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A Masquerade Dance of Liars:  
Reality, Fiction and Dissimulation in Immersive Theatre.

Mark Richard Ellis

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Huddersfield

August 2012

VOLUME I of III



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## ABSTRACT

This research engages with the complex relationship between reality and fiction in immersive theatre. It proposes a theoretical standpoint, based upon the constructivist epistemological theory of Maturana (1980) and Schmidt (1984), which allows critical analysis of the reality/fiction complex. The study then tests this method of analysis on nine existing pieces of work by other artists. The findings from this analysis are then used to explore the notion of dissimulation, the manner by which the constructed fictional artifice of the performance is presented in such a way as it begins to appropriate the conventions of everyday reality. Dissimulation is also used as the basis upon which to suggest points for development in existing work as a means of highlighting the potential use of analysis for practitioners. The application of the strategies used to dissimulate existing work along with application of the theory behind the process of dissimulation are then applied practically in the creation of scripts for two new pieces of work, *Menagerie* and *Wonderland*. The study also suggests the utilisation of the technique of retroscripting and proposes the concept of char/actor augmentation as a means of facilitating improvisation through a performance script. The study concludes that the application of constructivist epistemological theory through the proposed method of analysis can reveal information about the manner by which works of immersive theatre apply dissimulative strategies that is re-applicable in the creation of new work and therefore presents a means of thinking that can help practitioners to develop new and existing work.



This thesis is dedicated to all the liars, creating alternate universes in bathrooms, warehouses and cellars, shaking the leaves from a dormant reality so that it can grow again anew.





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# 1. General Introduction

## Aims, Objectives and Approaches

This research engages with the complex relationship between reality and fiction in immersive theatre. It proposes a theoretical standpoint which allows the critical analysis of this relationship and explores the potential of this process of analysis as a means of facilitating the development of new work in this genre. The practical application of this process is realised through the creation of scripts for two new pieces of work entitled *Menagerie*, and *Wonderland* and whilst having an acknowledged wider applicability across the field of immersive theatre, aims specifically to advance the field of understanding in relation to the subject area of creative writing and specifically the creation of performance work initiated through a typewritten document sitting within the field of scriptwriting for theatre.

Here the term script is applied in the manner used by Schechner as "...something that pre-exists any given enactment, which persists from enactment to enactment." (1988, p70). Here 'script' infers the framework which initiates and maintains the core details of a performance, the subject matter, the themes, the key imagery and intent that allows it to be revived in a recognisable form. The term 'script' is used in favour of the term 'score' which, as Cielsak explains (in Schechner, 1998), relates to an approach...

'[T]o find an objective set of actions and relationships that [...] communicate to the audience the images, actions, and meanings [that the performers] want to communicate.' (p51)

The score is therefore produced in rehearsal in response to the script to enhance and systematise the approach to performing the script by making the performer consider each

moment in the script and how they personally respond to it. This personal response can only be created by a specific performer engaging with a particular role and therefore cannot be considered by the writer prior to casting.

It should be noted that writing is not an element that is discussed frequently in relation to immersive theatre and a writer's contribution to a piece of work may often be subsumed under a company's overall credit. For example, Joel Scott of Goat and Monkey articulates the importance of the writer in immersive theatre noting that 'they can get overlooked' (NellFrizzellIdeasTap, 2013). However, Goat and Monkey's website does not credit an individual writer in relation to any of their work. (Goat and Monkey, 2013). Slung Low's website acknowledges a creative team but no specific writer (Slung Low, 2013). Tom MacRae, who was credited as writer for Punchdrunk's *The Crash of The Elysium*, was actually a part of the writing team for *Doctor Who* and appears to have been brought in for that one project and, it is felt, cannot be perceived to write specifically for immersive theatre (Cavendish, 2011). Furthermore, Colin Marsh and Maxine Doyle acknowledge that performers have in the past, written their own scripts for certain elements of Punchdrunk performances (see Appendix V). Because of this, it's extremely difficult to identify specific writers working in this field and, it is suggested that artists, directors and performers are undertaking writing tasks as part of the overall creative process but are not necessarily identifying themselves solely as writers.

This is reflected in the field of creative writing where research into the generation of scripts specifically for immersive work is extremely limited and whilst the growing field of transmedia screenwriting does at times touch upon this subject implicitly (for example Pope, 2013), the interest and focus of this research is somewhat different because it specifically engages with the creation of scripts for immersive performance. The implication is that the field of creative writing is essentially missing the potential presented by the field of interactive performance and the manner by which adaptations to creative writing theory and technique might have a wider application and implication across the current body of understanding particularly in relation to genres associated through the inclusion of interactivity such as transmedia screenwriting and writing for computer games.

The term 'immersive' is used to identify theatrical works that directly incorporate the audience in the realisation of the final piece. In most cases, this act of incorporation integrates the histories, ideas, thoughts and physicality of the audience members by encouraging them to interact with the set, props and most importantly, the performers (the notion of 'immersivity' is discussed in detail in the literature review). The experience could, in many ways, be likened to a ghost train or haunted house experience however, the thematic, intellectual and symbolic communication of immersive work is considerably more developed, allowing such work to be read as a piece of art. That is not to say that immersive work attempts to mute the visceral, sensual and directly-emotional experiences, in many cases these elements are integrated into the works to present an experiential complex that presents contrived, stylised elements alongside direct experience and interaction. In doing so, immersive work appears to blur the boundaries between reality and fiction in the eyes of the participants.

The concept of fiction seems transformed in immersive theatre. It is not allowed flight as it is in representative media through the distance created through written or visual languages or through the luxuries of re-takes and post-production. In immersive work, the notion of fiction seems bound up in the physicality of object and space, and in the actions and words of performers. It is the sense of the act of authorship behind the experience that gives it this sense of fictionality, the understanding that this space is somehow different from everyday reality. It is this sense of difference with which this study particularly engages. In disguising the signs that convey this act of authorship, a piece of work undergoes dissimulation and the fiction becomes more readily interpreted as being 'real'.

Explicitly then, this study seeks to answer the following question:

**How do participants categorise reality and fiction in works of immersive theatre and how can an understanding of this process be used to create and develop immersive work?**

Much of the development undertaken during this period of research has involved trying to find a way to understand and articulate how the apparently contradictory states of reality and fiction can combine in this kind of work. An initial focus was placed on the proposed

practical output where installation and written prose were considered, however it was found that there was no current means of understanding the way that fiction and reality interact and therefore any creative articulation of this state seemed to lack the appropriate theoretical basis that allowed critical engagement. Consideration of the creative element of this study was therefore put to one side until a method of critical engagement was discovered or created. The search for a concrete method of thinking about reality was long and difficult, travelling from philosophy and critical theory and the interrogation the nature and concepts of fiction and reality direct. It was not until there was a shift in viewpoint from this attempt at direct interrogation to observing the problem through the eyes of an individual 'perceiver of reality' that real progress was made. Relevant studies from the field of neuroscience were explored and this led to learning theory where constructivist epistemology presented a way of thinking about reality that seemed to have some practical applicability.

This study therefore approaches the concept of reality from an epistemological point of view, borrowing the ideas of Schmidt (1984) and Maturana (1980) to identify reality as a constructed model of understanding located within the mind of an observer. Maturana calls this the ortho-world model or OWM. Schmidt suggests that an observer understands reality by learning, recognising and recalling the conventions that they perceive to govern the 'internal' and 'external' worlds which combine to form daily experience. Received, mediated knowledge or repeated exposure to events with similar traits creates the development of understanding that, over time, is integrated into our understanding of the world. For example, the force of gravity leads to the experiential convention that objects fall vertically to the nearest supporting surface when released from a position above that surface. By understanding reality as a set of conventions, an individual is able to predict the outcome of particular events with a varying degree of certainty. It was not the manner by which an individual constructs their OWM that was interesting, but the manner by which the OWM was used to make judgements relating to the nature of reality and would therefore also be used to recognise fiction through a knowledge of the conventions that apply to reality as an individual understands it.

It is acknowledged that numerous 'realities' exist for each individual or, at least, that different conventions apply to different contexts. Therefore, the term 'everyday reality' is used to articulate the group of realities that an observer experiences in their day-to-day life and categorises as 'reality'. Immersive theatre presents a fictionalised performance reality that combines the conventions of everyday reality with other conventions dictated by the creators of the work, thereby blurring reality and fiction in the eyes of the participant.

It is the interplay of these conventions as categorised by a participant that is of interest here. By breaking down a piece of work into a series of single events, it is possible to engage with the conventions that are articulated by each event and through this, highlight which areas are perceived as familiar from everyday reality (real) and which are perceived as novel additions (fictional). This information can then be applied practically to dissimulate the piece of work by removing the elements that are being categorised as being fictional.

This study proposes a method of analysis based on constructivist epistemological theory to engage with the manner by which a participant perceives pieces of immersive theatre to combine reality and fiction. This is then tested through the analysis of nine pieces of existing work. The information obtained through this process is then used to engage with the process of dissimulation as perceived in these works. These strategies for dissimulation are then reapplied in two pieces of new work. Finally conclusions are drawn relating to the value of analysis in relation to the development of new and existing work. Here, 'value' is defined as:

'The ability to reveal unbiased information about a performance regarding the manner by which it integrates the conventions of everyday reality to dissimulate the performance.'

It is suggested that, as a developmental tool, a valuable method of analysis should also facilitate the reconsideration of the work in a practical sense leading to a perceived 'improvement' in the ability of the work to achieve its aims.

It is recognised that a performance script is not the same thing as a live piece of work however, it should be noted that engagement with the notion of dissimulation occurred when the live experiences of these works were 'captured' in a static form through the act of written reflection. Therefore it was felt that the creation of a script

was an appropriate manner to work with the ideas in stasis before they were 'released' into a live performance. This also allowed the application of the understanding and expertise developed from my on-going practice as a writer. Reflecting this, each script is followed by a critical commentary that highlights the application of these ideas.

## Thesis Overview

Chapter two presents an overview of relevant practitioners and existing work and engages with the theoretical perspectives used within this study to present a case for considering the notions of fiction and reality from the perspectives proposed by constructivist epistemology (Maturana (1980) and Schmidt (1984).

Chapter three discusses the methodological approach to this research, highlighting the combination of qualitative, quantitative and practice-based research that has been adopted. It also chronologically charts the progression of the research as a means of articulating the development of the study including key turning points and unsuccessful approaches during the research period.

Chapter four proposes a method for analysing pieces of immersive theatre in respect to the manner by which they utilise events which convey the familiar everyday conventions alongside unfamiliar fictional conventions and tests this method of analysis upon nine existing pieces of immersive work, highlighting the dissimulation strategies used in these works.

Chapter five proposes two strategies (retroscripting and char/actor augmentation) that might be used to facilitate the incorporation of interaction into performance scripts.

Chapter six tests the practical application of these strategies through the creation of a script for the short immersive piece *Menagerie*.

Chapter seven applies the dissimulation strategies observed during the analysis of existing work to a large multi-stranded immersive narrative entitled *Wonderland*.

Chapter eight summarises the conclusions presented at the end of chapters three, five and six as a means of responding to the overall research question.



## 2. Relevant Practitioners and Experiential Genres in Immersive Interaction

Since the turn of the century, there has been a dramatic rise in the number of companies and artists producing live, artistic works that directly incorporate the audience in the realisation of the final piece (It's Fun but is it Theatre? 2012). Here a participant's presence, personality, history and spontaneous choices all contribute to the work that is made. The name for this kind of work is still under debate and there is, as yet, no apparent consensus however, such work will mostly be referred to in this study as *immersive theatre*. The terms *interactive*, *collaborative*, *'absorptive'* (Marsh, 2010, Appendix V) or *participatory* are also used as a means of referring to work in this genre, with the choice of term largely dependent on the aims of the group or individual making the work and the way the piece and company position and consider the audience or participants (which are used here as synonyms for the individuals from the public who attend and involve themselves in immersive works). Therefore, for the sake of this study, immersive, participatory, collaborative or absorptive work that requires direct and active participation from the audience is deemed similar enough in the way it positions the audience member, for it is considered collectively as a generic group.

### Defining Immersive Theatre

Machon suggests that there is 'a diversity of practice that exists under [the] banner [of immersive theatre]' (2013, p70) which is reflected in this study. Certainly the one-to-ones of Biswas (2011) and Howells (2011), being far less concerned with narrative, have different

aims and intentions from the Punchdrunk (2010) and Slung Low (2009) works and, one could argue, come from a different artistic lineage however, there are key correlations that allow these works to be classified within the genre of immersive theatre. Machon identifies an 'immersive inheritance' (2013, p28) for the interdisciplinary, cross-conceptual generation of the immersive genre which articulates the taxonomic similarities of the works analysed in this study and is therefore worthy of further discussion.

### **Audience and Interactivity**

Whilst, of course, interactivity and audience participation in ritual (Salamone, 2004), prostitution and gaming (Radoff, 2010) can be traced back into prehistory, the consideration of the theatre audience's role and potential for transformation can be traced back to the writings of Antonin Artaud (Machon, 2013) whilst Wagner's concept and aspiration of the *gesamkunstwerk* in relation to opera, provides a clear point of reference in terms of the all-encompassing aims of the concept of immersion. Artaud's writing was largely influential to a number of the experimental theatre companies beginning in the 1960s including Peter Brook; Richard Schechner and The Performance Group; Jerzy Grotowski; The Living Theatre; and Butoh Theatre (Machon, 2013). Although questions have been raised relating to the degree to which Schechner and the Living Theatre (amongst others) have honoured Artaud's vision (Jannarone, 2009 and Delano, 2012) there is little doubt that these companies' experiments with audience and viscerality inspired and informed immersive practice (Machon, 2013). Equally, Kaprow's *Happenings*, beginning in the 1960s, challenged the relationship between audience, event and the use of space and time, employing interactivity and participation along with temporal duration (Goldberg, 2001) and from a similar although distinctly separate point of influence for immersive work.

### **Installation and Performance Art**

Machon also highlights the influence of conceptual artists such as Marina Abramović, Carolee Schneeman, Franko B and Yoko Ono whose exploration of interactivity in relation to their body-based performance / live art practices has influenced immersive theatre, particularly the small scale one-to-one genre of immersive practice (2013). It's clear how

work such as Abramović's *Rhythm 0* (Westfinearts, 2010); Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* (Vabethany, 2013) and Franko B's *Aktion 398* (Qualmann, 2011), which directly engaged the audience in the performance, may have been influential in the recognition of the potential of intimate interaction. The influence of installation artists such as Ilya Kabakov and Kienholz can be directly seen in the aesthetic of Punchdrunk and Signa and it could be suggested that, in their insertion of the uncanny into realistic reconstructions of familiar everyday scenes, Kabakov and Kienholz have provided inspiration, not only for the scenographic considerations of immersive work, but also for the aims and intent of immersive theatre as a whole where the familiar and novel are combined to create a sense of otherworldliness (see below).

## **Technology and Gaming**

Machon also goes on to highlight the influence of 'immersive technologies' noting the 'visceral deployment of technology' (2013, p35) as influential on immersive work such as *And the Birds Fell from the Sky* (Il Pixel Rosso, 2011). She says less about the influence of computer games which, through the popularisation of interactive storytelling, may have inspired the physical recreation of similar encounters in immersive theatrical experiences. It seems no coincidence that a large number of practitioners creating immersive work come from the first generation who grew up with computer games.

## **Audience Development**

It feels essential to also chart the manner by which audiences have come to welcome the immersive phenomenon, after all, the increase in immersive work has to correlate with its ability to attract audiences. Interactive experiences shaped by some intention are, of course, common in everyday reality. From traditional theatrical experiences that break the fourth wall, magic shows to honed customer service interactions (which all clearly demarcate the performer / audience relationship) there has also been a steady rise in opportunities for audiences to engage in participatory interactive gaming opportunities. From *Dungeons and*

*Dragons* to live role-playing, paintball and *Laser Quest* as well as massively multiplayer online role-playing games such as *World of Warcraft*, social participatory gaming, both live and virtual, has audiences in the millions. It is therefore not surprising to see audiences respond positively to the inclusion of interactivity and exploration in artistic and theatrical practices and to begin to seek a more active role in live performance experiences.

## **Machon's Scale of Immersivity**

Machon proposes a scale of immersivity, highlighting the 'specific elements that are identifiable in any immersive experience' (2013, p93) that is useful in highlighting the links between the works analysed as part of this study. These elements are:

- 'In-its-own world' – 'The world operates both within and outside of the time-frame, rules and relationships of the 'everyday' world' (p93).
- Space – a sensitivity and awareness of both space and place is explored by both practitioners in the creation of the work and participants as they engage with the immersive experience.
- Scenography – the scenographic considerations of the work will be sensitive to the existing features in both internal and external locations whilst adding to the sense that the work exists 'in-its-own world'.
- Sound – is considered in a way that 'rather than drawing you out of the experience, it engages you further within it' (p95).
- Duration/al – time plays an important consideration in the creation and experience of the work.
- Interdisciplinary/hybridised practice – Immersive theatre is by its nature interdisciplinary. 'Often these works incorporate elements from varied disciplines including architecture, improvisation, storytelling, spoken and /or physical performance, dance, circus skills, aerial arts, puppetry, sculpture, digital or

mechanical animation, gaming, sound, film, video, audio and/or haptic technologies’ (p97)

- Bodies – ‘There is a focus on the body itself and the audience’s immediate and subsequent appreciation of the event’ (p98).
- Audiences – ‘The direct, actual, physical insertion of an individual audience member within the world of the event, into the performance itself, is paramount and absolute’ (p98).
- A ‘contract for participation’ – is very often created by practitioners as a means of taking care of participants within the event.
- Intention – immersive work and the practitioners creating it aim to produce an artistic, intellectual and sensual product.
- Expertise – the practitioners creating the work have ‘an authoritative grasp of the artistic potential and creative constraints of the form’ (p100).

Whilst it is agreed that these elements certainly characterise immersive theatre and provide a useful means of defining the genre, some perhaps do not contribute to the scale of immersivity as Machon suggests. For example, applying this scale, work that does not consider a contract for participation is ‘less immersive’ but, in fact, ignoring ethical considerations relating to the participants might actually be a way of making a work ‘more immersive’ in the sense that the participants are given a greater freedom to explore and engage with the world. Equally, it is felt, immersive theatre is interdisciplinary by necessity. Machon does acknowledge the use of technology in a manner that is sensitive to the production, however more converging disciplines does not make a piece ‘more immersive’. What is more important is the manner by which these disciplines are used together to create a coherent, cohesive and believable performance. An unjustified aerial act in the wrong place could very easily create an awareness of the experience-as-performance as opposed to the experience-as-alternate reality making the work ‘less-immersive’. In the language adopted by this study, the insertion of such a novel (fictional) convention or a misplaced and unjustified familiar (real) convention reduces the dissimulation of the experience, and

distances the participant from the immediate experience of the work. Finally, the notion of expertise seems to establish a hierarchy of experience which, perhaps doesn't completely correlate with the notion of immersivity. One can conceive of a piece of work entitled, shall we say, '*A Trip to Hospital*' where an amateur artist attracts participants into a dark room before springing out of a cupboard brandishing a baseball bat and proceeds to beat the participant into an inch of their life before calling an ambulance. Strictly speaking this is considerably more immersive than a Punchdrunk production, if somewhat less ethically sound. The point of this somewhat flippant example is that immersivity is separate from the expertise of the practitioners creating the work. Granted, expertise will produce more complex, fulfilling, inspiring, exciting, profound artistic experiences than would likely be experienced in '*A Trip to Hospital*' but, it is suggested, with increased complexity comes also increased risk of failure to immerse (as can be seen in some of the pieces analysed in this study). Expertise facilitates a mastery over complexity but not, it is felt, over immersivity.

If one equates the intentions of the concept of immersivity with the intentions of the concept of dissimulation then it is possible to frame the scale of immersivity in a manner that values the presentation of the elements of a performance experience as equal to or even greater than the elements themselves. Suddenly the key elements of the scale stand out – the positioning of the audience in a similar manner to everyday reality; the consistency of the performance world; the sensitivity to space, scenographic design and use of sound; the considered use of time; and the consideration of the direct experience of the body, all convey the sense that these elements are well-placed within the performance which, in terms of dissimulation, infers recognising and adopting the conventions of everyday reality as a gauge to transforming the implausible into the plausible.

## **Defining Experiential Genres**

The following act of categorisation into various experiential genres (as opposed to narrative genres, historical lineages or degrees of immersivity) is conducted as a means of highlighting trends in immersive theatre practice to show the range of ways that practitioners are approaching the concepts of interaction and participation (rather than the

degree to which they are achieving immersion). It is by no means intended to be strictly definitive, the work included in this discussion merely provides a good example of a particular experiential genre. It also needs to be emphasised that most immersive works will display traits linked to a number of these categories.

## **Adventure**

The notion of *adventure* seems to underpin some of the larger immersive works presented by companies such as Punchdrunk (2006, 2007, 2009, 2010), Dreamthinkspeak (2012, 2010, 2008) and Slunglow (2009) placing an emphasis on exploration, fear and the unknown. They are regularly set in extensive, exotic and otherworldly sets situated inside large buildings to accommodate significant numbers of participants. Participants are often allowed to roam the building or space freely, rummaging through drawers and cupboards and interacting with the performers that they encounter along the way. These large shows are also often played out over relatively long periods of time which give the audience the opportunity to thoroughly explore the space and engage with the characters. In the case of Punchdrunk's large works such as their adaptations of Goethe's *Faust* (2006), and Edgar Allen Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death* (2007), the experience combines larger scale scenes where the division between audience and performer is fairly clear and is often personalised for some members of the audience through the integration of moments of intimacy between a single performer and participant.

## **Ritual**

Ritualistic performance permeates human society in multitudinous forms, with evidence of the earliest forms of ritual dating back to pre-historic times (Salamone, 2004). The distinction between immersive theatre and ritual is, at times, unclear however, it is clear that ritual has provided a point of inspiration for contemporary artists. The adoption of the transformative

motivations of ritual along with certain practices linked with secular and religious ritualistic performance, has been adopted by practitioners including Adrian Howells (2011), whose work includes foot-washing and bathing rituals; Fiction Pimps and Sisters Hope who aim is to ‘...activat[e] the aesthetic dimension of experience and reflection, to enrich any given situation and the persons involved in it’ (Worre Hallberg, 2011, Appendix VI); Hijas Del Mal who utilise religious iconography and ritual; and Ansuman Biswas, whose *2 Free* (2011) incorporates ritualistic singing and washing.

