

The Little Prince

A PERFORMANCE PRACTICE PORTFOLIO

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INTRODUCTION

To best illustrate how I intend to execute my play adaptation of *The Little Prince*, this portfolio follows the script; annotated and animated to provide you with a flavour of my intended performance style. I will articulate the artistic decision-making behind the design and performative elements of the piece, drawing on the inspirations that I identified in the beginning of this process in my proposal.

My adaptation of the childrens' story is all about

JOURNEY and
ADVENTURE

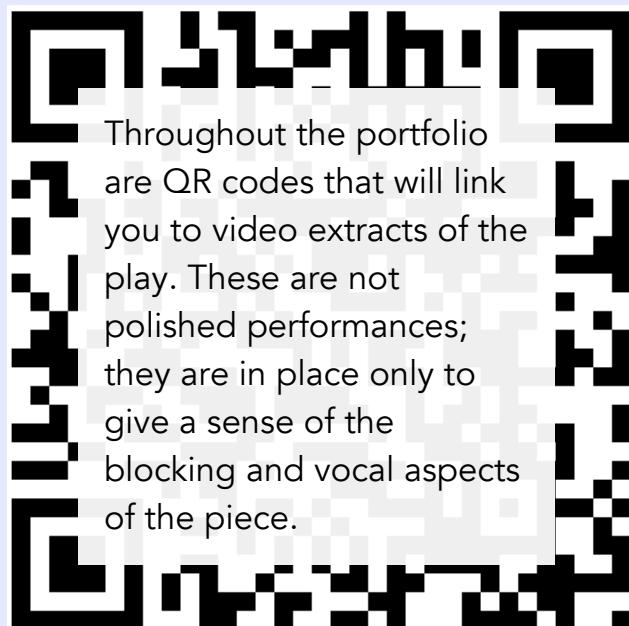
it is about the connections that we make in our life that remain, even when we leave the experience behind.

