



SpectrumSpace

PROJECT OUTCOMES REPORT



lotterywest A REIMAGINED MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Our project saw William Shakespeare's much loved comedy 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' reimaged and reframed from a neurodiverse perspective, to celebrate neurodiversity and promote acceptance of difference. The neurodiverse Shakespeare Company members involved in the project are committed to shifting negative societal attitudes about disability, via the creative arts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary - Page 2

Project Plan - Page 3

Outcomes - Page 4

Research - Page 5

Support - Page 6

Links - Page 7

SUMMARY

A Midsummer Night's Dream is one of William Shakespeare's best loved and most performed plays. It is set in a magical world presided over by the King of the Fairies (Oberon), into which a series of humans, would-be lovers and tradesmen, are manipulated into becoming what they don't wish to do or be. The play is structured towards a utopian ideal, a happy-ever-after in which ableism and perfect embodiment is positioned as desirable for the human family, and therefore the 'natural order of things'.



Our project reimagined and reframed the play from a neurodiverse perspective, using Shakespeare's characters and act/scene structure as the starting point to re-create A Midsummer Night's Dream as a journey towards celebrating disability, diversity and acceptance. The project process was a collaborative endeavour, guided by the Shakespeare Company members and creative decisions were made by majority vote. Company members were given the opportunity to work alongside and learn skills from an experienced theatre and film production crew. Despite Covid-19 interruptions, the show went on! Our project was a three-stage process involving neuro-diverse young people aged 17+ as active participants and curious sojourners towards shifting negative societal attitudes about disability.



”

The theatre games got me out of my comfort zone and gave me more confidence. Moving around the room, I was talking more, and another example was using sound and gesture which got me thinking (Shakespeare Company Member).

“

PROJECT PLAN

Project workshops took place in theatrical settings around Fremantle including, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre and Victoria Hall. The project culminated in a Showcase Film Premiere including a Q&A session with the Shakespeare Company members at the Fremantle Arts Centre.

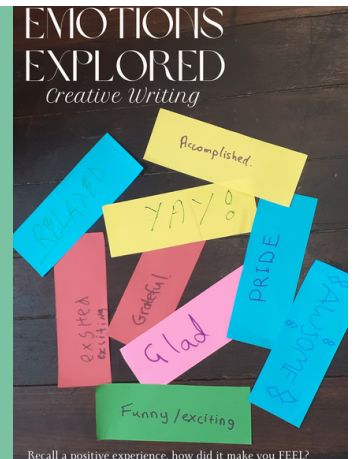


Stage 1

Theatre Games: Theatre for Living-based workshops x 10 to allow participants time to build a 'Company' ethos of trust, respect, confidence and team-building.

Stage 2

Creative Writing: Workshops x 10 to cover group discussion sessions, character and scene writing activities to produce a reimagined script.



Stage 3

Filming: Round-table script readings, dramaturgical/editing, production discussions, performance and production crew mentor meetings, and rehearsal.

Showcase Film Premiere Date: Nov 5th 2022.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Project Outcomes:

- A reimagined script for public dissemination.
- A reimagined film with the participants as actors and/or production crew.
- A documentary film showing the creative process.
- A Showcase Film Premiere.

Participant Outcomes:

- Skill building in writing, dramaturgy, performance, stagecraft and production values.
- Social capacity building through awareness of self and others in a collaborative space.
- Increased participant confidence.
- Increased ability to self-inspire/lead and inspire/lead others.

In Addition:

- 2 Company members have joined acting classes to pursue their passion in theatre/dramatic arts.
- 100% of the Company have expressed interest in exploring other creative projects with Spectrum Space.
- 90% of the Company reported they would do the project all over again, if given the opportunity.



”

My favourite part of the project was dressing up in our costumes and becoming part of the world in which the film was set (Shakespeare Company Member).

“



RESEARCH

BY CURTIN AUTISM RESEARCH GROUP

The A Reimagined Midsummer Night's Dream project was the subject of research conducted by the Curtin Autism Research Group.

The research explores:

Theatre-based programs (TBP) are social group programs delivered in an informal community setting. TBPs use strategies such as role-playing and improvisational games to encourage social interaction and communication among participants and improve their social confidence through performing. The 'A Reimagining Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream' is a theatre-based program co-produced with autistic adults and delivered by Spectrum Space in Western Australia. The program ran across six months in three phases – Theatre Games; Script Writing & Acting.

The study used a qualitative approach to conduct a realist evaluation of a TBP, Reimagining Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, from an autistic perspective.

Findings and recommendations will be published by CARG in May 2023.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

Dear Spectrum Space and Lotterywest,

We wanted to express our sincere thanks for the wonderful project you have facilitated this year for our daughter Charlotte. The reimaged “Midsummer Night’s Dream” from a neurodiverse perspective, has been such an original, creative, and worthwhile project for her to be involved in.

Charlotte has always wanted to act and be part of a drama production, but sadly opportunities are few and far between, if non-existent for people with autism to participate in. This project was so effective as they wrote the script and were involved in every part of the process of bringing a production to life, right through to the filming and acting stages.

We believe this project has benefited Charlotte immensely in social development assisting her with confidence, speech, willingness to speak to people outside of her own small network, bringing her ideas to the group to present and discuss, and we have seen a vast change in her. She has been confident to go to cafes and be in places which are new and function well while present. It has been wonderful to see her develop more interpersonal skills which the group work has, out of necessity, nurtured. Opportunities she would never have had without the group participation this year. It was simply quite amazing for us all to watch a movie Charlotte appeared in.

Thank you once again for ensuring this experience was available to all the participants, not only for Charlotte. It was extremely beneficial, and we hope that you will be able to facilitate future projects in a similar vein for our incredibly unique young people, as there are so few opportunities they can flourish so well in and be recognized and empowered to use their own special talents.

Yours faithfully,

L Paterson

(Mother of Charlotte Paterson)



PROJECT LINKS

FILM

DOCUMENTARY



THANK YOU

Spectrum Space would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported the A Reimagined Midsummer Night's Dream project.

Funder: 

Cast: AJ Sheehy, Charlotte Paterson, John Paterson, Henry Wilson, Honor Boekeman, Isabel Grace, Jen Harland, Jess Denning, Jordan Azor, Sam Hobbs and Thomas Cartwright

Workshop & Production Crew: Louise Sheehy, Trudi-Anne Gribble, Dr Suzanne Ingelbrecht, Chris Horgan, Jacob Horgan, Peter Horgan, Danika Bentley, Yvette Drager, Spectrum Space staff and volunteers

Research Team: Dr Bahareh Afsharnejad and Ms Sessina Figuiredo

Research Design: Dr Dannielle Dye, Dr Sonya Girdler and Dr. Brid Phillips

Venues: Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Victoria Hall, Fremantle Hospital and Fremantle Arts Centre



”

This group was great to work with and I do not want this to be the end. There are many more things we could do.
(Shakespeare Company Member)

“