## **Transformative**

As Worre Hallberg suggests in the quote above, there is a considerable focus in work inspired by ritual upon the potential for immersive works to create spaces where participants can explore their identities and memories with a focus upon facilitating positive change in the participants. There is a degree of overlap here between work that appropriates elements from the genre of ritual and work that sets out to facilitate a change in participants however, not all ritualistic works set out to transform. Fiction Pimps and Sisters Hope specifically set up experiences around Van Gennep’s (1961) suggestion that ritual has pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal stages and prepare and debrief the participants on either side of the fiction with the aim of empowering participants to seize control of their own lives (Worre Hallberg, 2011). It is a process that could be likened to counselling or some other kind of therapy and is clearly designed and presented to facilitate the psychological transformation of the participants. On the contrary, Adrian Howells’ foot washing and bathing performances, for example, clearly draw inspiration from purification rites (Long in Salamone, 2004) however, as a participant in Howells’ *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Holding and Feeding* (2011) there was no sense that the performance was trying to elicit some kind of change, but rather to infantilise the participant and through this, encourage the recollection of old sensations that had been forgotten. Clearly, this act of remembering could, in itself, have instigated some kind of transformative process (as could any experience) but it was not an apparently explicit intention of Howells’ or of the piece itself.



## **Reflective**

Numerous immersive performances create a forum within which audience members are asked to reflect upon their lives, thoughts and histories. These works place emphasis and value on the experience the audience member gets from talking about their personal life. These moments of reflection may form the majority of the performance or be one single exchange however, they are characterised, in many cases, by the delivery of the sort of direct question that might not be regularly asked in everyday reality. The act creates a conversation between performer and participant and relies upon the input of both to create the final work. Such exchanges may be used as part of a transformative agenda in the case of Fiction Pimps or, for example, *Rendezvous* by Villanella and Hanneke Paauwe (2011) which asked participants to imagine their deaths and preceding lives whilst lying inside a coffin; or Punchdrunk's *Our Thirteenth Hour* where, at one point, the participant was asked whether they had ever been in love and questioned about what being in love felt like.

## **Instructive**

Acknowledging the interactive performances of the teacher, lecturer, and instructor, some works place an emphasis on the delivery of information and associated appreciation of a subject. For example, Barnaby Stone's *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing* (2011) which encourages participants to consider the history and surrounding circumstances of a beam taken from Hardwick Hall.

## **Displays of Skill**

Interactive performances where the skill of the performer is held up as a spectacle should be relatively familiar from everyday experience and, in many cases, may not always be defined

as theatre. From street magicians to cocktail flaring, balloon makers to Tepanyaki chefs, the notion of performance permeates a large number of interactions. To use Barnaby's Stone's piece again as an example, in framing the act of cutting and preparing a sliver of the beam as a performance, the audience member is asked to consider the skill and craftsmanship of the act.

## **Participant Gratification**

Interactive performances which revolve around the gratification of the audience member in some manner might include sexual acts, lap-dancing, cooking, massage, beauty therapy, and service. It is suggested that what ties these acts together is the reduction in status of the performer in relation to the audience member. The performer is no longer perceived as the focus of the performance and rather it is the act or service that they perform on the audience member that is the key focus of the interaction.

## **Challenging**

This motivation to challenge the participant marks immersive theatre as a genre and in many cases contributes to the transformative potential of such work. Adriana Disman (2010) creates simple scenarios where the performer positions herself in the centre of the room near a sign that offers the opportunity for the audience to interact with her in a specific way. Previous works have allowed participants to kiss her (*Kiss Piece*, 2010), stick needles into her flesh (*Needle Piece*, 2011) or touch her naked body (*Touch Piece*, 2011). In these interactions, Disman challenges participants to question social and behavioural norms. In a similar way Lousie Orwin's work *I'll be Your Barbie If...* (2012) invites the participant to use a range of objects and substances upon the performer in whatever they wish. Other work utilises challenging elements to enhance the depth of the experience. *Rendezvous* (Villanella and Hanneke Paauwe, 2011) enhance the process of self-reflection by challenging the participant by asking them to climb into a coffin. Biswas' *2 Free* (2011) asked the audience to undress to explore the concepts of intimacy and sexuality in a manner that could not have been

achieved in a non-naked state. Finally, *66 Minutes in Damascus* (Bourjeily, 2012) subjected participants to the experience of being kidnapped as a means of commenting upon the political situation in Syria.

## Technological

Computer games and the extensions from this genre into performance can be used to inspire interaction with digitally represented fictional characters, avatars (being digitally represented real people), and can also be used to inspire self-performances where the audience member acts alone under the direction of a text. Blast Theory's work regularly uses communication technology to create alternate worlds around their audiences. *A Machine To See With* (2011) used mobile telephone technology to position participants as the protagonist of a heist move. *Ghostwriter* (2011) again utilised mobile telephone technology to provide an alternative museum tour around the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter. A completely different use of technology was experienced in Rod Maclachlan's *Exchange* (2011) which asked two participants to don pressure-sensitive harnesses which allowed the participants' breathing to control the lighting states of an attic room.

## Happenings

The non-narrative improvised art events organised by Alan Kaprow, Yves Klein and others in the 1950s and 1960s (Goldberg, 2001) have found contemporary popular appeal in flashmobs; linked events such as *International Pillowfight Day* (McCabe, 2011); and zombie walks (Swarbrick, 2010). Festivals such as *Burning Man* (2011), which place an emphasis on audience participation and collective expression could also be said to embody larger scale versions of happenings.

## **Alternate Reality Games**

The genre of Alternate Reality Games (ARGs) utilises numerous communication systems to create a dissimulative, immersive gaming experience where the game and reality are at times indistinguishable. McGonigal's research into the ARG *The Beast*, conveys the responses by a community of gamers who were unsure when the game had come to an end with many articulating their desire to continue (2006). This was demonstrated in September 2001 when a group of gamers or 'Cloudmakers', assembled on their message board to consider 'gaming the terrorist attacks' in an attempt to 'solve' 9/11 (McGonigal, 2006).

## **Pranks and Cons**

Focussing upon the notion of deception, these acts of interactive fiction-making could be said to trick, surprise or embarrass the victim(s) of the prank (the word participant infers consent) and often result in some significant loss by the victim whether that is relating to loss of status or property.

## **Writing for Immersive Theatre**

As noted in the introduction, it is difficult to pinpoint the contribution of specific writers to immersive theatrical works where the act of writing might be undertaken by a range of individuals who all identify as having different roles within the creative process. Although not specifically writing for immersive theatre, playwrights such as Sarah Kane and Martin Crimp have produced 'writerly' texts that activate both theatre-makers and audiences to interpret and construct the meaning of the text (Moss, 2005). The experimentation in form seen in *4.48 Psychosis* (Kane, 2000) and *Attempts on Her Life* (Crimp, 2007) certainly provide points of reference in terms of the manner by which performance scripts might be created that are engaged by audiences in a fragmentary manner that is not unlike the experience of exploring a Punchdrunk production where meaning and narrative are formed from the entirety of the experience, delivered through engagement with performers, set and

soundscape. Another point of reference is Anthony Neilson who works with the cast to find 'different elements of characters and different rhythms' (Smith, 2008, p76) that are then used to construct the script. Although approached from a different angle, this process adopted by Neilson provides a point of reference in terms of the concept of char/actorisation adopted within this study where the character histories are constructed from the personal histories of the performers to create the char/actor complex. This is described in detail in chapter 6.

### 3. Relevant Theoretical Perspectives

The genre of immersive theatre provides a new field of study with a limited but growing body of specific research. Much of this looks at the nuances and technical aspects of immersive performance in its own right and there is no research relating to the relationship that immersive theatre has to reality. That is not to say that there is no relevant research as this review will show, however, the genre itself presents numerous new challenges to thinking and, in terms of this research, has meant adopting an inter-disciplinary approach that combines approaches from a range of different fields. This review will therefore paint a picture of the theoretical fields that have been used to engage with the subject. Finally, relevant theoretical assertions in relation to the craft of creative writing are discussed to highlight the background of understanding that has influenced the manner by which the two performances, *Menagerie* and *Wonderland* that form the practical element of this research, have been constructed.

Given the interest of this study in the relationship between reality and fiction, it seems fitting to engage with the discussion of fiction by aesthetic philosophers as a starting point for this study and from that point highlight how the constructivist epistemological theory, supported by the findings from studies in the field of neuroscience and also play theory, can provide different perspectives from which to engage with the subjects under discussion.

#### **Fiction**

Aesthetic discussion relating to the nature of fiction has distinct relevance to this study and therefore is of considerable importance with respect to contextualising and evaluating some

of the key findings of this research. Arising initially from the study of the association between meaning and denotation by Bertrand Russell and his contemporaries and the apparent conundrum created by expression with no denotation (Lamarque in Levinson, 2005), two approaches, eliminativism and accommodationism were suggested as a means of explaining this problem. Eliminativism, as the attempt to remove denoting terms through paraphrasing 'affords somewhat mixed results' (Lamarque in Levinson, 2005, p380). Accommodationism, that suggests that all names are denoting terms which refer to objects with different kinds of being (Meinong 1904, 1960), provides the basis for the theoretical background with which this study engages. Meinong's theory was developed by Parsons (1980), who suggested that fictional characters differ from ordinary humans because they are incomplete. Rorty (1982) suggests that the concept of 'truth' does not necessarily infer correspondence with the facts and also that language is not a 'picture' of the world. One of the problems of distinguishing fiction from non-fiction is that there seems to be no surface features of language that differentiate between these two states (Lamarque in Levinson, 2005). 'Fiction-making is [also] distinct from lying' (ibid. p383) as literally true sentences are regularly included in fictional stories. Currie (1991) highlights the importance of the mutual recognition of the act of 'making believe' in relation to fiction and asserts the importance of authorial intention in relation to the understanding that the reader is to engage in this act of making believe.

The notion of truth and consistency within fictions is an accompanying concern. Walton (1990) identifies two principles relating to this matter. The Reality Principle assumes that the reader judges the fictionality of the portrayed world based upon their understanding of the real world to fill in the information around the explicitly stated details (Lamarque in Levinson, 2005). The Mutual Belief Principle incorporates the reader's understanding of the context and time when a narrative was written.

The manner by which humans are emotionally moved by narratives that they understand to be fictitious has also been the point of much consideration. This discussion, stemming from the paper, *How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?* by Colin Radford (1975) and being contributed to by Walton (1978), Lamarque (1981), Allen (1986), Novitz (1987), Currie

(1991), Carroll (1990), Neill (1991), Moran (1994), Smith (1995), Hartz (1999) and Joyce (2000) concerns itself with this problem. Based around the three propositions:

1. Readers or audiences often experience emotions towards objects they know to be fictional.
2. A necessary condition for expressing emotions towards objects is the belief that those objects exist.
3. Readers or audiences who know that the objects are fictional do not believe these objects exist.

(Lamarque in Levinson, 2005)

The above propositions create what has come to be known as 'the paradox of fiction', prompting theorists to discard one of the three in an attempt to solve the problem. Walton (1990) rejects proposition one, asserting that we do not experience real emotions but rather make-believe ones when engaging with fictions. However many theorists have suggested that it is counterintuitive to suggest that these emotions are not real and have instead rejected proposition two. (Lamarque in Levinson, 2005). Thought Theory suggests that vivid imagining can be a substitute for belief whilst, Counterpart Theory engages with the notion that readers can empathise with fictional characters because they are aware that real people may experience the same scenarios.

## **Constructivist Epistemology**

Epistemological theory provides the means to consolidate the ideas presented by philosophy relating to reality and fiction. The notion that our knowledge, understanding, and perception of the world is a psychological and social construct, has many supporters. Kelly (2001) proposed that an individual's understanding of reality is a construct created through the interpretation of information acquired through the sense organs and is therefore not necessarily representative of any objective reality. These constructs are developed as a means to understand the world and are then tested through physical interaction in an attempt to understand and order our experiences of reality. Specifically dealing with the



perception of fiction and the difference between that and reality, Schmidt (1984) proposes the notion of the Ortho World Model (OWM), the sum of constructed knowledge about reality and our working understanding of reality upon which judgements relating to the nature of reality are based. Schmidt suggests that reality is understood through the perception of an underlying set of conventions that allow us to take scenario-specific details and make sense of them in terms of prior experience. Schmidt's interpretation of the nature of conventions goes beyond those suggested by Lewis (1969), who understood convention in a social sense, to include physical conventions such as the convention of 'hardness' or that of 'gravity'.

If one considers the accumulation of conventions understood as 'reality' in a similar way to the manner by which literary genres are defined by sets of conventions, then it should be clear that, similar to the way that we have pre-learned expectations about what to expect from a horror novel, we also have pre-learned expectations about what to expect from reality. Rocks are hard and, when thrown into the air, will fall under the force of gravity until they meet a surface that is strong enough to support their weight. This understanding of reality as a set of conventions allows us to predict the outcome of events and in this way provide a working understanding of the way that we perceive reality to operate (Kelly, 2001). Woolley (1997) also suggests that this understanding of conventions, of the underlying patterns that make up our experience of reality, allows the brain to focus upon novel tasks and disengage from thinking about commonly repeated tasks. Interestingly, a study by Abraham and von Cramon (2009) into the manner by which fiction is perceived, indicates that the anterior medial pre-frontal cortex (amPFC) and the posterior-cingulate cortex (PCC) become significantly activated by tasks requiring subjects to ascertain whether a particular entity is real or fictional. The PCC and am PFC are also part of the brain's default network – the regions of the brain that are 'more engaged during passive periods within experiments' (Abraham and von Cramon, 2009, p2). The evidence from Abraham and von Cramon's study seems to support the concept of the OWM. Their study links the perception of reality to 'personal relevance' (p4) and detect significantly different levels of activation in the PCC and amPFC even though the participant is already aware of the real or fictional nature of the entity that they are describing. This suggests that prior knowledge regarding the real nature of a specific entity is supported by a complex activation of areas of

the brain relating to personal relevance. To frame this in relation to the OWM, this would mean that a search of an OWM would reveal specific details linked to an individual's prior understanding of a character. Abraham and von Cramon appear to suggest that it is the number of specific details that allow an observer to ascertain whether they are talking about a real person rather than a fictional one and suggest that an entity can be perceived as being 'more real' because of the higher number of associated conventions linked with that entity. Therefore, this notion of 'personal relevance' in Abraham and von Cramon's study is interpreted as meaning 'relevance to an individual's OWM' in the language of Schmidt (1984) and Maturana (1980), thereby linking these two ideas.

Abraham and von Cramon acknowledge Woolley and van Reet's assertion that children make use of contextual information when making judgements regarding the reality status of a novel entity (2006), however they do not accommodate this into their study. Their findings do, however, support the fact that the brain 'checks' assertions against some stored body of information. It also possibly links this process with the amPFC and the PCC because, one could argue that, any model of reality used to understand and interpret present experience would be constantly in use, even when no specific task is being undertaken. The task of interpretation being one that needs to occur with every new bit of information received through the sensory organs. The fact that this is then activated further when making judgements regarding the real or fictitious nature of a particular character, suggests further that the amPFC and PCC are responsible for this act of checking perceived information against present understanding of reality, conceptualised in constructivist theory as the OWM.

## **Reality Monitoring / Perception of Fiction**

Along with the study by Abraham and von Cramon mentioned above, a number of recent functional magnetic resonance imagining (fMRI) studies have sought to analyse the manner by which individuals monitor their experience of reality and how experience of fiction can be differentiated from this. This allows considerable insight into the idea proposed by philosophers concerned with the 'paradox of fiction'. Abraham and von Cramon's

suggestion of a correlation between the perceived reality of a subject and the complexity of the experience of this subject (2009) is supported by studies conducted by Simons, Henson *et al.* (2008); Turner, Simons *et al.* (2008); and Harris, Sheth *et al.* (2008). Each of these studies locates brain function linked to reality monitoring, belief and fictional differentiation activities within the prefrontal cortex (PFC). This highlights the importance that the PFC plays in relation to engagement with this experience, processing information linked to context discrimination (self / other and perceived / external) (Turner, Simons *et al.*, 2008) along with memory retrieval orientation and evaluation (Rugg and Wilding, 2000). The field of child development studies also provides a rich source of relevant material. Woolley's (1997) review of literature relating to the study of belief linked with real and fictional stimuli (e.g. Santa Claus) presents a strong overview of the subject area and also highlights the role that fear plays in assisting belief.

## **Constructivist Epistemology and the Philosophy of Fiction**

What is hopefully obvious from the above discussion relating to the philosophy of fiction is that related theorising does not regularly incorporate the notion of reality or, at least, that reality does not form the basis from which an understanding of fiction arises. Fiction, after all, is predominantly a sensation related to a relatively confident act of classification by an observer that has occurred in relation to particular text. Constructivist epistemological theory has shown that the act of observation resulting in the manner by which an individual perceives the world is entirely subjectively created due to the fact that the human organism is a sealed system (Maturana, 1980). This suggests that philosophers need to look inwards rather than outwards to understand the nature of fiction. At the manner by which texts are perceived rather than the texts themselves. Because fiction is predominantly the classification of a perceived object or description (Lamarque and Olsen, 1994) as being non-real then it feels appropriate to look towards the manner by which individuals perceive reality to understand how they differentiate fiction from reality.

Schmidt's (1984) discussion of fiction, extrapolated from Maturana's discussion of constructivist epistemological theory (1980) suggests that reality is perceived around the

basis of learned conventions that allow human beings to make predictions about their environment. The perception of gravity is a case in point, distinct from the force itself and learned by the repeated exposure to events where an object suspended above a surface is released and descends towards that surface. Gravity is a convention that most humans inherently understand. We predict that the ball will fall downwards because of our understanding of the convention that gravity plays on the world around us. It is suggested that the inclination for humans to look for causality and patterns in series of events (Wagner and Morris, 1987) arises from the manner by which they construct understanding. A pattern insinuates a convention and therefore allows humans to predict subsequent results of a particular system. If we model an individual's perception of reality as being formed from an understanding of underlying conventions generated by the repeated perception of conceptually linked events, then it is possible to explain some of the seemingly paradoxical aspects of a fiction. In relation to Parson's suggestion that fictional entities are incomplete (1980), one could interpret incompleteness as relating to the notion that the number of bits of information that the observer is allowed to perceive is perceptibly less than with a real person thereby the conventions linked to that character, their predictable behaviours as it were, are considerably less. In some ways this incompleteness is filled in by the observer from their own understanding of the world. Take the following line for example.

*She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her eyes, her lips... the way she spoke.*

Clearly this single line actually describes nothing specific about the woman herself. Nothing about her eyes except that she had them. Nothing about her lips or the way she spoke, yet this sentence conjures a potent an image in the mind of the reader that is completely based upon their own understanding of beauty. All the sentence does is draw the reader's attention to the woman's various features to encourage them to dwell upon and imagine these in more detail. One might even consider what the observer himself looks like.

This 'filling in' recalls Walton's Reality and Mutual Belief Principles (1990) and suggests a means by which this might occur. In essence these two principles describe the same act – of fleshing out the given details using the observer's own perceived understanding of the world and the conventions associated with that.

In relation to the perceived 'paradox of fiction' which relates to the manner by which we appear to genuinely emotionally engage with events and characters that we know to be made up, the answer becomes seemingly clear. In Walton's example of Charles' fear of a giant slime in a movie, the images of and narrative about the killer slime convey multiple conventions, including those relating to premature death, danger, being chased, and possibly drowning, all of which are serious concerns to your average individual. The observer doesn't have to be scared of the slime itself, however by observing the slime kill somebody, they are forced to recall and engage with their understanding of these conventions in the process of interpreting the film and therefore become scared of the notion of dying, not by the idea of a giant slime.

Walton's example of the slime presents a fairly weak argument in today's terms. As we become desensitised to violence on television, the concept of being scared of a slime, seems almost ridiculous and is unlikely to illicit an enduring fright reaction after the movie has finished (Harrison and Cantor, 2009). However, consider other films that portray horrific events much closer to home. *The Exorcist* (1973), for example, is set in a normal looking house and provides a horrific explanation for commonly observed but unexplained household phenomena (for example creaking floorboards). Consider further, the contemporary trend towards producing horror movies in a more realistic style. The television play *Ghostwatch* (1992) written by Stephen Volk appropriated the conventions of live television, using familiar television personalities within the fiction and was so convincing that two ten year-old boys who viewed the programme were referred to Gulson Hospital in Coventry to be treated for persistent anxiety (Simons and Silveira, 1994). In this case, the conventions presented by *Ghostwatch* were so recognisable from everyday reality, with a house in a quiet cul-de-sac used as the set; familiar presenters from children's television performing as themselves; and the numerous conventions of a live outside broadcast used within the production; that the associated horror was deeply disturbing. *Ghostwatch* dissimulated the television experience so that it would be perceived within a real framework and this considerably accentuated the horror of the events because the observing audience were trying to understand contrived fictional occurrences within a setting that they believed was real.

A further example might, for example, be the Walt Disney film *Bambi* (1942) where viewers are moved by the death of a cartoon deer's mother. It is suggested that, in viewing this death onscreen, we are encouraged to engage empathically with our thoughts and feelings relating to our understanding of the convention of death and the loss of a close relative perceived through the eyes of an innocent such as Bambi. The viewer understands the implications of such loss in a real sense and is shown that Bambi, perhaps, doesn't. Again, the specific context is clearly fictional but the thematic palette from which it pulls has a poignancy and relevance to most viewers.