These ideas are foundational in my desire to cultivate

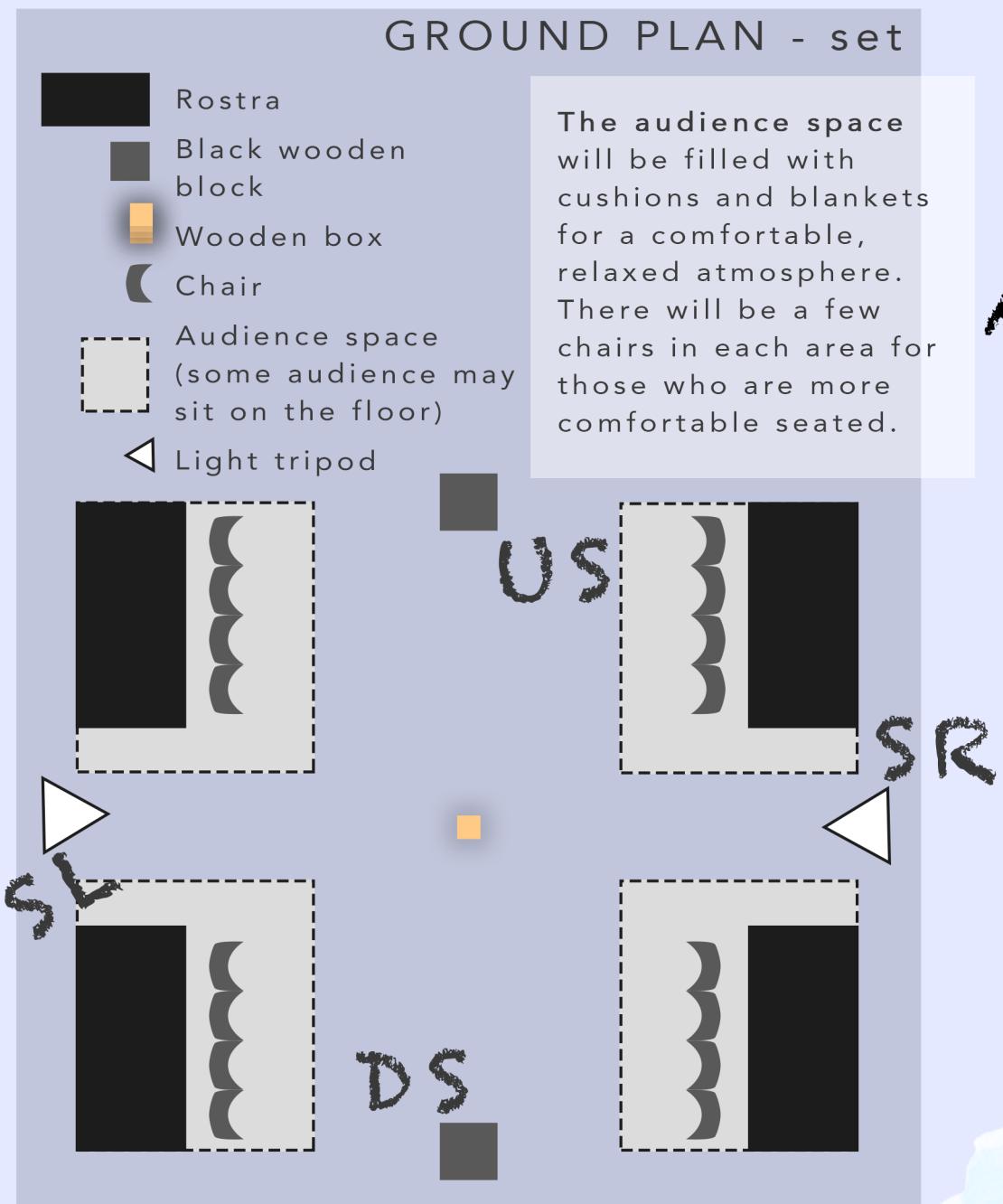
WONDER and
IMAGINATION

in a mature audience.

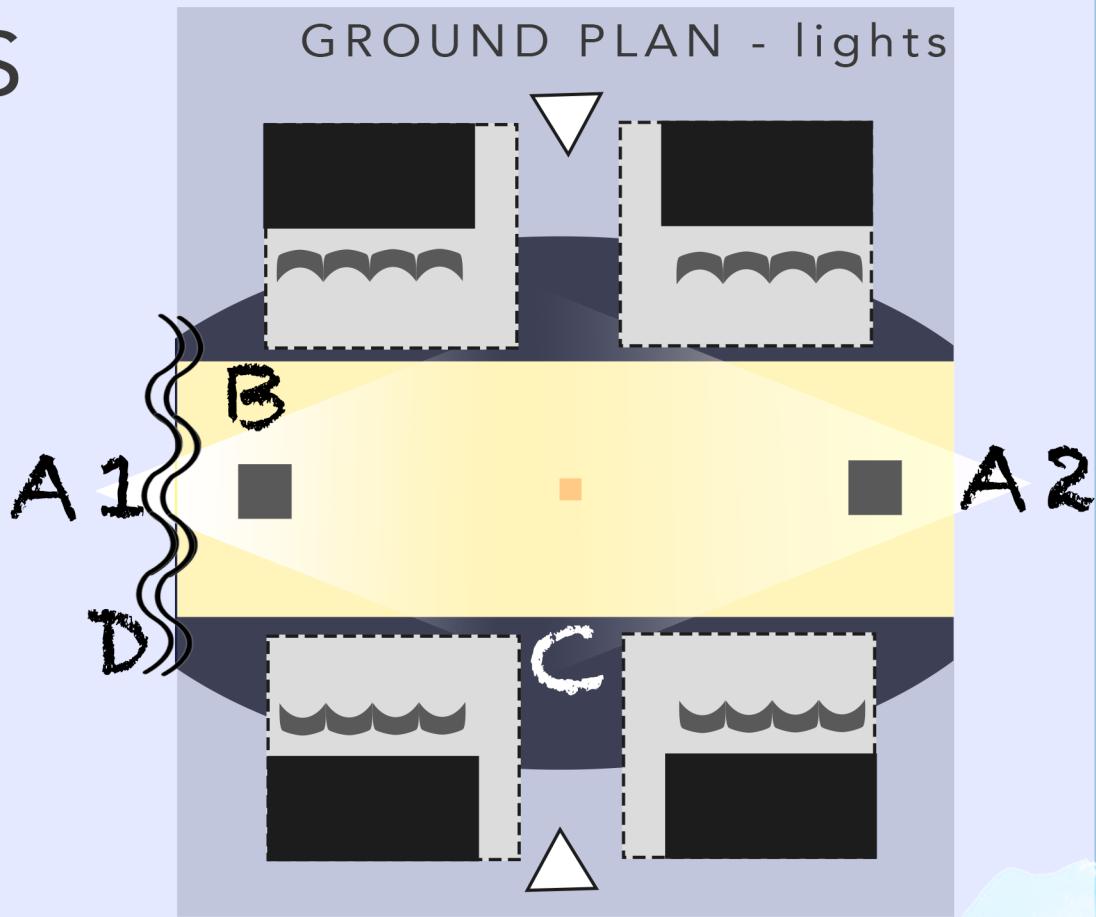
So, I hope that this portfolio allows you to access the essence of my performance, and takes you on the journey in a way that captures and cultivates wonder.

