

The Garden

An interactive performance for people with learning disabilities

Key facts:

- An interactive performance that can take place in a studio space
- Multisensory and non-verbal
- Three performers, including a musician plus stage manager
- Usually two performances a day – one morning, one afternoon – about an hour long
- Audience numbers – maximum 10 people with learning disabilities plus their family/carers (space permitting)
- We need 1.5 hours to get ready before the first show
- We need 1 hour to pack away after the second show
- One performer with a learning disability, supporting positive role modelling

About The Garden

The one-hour piece is performed to a seated audience of up to 10 people with learning disabilities plus their carers.

The three performers use an **interactive, multi-sensory, non-verbal** approach to take the audience on a journey through the seasons.

Projection is used extensively – on huge and tiny scales. Live and recorded **music** plays throughout.



People are given things to **smell, touch and taste**, and are welcomed into a relaxing space where they can enjoy themselves. People are made to feel **confident** responding to the performance in their own way.

Family and carers enjoy sharing **relaxed moments** with the people they care for, and are inspired to refresh the way they interact with them.

The audience

The piece was originally created in 2015 and has been in demand on tour every year since – we have performed in care homes, community centres and theatre spaces across the UK. It was originally developed for people with dementia and has been specially adapted for people with learning disabilities.

Watch a three-minute video (dementia audience):

<http://sparetyre.org/watch-and-listen/video/the-garden-immersive-installation-for-people-living-with-dementia>

This show would be enjoyed by:

- People with **learning disabilities** with **moderate to complex needs**
- People who have had a **stroke or brain injury**
- **Carers** (professional and family carers)
- Carers or people with these disabilities for whom **English is a second language**
- Adults aged 18+



What we need

- 1.5 hours to set up when we arrive
- 1 hour to pack away after the second show
- Suggested performance times are 11am and 2pm, but we can adapt this to suit the schedule at the venue
- A space of minimum 8m x 8m (audience area + playing space)
- Parking for a long wheelbase van
- A pale wall or screen for large-scale projections
- The ability to dim the space to twilight
- Access to at least one domestic plug socket
- For two-show days, the set should be left in place between shows



To note:

The show creates a 'messy' environment – water is sprinkled in a contained way. Soil forms part of the set. The team clear up comprehensively after each performance, and during the show if a Health & Safety risk is posed.

Small samples of marshmallows and Pimm's (alcoholic) are handed around – can be adapted to use fruit or lemonade instead.

A full Risk Assessment is provided for all activities.

About Spare Tyre

Spare Tyre is a leading participatory arts charity based in London. We have spent the last 40 years producing bold and powerful theatre with voiceless communities and individuals that inspires and challenges us all.

We are an **Arts Council NPO**, and The Garden was developed and toured thanks to support from the **City Bridge Trust**, other trusts and foundations, and local authority funders.

Read our annual review 2016/17: <http://sparetyre.org/about/about-us>

Cost: £1000 per day



Contact details

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The response

“Beautiful and calming...Are you coming back?”

Participant, Lambeth Walk Day Centre

“I felt the Garden show was pitched right for our service users and I personally was moved to tears by the engagement and interactions achieved by the show with the people we work with. It was fantastic and in many cases unexpected, which I loved.”

-Helen Barnard, MAC Tulse Hill, Lambeth Mencap

“I would just like to say what an amazing show, the guys absolutely loved it. Everyone said how they enjoyed it! You have a great team, very welcoming and friendly....We would like to have here again.”

-Trish Revie, Greenwich Mencap

“That was off the scale amazing. I’ve seen interactions but I’ve never seen it before for this group of people I’ve been with for ages!”

-Carer, MAC Tulse Hill, Lambeth Mencap