## **Additional Theoretical Perspectives**

### **Play Theory**

In *Man, Play and Games* (2001), Roger Caillois defines the activity of play as essentially free – in that it is not obligatory; separate – in that that play is allocated its own space and time differentiated from the real world; uncertain – in that the outcome remains unknown until the end; unproductive – ‘ending in a situation identical to that prevailing at the beginning of the game’; governed by rules that suspend ordinary laws or make-believe - ‘accompanied by a special awareness of a second reality or of a free unreality, as against real life’. Caillois suggests that games cannot be ruled and make-believe and in one sense he is correct – that it is unlikely that a make-believe ruled game will be enacted by participants (Caillois gives the example of an imaginary game of chess). However, it *is* possible for make-believe games to have rules given that many acts of making-believe require participants to engage with a specific subject, so, for example, in playing Cowboys and Indians it is likely that the game will be two sided and that one of these will be given the denomination ‘Cowboys’ and the other ‘Indians’. One of the rules of playing Cowboys and Indians is that you have to choose between being a Cowboy and an Indian. If you choose to be a space alien then you are performing what Caillois would call a nihilistic role and openly disregarding the rules of the

game. Obviously, the act of making-believe creates fictions, however, Caillois also asserts that rules create fictions in that they 'suspend ordinary laws' and 'establish new legislation' (2001, p128). This idea of play is therefore relevant to this study as any condition in a piece of immersive theatre that stipulates that new rules apply or that force participants to consciously adopt a different role, will add to the awareness that the piece is a fictional construct.

## **Liminality**

In his 1908 work *Rites de Passage* the ethnographer Arnold van Gennep highlighted the importance of the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane, introducing the term *liminal* (from the Latin *limen* - 'threshold' (Soanes and Stevenson, 2003)) which Richard Schechner relates to the field of performance by noting that 'Performance isn't 'in' anything but between' (cited in Crosby, 2009, p4). Van Gennep divides ritualistic acts into three stages – the pre-liminal (rites of separation), liminal (transition rites) and post-liminal (rites of incorporation). Turner applies this notion of liminality to a wider context beyond tribal society (1964) whilst Schechner specifically applies the term liminality to performance to explore the transformative potential of performance work noting that performance (alongside play, games, sports and ritual) are activities '*apart from everyday life*' (emphasis original) where 'a special world is created where people can make the rules, rearrange time, assign value to things and work for pleasure' (1988, p11)

Turner notes key features of the liminal in *Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage* (1964). Here he describes the initiates as having a levelling of status (which he calls *communitas*) which he likens to death and notes that they may be treated in a similar manner to which a corpse is treated within that society (1964). Initiates often a symbolically stripped of status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank, kinship position making them indistinguishable as individuals. Turner describes this as 'sacred poverty' (p49). The technique of masking the participants used in many Punchdrunk's work is one means of facilitating a sense of *communitas* upon their audiences. In one-to-one work, where there is no group of participants together, one might perceive a sense of *communitas* in the manner

by which the overall group of participants are treated by performers, receiving similar private experiences independent of their gender, race, and social status. Participants were literally stripped of their secular clothing in the Howells (2011) and Biswas (2011) pieces analysed as part of this study.

Turner also draws from on Harrison's identification of communication of the *sacra* which may be communicated as exhibitions (what is shown), actions (what is done) and instructions (what is said) (in Turner, 1964). He highlights the frequent disproportion (large or small), monstrousness and mystery of exhibited *sacra* noting that the exaggerated feature often provides a point of reflection. Again, this can be perceived in the repetition used by Punchdrunk when design the spaces in their installation. In *The Drowned Man* (2013) rooms are filled with repeated images that articulate a particular element of the piece - Many wigs, many cowboy hats, many medical assessment are displayed to emphasise a particular character trait or theme. Turner also applies this interpretation to monstrous features and entities noting the chimeric qualities of many of these entities. Interestingly, in relation to this study, Turner suggests that 'monsters are manufactured precisely to teach neophytes to distinguish clearly between the different factors of reality' (p52). The inference is striking – what we might call the fictionalised elements of the ritual provide a frame by which to focus attention on everyday reality. The distorted penis length of a *sacra*, for example, drawing the mind's focus to the notion of fertility. Applying the theory of Maturana (1980) and Schmidt (1984) we see the introduction of novel conventions as a means of facilitating reflection on everyday conventions. In terms of immersive theatre the implication is that the fictional frames created by artists and companies do not distance participants from reality completely but instead, untangle and discard the complexity and multitude of conventions experienced as everyday reality to foreground certain ideas and infer certain conventions that become of the focus of the work. Schechner reflects this idea in his analogy that reality is raw and art is cooked' (1988, p38)

To return to the case of the initiates who are stripped of their statuses, property and other identifying features (Turner, 1964) we can see that the acts of authorship applied to the situation, create the experience of liminality through the reduction of everyday conventions and the imposition of the specific novel conventions linked to the ritual (which in immersive



theatre we might link to the notion of fictionalisation). This fictionalisation facilitates the process of transformation and infers the potential of all works that utilises the liminal to create change through the reformulation of participant identity. By removing the mass of everyday conventions from the experience the participant is able to change or redefine their position in relation to the elements presented by the liminal. It is suggested that the perceived sacred importance given to key rites of passage within a given society underlines the importance of the proposed transformation and the requirement of the initiate to accommodate the proposed transformations into their personality and associated behaviours.

Here a difference becomes apparent between the intentional liminality created during rites of passage with their specific transformative aims and the liminality created within immersive theatre spaces where transformation becomes a possibility (for example in Howells, 2011) rather than a specific intention of the work (for example in the work of Fiction Pimps and Sisters Hope). What is consistent in both the Howells work and the work of Fiction Pimps and Sisters Hope is that the direction of proposed transformation is non-specific. If participants undergo a transformative experience in relation to these performances, that transformation will be one that occurs in relation to an individual participant's perceptions of their own lives and personal psychology. It is a self-directed transformation facilitated by the performance as opposed to a specifically directed process aimed at, for example, transforming boys into men.

By framing liminality in terms of the reduction of an individual's everyday conventions with the intention of focusing upon a particular set of novel conventions (along with the thoughts, feelings and behaviours arising from this focused engagement), it is possible to highlight the manner by which other liminal spaces are created within everyday reality which are not framed as fiction. A vacation, for example, removes an individual from their everyday reality creating a liminal space (Wang, 1999) and is potentially transformative as the tourist selects their activities and focus of attention over a given period within a given geographical area. Equally, the liminality of the psychiatrist's office foregrounds introspection and discussion of personal feelings again creating a space for potential transformation to occur. This articulates Lamarque and Olsen's assertion that fictiveness is

the result of an act of classification applied to certain sets of circumstances (1994). The liminality described in the above examples bears little difference to the liminality perceived in immersive theatre in terms of the exchange and reduction of everyday conventions and replacement with novel conventions however, the framing of immersive theatre as a performance event introduces the concept of fiction which is then applied during the classification of that experience. One might transplant all aspects of the psychiatrist's office into an immersive installation and recreate the experience exactly, using a trained psychiatrist however, the difference in framing is likely to introduce questions relating to performance, authenticity and ultimately relating to the fictionality of the experience that were not considered when the same event took place inside a 'real' office.

This discussion of liminality underlines the position this study takes in relation to fiction, that what we describe as fiction is simply the result of a process of classification in relation to the fiction / reality binary within the mind of the observer. Because of the manner by which ritual is framed as an experience relevant to everyday reality, we still see a stripping back of everyday conventions as a mean of focusing participants' attention on the transformative sacra however, there is little question of the events being fictional even though ritual can incorporate role-play and many other elements which can also be perceived in the tradition of theatre (Schechner refers to the elements of ritualistic experiences as *actuals* (1988)). Whereas, in immersive theatre framed in the tradition that has integrated the concept of fiction into it's terms of analysis and discussion, the occurrences and sense of authorship within the liminal raises this notion of the blurring of fiction and reality. The interpretation is simply a result of context however, and it is felt that this does not reduce the applicability of an understanding of how these elements work together, which is, of course, the subject under focus within this study.

The stages of liminality can be applied to an entire ritual and is equally useful in relation to the analysis of performance. However, it is also possible to identify rituals or performances which specifically contribute to one of the three liminal stages. A performance might have the singular aim of being a rite of separation, a rite of transition or a rite of incorporation although it is noted that a performance with such a singular intent will also have a pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal stage of its own and therefore it is in this more general

application that liminal theory is applied in this study, identifying the three ways by which observers engage with performances. In this interpretation, the pre-liminal stage represents the period prior to an observer directly engaging with a performance where, in the case of immersive theatre, often contextualises the performance which informs the act of classified as the experience being fictional or real. This stage contains little information directly taken from the performance itself, but usually specifically articulates the point of separation from reality, against which the events constituting the performance are likely to be considered. It is the initial period where the experience is framed as a performance. In an audience seated / performers staged theatrical event, one might include the observation of promotional material and related criticism; the act of buying a ticket; the act of travelling to a theatrical venue; the act of handing over a ticket; the act of waiting inside a theatrical venue; the act of entering a theatre and sitting on a seat; that act of observing an empty stage or curtain; the act of the lights going down; and the act of somebody walking out onto the stage; as various events within the pre-liminal stage of a performance that provide information that contextualises the events that occur on the stage as being part of a performance reality and not part of everyday reality. The liminal stage is therefore defined as the body of the ritual or performance and the post-liminal stage is distinguished as the events following the performance where the participant is re-assimilated into everyday reality. The importance of each stage in providing an observer or participant with the information needed to classify the events in the liminal stage as being fictional should not be underestimated. Video footage of 'pranks' that restrict pre-liminal information clearly shows the confusion of the 'victim' in relation to the events that are occurring (Coeludd, 2007). The revelation of the fictional nature of the liminal stage within the post-liminal stage can be seen to cause embarrassment to the 'victim' in relation to the manner that the events within the liminal stage have causes them to behave.

## **Thresholds and Boundaries of Liminality**

Liminality in performance is typically articulated through the 4<sup>th</sup> wall convention and is used to separate the performance space from the observation space which houses the audience. Norman et al (1999, p11) suggest that 'Theatre as art is hinged on an essential

boundary, namely the division between actor and spectator,' proposing that the 4<sup>th</sup> wall convention is used to separate the aesthetic codes of performance from the complex, multi-layered codes of everyday reality (ibid). They suggest that this convention can be insinuated in a number of physical ways, through light, sound and staging as well as by inserting barriers that block the audiences' view of the performance area such as curtains or doors (ibid). They also note how the "virtual reality of theatre' may emanate from an actor' (ibid, p15) in the case of street theatre where public space is 'momentarily invested with inhabitual qualities' (ibid, p15). Norman *et al* then go on to identify the key properties of performance boundaries. These are:

- The ability to cross boundaries and so pass from one space to another.
- The ability to locate boundaries in different positions.
- The ability to use multiple boundaries to create several linkages between two spaces or to link many spaces together to form a larger structure.
- The ability to dynamically introduce and remove boundaries.
- The ability for boundaries to be mobile or fixed.
- The ability for boundaries to offer varying degrees of visual and acoustic transparency, or possibly even amplification.
- The ability for boundaries to be explicitly or implicitly represented to spectators.

These descriptions provide a means to understand how participants may make judgements relating to the presence of a performance, highlighting the importance that the perception of such thresholds plays in the understanding of the observed events as forming part of a performance. It is anticipated that the perception of a series of events devoid of these indicators of performance, may result in error in classification with the events being perceived as being real and therefore dissimulated.

# Practice-relevant Theory

## Dissimulation

McGonigal (2006) highlights the importance of dissimulation within ARGs and highlights the lengths that game developers at Microsoft went to disguise the fact that the websites that form a particular game are not produced by the same people. In *The Beast*, for example there were:

‘Two university sites, a coroner’s site, a hat store and several sites of architects who build intelligent houses. One of the architect’s sites is written entirely in German’ (Herold in McGonigal 2006).

Dissimulation was created in a number of other ways and with impressive consideration of detail. Sites were registered with fictional names, live events constituting political rallies for anti-robot militias were organised and a ‘real’ Hotmail account inbox was set up for real Microsoft executive Doug Zartman (who had been discovered by players to be involved with the game) which was linked to via a forum post and which the game producers encouraged players to hack into by giving them clues to the password in the forum post. As a means of dissimulating the game experience, players of Electronic Arts’ *Majestic* (2001) were contacted soon after the official start of the game to be told that the game was postponed due to a fire at game headquarters when this wasn’t actually the case (McGonigal, 2006).

It is clear that, with respect to dissimulation, narrative construction and characterisation need to be undertaken with a clear focus upon authenticity, naturalism and believability. Dissimulative practices in immersive theatre question the appropriateness of ‘traditional’ approaches to constructing stories and suggests that alternative approaches and perspectives need to be considered. The review below outlines what might be considered a ‘traditional theoretical approach’ to story construction. Extrapolation of these concepts to suit immersive theatre is engaged with in Chapter 4.

## Characterisation

Theoretical assertions based upon the development of character and motivation are recorded in the majority of texts focussing upon the theory and craft of creative writing, Anderson (2005), McCutcheon (1996), Morley (2007), McKee (1999) and Greenwell (in Neale, 2009), all highlight perceived commonalities in complicated characters. McKee suggests that all protagonists must have a clearly expressed object of desire which that character will expend energy to obtain. This object is therefore symbolic of the character's desire, providing a clear indicator relating to whether a particular character has succeeded in fulfilling this desire. McKee, Aristotle and Novakovich (1998) also highlight the importance of paradox or consistent inconsistencies (Aristotle, 2003) in relation to internal psychologies of characters that are responsible for generating conflict within a character that is articulated through their behaviours in the story. Johnston (1979) highlights the importance of status expressed through the behaviour and dialogue of characters when interacting with others, suggesting that an awareness of status is essential to producing naturalistic character interactions.

In terms of relevant examples from contemporary writing, the emotionally vacant characters created by Haruki Murakami (1999, 2001, 2007) are of particular interest. Equally, the characters portrayed within the 'dirty realism' of Raymond Carver (1988, 1992, 2003), David Means (2003, 2006 ) and Charles Bukowski (2002, 2008) are of considerable inspiration along with screenwriting relating to contemporary youth culture in Britain such as the television series *Skins* (2007), and *Misfits* (2009) which have all inspired the development of emotionally complex characters, devoid of moral compasses and cast out of the apparent contemporary British emotional hegemonies. Contemporary theatre is of less specific interest in terms of characterisation although, obviously, the notion of presenting characters with which the audience can directly engage with has been adopted from theatrical practitioners upon which this study is based and which are described below.

## Plot

Aristotle (2003), McKee (1999), Anderson and Neale (in Anderson, 2006), Morley (2007) amongst others all express a model of plot being adapted from Aristotle which is formed of a three act structure, instigated by an inciting incident with action rising to a climactic point of resolution. Booker (2004) posits seven archetypal plot structures which, he suggests, all stories fall into. Whilst this is certainly illuminating and helpful on numerous levels, Booker fails to accommodate certain developments in relation to plot that centre themselves around 'the world of the ego', (p438) and suggests that stories by writers such as Chekhov, Proust and Beckett 'do not reach a full archetypal conclusion' (p438) calling these resolutions 'pseudo-endings' and suggesting that Steven Spielberg's *E.T.* (1982) 'provides a more substantial ending than the plays of Chekhov, Proust [or] Beckett.' (p453). In doing so Booker fails to understand the manner by which these writers have avoided an archetypal plot resolution as a means of conveying meaninglessness and uncertainty, challenging readers and theatre-goers to question and interpret the events that have unfolded within the narrative. What Booker terms 'pseudo-endings' are, it is proposed, a kind of tragic plot-resolution in themselves - one that not only conveys the archetypal tragic downfall of a character, but also conveys the tragedy of incompleteness and non-resolution.

## Narrative Structure

Neale (2008) describes the manner by which narrative elements can be arranged to convey and focus stories in different manners and notes linear, spliced, repeating, multiple voice or reversed structures as commonly perceived approaches to telling stories. This is supported by Bell (2004) who highlights the importance of timeframes in relation to narrative structure and mentions the parallel and 'double' plots. Bell, along with Keating (1994), Beinhart (1996) and Williamson (1990) all highlight the manner by which narrative structure can, at times stereotypically, be linked to genre, for example, in the case of the murder mystery or horror genres.

## Dialogue

Traditionally, theatre scripts have contained dialogue stipulated fully in dialogic exchanges between characters. Neale (2006) suggests that 'showing' through the use of detail and dialogue hands over the process of interpretation to the reader, making the reader more 'active' (p135). This is supported by Kempton (2004). Practitioners have played with the manner by which dialogue might be delivered to performers with various filmmakers using the technique of retroscripting to encourage naturalistic delivery through improvisation. In a retroscript, key plot and conversation points are given which provide a framework around which improvisation can occur. The films, *This is Spinal Tap* (1984), *Dr Strangelove* (1964), *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) and *Paranormal Activity* (2007) have all made use of this technique in an attempt to create dialogue that more closely resembles real speech.

## Setting

Anderson (2006) conveys the different ways that setting can be used as a means of conveying or affecting character and plot, or through linking to the themes or emotional tone of the narrative. In relation to staged productions with a seated audience, performance scripts have also paid close attention to the setting of props upon the stage and also to the direction from which performers enter, leave and position themselves onstage, often with the performers positioned artificially so that they are facing the audience (Neale, 2008).

As noted, the above practice-focused theoretical perspectives provide, on the whole, a traditional means of approaching the act of constructing narratives. The next chapter justifies the method of analysis used to identify and engage with fictional elements in immersive work and tests this method on a number of existing works.



## 4. Methodology

This chapter charts the development and application of different methodological approaches during the period of research. Beginning with a practice-based research focus it became apparent that the lack of an established method for discussing and analysing the relationship between reality and fiction meant that the development of such was necessary before an informed practical exploration of these ideas was possible.

### Practice-based Exploration

The research began with a practice-based exploration of the relationship between reality and fiction through the conceptualisation of a number of pieces of work that augmented fictional elements on real scenarios. These were considered and then rejected before any significant degree of realisation occurred but are briefly outlined below as a means of articulating the formative stages of the research.

#### *Museum of Lies* (September 2008 to July 2009)

*Museum of Lies* was conceptualised as an installation space devoid of performers that aimed to tell a story via the absent presence of the characters as a means of exploring the manner by which narrative was perceived by participants exploring the space. In many ways this was similar to Punchdrunk's *It Felt Like a Kiss* (2009) which only really employed performers in the latter stages of the performance and prior to this,

relied upon the installation, along with Adam Curtis' documentary of the same name, to convey an overall sense of the themes being conveyed which related to the rise of fear as a political tool beginning in the 1960s. For *Museum of Lies*, a plot was sketched out however, the concept was shelved, primarily due to financial constraints but also because, upon experiencing *It Felt Like a Kiss* it was felt that the absence of performers within the space detracted from the total experience of the piece and what was more exciting and interesting from a research perspective was the later sections of the piece where the sense of the work became considerably 'more real' through the insertion of performers. This particularly linked to the section where the participants were chased by a performer with a chainsaw through the installation, where my own understanding of the fictional nature of the performance almost completely disappeared in response to the perceived 'reality' of the situation. The relationship between reality and fiction in immersive theatre then became the focus of the study and a search for a means of describing and analysing this relationship began whilst practice-based explorations continued alongside this.

#### **VOID (July 2009 – December 2009)**

In response to the new direction the research was taking, *VOID* was conceptualised as a project aimed at creating an exhibition space for artists that would then become the site for a performance that imposed various dramatic elements upon the participants and explored their responses, essentially augmenting a play over a real environment that participants would only be partially aware of, and utilising creative writing techniques to essentially shape apparently real events. The piece didn't get much further than this because it was becoming apparent at this point that there was no established means of analysing the relationship between reality and fiction to underpin the creative work.

### ***Untitled (December 2009 – May 2010)***

This took the form of a blog that fictionalised my experience of undertaking the PhD through writing and photographs. Quickly, it was recognised that firstly, this wasn't actually exploring the desired area of research which, it was felt, had to involve live encounters in a similar manner to the experience of immersive theatre productions. Fiction within a presented text felt 'too easy' in the sense that one could fabricate any imagined encounter with little effort. Secondly, my real life, with one small child and another on the way, was not particularly exciting and I had restricted ability to live out and construct events that were not utterly banal. The combination of these two factors led to a period of reassessment in terms of the methods of the research. What was completely clear was that without a strong theoretical framework to underpin the research, any practical exploration was rather uninformed and risked becoming vague. This was essentially the key methodological turning point of the research.

### **Practitioner Interviews**

To extend understanding relating to the manner by which different practitioners consider the reality / fiction binary in their work, interviews were conducted with Colin Marsh and Maxine Doyle of Punchdrunk, Alan Lane of Slunglow, David Newton (who created immersive training scenarios for the police force) and Alexander Kelly of Third Angel. Because these were conducted between May and December 2010, before the method of analysis was finished, their relevance to the study was limited and the inclusion and engagement with the interviews felt tangential to the main direction of the thesis. Therefore, the interview with Colin Marsh and Maxine Doyle was the only one deemed to have significant applicability to warrant inclusion.

## **Development of Theoretical Framework and Method of Analysis**

Occurring between September 2010 and June 2011 and beginning initially with a review of literature relating to fMRI studies of the brain in relation to the perception of fiction, expanding out from the Abraham and von Cramon (2009) paper, reading began to focus on the discussion of reality and fiction in constructivist epistemology theory. Here, Schmidt's specific engagement with the phenomenon of fiction (1984) in relation to the experience of everyday reality provided the theoretical grounding to discuss and analyse the experience of immersive theatrical events. The basic premise was fairly simple – if the experience of fiction was derived from an awareness an observer of the manner by which a particular element of a piece of work adopted conventions that were unfamiliar from those experienced in everyday reality then, coupled with the participant's awareness of the experience being performative in nature, certain elements would be perceived as fictional. The classification of 'fiction' derives from the perception of the established binary opposition of fiction and reality used to discuss perceptions of non-reality in narrative artistic genres such as theatre, literature, film and gaming coupled with the identification of the experience as being identifiable within those established genres.

In relation to the perception of fiction within a complex scenario, such as that presented by an immersive experience, three distinct questions arose that required different methodological strategies. The perception of fiction itself is a binary which, when applied to an entire piece of work, creates one of the key problems within this development of this study - How do immersive works combine the apparently contradictory states of reality and fiction? The answer being that the reality / fiction binary is not sufficient to adequately explain what is happening in this kind of work however, it was clear that participants were instinctively attempting to apply this binary to their experience resulting in the notion that this kind of work blurs together reality and fiction. Applying Maturana (1980) and Schmidt's (1984) proposal that reality is understood as a complex of underlying conventions constructed into an internal model of reality that Maturana termed the ortho-world model (OWM), it

became clear that immersive work combines familiar (real) and novel (fictional) conventions (Schmidt, 1984) together to form this reality/ fiction complex perceived as the performance. Therefore the reality / fiction binary is occurring on a convention-by-convention basis. Returning to the three questions that informed the methodological approach to this study, these were:

1. What factors contribute to this process of differentiation between classification of conventions as being real or fictional?
2. Which conventions suggested by a performance contribute to the participant's recognition of the work as being partially real and which contribute to the participant's recognition of it being partially fictional?
3. How are these notions applied in the creation of new work?