Throughout the portfolio are QR codes that will link you to video extracts of the play. These are not polished performances; they are in place only to give a sense of the blocking and vocal aspects of the piece.

STAGING & LIGHTS



GROUND PLAN - lights



A1&2: Sidelights; used to improve visibility of facial and physical elements.

B: LED wash on performing space. LEDs are versatile; I have chosen them for easy colour changes.

C: Dim wash on audience space; lighting the audience space makes the audience feel included in the action, not simply passive spectators, it creates a more relaxed space.

D: Star cloth.

THE INVITATION

LX1

Grown ups love figures.¹ When you tell them that you have made a new friend, they never ask you any questions about essential matters. They never say to you:

What does his voice sound like?

What game does he love best?

Does he collect butterflies?²

Instead they demand

How old is he?

How many siblings has he?

How much money does his father make?

Only from these figures do they think they have learned anything about him. Just so, you might say to them:

The proof that the little prince existed was that he was charming, that he laughed,³ and that he was looking for a sheep.

Certainly, for those of us who understand life, figures are a matter of indifference.

⁴

Once upon a time, there was a little prince who lived on a planet that was scarcely any bigger than himself, and who had need of a friend.

In this life, we journey far, we journey far, far...

Where we go, we'll never know, but I'll come home, home...

On his planet, there were terrible baobab seeds that the Prince tended to every morning lest they grow too big for his little planet. Other than the baobabs, a couple of small volcanoes, and the sun in the sky; the Prince was alone on his planet.

⁵ Day by day, I do the same, I stay the same, I watch the sunset

But I love this place, so day by day, I do the same, and I watch the sun set

LX2

LX1: warm wash; bright on performing space, dim on audience.

Before starting: stop strumming, cross to DS. Pause.

1. Stand: engage the audience with eye contact, tell THEM the story.

2. Circle the block, play 'the angry adult' - wagging fingers and hands on hips.

3. Pause.

4. Cross US to guitar

5. Cross to CS and scoop out the seed. Reach up, twisting like a sprout growing, look up, stretch, SEE this huge tree!

6. Repeat the scoop

and stretching movement, then return to the block US and watch the sunset. Stay in the moment.

LX2: LED, pink/orange wash

PINK TEXT: Song

BLUE TEXT: The voice of the Little Prince

PURPLE TEXT: The voice of the fox

CHALK: Notes

CHALK: Lighting

THE INVITATION is an important element of cultivating wonder in an audience. How you are made to feel when you enter a performing space can set the tone for the rest of the show. It is crucial for my audience to feel comfortable and welcome in as

I hope that if the audience are relaxed, it will make it easier for them to give in to the suspension of disbelief.

To facilitate this, I will be playing my guitar as the audience enter; the music is soft and lighthearted, and the acoustic sound creates a warm atmosphere. This element arose from the first work-in-progress where many audience members commented on the tone of the music and asked if they could enter the space to it.



The audience space is also designed for comfort, which is explained on Page 2.

LX3

Then, one day, a new sprout ¹ emerged from the dirt - one he had never seen before. He ²watched the sprout grow into a flower and cared for it tenderly, with the same devotion to which he attended the baobab seeds. The Little Prince knew that when the flower opened up to him, it would be miraculous. What he did not know ⁴was that this flower would change everything.

