautiful imagery, comedy moments and very good chemistry on stage. We loved it!" (Audience member, The Lantern Sheffield)

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Etiquette of Grief

For ages 12 and up

Ellie Harrison's *Etiquette of Grief* is a beautifully intelligent, funny and heart-warming piece about love, sadness and loss and compares our personal and public responses to grief through song and filmic re-enactments.



Etiquette of Grief is the first part of a broader sequence of creative projects entitled *The Grief Series* and you can find out more at www.griefseries.co.uk. In the show Ellie considers if there is a time and a place for showing extreme emotion, and if so, when? With inspiring messages from her digital alter-ego, interactive games and plenty of cucumber sandwiches, *Etiquette of Grief* unwraps our personal and national responses to grief and the grieving whilst celebrating the freedom of expression, even in our darkest moments.

Audience feedback:

"I genuinely wanted to be brave enough to give you a standing ovation as I've never seen anything quite like it, either as meaningful or as funny"

"This is not a patronising or sentimental performance but a genuine connection to our humanity, flaws and all."

"Etiquette of Grief struck to the core of my own grief having lost a close relative this year."

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About the Companies

Lunabug Theatre

Lunabug tell original stories with a heart-warming charm. Honest and playful, we create a visual adventure for audiences old and young.

Lunabug is committed to creating high quality contemporary theatre for all the family to enjoy. We take our audience with us on a magical journey that is crammed with imagination and full of twists and turns. We create a beautiful blend of visual imagery and original sound design, which is all combined with our playful brand of physical storytelling.

Based in Leeds and Oxford Lunabug Theatre is run by Co-Artistic Directors Naomi Rothwell and Beth Caudle who collaborate with a range of other artists to make original family theatre. The company formed in 2010. Their first show, *The Dreams of Philomina*, was supported by the Emerge artist development program at The Carriageworks, Leeds. After initial touring and Arts Council Funding in 2012, further dates are currently being booked for 2013. They are produced by LittleMighty, a producing partnership of Gloria Lindh and Dick Bonham.

You can find out more about Lunabug Theatre at www.lunabug.co.uk.

Ellie Harrison

Ellie Harrison is a performance maker and artist living and working in Leeds, West Yorkshire.

Ellie creates a range of solo and collaborative devised performance work for studios, galleries, found and public spaces. Participation is at the heart of all of her work as a performer, facilitator and mentor of young people. Her work is often characterised by a playful and provocative approach to difficult topics, encouraging audiences to make decisions and participate.

Ellie has been making performance both nationally and internationally since 2006. Her work has been given 4 star reviews in The Guardian and all the projects in *The Grief Series* have been funded by Arts Council England through the National Lottery. She is produced by Peter Reed and The Performing Office.



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Workshop Content

Our workshops have been specially planned and prepared to work sensitively and creatively with young people experiencing bereavement. Our approach is structured and adapted to the needs of the participants. We work to create a safe environment where participants can reflect on the theatre they have seen and take part in inclusive activities that explore their creativity and encourage them to share their thoughts and reactions to the show they have seen. This chance to share and participate together gives the young people a chance to feel less isolated and promotes team work and communication.

Our workshop leaders are experienced in working with groups from early years through to key stage 4, A-Level students, university students and young people or adults with learning disabilities.

The two age groups will take part in separate tailored workshop sessions. We will bring the groups together for the final part of the day so they can share their ideas and reflect on their day.

Examples of workshop sessions:

All sessions begin with an introduction which includes offering coping tools such as a time out zone in case any participants need emotional support.

Lunabug Theatre - Ages 4 to 11 Years

The workshop is a playful and safe space to explore the themes in the show. The participants take part in activities that ask them to think about the character Philomina, from the show. How did she feel at different points along her journey? What advice would you offer, to help her? Using their reflections on Philomina the participants are encouraged to think about someone who is special to them and what advice they would give to others experiencing bereavement.

Ellie Harrison - Ages 12 Years and up

The workshop allows participants to play games, invent their own alter egos and create a bereavement 'Survival Kit'. Creative tasks and activities will give participants the chance to explore memory and imagination. The workshop aims to create a safe space where notions of grief and bereavement can be discussed and expressed openly through a range of empowering creative practice.

End of Session - Joint Workshop

Both age groups come together for the final part of the session. This is a chance for family members collecting them to share in what they have learnt and experienced. The two groups share their ideas of pieces of advice for the 'Survival Box'. Everyone has the chance to make a paper aeroplane (like Albert in The Dreams of Philomina). Everyone writes a memory about their special person on the plane and can take their 'Memory Plane' home with them.

Workshop Participant's Feedback:

"A great day to bring together families who are experiencing bereavement."

Dan, St Gemma's Hospice

"I learnt to have fun and be brave."

Participant, Age 7, St Gemma's Hospice

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"All of the children (and I can speak for myself too!) thoroughly enjoyed the event and got a lot from it. What did they get?a sense of connection with other children who have experienced the death of somebody significant in their lives. This reduces the sense of "it only happened to me"- to understand that it is ok to have fun even when there has been tragedy in your life. A sense of achievement. A sense of self-confidence. your manner with the children was exceptional - very perceptive, inclusive and encouraging. You illustrated a sensitivity to the needs of each individual child and each child got not only a group, but a personal experience. You showed incredible professionalism in a warm and sensitive way."

Jill Williams, Gaddum Centre Bereavement Service

Additional

As we are working with young people, we ask that there is at least one staff member from your organisation present during the workshops. This person will need to have knowledge of any specific needs the children have and contact details if parents/guardians wish to leave their children to take part in the workshops.