To engage with the first question, a record of a performance as a list of the proposed conventions was prepared and a qualitative approach to analysis was adopted drawing generalisations from a descriptive response to the process of justifying the basis upon which the classification of reality / fiction was undertaken in relation to each convention presented by a performance. This process of generalisation resulted in the proposition of six potential characteristics of events which were deemed important to the act of classification as they were deemed to insinuate real or fictional conventions. These were:

- Conventional – The convention articulated by a specific event in the performance was familiar from the analyst's experience of everyday reality.
- Unconventional – The convention articulated by a specific event in the performance was unfamiliar from the analyst's experience of everyday reality.
- Encompassing – A specific event in the performance recognised the presence of the participant, positioning them within the performance but did not accommodate or request their response.

- Non-encompassing – A specific event in the performance did not recognise the presence of the participant, positioning them outside of the performance.
- Interactive: Directed - A specific event in the performance involved specific interaction which was clearly articulated by some element of the performance.
- Interactive: Self-motivated – A specific event in the performance was instigated by the participant, seemingly through their own freedom of choice.

To engage with the second question, a record of a performance as a list of the proposed conventions was prepared and, applying the above characteristics derived from the qualitative engagement, each convention was identified as real or fictional, leading to an accumulation of data linked to the reality / fiction binary. Following this process, it became possible to present a statement relating to a performance proposing a particular number of conventions that were classified as conventional, unconventional, encompassing, non-encompassing, interactive: directed and interactive: self-motivated. By converting each figure to a percentile and arranging these around a radar chart to reflect the reality / fiction binary it was possible to graphically represent the overall distribution of real and fictional elements in a performance. Whilst such representation does not, admittedly, particularly extend the analysis it does allow for the clear visual articulation of the overall reality / fiction binary and, it is suggested, could be of potential use in terms of presenting the findings of analysis to companies to underline the potential areas for development in work that were discussed in the accompanying post-analysis report.

To engage with the third question the understanding derived from the process of analysis was applied in the creation of two new pieces of work to test how successfully such ideas can be utilised.

The methodological considerations of the first and second questions relating to creation of theory from analysis will be dealt with first before discussion of the practice-orientated element of the work which is included towards the end of this chapter.

### **Mixed Methods Research**

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies into 'mixed methods research' (Creswell, 2009, p203) accommodates investigation of the binary element of the classification of conventions as real / fictional whilst allowing a deeper exploration of the criteria upon which this judgement may be being made. In line with the model for sequential exploratory design outlined by Creswell (2009), the qualitative analysis precedes the quantitative and can be used when 'testing elements of emergent theory resulting from the qualitative phase'. It 'can also be used to generalise qualitative findings to different samples (Creswell, 2009, p211). In this study, the emergent theory linked to the proposed factors that contribute to the process of classifying conventions as real / fictional was tested quantitatively against data collected from the experience of other performances to establish the general applicability of these factors in terms of highlighting and explaining differences between immersive performances. The aim was to ascertain whether performances that display a greater number of familiar (real) conventions took different approaches to those which display a greater number of novel (fictional conventions). The quantitative data was then used to pinpoint key areas of dissimulation from which strategies for dissimulation were established.

### **Positioning of the Researcher within the Study**

The question of positioning the analyst within the research activity was also recognised as a key consideration. Dewey (1994), Eco (1989, 2006), and Bourriaud (2006), amongst others, have all acknowledged the importance of recognising art as

'experience' (Dewey) or an 'encounter' (Bourriaud) between the work and the individual perceiving or, in the case of immersive theatre, participating in the artistic event. Briefly, each proposes that the meaning of the work is created in the process of interpretation undertaken by the participant. This insinuates that the meaning placed upon a piece of work will differ depending on the individual encountering it and the sum of their experience and understanding at the point of encounter. Dewey articulates this notion clearly when he writes:

“[Life] is a thing of histories, each with its own plot, its own inception and movement towards its close, each having its own particular rhythmic movement; each with its own unrepeated quality pervading it throughout.”  
(1994, p205)

This notion of individual interpretation of art links directly with the constructivist epistemological model of reality proposed by Maturana (1980) and developed by Schmidt (1984) in relation to the notion of fiction. By modelling each individual observer of reality as a sealed unit, constructing an understanding of reality through the sense organs that potentially may generate an unknowable degree of distortion, Maturana and Schmidt highlight the manner by which each individual constructs and encounters reality differently.

The methodological implications of this are that the experience of a piece of immersive theatre, the physical and emotional responses and interactions and, in relation to this study, the classification of the various conventions presented by a piece of work as familiar (real) or novel (fictional) will be subject to a potentially huge degree of variability depending on the individual experiencing the work. The degree of internally-constructed meaning involved in this process, ruled out the applicability of a third-person methodology in favour of a participant/analyst-centred first person approach to analysis.



## **First Person Research Methodologies**

Seamon (2000) highlights a number of traits that are important to first-person research noting that the researcher must come in direct contact with the research phenomenon, specifically noting participation as a methodological approach alongside describing and recording the experience (p7). He also notes that the researcher must immerse themselves fully in the experience to become as familiar as possible with it. Seamon applies this notion not only to direct experience of live events but also to the phenomenological study of artifactual texts. Alongside this he recognises the need for researchers to 'approach the phenomenon as a beginner' and 'adapt her methods to the nature and circumstances of the phenomenon' (p7). These suggestions provide the basis upon which this study is conducted which will be discussed specifically below.

The benefit of adopting a first person perspective to this research has already been discussed both from the perspective of engaging with the reality / fiction binary and also from the position of the participant experiencing the work. It is difficult to see how one might experience immersive theatre first-hand without actually participating in the work however, clearly Seamon's discussion emphasises the need for this direct participation to occur. Seamon recognises that the nature of experience may inhibit repeated exposure to the subject under scrutiny however, in relation to immersive theatrical experiences, that possibility is available. Besides the logistical and economical issues relating to the repeated experience of such work over many days at considerable expense, the natural variability in immersive work that often incorporates a degree of performer improvisation to accommodate the responses of the participants suggests that there will be no single version of a piece and that, whilst there will likely be a perceptible homogeneity to work experienced over repeated encounters, each encounter with a specific work can be treated as unique. Seamon does acknowledge the applicability of first-person research methodologies to artifactual texts and therefore opens up the potential for research to include performance scripts alongside lived experiences. Whilst the analysis mainly focused upon the live experience of work, it also included the script for

Slung Low's *They Only Come at Night: Vision* (2009). Therefore, it was decided that, if the different types of text were to be analysed, a degree of preparation needed to occur so that the analysis retained a consistency of approach. Because the study aimed to identify and engage with the underlying conventions proposed by the work, it was deemed appropriate to document the live experience of work in such a way that foregrounded the underlying conventions. Equally, the Slung Low script was approached in the same way, foregrounding the conventions insinuated by the actions and events described on paper.

Finally, observing Seamon's suggestion that the researcher approaches the studied phenomenon under the pretence of uninformed state it felt essential that any response to the first question described above, engaged with the factors that influenced the classification of conventions as real or fictional in such a way that made no pre-suppositions about the potential nature these factors. Therefore, the initial responses were presented as explanatory prose, justifying the act of classification on a convention-by-convention basis to present a larger picture of the thought processes behind the act of classification (See Appendix 1).

### **Selection of Work for Analysis**

The method of analysis was then tested on a number of existing works that displayed were deemed to be immersive in nature. Machon's (2013) 'scale of immersivity' was not yet published but the criteria for choosing work reflected a number of the elements outlined in that discussion. There were:

- The work had to be interactive and participant-focused being perceptibly incomplete without participant involvement. The audience were not positioned as silent spectators outside of the world presented by the performance.
- The work had to aim to create a performance space that distinguished itself from everyday reality.

The relatively open nature of these criteria allowed engagement with a range of work allowing for a variety of different approaches to be analysed.

The data collection period ran from September 2010 to April 2011 and allowed engagement with eight existing pieces of work. The script for Slung Low's *They Only Come at Night: Visions* was also obtained and analysed during this period. This amounted to the analysis of around six hundred different theatrical events (see Appendix I).

## **Practice-based Application of Findings from Analysis**

(January 2011 – March 2012)

In line with the aims of this research to develop the field of knowledge relating to the creation of immersive theatre from a scriptwriting perspective, the understanding gained from the analysis of existing work was applied practically in the creation of two scripts. The application of theoretical approaches derived from the analysis of existing work to the process of conceptualising and writing new scripts for immersive theatre tested the practical applicability of this understanding, accommodating the potential for theory to evolve in the virtual environment of the script storyworld. Here, the static rendering of the performance as script allowed prolonged consideration of the approaches and scenarios created in relation to the dissimulation of novel (fictional) conventions into familiar (real) ones. The creation of the scripts also challenged and addressed approaches to creative writing as theorised in the current body of understanding of that particular academic field. It is noted that immersive theatre's particular defining features, as highlighted by Machon (2013) and articulated and discussed in the introduction to this thesis present evolutionary pressures to the practice and theorisation of creative writing that allow the advancement of knowledge in this field.

*Menagerie* was created and piloted in January 2011 after the analysis *Money* (Shunt, 2010), *The Night Chauffeur* (Punchdrunk, 2010), *They Only Come at Night: Visions* (Slung Low, 2009) and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Secret Cinema, 2010) and was reshowed in March 2011 using performers from The University of Worcester presenting to their peers. The reshowing allowed for further analysis and data collection in relation to both the use of retroscripting and char/actor augmentation and also allowed the collection of audience responses to the work. The potential use of these approaches to scriptwriting came out of the analysis of the works, particularly in relation to the problems incorporating true audience interaction perceived in the Slung Low script and also the distancing of participants experienced in *Money*.

*Wonderland* was created in the period following the completion of analysis and applied the techniques of retroscripting and char/actor augmentation along with approaches observed in the other analysed work. Because dissimulation (being the replacement of novel (fictional) conventions with familiar (real) conventions) was central to this study, it was decided to create a piece that applied the aims of dissimulation throughout. Whilst there were clear ethical implications in aiming to present a piece of performance that could not be distinguished from reality, the challenge of achieving total dissimulation meant the application of the understanding derived from the analysis of existing work was applied constantly and consistently allowing for a more thorough exploration of this idea. From an ethical perspective, the performance remained in script-form and therefore real participants were not misled and deceived in the experience of this work.

Upon completion, both pieces of work were subject to the same process of analysis applied to the existing work. In this way the attempted total dissimulation of *Wonderland* was scrutinised and the method of analysis retested in terms of a tool for reflection and development of work.

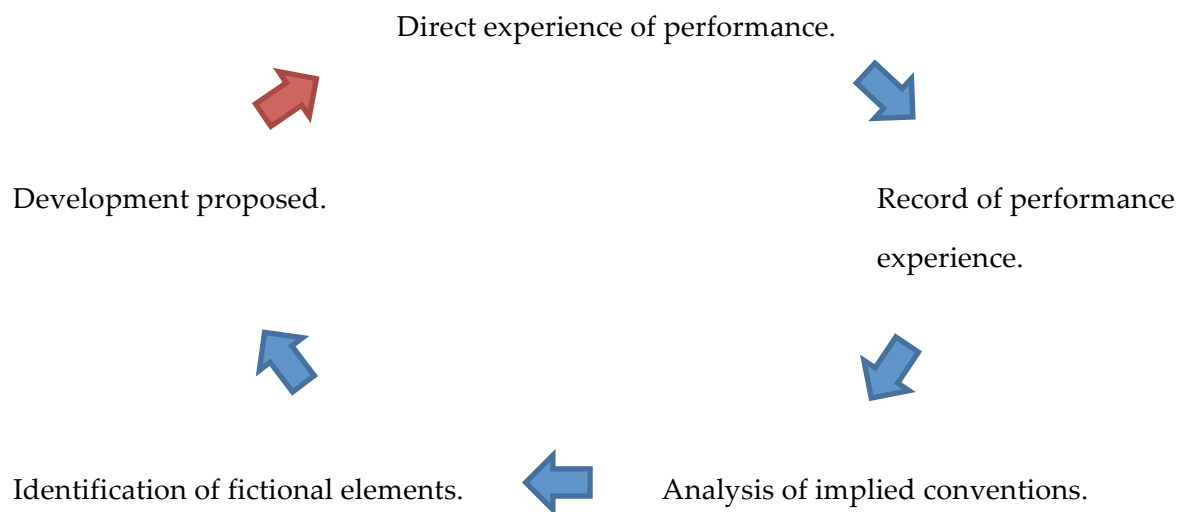
## 5. Analytical Method

As noted in the introduction, this study will first seek to identify the manner by which existing works incorporate and dissimulate fictions before applying the resulting understanding practically through the creation of two new pieces of work. This chapter therefore engages with this first matter. It proposes a means of modelling the experience of reality in such a way that can be used to analyse pieces of performance. Then it addresses the development of the proposed method of analysis and shows the results of its application. Finally, it uses the information derived from the analysis of fictional elements in performance to suggest specific areas that need to be addressed in order to dissimulate the performance. In this manner, the following section seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Can the proposed method of analysis be used to distinguish between different performances that integrate fictional and real elements to different degrees?
2. Can the proposed method of analysis be used to identify elements of a performance that may assist in the development of that performance?
3. Are there generally observable ways in which current pieces of work dissimulate fictional elements?
4. How might obviously fictional elements be dissimulated to make them appear more real to a participant?
5. Is it possible to construct a piece of work that is indistinguishable from everyday reality and if so, how might this be achieved?
6. Do the findings inform ethical considerations relating to immersive performances?

Because there is no established manner by which to identify and analyse fictional aspects of performance texts, a reflective process based upon Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984) has been

adapted to produce a detailed record of the analyst's memory of the performance. This record differentiates between the various events that form the performance and assesses these in relation to the perceived nature of the experience. This process measures the conventions implied through the constituent events against those that form the analyst's own OWM (Schmidt, 1984) to assess consistency with the analyst's understanding of reality. In this way this method of analysis incorporates the participant and researcher into one person within a reflective process that identifies the experiences of the researcher as participant before analysing these experiences.



**Figure 5.1 Representational Diagram of Reflective Process.** The above diagram illustrates this reflective process with the final arrow coloured differently to highlight the potential to create a closed cycle of reflection and development, when the findings of the analysis can be reapplied to the original work.

Before addressing the analysis itself, though, it feels essential to establish the manner by which the script or record of the performance was prepared before analysis.

### Identification of Liminal Stages

The pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal stages (Van Gennep, 1961) were first identified for the performance. In the cases addressed below, the liminal stage was clearly demarcated by a spatial or temporal threshold (Norman, 1999) and coincided with the moment when the analyst recognised that they were involved in a performance. The post-liminal stage was began at the moment where the analyst sensed the performance element of the work had

finished. This didn't necessarily always coincide with existing the space for example, the end of Ansuman Biswas' *2 Free* was marked by the performer moving away from the participant and sitting on their own in contemplation. The participant still had to dress themselves and leave the space but it was decided that this was a practicality that wasn't part of the performance.

## **Identification of Events**

Once the liminal stage had been defined along with the corresponding pre-liminal and post-liminal stages, the experience of each stage of the work was broken down into series of events that, together, constituted the overall work. Within this study an event is defined as:

A perceptibly discrete unit within a scene that distinguishes itself from other events by a distinct shift in the participant's attention from one subject to another. Events may be intended or accidental; they may be planned or spontaneous.

Events may be distinguished in numerous different ways including:

- Change in conversation topic.
- Change in position (For example, a participant or performer beginning to move in a particular direction)
- Change in speaker (Either performer to performer or performer to participant)
- Physical contact (When a performer or participant touches another person)
- Change in environment (For example when a participant gets out of a car or moves from one room to another)
- Shift in role (For example where a participant moves from being an observer to a participant)
- Change in emotion (For example, where, in the middle of a conversation, a performer breaks down into tears)

- Change in 'atmosphere' signified by a physical event (E.g. room fills with smoke, music changes)
- Change in taste: Where food or drink is imbibed or when there is a change from one taste to another (For example eating a chocolate lime).
- Change in colour or intensity of light.

In line with Schmidt's assertions regarding fiction (1984), it is suggested that the participant assesses the relevance of each event to their understanding of everyday reality during the pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal stages of the performance. In the pre-liminal stage, before the performance, this judgement is based upon the acknowledgement of various elements that identify the performance as distinct from everyday reality with (in the case of first viewings) little understanding of what the performance itself contains. In the liminal stage this will occur as information is delivered during the performance and will include the sense of reality created through direct live experience. In the post-liminal stage, this assessment will be based upon the memory of the performance and will be accompanied by the ability for the participant to observe the performance as a whole. Because of the interactive and live nature of immersive performance it would be obstructive to prepare the record of the performance in the pre-liminal or liminal stages of the performance. Therefore, the performance was recorded in the post-liminal stage, following the performance. The participant's experience of the performance was written down in as much detail as possible and, following this, separate events were highlighted based upon the definition described above.

In most cases, events were clearly distinguished and easy to define. For example, at the beginning of Ansuman Biswas' *2 Free* (2011), the participant was asked to take their shoes and socks off, then they were given a large sand timer and lantern, then they were told that a gong would be struck at the end of the performance, then they were shown what the gong sounded like, then they were told to 'go and explore' then they were allowed to enter the first room. This experience has been conveyed in a simplistic style to highlight the clear manner by which the integration of new information develops the participant's sense of the



performance. In the above example the division between events was marked by the word 'then' thus defining the idea of the event as a discrete packet of information that is perceived to develop the performance.

In documenting the performance, the aim was to reflect the experience as accurately as possible. Recording the performance in audio or video formats was considered impractical in most cases and, it was noted, there was also the potential risk that the awareness of this act of recording might have changed the manner by which performers and participants interacted. It was therefore decided that performances would be experienced in the manner intended and then a written document of the performance would be produced as soon as possible after the event. This would therefore minimise the risk of distorting the recalled events either through the creation of false memories (Johnson, 2006) or through the reduction of ability to recall specific details (Johnson, 1992).

In this act of documentation, the emphasis was placed upon recalling as many events as possible. Each event from this record was analysed separately to observe the effect that an individual event had upon the total experience. This assessment of each individual event was used to build up a picture of the performance as a whole. The event record of each performance analysed below is included in Appendix I.

## **Process of Analysis**

Each event conveys a particular convention which the analyst can compare against their understanding of the conventions of reality and was therefore considered individually with the results of this process noted down in a qualitative response. After responses had been recorded to around a hundred different events, generalisations were drawn, highlighting the following common areas of engagement:

## **Convention**

Schmidt (1984) suggests that reality is understood around a set of learned conventions and therefore it was articulated that any event that presented a convention that was not perceived in everyday reality might be articulated as fictional.

## **Interactivity**

It was perceived that interaction was something that occurred constantly in everyday reality and yet in staged performances, for example, interactivity was, on the whole, non-existent, particularly where the fourth wall was consistently maintained. This insinuates that there are multiple levels of interaction, for example, in a pantomime where the performers make reference to the audience, ask participants to join them in undertaking a particular act from their seats or actually take an individual participant from their seat and interact with them physically onstage.

## **Control**

It was perceived that, in everyday reality, people are generally free to do as they wish (in fact a great deal of importance is placed on giving the ability for individuals to express their free will). It is certainly recognised that direction by a third party constantly occurs in everyday reality, however it was felt that the perception of control was a contributing factor when judging whether an event was fictional or not.

## **Exposition**

It was perceived that the need to expose information to a participant insinuates that writer or producers believe that the information gained from the surrounding environment and the preceding events is not enough to tell the participant what they need to know about their current situation. Therefore, information that is revealed to a participant without their

requesting it was considered to be a clear indicator of the self-awareness of the performance thereby distinguishing the perceived event from everyday reality.

Within these areas of interest, the following binary oppositions were noted and applied to form a process of categorisation in relation to the nature of a particular event.

## **Conventional / Unconventional**

This classification highlights whether a particular event has a perceived difference or similarity to everyday reality.

Allocation of the state 'conventional' insinuates that the analyst affirms that a particular event conveys a perceived convention or set of conventions that are recognisable or possible based upon the analyst's understanding of their OWM.

'Unconventional' implies that the convention is not perceived in everyday reality. (The word unconventional was used for brevity and does not adequately describe the state in which this convention exists – every perceived convention is a convention, it is the apparent lack of this convention in analyst's perceived everyday reality that is the key factor here).

The following examples should highlight the difference between conventional and unconventional.

1. In the script for *Wonderland*, Pick offers the participant a swig of her beer. This is classified as conventional because, whilst this act might be considered somewhat unusual, defying recognised conventions of social behaviour, it is still possible and does not inherently convey an obvious purpose relating to the performance (such as exposition).
2. In Slung Low's script for *They Only Come at Night: Visions* – the participant is asked to remember their colour and stand in the relevant salt circle. This is perceived as unconventional because the presence of the salt circles, whilst possible, is not familiar from everyday reality. In the process of making sense of this convention (in resolving the real / fictional dichotomy) the observer finds the most likely

justification for the perceived convention in relation to a contrived performance because no such justification exists in relation to everyday reality.

It is important to distinguish between the convention itself and the stimuli that has caused the presentation of the convention. For example, in Alex's monologue in *They Only Come at Night: Visions* Alex screams because he is apparently being attacked by vampires. The scream itself is conventional – it is a behaviour that can be observed in everyday reality. The implied reason behind the convention – the vampire attack is unconventional however, the scream does not inherently imply the presence of vampires - this information is conveyed by another act that has occurred earlier on in the piece. These two pieces of information (one implied, one observable) are articulated simultaneously through the scream.

### **Positioning of Participants**

If a participant is positioned outside of a particular experience, then this sets them up as an observer, thereby distancing them from the experience. Whilst it is not uncommon for individuals to be positioned in this manner in everyday reality, it does also recall the conventions of separative performance and, it is anticipated, could be used as a means of understanding the nature of a particular experience. This would be particularly relevant in relation to the observation of private events unfolding - the ability to observe such events that one wouldn't have access to in everyday reality makes the constructed artifice of the situation apparent, revealing the fiction. In relation to acts that accommodate participants in some way, there is a distinction made between *encompassing acts* that make reference to participants but do not insinuate or demand a related action and *interactive acts* that accommodate participant responses.