LP: If someone loves a flower, of which just one single blossom grows in all the millions and millions of stars, it is enough to make him happy just to look at the stars.

The flower chose her colour with the greatest care. She dressed herself slowly. She adjusted her petals one by one. She did not ⁶wish to go out into the world all rumpled like field poppies, no! It was only in the full radiance of her beauty that she wished to appear!

⁷ Day by day, I do the same, I stay the same, I wait for you...

Then one morning, exactly at sunrise, she suddenly showed herself. LX4

[Pause]

Then it all changed, before my eyes, I trade my sunsets for sunrise. LX5

⁸ She begged the Prince to excuse her dishevelled appearance though she knew very well how beautiful she was... As did the Prince.

⁹ He continued to attend to her every need, as he had before she bloomed: he watered her, brought her a screen for the wind, a jar to keep her safe in the cold night, but the Rose asked much of him, and soon he grew weary of her tiresome vanity... and came to doubt her. LX6

¹¹ So, one day, feeling alone, the Prince left his planet using a flock of migrating birds... in search of a friend.

¹² The little prince encountered seven planets on his journey: audience.

LX3: LX1

(warm wash)

1. SEE it CS; the box becomes the rose.

2. Water the 'sprout',

using watering can hidden in US block.

Circling it, cross to DS with watering can.

3. Lie on front and

watch it grow -

patient but EXCITED.

4. Turn away to DS (like a secret).

5. Sit cross-legged, facing the rose.

6. Stand, return to US for guitar

7. Walk the guitar US. When LX4, marvel in it - her beauty!

LX4: LED - red/pink wash

LX5: LX3 (sunrise)

8. Pull red string from box and tie to SR tripod.

9. Run to can DS, water the

rose, leave can US, and

10. return to DS. LX6: LX1 (warm wash)

10. Fall onto knees, face away.

11. Look at the rose once, then step onto

the block and 'fly'.

12. Relax, take a moment to see the

audience.

COSTUME & MOVEMENT

COSTUME

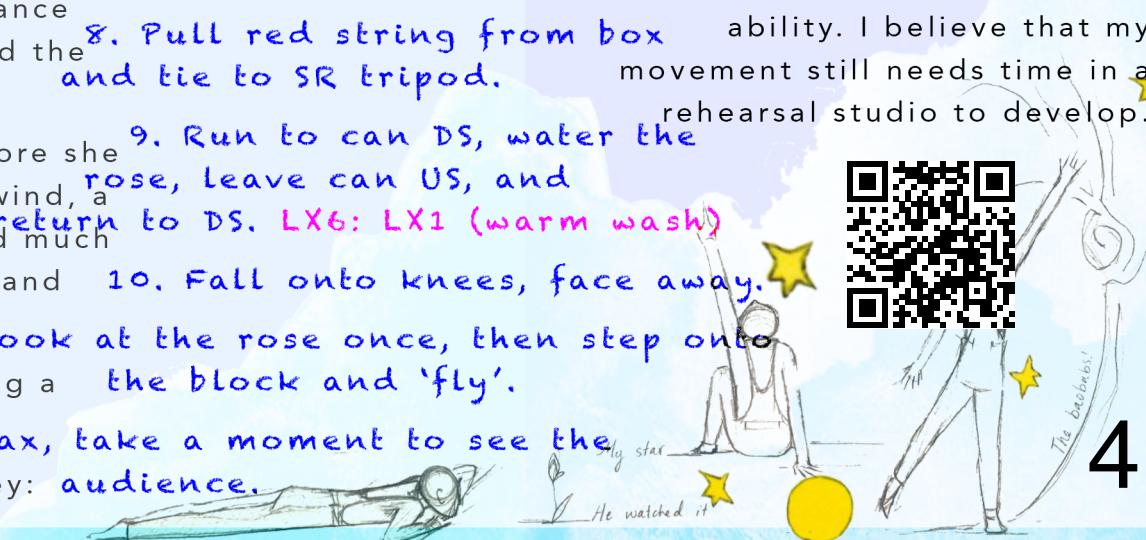
The blue dungarees are playful, the costume should feel at once artistic and childlike. In a more practical sense, the costume allows for easy movement.