### **Encompassing / Non-encompassing**

This classification highlights whether or not a particular event acknowledges the existence participant.

The allocation of this state is based upon whether the participant is acknowledged by or in relation to the performance or text. It is distinguished from being 'interactive' because the participant is not required to choose to perform an act arising from the delivered information (see below).

Examples:

1. A speech by an actor is directed at a participant but doesn't require / allow them to respond in such a way that will change the content of the speech. Therefore a monologue directed at a participant is encompassing whilst a conversation with a participant is interactive.
2. Aural / visual media is used to directly address the participant but cannot incorporate the responses of the participant. An example of this in *They Only Come at Night: Visions* (Slung Low, 2009) where the car radio is used by Glitch and Quinn to speak directly to the participants. This method of address is one-directional because it cannot accommodate audience response and is therefore classified as encompassing.
3. Where physical events happen around the participant but do not require the participant to interact with them. An example of this is again from *They Only Come at Night: Visions* where the lights go off and then come back on to reveal a car 'blasted with blood' (Slung Low, 2009). Following this a hand draws the words YOU HERE DIE on the windscreen. In this situation, the participant is clearly positioned as an onlooker to the act which in turn refers to the participant.

A grey area in classification arises in relation to situations where the participant is required not to act – for example, in *They Only Come at Night: Visions* where the stage direction states:

'Growling and the sound of something stalking around the AUDIENCE.'

(Slung Low, 2009, p7)

In this situation the participant is stood within a circle of salt that they have been told will protect them from the vampires. Clearly the participant is required to believe this and stay in the salt circle as instructed instead of running away. For this reason they are making the

decision to stay still which could be said to be classified as creating an interactive relationship between performance and participant. To decide, the following question was raised – Is the performance set up to accommodate any response or will, in the case of the example above, the participant choosing to leave the circle of salt and run ‘break’ the performance. If the performance can accommodate any response it is ‘interactive’, if a particular response is required then that event is deemed to be ‘encompassing’. In the above example the performance cannot accommodate the participant if they decide to run so the act of them standing still whilst being stalked around is designated as encompassing.

### **Interactive / Non-interactive**

This classification highlights whether or not a particular event accommodates the response of the participant experiencing it.

As noted above, to be classified as interactive an act must inherently accommodate the response of a participant without detracting from the premise of the performance. In many cases, the range of possible choices for interaction may be quite limited however to be classified as an interactive act the performance must be set up to accommodate any of the potential responses that a participant might make.

#### Interactive Conversation

In the unnamed section of Punchdrunk’s *The Night Chauffeur* dubbed *Our Thirteenth Hour* (2010) for the sake of this study, Bridget asks the participant if they have ever been in love and what being in love feels like. The participant is then free to choose how to respond to this question based on their own experiences and, in turn, the performer playing Bridget will respond accordingly, thus creating a conversation. In this way, the response of the participant is important and through its accommodation by the response of the performer, alters the performance. Because the performer is free to improvise, the performance can cope with the variety of responses that different participants will produce.

#### Physical interaction

It is suggested that physical interaction can occur in three ways: In relation to the set, in relation to the space and in relation to the performers. Set and space were distinguished

between because, for example, in *It Felt Like a Kiss* (Punchdrunk, 2009) where participants are fleeing from the man with the chainsaw, they are, on the whole, not interacting with the set but with the space itself and the performer. They are running away from the performer through the space. Therefore any movement within the space is considered as an interactive act. Responses by the participant may be stipulated in some way or may be self-motivated, for example, in Ansuman Biswas' *2 Free* (2011) the participant is specifically asked by a sign on the back of the door to remove all of their clothes before they may unbind the performer. Later, subtle unspoken gestures by the performer manipulate the participant into various situations (the point, of course, being to get the participant to question whether or not they are freely choosing what happens). In Punchdrunk's *The Masque of the Red Death* (2007) participants were apparently free to explore the space on their own or equally to follow performers. The control or this, as Maxine Doyle highlights, is a key concern of Punchdrunk's work:

'It's a combination of us as a team having an outside eye to very crudely know, okay we need a distraction, a two minute scene at that point to distract the audience to break up the flow because there's too much congestion at this point in space, and we need to sort it out, so it's a combination of us setting new parameters and setting new boundaries and the performers actually instinctively learning how to mould their shows so that they control it in terms of time, so that, you know, that can be really crudely, like performers three nights, you realise there's no one to following him, his story's getting lost so he coughs or vomits on the stairwell to get attention.' (Appendix II)

## Interactive Set

In Punchdrunk's *It Felt Like a Kiss* (2009) participants were free to open drawers and look inside the diaries of important government employees. The range of probable interactions here is minimal however, the participant must choose to open the drawer over, say, rummaging inside a filing cabinet and in this sense this presents a realistic convention where, given access to a space one can pick up or read anything within it.

## **Self-motivated / Directed**

This classification notes whether the participant made the decision to undertake a particular act or whether they were specifically directed to do so by some aspect of a particular event.

This classification was based upon the notion that, on the whole, everyday reality allows a considerable freedom of choice and it is only in certain situations where one is directed to undertake specific actions. Freedom to choose is therefore a convention that is recognisable in everyday reality, whilst specific direction implies authorship which insinuates, in the case of the performance, engagement with a fictional construct –you are being asked to behave in this way for a specific reason. Because the participant understands that they are engaged with a performance, such a command is likely to be interpreted as being linked to that performance, thereby revealing the rules and acknowledging the constructed fictional artifice (Caillois, 2001). This appears to be particularly relevant when an individual is told to do something that would normally be free from such direction or, when an individual is told to do something that goes against everyday convention. It should be noted that these two states can exist together: That a performer may want somebody to walk through a door as part of the performance at the same time as a participant will want to walk through the door to satisfy a perceived need to find out more information about the environment or people within it. In practical terms this articulates the difference between the method described above by Punchdrunk's Maxine Doyle above (where the performer's act naturally draws the participant towards them) and for example, Slung Low's *They Only Come At Night: Visions* where the participant is specifically directed to stand in the salt circle. The Punchdrunk



method asks the participant to make the decision to follow whereas this freedom of choice is removed in the Slung Low piece.

In terms of classifying dialogue, non-specific 'chat' is classified as self-motivated (because the participant is free to choose where the conversation goes) whereas any response to a direct question is classified as directed (because the subject of the response is stipulated by the question).

Where a participant makes a decision to perform an act based upon what the performance is asking them to do as opposed to what they would choose to do then they are engaging in role-play and with this comes the awareness of the participant's own unconventional behaviour (the choices that they have made are outside the recognised conventions linked to their own identity and associated behaviours). By transferring the experience into the realm of play, one might expect the participant to experience a sense of detachment from the emotional aspects of the performance, as Caillois notes, play creates fictions by imposing novel rules of behaviour on a situation (2001). It is suggested that this awareness of the fictional aspects of the scenario, of the playing of a role, is experienced as the sensation that the scenario is a game and perceived as thus in the mind of the participant.

## **Exposition**

This classification notes the unprompted delivering of information regarding the larger situation that draws awareness to the constructed artifice of the scenario.

Forced exposition infers authorship, the notion that particular pieces of information need to be understood for the situation to make sense and therefore, it is suggested, influence decisions by participants as to the real/fictional nature of the perceived events. This is particularly relevant in apparently inappropriate situations, for example in Alex's character monologue in Slung Low's *They Only Come at Night: Visions* (2009) where Alex begins to tell the participant about Quinn the vampire hunter when, it is implied, they are about to be overwhelmed by vampires. This behaviour can be seen to go against everyday behavioural conventions relating to self-preservation and therefore undermine the participant's ability to treat what is occurring as real or even realistic.

Once every identified event had been classified in terms of the perceived relation to the analyst's OWM, the data was converted into a percentile and these values were measured against one another to highlight any difference between the performances themselves. It was decided to separate out the liminal section of the piece from the pre and post-liminal sections of the performance to identify any differences between these stages. Percentile values relating to a particular stage were placed in a radar chart with the classes 'Conventional' and 'Interactive: Self-motivated' (which were perceived to be more representative of the experience of reality) set against 'Unconventional' and 'Non-Encompassing' (which were perceived to be key factors in identifying fictional performance). The classes of 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' (which were perceived to be more neutral with allocation depending upon the specific context) were placed in between and form a perceptible line dividing the classifications suggesting 'reality' (Conventional and Interactive: Self-motivated) and the classifications suggesting 'fiction' (Unconventional and Non-encompassing). The classifications of Unconventional and Interactive: Directed were positioned intentionally near to one another as a means of highlighting performances that had a large number of events that imposed unconventional rule-systems upon the participants.

## Analyses

The descriptions of each performance along with the accompanying analysis are inserted below. Following this, suggestions are made relating to unconventional events which present potential areas for development. These suggestions are sympathetic to the perceived aims and scope of the piece and do not assume an absolute goal of 'realness' for each work that is analysed. The full analyses of each individual event from each piece upon which the following discussion is derived are included in Appendix I.

## 2 Free - Ansuman Biswas (2011)

### Description

*2 Free* was a performance piece for one participant. I was handed a lantern and sand-timer at the door, asked to remove my footwear and then told that I could enter the room and that I was 'free to explore'. The first room contained an armchair and a door with a sign on it that re-stated the notion that I was free to explore and that, upon entering the next room, I should read the sign on the back of the door. The next room was much darker, curtained from floor to ceiling and contained the performer, who was naked, gagged, blindfolded and bound around the hands and feet. The sign on the door requested that I remove all of my clothes and once I had done this I could unbind the performer. The performer then began to chant in an unfamiliar language before stepping forwards and putting their weight on me which was reminiscent of a trust exercise. After some time, one of the curtains was pulled back and revealed a third space which contained a shower. I was wordlessly directed to step into the shower and was subsequently washed and dried. Scented oil was then applied to my body. I was then embraced by the performer at which point the gong rang. The performer went and knelt down in the curtained space as if in meditation, and I was left to dress and then exit the performance space before putting my shoes on outside.

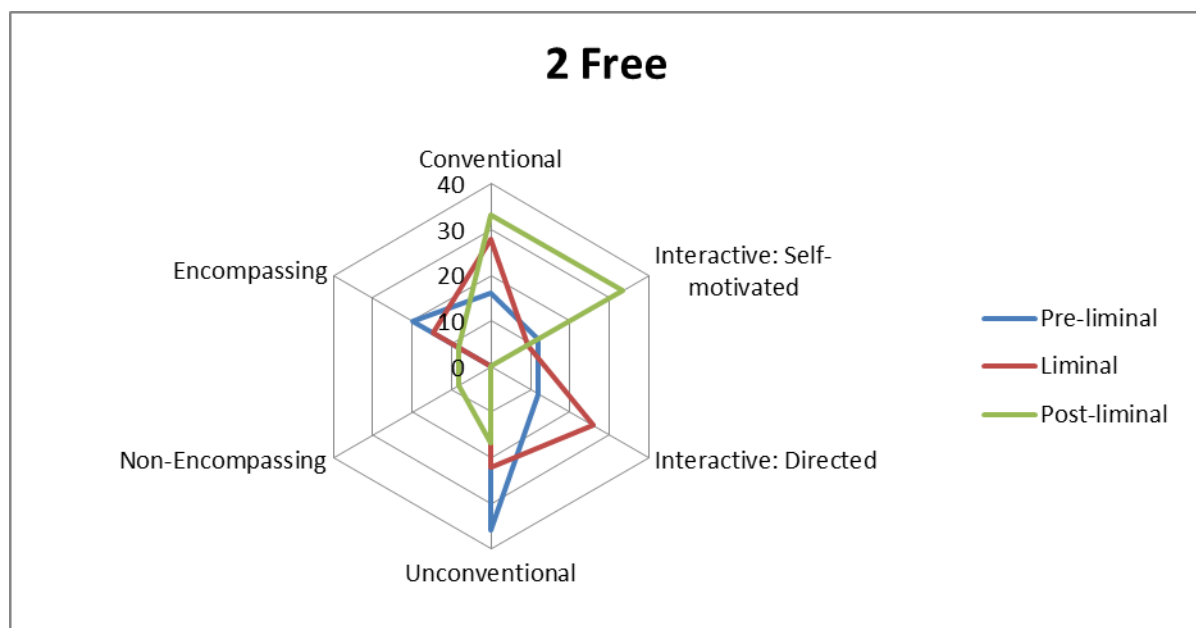


Figure 5.2 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *2 Free* (Ansuman Biswas, 2011). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

The pre-liminal stage for this piece included the act of buying a ticket after seeing publicity about the event, travelling to and entering the Battersea Arts Centre, handing the ticket over and spending time within the Battersea Arts Centre watching other performances, eating and drinking before the time came to attend the performance. I was then greeted by an usher and given details relating to the performance before being handed a large sand-timer and a lantern and shown what the gong would sound like that was to signal the end of the performance. This combination of events made the threshold into the performance reality extremely clear. Discussion with the usher relating to the sand timer and lantern cemented this and in some ways these objects were symbolic of the journey across the threshold into the liminal stage of the performance.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements**

There was a physical reality to this performance. I was granted the freedom to move around the space at will and I also interacted with the performer in a physical manner. The nudity and binding of the performer was physically undeniable and there was also the physical experience of the darkness and the movement of light created by the lantern. The piece played with the notion of free choice, in many ways as a participant, I was directed around the space, however this was done in an extremely subtle manner which almost implied that I was making the decision to act. There was no sense that I was being forced to behave in a particular way or to play a particular role so I approached the performance as myself. This meant that all responses to the events that formed the performance were genuine.

### **Fictional Elements**

The setting, which was essentially a black box, clearly conveyed the notion that this was a performance space and, combined with the signage and the requests created by the signage

also highlighted the fact that the scenario was a constructed artifice. The unconventional behaviour of the performer confirmed this aspect of the performance by not speaking at any point and instead chanted in an unfamiliar language. The act of pulling back of the curtain to reveal the shower also highlighted the constructed artifice owing to the fact that this action recalled the understood convention that performance spaces are often curtained from floor to ceiling. This convention is unfamiliar in everyday reality.

### **Post-liminal Stage**

This piece had a relatively long post-liminal stage that began after the performer ceased to acknowledge my presence. It incorporated my act of dressing and leaving the two rooms which formed the performance space. Once the interaction had ceased, the sensation of freedom of choice and the need to take responsibility for one's actions returned. In other words, one's actions were no longer being specifically directed by the performance.

### **Areas for Potential Development**

This piece was a self-contained and stylised piece of performance that was in no way trying to present itself as being overtly real or fictional. In some ways the obvious fictionality of the performance assisted in my accommodation of and engagement with the specific behavioural challenges that this piece presented. Had *2 Free* been staged in a realistic setting then the piece itself would have probably presented a thoroughly more challenging and potentially dangerous scenario. It is as if the fictional elements of this piece helped me to classify the experience in a different manner, making it 'ok' to engage in a scenario that would be considered significantly outside the normal range human interaction. Through this reclassification, the implied consequences of such interaction were also removed. Therefore the relationship between the real and the fictional within this piece did seem, on the whole, fitting to the nature of the experience.

## *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing - Barnaby Stone (2011)*

### **Description.**

I entered the performance space which was a white room with a wooden-floor in which a large oak beam taken from the roof of Hardwick Hall rested on a plinth. The room also contained the performer, a stool with some wooden pegs on it and some wood-working equipment. The performer then proceeded to tell me about the beam, where it had come from and the links that the building from which it was taken had with key historical figures. They asserted that conversations regarding the running of the country may have been made whilst important dignitaries were standing on the floor that the beam had supported. Following this talk, where I was free to ask questions, I was asked to pick a peg from the stool and hand it to the performer. The peg was then hammered into the end of the beam and the end was sanded off in various stages. I could observe this act by the silhouette of the performer cast on the wall by a spotlight. Following this, a thin sliver of wood was cut from the end of the beam, snapped into two and one half was given to me. The performer explained that the peg represented this conversation and showed me the evidence of other pegs from previous conversations. He then put the other half of the slice of wood on a shelf that ran around the outside of the room. Upon this shelf stood all the other slices of the beam created from previous performances. I was then free to leave with my piece of the beam.

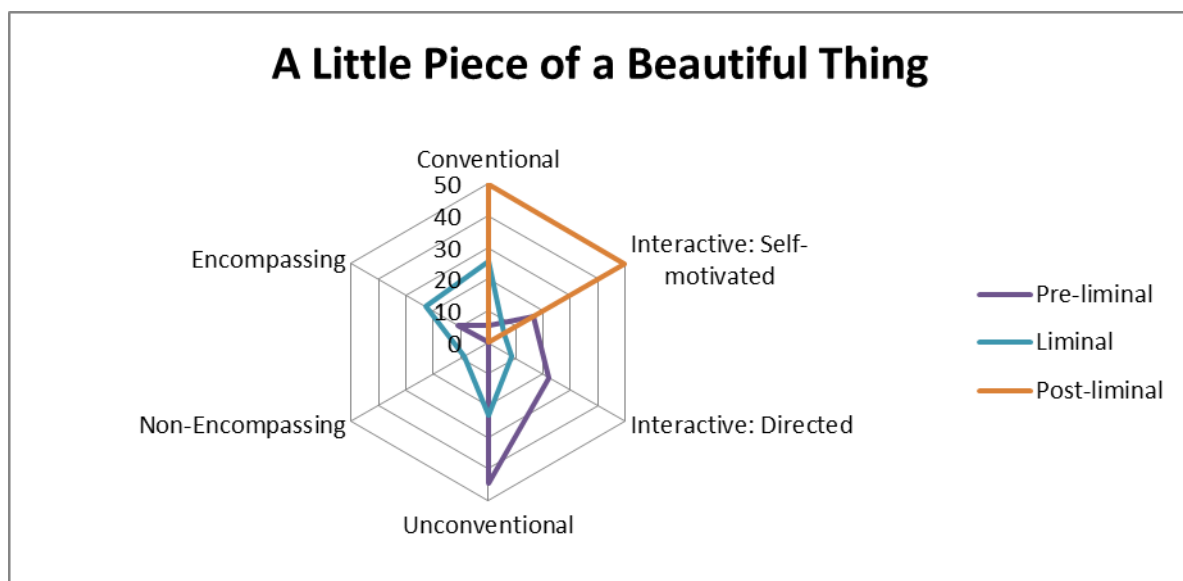


Figure 5.3 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing* (Barnaby Stone (2011)). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

The pre-liminal stage for this piece included the act of buying a ticket after seeing publicity about the event, travelling to and entering the Battersea Arts Centre, handing the ticket over and spending time within the Battersea Arts Centre watching other performances, eating and drinking before the time came to attend the performance. The room housing the performance then had to be located from a map of the building. Before the performance began, I had to wait outside the room before being told that I could enter. There was therefore no doubt that the following experience was going to involve the constructed artifice of a performance.

## **Liminal Stage**

The liminal stage of this piece had the feel of a lesson in a classroom. Overall, the sensation was of reality heightened by a few elements that acknowledged the performative-nature of the events.

### **Real Elements**

There was physical reality to this piece created by the beam itself along with the interaction with the beam and pegs by the performer and myself. The performer also appeared to deliver the words in a spontaneous manner and, whilst it was obvious that the subject of the conversation had been repeated and to some extent honed, there was no indication that the performer was recalling words verbatim from a script. The subject of the script included recognisable characters from history and there was no reason to doubt that the information conveyed was in any way fabricated.

### **Fictional elements**

The use of the spotlight to cast the shadow of the performer onto the wall, recalled the conventions of a performance involving shadow puppets. This was because the light was clearly set up to cast the performer's shadow on the wall rather than to light the work that

was being undertaken. The metaphor created by the act of inserting the peg into the wood and the act of displaying the slices of wood around the edge of the room were unconventional and suggested that the perceived events were part of a performance.

### **Post-liminal Stage**

There was no particular post-liminal stage to this piece except the act of leaving the space. In some ways the piece stayed with you through the possession of the slice of wood.

### **Areas for Potential Development**

This piece was a self-contained and stylised piece of performance that was in no way trying to present itself as being overtly real or fictional. In some ways it drew attention to the sense that craft and teaching are both types of performance in themselves and this was achieved through the integration of behaviour-types into the constructed artifice of the performance. Therefore, in terms of development relating to the fiction/reality dichotomy, it is difficult to suggest areas for improvement given that it was the interplay of these elements that created this effect within the piece.



## *Indiscreet* - Deborah Pearson (2011)

### Description

I was asked to wait on a chair by a sign in a hallway. Following a considerable amount of time, an usher came along and escorted me down a hallway into a yellow, industrial kitchen where I was seated on a chair by the door. I was told that I would know when the performance had finished and that I should leave through the door in front of me. After a short time, I overheard a woman with an American accent speaking to a British woman, recounting as story relating to herself and an ex-lover and their relationship over the course of a number of years. At times the two women were interrupted by passers-by asking for directions and also drowned out by people moving around the building. As the story drew to a close, the American woman mentioned finding a box in a yellow, industrial kitchen at which point I noticed a corresponding box in front of me. The women then walked away down the corridor, their conversation gradually fading into nothingness. Inside the box was a ship in a bottle and a letter from the ex-lover to the American. I then had to make the decision to leave the kitchen through the door in front of me.