MOVEMENT

As the aim of the piece is about cultivating wonder, I am using movement to SHOW what I cannot describe in words; the height of the baobab, the drawing of the sheep on page 9. The movement is energetic - if I am excited to tell the story, the audience should be excited to hear it - and playful, sharing the innocence of the Prince.

This is a challenge for me as I lack confidence in my performance and physical

ability. I believe that my movement still needs time in a rehearsal studio to develop.



1 First, he met a King who ruled over all but gave no orders.

1. Jump off the block.

2 Then, a conceited man, proud to be the best of any man on his planet... and the only man on his planet.

2. Take time unravelling yellow string; tie it to the watering can

A tippler, who drinks to forget the shame of drinking US.

3. An exciting word!

A businessman, who counted the stars to make himself rich... so that he could buy more stars to count. He reminded the Prince distinctly of the tippler.

4. Gesture to the star cloth as if the whole sky is a map.

A lamplighter, who followed his orders, even though they made his life hard. The lamplighter could have been a friend, but alas his planet was even smaller than the one the prince had left.

5. Green string; tie to SL tripod, then cross US for the guitar.

He then came across a Geographer. To map the planets of the universe, the Prince thought, must be a wonderful occupation.

6. US block/area becomes

But the geographer had never explored to learn of any planets... the place where he landed.

7. US block/area becomes the place where he landed.

Tired of his fruitless travels, the Prince asked the Geographer if he knew of any planets big enough that he might find a friend...

7. Despair! Shout to the stars!

The Geographer sent him to Earth.

8. Pull the snake out from the DS block.

I hope that here, I'll find a home, find my home, oh...

9. A bit of fear.

And at the end, I'll find a friend...

But where he landed there was nothing but desert as far as the eye could see. For a while he despaired; had the geographer lied to him? Was this all there was to the planet? Would he ever find a friend?

10. The snake follows the Prince at eye level, keeping eye-contact, rotating.

Just then, a snake slithered out of the sand!

11. Snake feigns a bite and the Prince lunges back.

LP: You are a funny animal, you are no thicker than a finger.

But the snake, though small, told the Prince that he was more powerful than the finger of a King, could carry a soul farther than any other thing, and, with one bite, could send the Prince back to where his journey did begin.

The snake offered to help the Prince, should he ever grow too homesick for his planet.

PUPPETRY

The use of puppetry in my performance is inspired by the live performances of Solar Bear's *The Arrival* and Jabuti Theatre's *Paper Memories*. These family shows both use puppetry in a way that excited wonder. Puppets, for me, remind me of what it is like to be a child and to experience the magic of something inanimate coming to life.

Puppetry is a challenging area for me as I have never worked with puppets before; however, we were

introduced to basic puppetry skills during the workshop with Rachel McIntyre (Jabuti Theatre).

When I was working on my fox and snake, I referred to this teaching, working with breath and focus to give them life.



¹ Then they parted ways.

Though he never said it, the Prince was relieved that one day he might be able to return to his planet... and his rose. **2. Take the guitar.** With this in mind, he continued on his journey.

² He discovered very few things on his travels as the desert is vast, but his best discoveries were of three things: **3. Betro** LX7: red w

A garden

A fox

A pilot

What made the garden special was also what made it terrible.

7 The Little Prince had believed that his rose was unique in all the world. But here, in a garden in the desert, was a hundred roses ³ who were all indiscernible from his rose. ^s

LX8 In this life I've journeyed far, far from you, far...

And still you're here, your hurt so near, I loved you dear,
dear...

In this life, the journey is long, but take me where I belong...

I can only hope, it will take me home, I'll find my home, oh...

Not far from the roses, the Prince met a fox. Like the Prince, the fox was looking for a friend.

FOX: My life is very monotonous; I hunt the chickens, the men hunt me... All the chickens are just alike, and all the men are just alike. And, in consequence, I am a little bored. But if you tame me, it will be as if the sun came to shine on my life.

5 And so it was that the Prince tamed the Fox but, eventually the time came for the Prince to continue his journey. It was a sad departure.

FOX: One runs the risk of weeping a little if one lets himself be tamed.