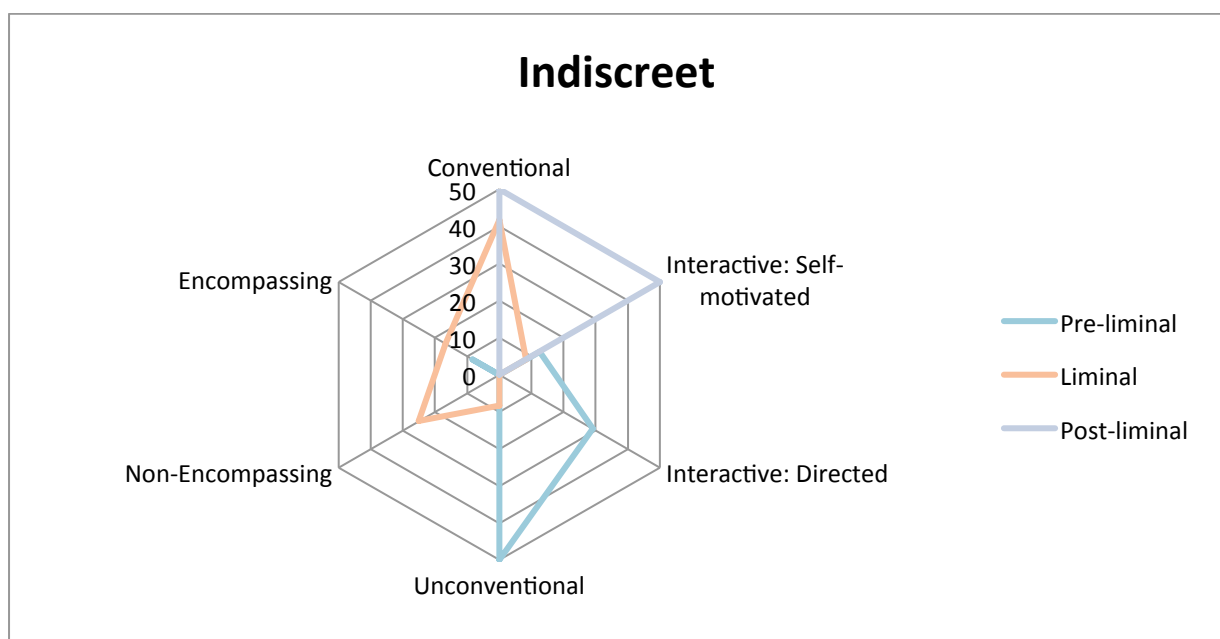


Figure 5.4 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *Indiscreet* (Deborah Pearson, 2011). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## Pre-liminal Stage

The pre-liminal stage for this piece included the act of buying a ticket after seeing publicity about the event, travelling to and entering the Battersea Arts Centre, handing over the ticket and going to find the seat in the hallway before the performance began. Following this, my conversation with the usher and the act of being seated in the kitchen all insinuated the notion that I was going to be experiencing a performance. It is interesting to note the manner by which the performance started. The fact that it was overheard (The two performers had been observed talking on the staircase on a previous occasion that day) meant that I wasn't certain whether what I was hearing was the performance or not. This doubt meant that the line between the pre-liminal and liminal stages of this performance were not as clearly defined as other performances.

## Liminal Stage

### Real Elements

In the case of this piece, the rather high proportion of non-encompassing events were actually justified by the nature of the performance, the fact that it was overheard and therefore not supposed to be encompassing, this meant that, until the point where the performer mentioned the kitchen, the box and the bottle (which was not supposed to be the kitchen that I was sitting in) the whole performance could have easily been an overheard conversation as it could have been a performance. The conventions of overhearing a conversation were almost identical to same experience in everyday reality, and therefore the piece felt extremely real. The dialogue was clearly improvised around the structure of a story and therefore sounded natural and felt realistic. Elements that added to the sense that this was real were the apparently unintended glitches such as the interruption of the speakers by passers-by and the drowning out of the speakers by a group of children moving about. These conventional elements, familiar from situations in everyday reality but

unfamiliar in relation to performances actually increased the sensation that this was a real situation.

### **Fictional Elements**

As noted above, the only point in the liminal stage that perceived as being fictional was the mentioning of the box in the kitchen. The reason being that the kitchen the performer was talking about was a different kitchen to the one in which I was sitting. This incongruity alerted me to the fact that this was a performance and not a real situation. If desired, this could have been easily circumvented by having one of the performers mention that the box had been left in the kitchen although the effect would have been somewhat different, the sensation as it was felt like I was suddenly thrust into a scene of the story that was being told.

### **Post-liminal Stage**

The post-liminal stage was minimal and really only involved leaving the room in which I was sitting during the performance.

### **Areas for Potential Development**

This piece clearly set out to play with the audience's expectations of what could be understood as a performance. The manner by which it used the interplay between reality and fiction was extremely effective, utilising the conventions of an everyday experience to the extent that I was left, until the last moment, wondering whether I was really engaging with the planned encounter at all. The denouement achieved by drawing the real and fictional worlds together through the placing of the ship in the bottle inside the box in the kitchen was the only event that identified itself as being related to a performance. In terms of development one could suggest the removal of all fictional aspects of the performance: The act of being seated in the kitchen or the above consolidation of the real and fictional however, the risk would be that the performance disappears altogether and that I would not have recognised it as such.

## ***Our Thirteenth Hour – Punchdrunk (2010)***

(Please note, this piece was one of a collection of four pieces entitled *The Night Chauffeur –* The title '*Our Thirteenth Hour*' has been allocated for the sake of convenience in relation to this study.)

### **Description**

I entered the Chamberlayne public house in Kensal Rise and spoke to the ushers at the door. I was then signed up for the performance and, after having a drink at the bar, I was told that it was 'my time' and was taken outside by a male usher and directed into a car. I was asked to sit in the front of the car, whilst another participant was asked to sit in the back next to large man who appeared to be asleep. The car set off and, after some time, the large man in the back started coughing. I was directed to pass an oxygen tank over from the front seat and the man drew deeply on the mask before delivering a monologue about a man who put his heart in a box. The car pulled up and I was given a box and directed to give it to a woman standing on a street corner. After getting out, the car drove away leaving me alone with the woman. She steadfastly refused to take the box but asked me to walk with her. She asked if I liked games and after my response said that she liked to be chased. She then set off running down the road with me chasing after her. When I eventually caught her, she asked me whether I had ever been in love. After I responded she took the box from me and opened it. Inside was a pocket watch with thirteen hours on the face. She asked me about the man in the car who she said was her father. I said he looked pretty ill and she seemed concerned. Then she gave me a napkin with writing on it that said 'Never forget *Our Thirteenth Hour –* Bridget'. She then told me to continue walking along the road until I found the Chamberlayne Pub.

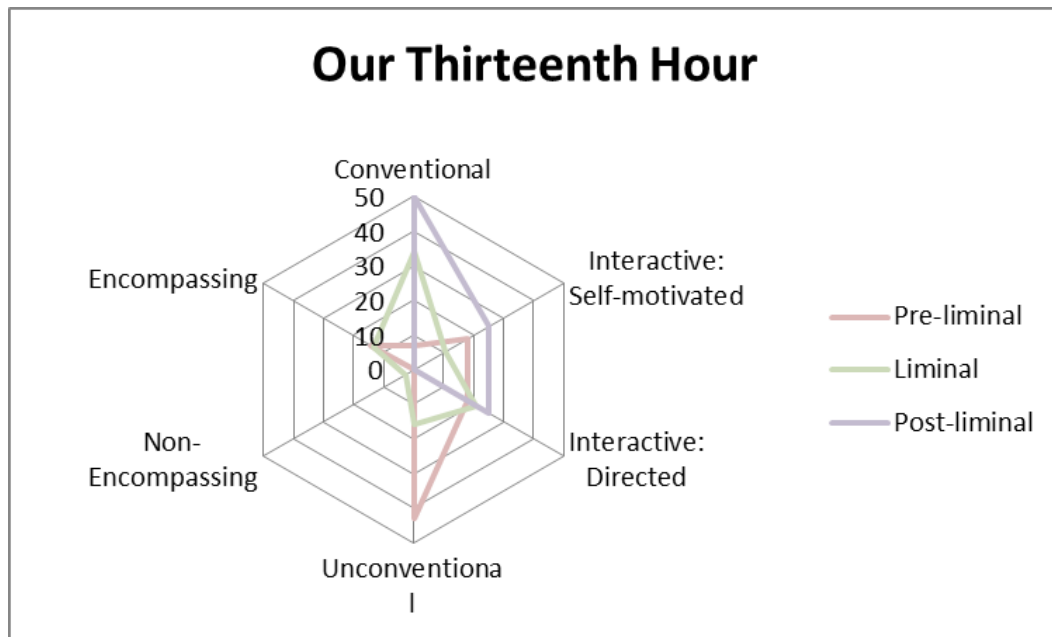


Figure 5.5 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *Our Thirteenth Hour* (Punchdrunk, 2010). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## Pre-liminal Stage

The pre-liminal stage of this piece was somewhat different given that it had been initiated following an interview with Colin Marsh and Maxine Doyle from Punchdrunk. I was directed to go to the Chamberlayne and tell the woman on the door that Colin had sent me. The only other information given was that 'It was a little piece we're doing for Stella Artois'. The understanding that Colin Marsh was executive director of Punchdrunk, a theatrical company, along with his suggestion that it was a little piece and the interaction with the ushers on the door of the Chamberlayne made it clear that what I was going to experience was a performance although the nature of this was unclear. It should be noted that even though the information regarding the performance was considerably less, there was still no doubt that I was going to participate in a performance.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements**

There was a physical reality to this piece, the act of getting into the car and that of chasing Bridget down the road were undeniably real. Also the interactive and encompassing aspects of the piece, the direct questions posed by Bridget (which responded to honestly) and the speech in the car delivered by her father were clearly directed at me. The setting itself was utterly real, being set on the streets of Kensal Rise and including members of the public who happened to be passing by. There was also a real sensation of desertion created by the act of the car driving away, leaving me standing in the street.

### **Fictional Elements**

The story about the man who put his heart in a box was delivered in an affected manner which suggested it had been written and recalled. Certainly the heightened nature of the tone of this piece insinuated that it was not spontaneously told. Also, the position that I was placed in, by asking me to get into the car filled with strangers and being requested to deliver the box were, on the whole, unconventional and reminiscent of events observed in cinematic narratives. For this reason, there was a sense of the larger fictional construct around the real physical aspects of the piece.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

The post-liminal stage was interesting and conveyed the use of an anthropocentric narrative device because, at the moment that Bridget walked away from me, I stopped seeing the surrounding environment as the world of the play and it changed back into 'reality' accompanied by the somewhat startling realisation that I did not really know where I was and only had Bridget's directions as guidance. The length of the walk back to the Chamberlayne added a sense of doubt that the directions were correct, and I was genuinely concerned I might have been lost.

## **Areas for Potential Development**

Given that the performance itself appeared to set out to provide a heightened alternate experience of reality, it seems fair to highlight moments where this sense of reality was broken by unconventional elements. It was felt that, the speech in the car could have been improvised around a basic structure to avoid the affectations created by recalled performance. It may have also been dissimulated by integrating devices into this piece to avoid the directed requests or at least to more clearly justify certain narrative elements. For example, there was no explanation as to why the man had the box on him in the first place or really why I had to take the box to Bridget as opposed to the chauffeur. Perhaps the man could have tried to get out of the car and then been halted by another coughing fit that required the attention of the chauffeur. A sharp request at this point, asking me to take the box would have made it appear like it was the last resort. Equally, some reason could have been given as to why I needed to get in the car in the first place. Perhaps that we were being taken to another venue so that the threshold of the performance was not as clearly defined. This would have probably resulted in a greater sense of doubt regarding whether this encounter was intended. It should be noted that these non-justifications were not apparent during the experience but were revealed during the process of reflection.

# Rendezvous - Villanelle and Hanneke Paauwe (2011)

## Description

I was invited into a room where I was asked to remove my shoes. Following this I was taken along a corridor and into a room with a coffin in it. I was told to climb inside and, upon doing so, had my arms arranged like a corpse. I was then asked to close my eyes and a photo of me lying in the coffin was taken. Following this, the 'usher' left the room and I was left, apparently alone, until I heard footsteps around the coffin. After a short time a woman looked over the rim of the coffin and began to ask me a series of questions relating to my life (as if I were actually dead in the coffin), such as 'Would people be sad?' 'Will there be a lot of people at your funeral?' these questions were delivered in a poetic style and I was encouraged to respond in a truthful manner. At the end of the performance, the woman kissed me on the forehead and left a white feather on my chest. After a short time the 'usher' came back in and instructed me to climb out of the coffin. I was then taken back to the first room where a picture was waiting of me lying, apparently dead, inside the coffin. This was given to the me in a card and envelope to keep.

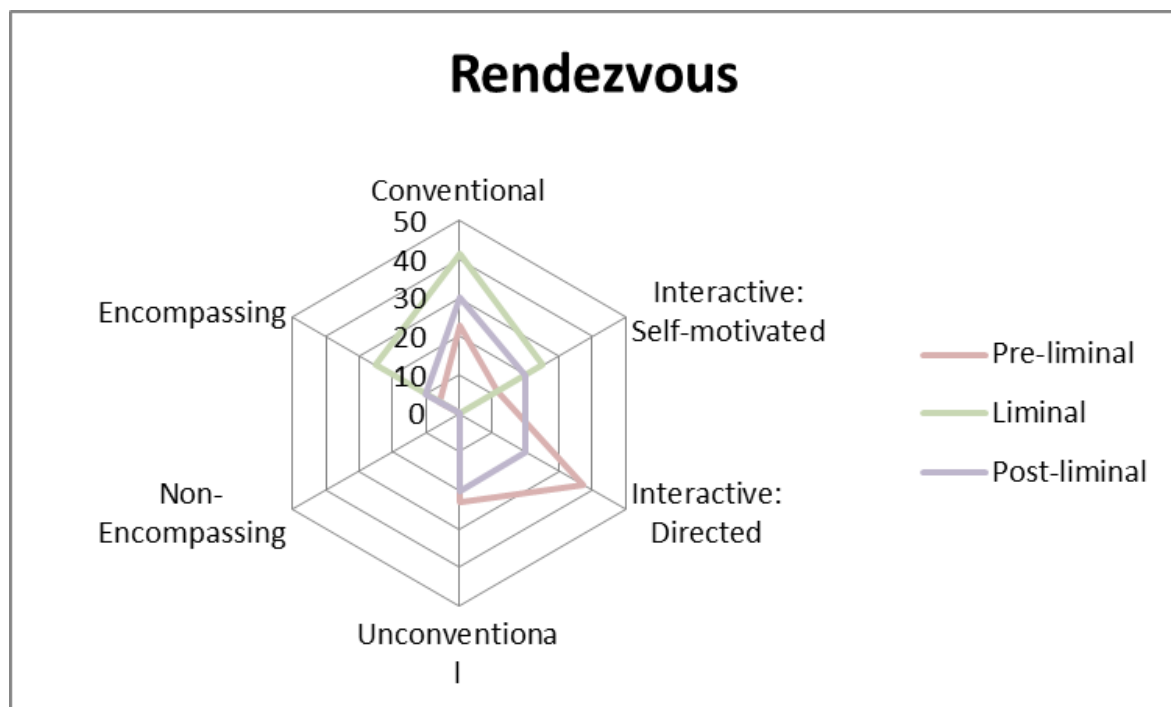




Figure 5.6 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *Rendezvous* (Villanelle and Hanneke Paauwe, 2011). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

The pre-liminal stage for this piece included the act of buying a ticket after seeing publicity about the event, travelling to and entering the Battersea Arts Centre, handing over the ticket and going to find the room before the performance began. There was then an intermediary stage where I was taken into the room and asked to remove my shoes; taken into the room with the coffin; asked to climb into the coffin (an act which had practical implications of its own and clearly highlighted the fictional nature of the performance) and was asked to close my eyes for the photo (again an act which implied the act of 'making believe' that I was dead). Each of these events was a clear indication that the events in the liminal stage formed a performance and were not real.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements**

There was a physical reality to lying inside the coffin and the interactive nature of the performance meant that I was responding with my own thoughts and feelings relating to how imagined my death and my funeral. The act of kissing my forehead also had a physical reality to it.

### **Fictional Elements**

The language that was used by the performer was rather stylised and clearly scripted beforehand. Delivery was fairly naturalistic but in some ways conveyed the notion that the performer was recalling the script rather than speaking spontaneously to me. It's difficult to decide whether less-heightened dialogue would have worked more effectively. It might have become comic if the performer was speaking in a normal manner. In some ways the tone suited the bizarre scenario that had been created and referenced language used in spiritual discourses.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

The post-liminal stage was fairly long and incorporated unconventional elements into it as well as my re-integration into everyday reality. The *memento mori* of the photograph provided a lasting unconventional reminder of the performance.

## **Areas for Potential Development**

From an ethical perspective, there appears to be a clear dialogue occurring in relation to the fictional and real elements of this piece. On one hand, the piece clearly set out to challenge participants by asking them to climb inside a coffin. With this in mind, the clearly fictional elements of this piece, the minimally set 'black box' staging of the piece and the heightened dialogue delivered by the performer, played a role in reducing the impact or challenge of this act, by communicating the notion that this was a performance. On the other hand, it was asking participants to engage with their thoughts and feelings about their real lives and therefore the piece seemed to be committed to engaging with these responses in a respectful manner. In terms of the staging, it would be entirely possible to heighten the realism of the set, for example, to the point where the entire piece took place in a church or funeral parlour. It is anticipated that the effect of undertaking such an act would be likely to make the piece more challenging, however, it is questionable whether the effect of doing so would significantly increase the ability of the piece to engage the participant.

## *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* - Secret Cinema (2010)

### **Description**

The experience was centred around a showing of the Milos Forman film *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975). However, until the actual screening, I was not directly informed as to the specific film that was being shown but received clues via email. Upon attending the performance, I entered a loose reconstruction of the film's environment in a derelict hospital located in Ladbroke Grove, West London. I had been previously requested to wear slippers and a dressing gown when travelling to the performance site (which for logistical reasons I didn't do) and upon arrival I was given a surgical gown to wear. The set included a number of different rooms that were inspired by the film through which I was free to wander between at will. There was no perceptible overarching narrative for audiences to engage with. Rooms included a meeting room where performers discussed their personal thoughts and feelings; an experimental surgery room (which was closed at some point during the course of the evening and therefore was not directly observed); and several small therapy rooms where participants could be interviewed by performers pretending to be psychiatrists. There were also a number of 'pharmacies' where I could exchange pre-paid prescription vouchers for drinks and a 'canteen' serving food. Along with these there was a room where I could send postcards to my family; a room with a woman playing the violin and fancy dress chicken heads for participants to wear (which I didn't do). Elsewhere, there was a hole in the wall which I crawled into but which didn't go anywhere. After about two hours, the corridors were closed off and filled with smoke and the Simon and Garfunkel song *The Sound of Silence* (1964) was played over the public address system. At this point, I was issued into a room filled with seats facing a cinema screen and the film was shown.

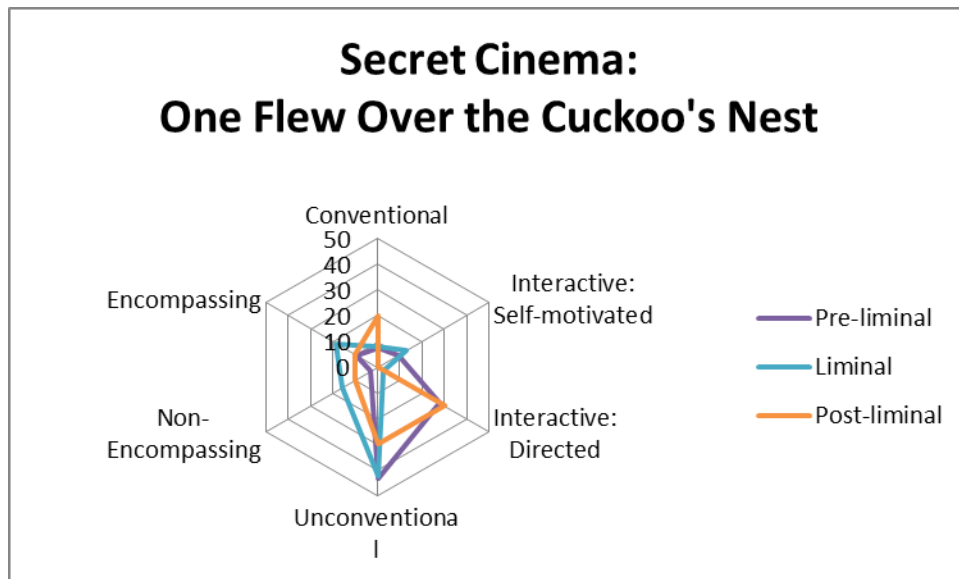


Fig 5.7: Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Secret Cinema, 2010). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## Pre-liminal Stage

There was a long pre-liminal stage to this piece, beginning with observation of publicity and the purchase of tickets and followed by a number of emails relating to the performance which requested various actions. One email was presented as if it was from 'The New Wellbeing Foundation,' a fictional mental healthcare institution. The effort put into preparing this email was somewhat undermined by the Secret Cinema and Windows Phone logos attached to the email which clearly articulated the fictitious nature of this email. It is felt that this example articulates the manner by which logos and product placement can easily highlight the constructed artifice of a scenario, performance or artefact linked to such. The pre-liminal communication also contained specific requests for participants to dress in an unconventional manner and bring various items with them to the performance. I felt that these specific requests for me to behave in this unconventional manner in some ways encouraged me to engage in role play and gave me an awareness of the act of make-believe that myself and the performance were undertaking. This was perceived as enhancing the focus on the fictional elements of the piece. This can be seen through the high proportion of 'Interactive: Directed' and 'Unconventional' events that form the pre-liminal stage of this production.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements**

There was a physically real element to the liminal stage of this performance. I was free to move around as I liked and engage in the interactive elements of the set at will. The set itself, which occupied a large disused hospital building, added an air of authenticity to the performance.