1. Brown string; tie it to the snake's string.

2. Take the guitar, cross US with the guitar.

LX7: red wash

LX8: fade to LX1. 10 seconds

4. Take the fox out of the box.
time for the fox to take in the
audience on both sides. p

the s. Kneel next to the
ses block with the fox,
at each other, smile, imp



THE BOX is the most distinct prop; it is filled with coloured string that represent the different connections the Prince makes on his journey. The box is a tidy way to keep all the string central to one point and to keep it hidden, which helps to create wonderment. The box as a central point creates a useful point of reference for story elements like the rose.

THE WATERING CAN is the only other prop. The imagery of the Prince watering the rose is very important in the story, as it leads to his understanding of what it means to love and be loved - nurturing, time, and attention. While the can could be signified through mime, I didn't want anyone to miss the importance of the tender act.

THE GUITAR is primarily an instrument but does occasionally function as a prop. This is a solution to some static moments where movement felt too restricted to one part of the stage due to my reliance on the guitar for accompaniment. The guitar at points becomes the Prince such as when the Pilot and the Prince set off for water in the final moments, and when the Pilot takes the Prince in his arms.

But the Prince could not understand. The Fox sent him back to the rose garden... ²

¹ LX9 1. Return the fox.

He could see how empty the beautiful flowers were, and he understood that what made his rose unique was the time that he spend watering her, ^{LX10} the screen he used to protect her from the draughts, the glass jar that kept her from the cold, all of the moments that they had spent together listening and talking and loving each other. It was the butterflies... And, as it was for the Prince, so it would be fore the Fox who would remember the prince's golden hair every time he saw the ³ wheat fields, and when the wind ⁴ blows through the grain, he would hear the Little ⁵ Prince's laugh and so would never be alone... ⁶ wind blowing.

LP: You are not at all like my rose. You are like my fox when I first knew him; he was only a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But I have made him my friend, and now he is unique in all the world. My rose perfumed all my planet but I did not know how to take pleasure in all her grace. I ought to have judged by deeds and not by words. She cast her fragrance and her radiance over me. I ought never to have run away from her. ⁷ LX11

⁷ He returned the Fox who made him a present of a secret: LX11: LX1

⁸ It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye...

This is a moment, this isn't the ending, it's not the beginning, it's not goodbye.

This kind of moment, will transcend forever, so that we'll never, say goodbye.

And I'll remember you always.

The prince's journey was over; he had found a friend. His next journey would take him back home.

⁹ However, on his way back to the place where we had landed in the desert, where he knew the snake would be, who could send

NARRATION & STORYTELLING

^{LX9: LX7}

2. Be IN the garden,

SEE the roses.

3. Pause, consider.

4. Audiences are the

wheat fields.

5. SHOW audience the

wind

blowing.

^{LX10: LX4 (red/pink}

rose) 10 seconds

6. Kneel down as if

talking to the rose, as if

to tell her: I'm sorry.

7. Pink string: tie to SL

tripod.

LX11: LX1

8. Cross US to guitar. Pause.

9. Blue string; tie to SR tripod.

My decision to narrate, rather than perform (in the traditional sense by doing the characters as roles) was made based on two factors.

Firstly, it is a comfort to me because I don't feel confident in my acting skills. I believe I have created a better and more interesting piece by focusing on the story and less on the characterisation. Secondly, as a narrator, I act as a medium between the audience and the story. It is an easy way to engage the audience in the events.

Through devising the piece, I became aware that storytelling allowed me to practice more diverse performance language that may be prohibited by adopting a more traditional character-based role.

This approach is heavily inspired by the storytelling in *Orpheus* (Flannagan Collective and Gobuledigook Theatre) who used spoken word and live acoustic music.

Similarly, in my piece, the poetic narrative style easily lends itself to being integrated with music and song.

The live music element became a key part in the writing process as I find songwriting easier than script-writing. Telling the story through song allowed me to access the story as a writer.



the Prince back home, he came across a Pilot who had crashed his plane into the sand. He was trying to fix it. **1. Looking up, like a child would ask an adult.**

Thinking that this Pilot must have seen much of the world on his travels, the Little Prince asked:

LP: If you please, draw me a sheep!

2. BE AMAZED!

3. Draw a big sheep in the air.

The Pilot was amazed to see another soul in the middle of the desert. Even more amazed was he by the Prince's request. The pilot drew three sheep, none of which were to the Prince's liking, so he instead drew the Prince a box, inside which could be found the sheep.

4. Go to the box and peek inside. Don't show the audience, but acknowledge them to invite them into the moment.

The Prince was thrilled by his little sheep.

5. Clock the snake.

He was also afraid of the journey ahead, so he stayed with the pilot for a time. The pilot learned a little of where the Prince had come from and what he had encountered on his journeys. Then, there came a day where the pilot ran out of water and the pair set off in search of a well. The Prince did not need the water, but he told the pilot, of whom he had grown fond, how water can also be good for the heart...

6. Pick up the guitar and stand side-by-side, like the Prince and the Pilot.

The darkness fell, and the stars began to come out. Thirst had made the pilot a little feverish, and he looked at them as if he were in a dream.

7. LX12: Dim blue (all) starcloth is focus.

8. Turn and look at the stars, give the audience time to look too.

LP: The stars are beautiful because of a flower that cannot be seen. What makes the desert beautiful is that somewhere it hides a well.

It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. All that is essential is invisible to the eye.

As the little prince dropped off to sleep, the pilot took him in his arms. It seemed to him that he was carrying a very fragile treasure. It seemed to him that there was nothing more fragile on all the Earth.

They found the well at daybreak.



LX13: LX5 (sunrise)

LX14: LX1, 2 seconds

In this life, we journey far, we journey far, far...

1. The well is CS, reach up to touch

But I'm not, the only one, when the journey's done, oh... it.

The little prince laughed,¹ touched the rope, and set the pulley to working. And the pulley moaned. The pilot and the little prince relished in the sound of the well, long forgotten that they had found.

2 They drank.

Eyes closed.

And the pilot understood what the prince had been looking for.

In your laugh, I've found a home, found my home, oh... floor facing the rose
This is a moment...

3. Strum,
standing, take in
the well

4. Return to block DS.

5. Place the guitar down

6. Sit on the

and star cloth, relaxed, legs

stretched out and ankles crossed.

7. Search for
the star on the
star cloth.

3 It was as sweet as some special festival treat. A sweetness born from the walk under the stars, the song of the pulley, the effort of the pilot's arms.

But there was something that suddenly made the pilot very sad -
a realisation, a feeling, a look?

8. Fill the room with his happiness,
embody it.

This is a moment, this isn't the ending, it's not the beginning,
it's not goodbye.⁵

But the pilot was not reassured. He remembered the fox: one runs the risk of weeping a little, if one lets himself be tamed.

6 LP: It is just as with the flower. If you love a flower that lives on a star, it is sweet to look at the sky at night. All the stars are a-bloom with flowers. My star⁷ will be just one of the stars for you. In one of the stars I shall be living, in one of them I will be laughing. And so it will be as if all the stars are laughing... You only you - will have stars that can laugh!

In the morning, the Little Prince returned to where he landed in the desert, to where he knew the snake would be. The little Prince did not cry out. He fell as gently as a tree falls. There was not even any sound, because of the sand.