### **Fictional Elements**

The liminal stage of the performance had a high proportion of perceptibly fictional events within it, which made it more difficult to suspend disbelief and therefore detracted from the experience. I could consistently see large groups of other participants which acted as a constant reminder that the whole set up was the prelude to a cinema screening. Also, there were no objectives and no particular narrative to engage with so I was basically left to wander around for two hours. The interactive elements were few and were either over-subscribed so that I had to queue or required me to motivate myself to engage in an act that had no real purpose (dancing about wearing a chicken's head) or literally didn't go anywhere (crawling down a tunnel made out of a sheet that opened out into an empty room). The effect of this was inevitably frustrating and, instead of providing entertainment in its own right, actually enhanced the negative sensation of waiting to watch a film that I had seen a number of times before. The systems set up to buy drinks and food were confusing and meant that I had to go to several different locations to undertake the simple act of buying a beer. Again, this was frustrating and focused my attention upon these artificially created systems rather than the performance itself. To draw on Caillois (2001), the obvious imposition of rules made the fictional nature of the experience obvious. Equally, the act of 'making-believe' (Currie, 2008) that I was buying a prescription for medicine rather than a beer token, drew attention to the constructed artifice of the scenario, particularly as the drink bottles were not made to look like medicine bottles. Packaging the bottles in pharmacy paper bags only really worked for a few seconds until I took the drink out of the bag and discarded it. The overall effect was that I was constantly reminded of the artificial nature of the production through being asked to perform unconventional acts making me self-aware of the act of generating fictions.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

The act of watching the film has been included as part of the post-liminal stage because it was felt that the live performance elements, on the whole, disappeared at this point. However, on a few occasions, performers intervened in the screening to make reference to the film. The effect of having to sit down for 133 minutes after being engaged in semi-immersive environment was again, somewhat frustrating and appeared to lack consideration in the manner of delivery. Granted, this was supposed to be a cinematic experience however, that didn't necessarily mean dividing the immersive and non-immersive sections in such a clear manner. It didn't necessarily mean showing the film at all, particularly in one go and in one space. The nature of cinema distracts the observer's attention from the setting in which it is viewed and therefore, once engagement with the recorded movie had started, it didn't really matter that we were sitting in a disused hospital. I felt that exploring the hospital setting was more interesting and exciting than sitting and watching a film and that this conflict of desires imposed itself on the experience as a whole. It had the same effect on me as when somebody switches a television on at a party and, instead of socialising and enjoying the company or other people, I become drawn into the non-social act of watching the television. In this case it was basically forced upon myself and the other members of the audience.

## **Areas for potential development**

Whilst one can applaud the effort and organisation put into producing this experience, I felt that significantly more could be done to achieve a more full and immersive experience for participants.

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

To avoid this self-awareness and increase the sensation of reality in this stage of the performance, the communications could have been sent from an independent email address lined to The New Wellbeing Foundation and contained no obvious reference to Secret Cinema or Microsoft Windows Phone. It is suggested that, by inserting an air of mystery around these communications, Secret Cinema could have played with my natural curiosity

to find out about the source of these messages. In this scenario, my engagement would have been rewarded and, had I not engaged, I would have missed out on part of the experience. By promoting active engagement with communications, Secret Cinema would have encouraged me to invest more energy in relation to their performances in the future. Also, by reducing specific direction relating to the unconventional acts that participants were expected to carry out before the performance, Secret Cinema would have reduced the sense of self-awareness I felt in relation to the request that I dress up in an unconventional manner. Given that participants were given surgical gowns upon entry, it was felt that the request to dress up was not necessary in the first place and therefore the organisers could have avoided embarrassing any participants who might not have wanted to wear a dressing gown in public. Equally I was concerned that, because I couldn't pack the required costume into my bag when I travelled to London, that I might turn away from the performance or that I would appear different to everybody else becoming, as Caillois (2001) puts it, a nihilist by appearing to openly disregard the rules. Caillois notes that such nihilistic behaviour ruins the game by 'denouncing the rules as absurd and conventional' (2001, p126) and therefore participants, such as myself, who may have been perceived as, intentionally or otherwise, playing a nihilistic role by openly disregarding the rules needed to be addressed. I genuinely felt anxious about 'spoiling the fun' for other participants and, given that we were given costume when we arrived, this could easily be avoided. Therefore, to avoid positioning participants as nihilists within the performance framework, the following suggestions are made:

- That companies should avoid asking audiences to prepare for a performance in such a way that clearly distinguishes between those who have prepared and those who have not.
- That companies should provide everything participants need to engage with the performance.

### **Liminal and Post-liminal Stages**

The two major problems perceived in relation to this piece were the anticlimactic nature of the film screening and the manner by which the piece dealt with the audience beforehand. As already noted, it is suggested that an immersive film screening might differ in format

from a traditional film screening and that, perhaps, the film could be divided up into a number of various sections that could be inserted into the setting in novel ways. It is suspected that most participants would be familiar with the film in the first place, which raises the question – Why screen the film at all? What benefit does a participant obtain from viewing a repeat screening in an environment set up to almost distract one’s attention away from the film itself? Cinemas are nondescript so that they do not distract audiences from viewing the piece. This piece seemed to break those rules in a manner that had a negative effect on my overall experience. The sense that this was a fictional construct was also amplified by the fact that the liminal experience was actually a fairly poor representation of the film. Surely a more interesting manner by which to approach the task of screening a film is in a similar way to Mark Z. Danielewski’s book *The House of Leaves* (2000) which uses a critical essay to describe a film that is at the epicentre of the collapsing world of the protagonist. In this way, the characters and events in the immersive world could be portrayed as responding to the film. Other issues with the liminal stage of this work could be seen in the manner by which it managed the large number of participants who migrated around the building in herds rather than drawing out their own narrative experiences. It is suggested that the use of a larger premises (in the manner adopted by Punchdrunk) would have gone some way to solve this problem. Also, finding a device to separate parties of friends would have encouraged participants to act alone. There would also have been more space for the interactive elements of the liminal stage to inhabit so there were more opportunities for participants to engage directly with the piece. Finally, I felt that I was exploring the building in a rather aimless manner. Therefore, it is suggested that practitioners find some way of motivating the audience so that they seek out various experiences. Integrating clear aims and some kind of reward system into the experience would probably motivate participants to actively engage with the piece.



# Money -Shunt (2010)

## Description

I entered a large warehouse space on Bermondsey Street, London and was seated in a bar area. In the middle of the space was a large machine-like structure from which performers emerged and, eventually, participants entered. Inside on the first floor there was an area that was similar to the House of Commons, with two rows of tiered seating facing one another along the side of the room. Above and below this were other areas visible by a glass floor / ceiling. Over the course of the performance participants were led to various locations around the machine and observed performers undertaking numerous abstract, carnivalesque and surreal behaviours which acted as loose metaphors for the movement of the stock markets and the culture associated with this. We were moved between the 'House of Commons' and the floor above where I observed performers on the ground floor (through the glass ceiling and glass floor or the 'House of Commons'). We were then led back into the 'House of Commons' where I observed further surreal behaviour and abstract dialogue. Finally, participants were ushered out of the machine and back into the bar area.

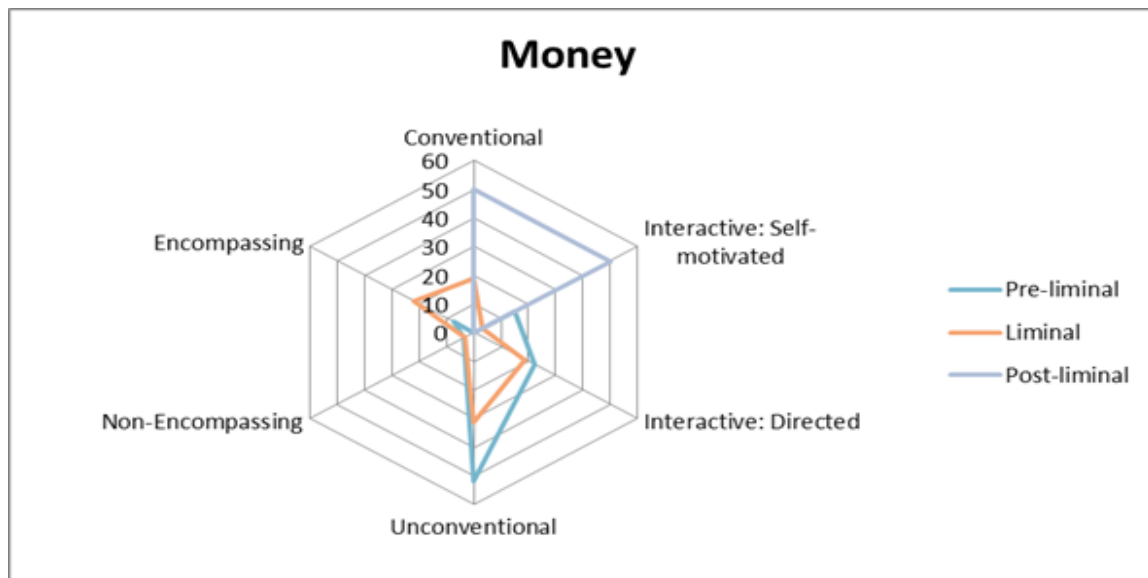


Figure 5.8 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *Money* (Shunt, 2010). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

## **Pre-liminal stage**

The pre-liminal stage for this piece included the act of buying a ticket after seeing publicity about the event, travelling to and entering Shunt's Bermondsey Street venue, handing over the ticket, going to buy a drink and sitting in the waiting area looking at the 'machine' before the performance began. This clearly articulated to me that the events in the performance should be perceived as such and this was reinforced by the positioning of the machine as a set within the venue (rather than using the venue as the set), this conveyed the message that participants were not part of the performance until they were within the set.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements**

There was a physical reality to this piece created by the fact that I was led around the performance space between scenes although this movement was prompted by direction from the ushers and was not performed at will. There was also a moment of physical interactivity where coloured balls were dropped from a net onto a glass screen, which initiated a spontaneous 'ball-fight' with participants throwing the balls across the room at one another. It was not clear whether this was an intention of this act or simply the spontaneous reaction of the participants in that particular performance.

### **Fictional Elements**

The striking quality of this piece was the manner by which it sought to immerse the audience inside the set and yet did not really integrate the audience into the performance itself. In each setting, a clear line was drawn between audience and performer either by seating participants in the 'House of Commons' whilst performers took the floor, or through several layers of glass and floors of the 'machine' placing the audience at the top and the performers at the bottom. Even the performance itself was fairly non-encompassing with performers only making the odd reference to the audience who were seated collectively. I was therefore reminded of my submissive role as a quiet observer. The surreal and abstract nature of the behaviour added to this feeling of separation so that, overall, despite all its experimentation, the performance felt surprisingly like a traditionally-staged piece with set, audience and performers.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

Upon, first leaving the machine and then the venue itself, the reintegration back into everyday reality was completed. There were no transient elements that followed participants back into everyday reality.

## **Areas for potential development**

Initially, one must ask whether this piece is aiming to be immersive at all or whether it simply has adopted some of the conventions of immersive theatre. Given that this critique is defunct if it is taken that this piece intends to be separative, it shall be assumed that the producers have intended to create an immersive work and have fallen at the majority of the hurdles.

The main issue here was the manner by which the performance constantly draws lines between performance / performers and the audience. There were only a few moments where the fourth wall was apparently removed completely. The abstract over-styled nature of the dialogue and the manner by which the piece positioned and utilised the set and audience emphasised the difference between performance and audience. If the piece was trying to be immersive, then it failed on most accounts because the audience were not involved in the production. The communicative acts within the production did not empower participants to respond. Also, participants were treated as a single whole as opposed to a group of individuals. In terms of the set, it was not apparent why the outside of the set needed to be presented at all. Why not house the performance inside a building and welcome audiences into the set upon entry rather than immediately distinguishing between the liminal and pre-liminal stages?

# *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding -* **Adrian Howells (2011)**

## **Description**

I was asked to sit in a small curtained area and read the outline of the performance including terms and conditions. I was then shown into the changing room where I undressed and put on a bathrobe. I then knocked on a door and was let into a bathroom area. The performer welcomed me and then explained what would happen. The door was locked and I disrobed and was helped into the bath. Following this, the performer asked me to close my eyes. Rose-petals were dropped onto my face and after this I was soaped and washed by the performer. I was then asked to stand and was dried down before the robe was placed back on. The performer then sat down with his legs open and I was prompted to position myself between the performer's legs, perpendicular to the performer. I was then embraced by the performer in a caring manner and after some time, fed a few pieces of white chocolate whilst still in the embrace. After some time, the performer released me and I was told, in my own time that I should stand up. Following this I exited the bathroom into the changing area, redressed and then left the changing area.

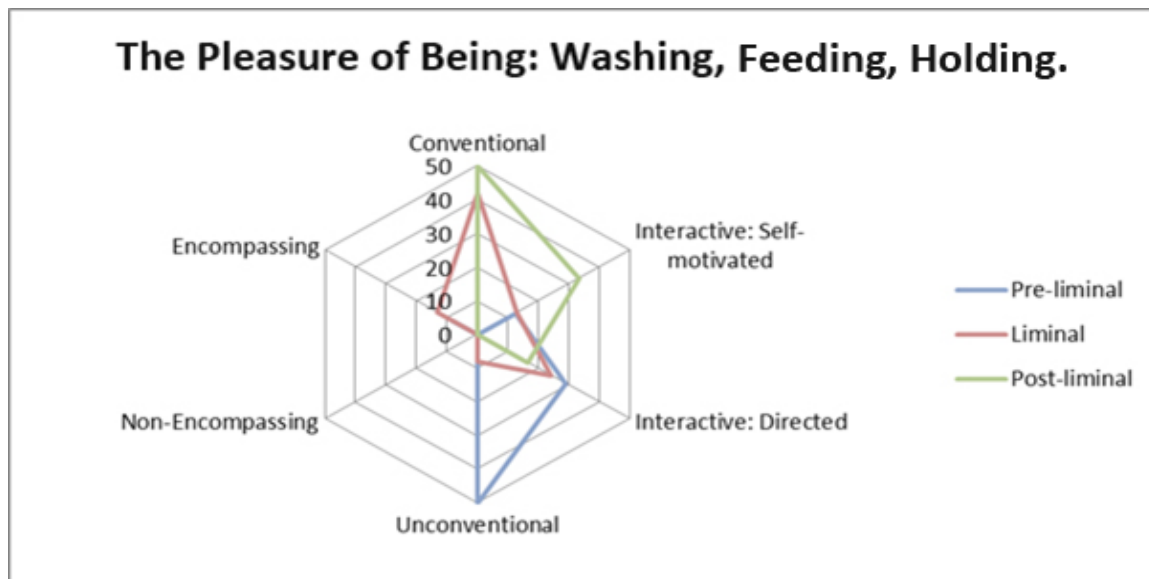


Figure 5.9 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding* (Adrian Howells, 2011). The line between Encompassing and Interactive: Directed suggests the division between real elements (top right) and Fictional elements (bottom left).

## Pre-liminal Stage

The pre-liminal stage for this piece included the act of buying a ticket after seeing publicity about the event, travelling to and entering the Battersea Arts Centre, handing over the ticket and going to find the room before the performance began. Following this, I was seated in a small curtained room where I was asked to read the details of the performance. I then entered the changing room and undressed before knocking at the door. The door was opened and I was led into the performance space. All of these elements in some way made reference to the performance itself and, for this reason there was no confusion relating to the fact that I was preparing to engage with a performance experience.

## Liminal Stage

### Real Elements:

The overall feeling of the liminal stage was of reality. The physical nature of the performance, of being washed, held and fed was undeniably real. The conversation that occurred centred around instructions from the performer relating to what I needed to do. I

was free to talk about anything I wanted, however in this case, I chose to stay quiet and focus on the physical aspects of the performance.

### **Fictional Elements**

As noted above, very little was considered to inherently insinuate the constructed artifice of the scenario, however, it was thought that the preparation of the cushions before the embrace drew my attention to the act as part of a performance. Also the direction given to me at this point about how to sit in the embrace specifically highlighted the fact that this position was an unfamiliar one. To avoid this self-awareness permeating the performance it is suggested that the cushions should have been arranged prior to the participant entering the space and that the direction relating to how to sit in the embrace could have been delivered in a less direct manner, possibly by guiding the participant in a more physical manner so that the act felt more natural.

### **Post-liminal Stage**

The post-liminal stage, involving getting dressed and leaving the changing room, was utterly conventional and reminiscent of getting dressed at the swimming baths. There was nothing inherently unconventional about this section of the performance.

### **Areas for potential development**

As noted above, the lack of pretence in this piece means that the notion of the fictional is fairly irrelevant, however certain aspects did draw my attention to the practical elements of the staging, such as the re-arrangement of cushions and moments where I was directed by the performer. It might be suggested that other means could be used to reduce the impact of these features. Cushions could be pre-placed and direction could occur through tactile communication in the same manner as Ansuman Biswas' *2 Free* (described above).

## *They Only Come At Night: Visions - Slung Low (2009)*

### Description (Adapted from the performance script)

Participants are ushered into a car and then 'kidnapped' by the driver and driven at speed into a car park that has been over-run by vampyric creatures. The driver is subsequently killed and participants are told by the character Quinn via the car's radio to get out of the car, don headphones and follow a trail of salt that will protect them. Participants are separated from one another and meet a character who speaks to them for a short time before being killed by the vampires. Participants then re-join one another and meet Quinn the vampire hunter, observe his showdown with the antagonistic 'Glitch' and then escape into the outside world.

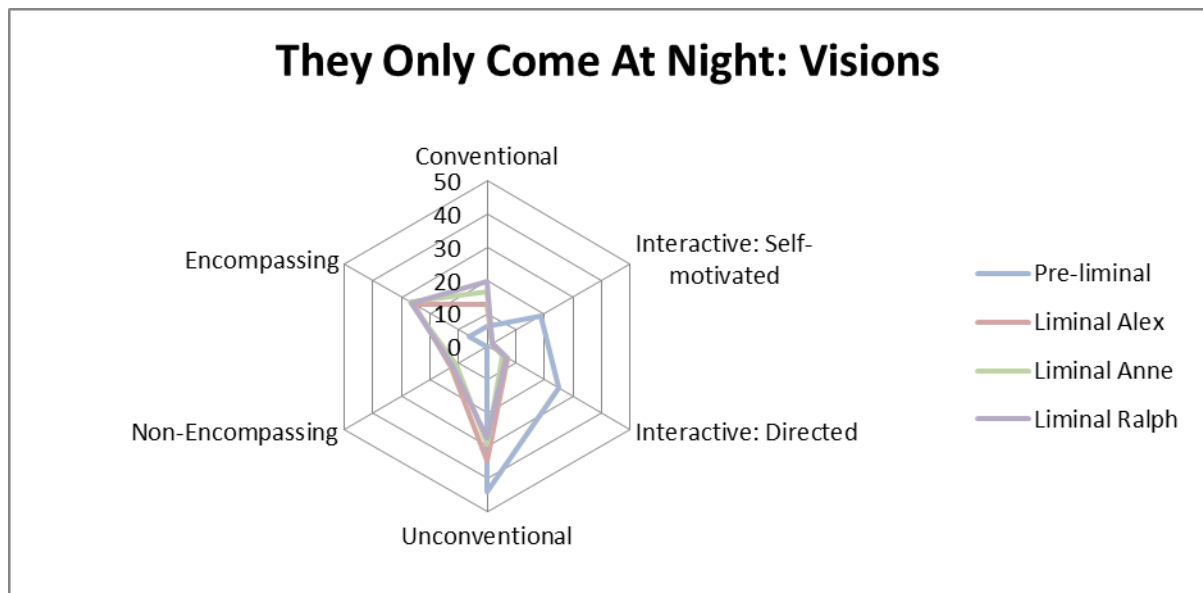


Fig 5.10: Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *They Only Come At Night: Visions* (Slung Low, 2009). The line between 'Encompassing' and 'Interactive: Directed' suggests the division between real elements (top right) and fictional elements (bottom left).

### Pre-liminal Stage

It should be noted that the analysis of this piece was taken from the script itself and not from direct experience of the performance. It is however insinuated that participants will have engaged in the act of observing publicity, buying a ticket, travelling to the venue, handing over the ticket and waiting for the performance to begin and, for this reason, should be fully

aware of the fact that they are about to engage with a performance. Specific details relating to the pre-liminal stage are not available from the script and therefore cannot be ascertained.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements:**

The script insinuates a physical reality to this piece given the interaction between the performers and the participants and the movement through the piece. Also, the performers' speeches regularly address participants, with the three 'monologues' directly encompassing participants. The sections delivered through the radio directly refer to the participants sitting in the car and are therefore also encompassing. It should be noted that, from the script at least, this piece appears to operate a one-way system of communication where participant responses are not considered or incorporated into the performance. This, of course, might differ in practice with participant responses becoming incorporated however, it is clear that participant responses cannot change the performance in any significant manner if the script is to be adhered to.

### **Fictional Elements**

There are numerous elements within this piece that inherently convey the notion of fiction.

### **Restricted freedom of choice**

Participants are significantly restricted in their ability to choose which direction they can move in, both in the sense that they are told to follow a line of salt and that they are regularly told when to walk and when to stop. This sets up the performance in a linear manner similar to a ghost train, for example, with a clearly marked, beginning middle and end. There is no apparent confusion relating to the direction in which the participant is travelling; certainly, the participant is not granted any freedom of choice in relation to direction of movement. An attempt is made to justify the devices of the salt line and the headphones, however this pushes the credibility of the concept presenting an element of predetermination which is not explained by the piece – How did the salt lines get there? How did the driver know to stop in that place? How come the headphones were placed in that place also? These questions clearly indicate the contrived element of the performance



and limit the sense that what is occurring is real, even though, in other ways, it is set in a realistic environment. Also, the explicit command for the participant to remember their colour, find the corresponding path and to put on the headphones clearly implies a meta-system of rules operating above the spontaneity of the experience which clearly suggests that the experience itself is part of a contrived fictional construct. As Caillois suggests, the imposition of rules upon a scenario creates a fiction because the freedom of reality is artificially restricted (2001).

### **Subject**

The piece regularly mentions the presence of vampires which, in the minds of most participants will be recognisable as a familiarly fictional concept.

### **Exposition**

There are regular periods of exposition where participants are told background information regarding the vampires without asking for this information. In this way the script and concept is revealed because the characters are not behaving in a particularly natural manner. It also stretches believability that characters would spend a considerable amount of time telling a stranger about the context that they find themselves in when their lives are in jeopardy.

### **Implausible Behaviour**

Some of the behaviours written into the script are clearly inserted for stylistic purposes rather than to convey natural behaviour – the motivational self-coaching in Ralph’s is pushing credulity, but for example, Alex’s appearance from a large cardboard box and Ralph’s wearing of hockey pads are clearly stylistic nuances of a fictional piece that are very unlikely to happen in real life and are not really explained within the context of the performance.

### **Wearing of headphones**

The headphones are likely to act as a constant reminder to the participant that they are engaging with a fictional artifice. Granted, it is possible for participants to forget about the headphones for periods of time but it’s inevitable that some aspect or other will draw their attention back to these. The justification for the headphones is better than that for the salt

lines, however, there is still the issue of the initial placement of the headphones in the piece (as described above) and, beyond this, the purpose of the headphones remains fairly clear as a necessary means of delivering the play.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

The post-liminal stage is not articulated in this script, although it is suspected that participants will at least have to hand-back the headphones. This act references the fact that the events preceding this act were part of a performance that, in some way, was delivered through the headphones. The headphones become symbolic to the ability of the performance to exist.