LX15



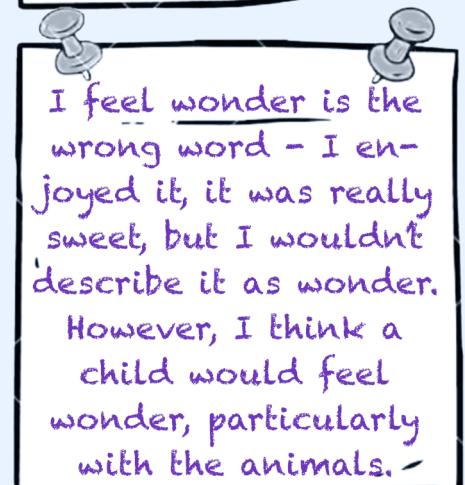
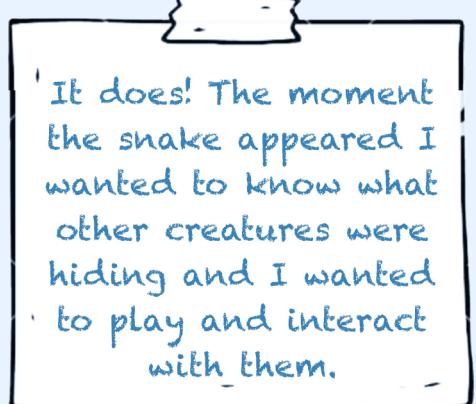
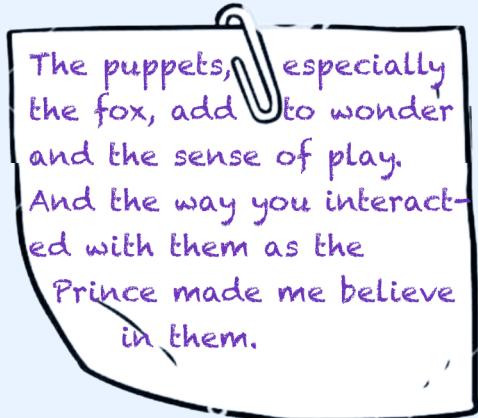
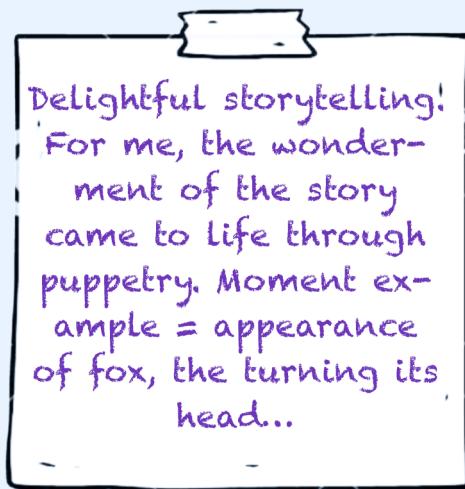
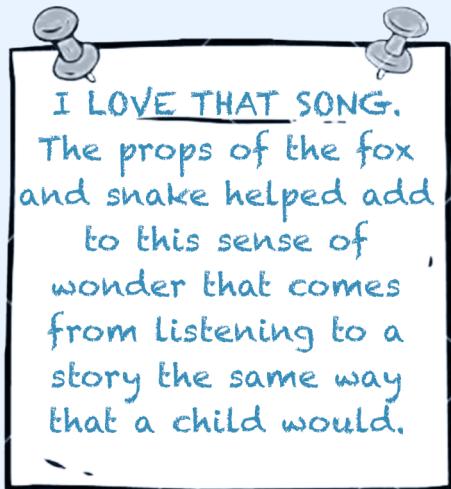
Listen while
you read

The last paragraph: Return to the box with all of the string - representing the Prince and his connections made on the journey. Take the small pair of scissors from inside the box, loosen the strings while talking, gather them together above (it does look like a tree!), then, after 'there was not even any sound,' cut the string and let them all fall softly to the ground.

LX15: Blackout



I asked: Does this piece make you feel WONDER?
Please use a key moment to explain.



DEVELOPMENT

The most significant challenge to navigate as an autonomous performer is fostering an objective perspective. When the work is written, performed and designed by one person, it can be difficult to see the flaws, or, sometimes, the strengths in the performance.

The work-in-progresses are an important tool for combating this challenge as it trials certain aspects of the in front a live audience - much like prototyping.

In the second work-in-progress, I focused on the puppetry elements as it is a practice I hadn't used before. It was an opportunity to see if the puppets were convincing. I also used this performance to ask the audience a question specific to my research so that I could refer to this as an opportunity to evaluate the overall success of my piece.

On the left are some of the comments I received from audience members (verbatim). The general response was that the puppets, song, and storytelling style collaboratively and effectively cultivated wonder in this mature audience. However, one comment raised an interesting question about the role of the audience member in being moved and amazed by work, which I hope to explore more fully in my evaluation.

The responses confirmed that, while I know there is still work to be done on polishing the performance, the piece is effective and engaging. The responses moved me to be proud of the work that I have created and to challenge how critical I am of my own practice.

THANK YOU  10

The Little Prince

..... A Play

WEDNESDAY 22nd APRIL

Performing Arts Studio

TIME



A play adaptation of the classic children's story by Antoine Saint-Exupéry.

Follow the Little Prince on his journey through the stars; a storytelling adventure for all, with puppetry and live music.

Written, staged and performed by

Laura Walker

as part of the Drama and Performance

BA(Hons) Autonomous

Performer



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