## **Areas for Potential Development**

Whilst it is recognised that the portrayed experience does wear its theatricality on its sleeve in one sense, the use of a real setting and some realistic conventions give the sense that, to a degree, the piece is trying to create a theatrically heightened reality and therefore criticism of the manner by which this is achieved is relevant to the piece and would be a useful tool in terms of its development. In terms of the clearly fictional subject area, you obviously can't produce a story about vampires that doesn't include vampires; however, it is felt that stylistic nuances that add nothing to the narrative detract from the plausibility of the experience. Also, unnecessary exposition about the history of the vampires and Quinn could be inserted in a less-obvious and distracting manner. Finally, it would not be hard to do more to insert the salt lines and headphones into the piece in a less contrived manner. For example, why do the participants have to be explicitly given colours relating to the salt-lines? This clear addition of arbitrary rules could be said to generate a fictional scenario in and of itself, changing the situation into a game as opposed to something that feels real. (Caillois, 2001). One might test what would happen if participants were left to decide upon the routes for themselves or introduce some other device to divide participants up. Equally, the character of Milo is completely under-utilised and could provide a means of dividing the participants up. Perhaps by taking them off one by one. The line 'If we stay together we're dead for sure. If we split up then at least one of us might make it.' or something similar

could be used to justify the act of breaking up the group. The above alteration would also place an ominous significance on the point when the participants reform, foreshadowing the forthcoming climactic point of the performance. The above suggestions are not based upon the premise that the scenarios should be utterly realistic, that would rule out engagement with the supernatural and other unconventional subject matter, however, it is believed that by avoiding the imposition of artificial rule-systems or the insertion of contrived dramatic devices, the creators will also avoid so clearly marking the experience as a fictional construct.

# Comparison of Results

## Liminal Stage

The charts below represent exactly the same system of analysis. The choice to divide them up was initially made to avoid overcrowding the charts making them illegible; however, the choice of performances for each chart was made consciously, dividing performances that were felt to be archetypally 'immersive' from those that felt more 'separative'.

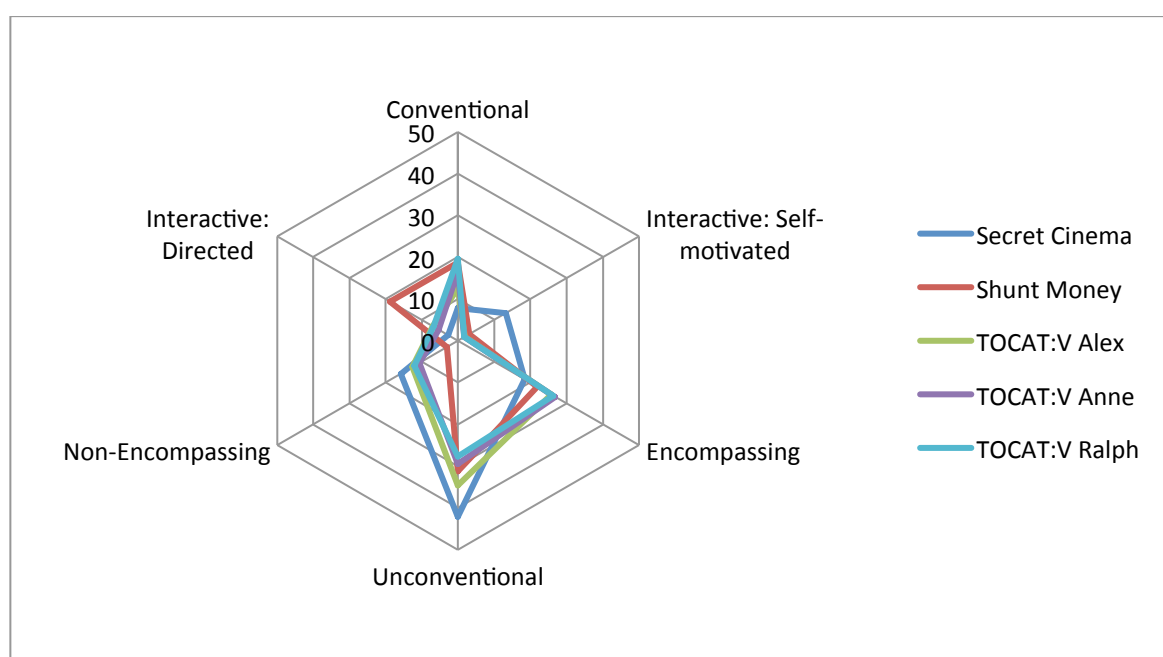


Fig 5.11 Diagrammatic comparison of the analyses of the liminal stages of the perceptibly more separative performances: *Secret Cinema*; *Shunt Money*; and *They Only Come at Night: Visions*.

Figure 3.11 above shows those performances that were felt to, in some way, separate the audience from the performance: Shunt's *Money* (2010), consistently positions the audience as distinct from the performance; Slung Low's *They Only Come at Night: Visions* (2009) clearly limits participant movement within the piece and inserts a number of contrived elements; whilst Secret Cinema's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, forces large number of participants into a limited space, positioning itself more like a theme park ride than an interactive performance. Evidence from the analysis reinforces this sense that these pieces in some way more clearly identified themselves as performances with the majority of the representative polygon sitting below and left of the line bisecting the chart between 'Interactive: Directed' and 'Encompassing'.

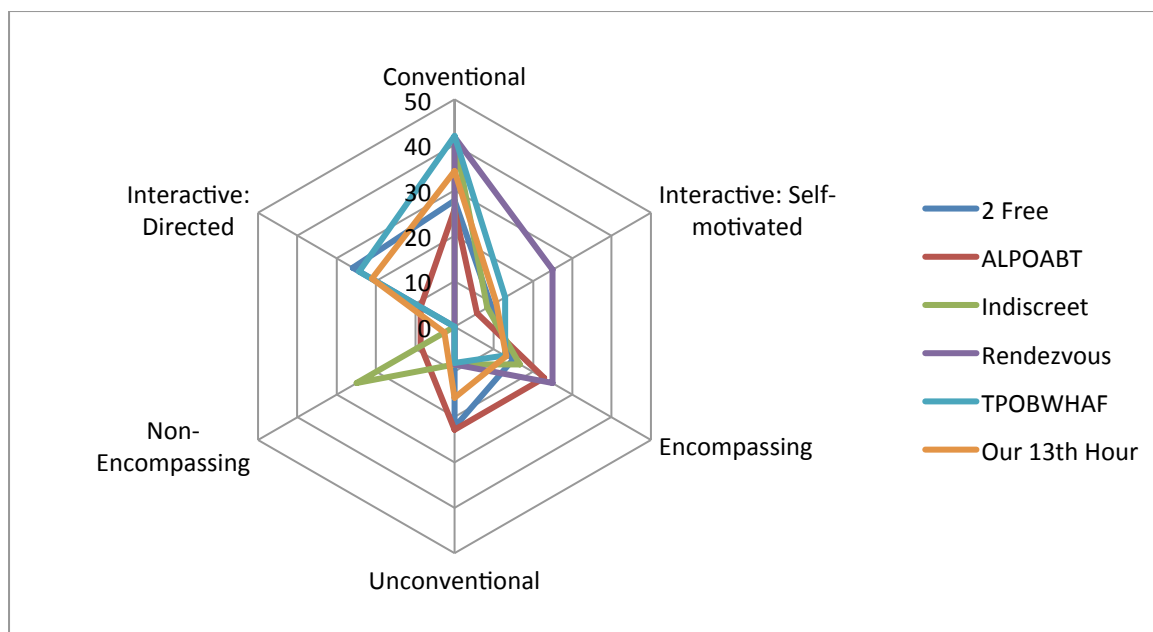


Figure 5.12 Diagrammatic comparison of the analyses of the liminal stages of the perceptibly more immersive performances: *2 Free*; *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing*; *Indiscreet*; *Rendezvous*; *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding*; and *Our Thirteenth Hour*. These performances were perceived, upon experience, to integrate the participant into the performance more considerably. As you can see, this is reinforced by the tendency to occupy the ‘real’ half of the chart.

## Anomalies in Liminal Stage Analyses.

Given that Shunt’s *Money* (2010) had been identified as being perceptibly most-like a staged performance and incorporated into the study for that reason, it was in some ways surprising to see it occupying a relatively large section of the ‘reality’ side of the chart, however, when looking at the analysis, this effect was actually created by the transitional moments between the scenes of the performance (walking up and down the stairs) rather than the performance itself. I stand by the decision to include these sections in the analysis, to take the performance as a whole, rather than as separate sections, because in other performances they might be more relevant to the performance, however it is acknowledge that they can skew the result to an extent. One might classify these sections as inter-liminal – events that join two parts of the liminal stage together, in this case, for practical reasons. I would also add that the presence of these inter-liminal sections insinuates that the piece may feel more fragmented and reveal its fictionality more considerably because participants are constantly crossing the threshold between everyday reality and the performance reality.

It was no surprise to see a significant proportion of *Indiscreet* (2011) occupying the 'fictional' half of the chart although, I would suggest that in the specific case of this piece non-encompassing cannot be taken to infer 'fictional' – *Indiscreet* created a scenario where the participant was positioned as a voyeur, overhearing the conversation that conveyed the majority of the information regarding the characters. In this case, the scenario justified the separation from the performance by creating a convention that was recognisable from everyday reality, that of listening in on conversation. The convention itself conveys separation from the conversation and this makes the participant articulate the separation itself in a different way, not as part of a performance but as linked to a real scenario.

In the performance *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing* (2011), the participant was positioned in a similar way to a student in a classroom, as an observer of the events unfolding accompanied by conversational interaction. In this way the proportion of conventional aspects (25.71%) within the performance were almost equal to the unconventional ones (22.86%) equalling the proportion of events classified as encompassing (25.86%) with a smaller proportion noted as being interactive (14.28%). It would be interesting to see how these scores would have changed if this was presented as a talk or lesson as opposed to a theatrical performance or perhaps situated in a classroom rather than a theatre. This suggests the importance of the pre-liminal stage of the performance in altering the manner by which the performance itself is perceived and insinuates the manner by which a classroom scenario might differ from everyday reality. This clearly suggests possibility for further exploration, though, at this moment, the relationship between reality and fiction in a classroom situation lies outside the scope of this study.

## Pre-liminal Stage

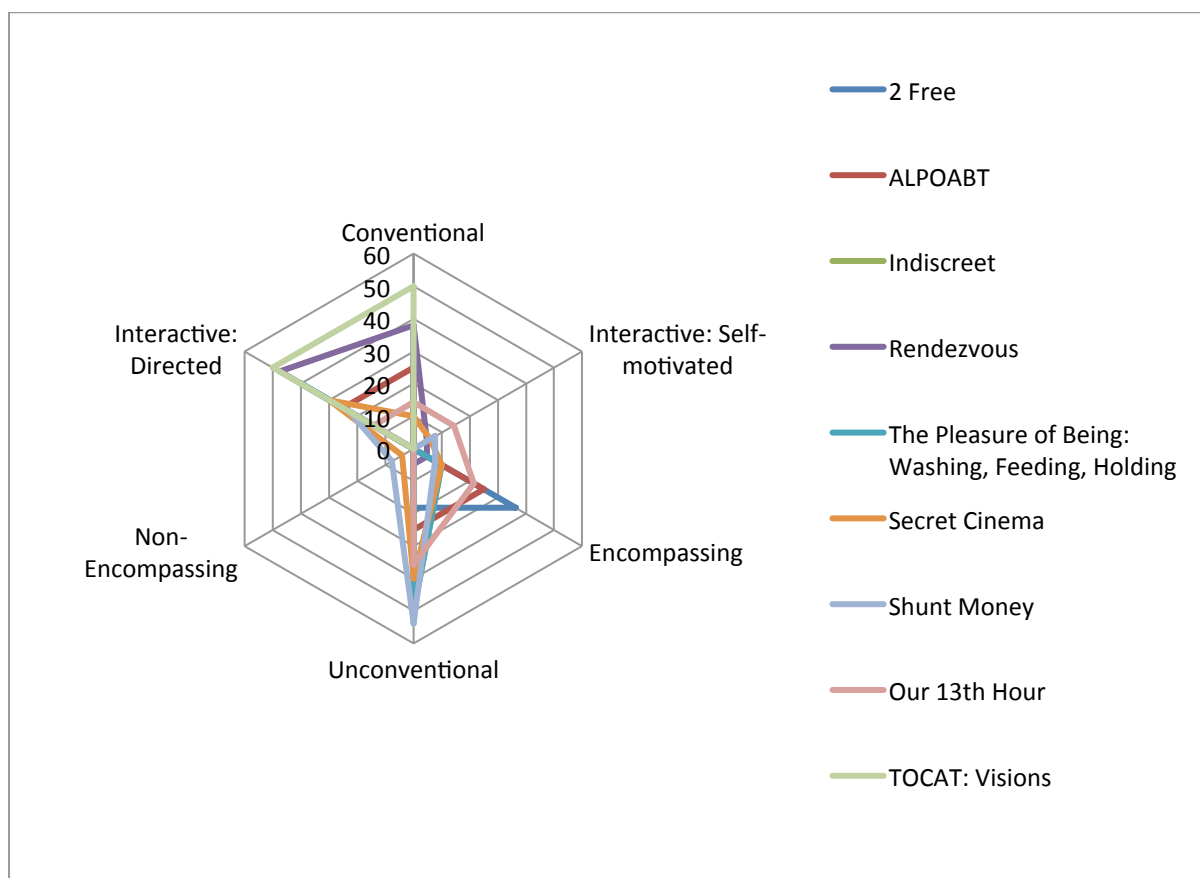


Figure 5.13 Diagrammatic comparison of the analyses of the pre-liminal stages of the performances *2 Free*; *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing*; *Indiscreet*, *Rendezvous*; *The Pleasure of Being: Washing Holding and Feeding*; *Secret Cinema*; *Shunt Money*; *Our Thirteenth Hour*; and *They Only Come at Night: Visions*. There is clearly higher proportion of events falling in the 'fictional' half of the chart, noted to be 'Interactive: Directed' and 'Unconventional' in this stage of the performance which implies that information is being conveyed to participants that infers the fictional nature of the proceeding performance.

In relation to the results conveyed in Figure 5.13, there is a clear tendency towards events being predominantly classified as Interactive: Directed and Unconventional in this section which highlights the importance of the pre-liminal stage in relation to indicating the nature of the performance. It is therefore suggested that it is the pre-liminal sections that draw attention to the nature of the performance, including events such as the observing of publicity, the buying of a ticket, the arrival at the venue and handing over the ticket, all provide the means by which the participant contextualises the liminal events as being part of a performance. The importance of this stage should not be under-estimated given that in situations where the pre-liminal stage is removed or disguised participants can be observed behaving in a manner that conveys significant belief in the unfolding events however

bizarre they may appear to the knowing observer. For example in the recording taken from the television programme *Beadle's About* where the 'victim' of the prank begins work at a mortuary and encounters an actor dressed as a ghost who emerges from the coffins on display and then subsequently disappears. (Coeludd, 2007).

## Post-liminal Stage

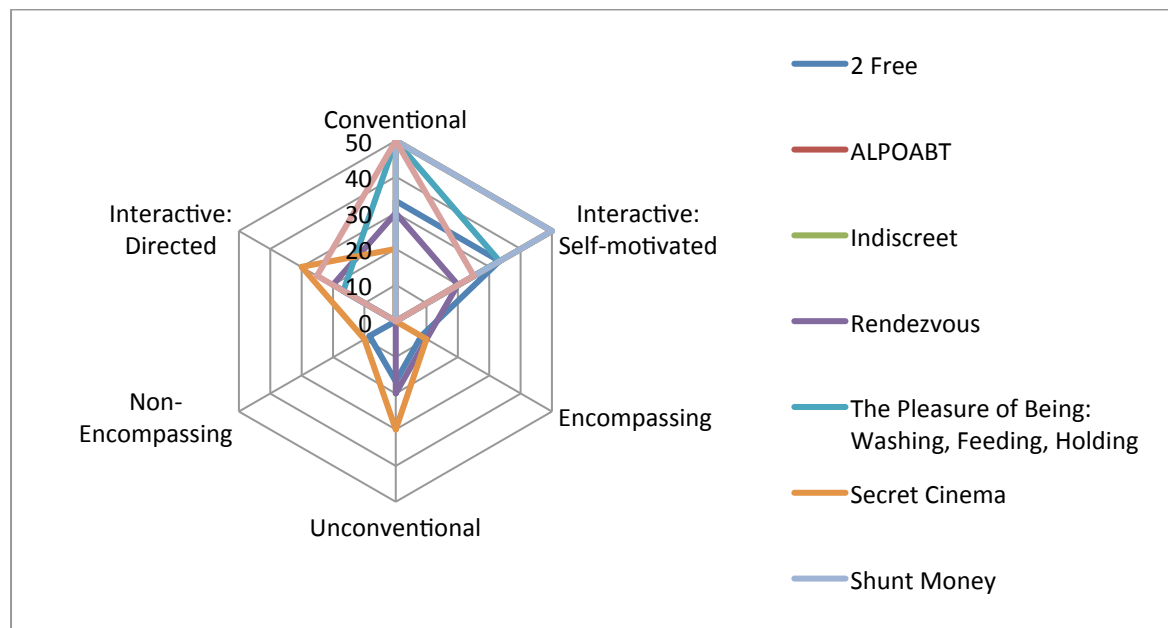


Figure 5.14 Diagrammatic comparison of the analyses of the post-liminal stages of the performances *2 Free*; *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing*; *Indiscreet*, *Rendezvous*; *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding*; *Secret Cinema*; *Shunt Money*; *Our Thirteenth Hour*; and *They Only Come at Night: Visions*. There is a high proportion of events being classified in the 'real' half of the chart. This articulates the perceived 'return to reality' which is inevitable given that the participant has previously been engaging with something that has been perceived as a performance. It should be noted that *They Only Come At Night: Visions* has been removed from this chart because it was not possible to ascertain the participant experience following the end of the script. Interestingly, the three performances (*2 Free*, *Rendezvous* and *Secret Cinema*) which show fictional elements in their post-liminal stages all presented considerably elongated post-liminal stages which contained further elements of performance.

Figure 5.14 shows that the post-liminal stage conveys an abundance of events classified as Conventional and Interactive: Self-motivated. Again, this result was to be expected given that this stage is where the performance itself recedes and the participant is re-integrated into everyday reality. The three performances which contain events classified within the 'fictional' half of the chart are those which had a significantly longer post-liminal stage. 2



*Free*, for example contained 6 events in the post-liminal stage whilst, *Rendezvous* and Secret Cinema’s adaptation of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* had 5 events. Other performances had between one and three events in the post-liminal stage.

## Discussion

As a first and important point of reflection, the above results convey the sense that that this method of analysis can articulate differences in relation to the manner and success by which they sought to accommodate events that were conveyed conventions familiar from everyday reality. In most cases analysis appears to reflect the overall experience of the piece itself and therefore could provide a means for practitioners to criticise their own work as part of the developmental process. Representation in a radar chart can illustrate real or fictional trends in specific works and provides a visual means of observing the degree to which a work appropriates conventions from everyday reality and the success by which it dissimulates fictional elements. This subjective binary opposition of the fictional and real is relevant to the act of producing work. Using sculpture as a metaphor – to make something feel absolutely real, one must form the piece out of the conventions or reality and then smooth off the rough fictional edges. No part of the piece must ‘catch’ in the mind of the participant and make them question whether the experience is genuine. The specific everyday conventions observed in the analysed pieces of work are identified in Table 5.1.

<b>Conventions appropriated from everyday reality.</b>	<b>Performances incorporating these elements.</b>
Physical contact with performer.	<i>2 Free; The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding; Rendezvous; Our Thirteenth Hour.</i>
Interaction between performer and participant.	<i>A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing; Our Thirteenth Hour; The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding; 2 Free; Indiscreet;</i>

	<i>They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>
Use of real setting.	<i>They Only Come at Night: Visions; Our Thirteenth Hour; Secret Cinema.</i>
Significant degree of physical movement.	<i>Our Thirteenth Hour; 2 Free; Secret Cinema; Money; They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>
Freedom to move anywhere within performance.	<i>Secret Cinema.</i>
Real subject under discussion (e.g. The participant's life).	<i>A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing; Our Thirteenth Hour; The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding; Rendezvous.</i>
Responsive dialogue.	<i>Indiscreet; Our Thirteenth Hour; The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding; A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing;</i>
Nudity.	<i>2 Free; The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding.</i>
Previous engagement with performance/character in a different realistic context.	<i>Indiscreet.</i>
Overheard Conversation in realistic context.	<i>Indiscreet.</i>
Interference from non-performance sources.	<i>Indiscreet; Our Thirteenth Hour.</i>
Appropriation of teaching scenario.	<i>A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing</i>
Real work undertaken.	<i>A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing.</i>
Sense of disorientation.	<i>Our Thirteenth Hour; They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>

Real sense of fear / challenge	<i>Rendezvous; 2 Free; They Only Come at night: Visions.</i>
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**Table 5.1: Conventions appropriated from everyday reality observed in the analysed performances.**

What draws the majority of these elements together is that they are undeniably real. One cannot fictionalise the experience of being naked, for example, or that one is allowed to move freely or speak directly to another individual – In a sense these elements feel inherently true because they are directly extracted from the experience of everyday reality even if it is recognised that the experience is contextualised within a performance. It is therefore suggested that this process of recognising everyday conventions and incorporating them into the liminal stage of a piece of work, is one way of imbuing the work with a sense that it is real.

What can also be seen is the appropriation of familiar scenarios from everyday reality that contextualise the experience in a recognisable manner that negates the premise of a performance. So for example, *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing* adopts some of the conventions of a classroom experience that we recognise as being a part of everyday reality and, through doing this, justifies the directness of speech and the subject of discussion. *Indiscreet* similarly utilises the recognisable convention of eavesdropping on another person’s conversation to negate the idea that the information is being delivered for the sake of the participant. The sense here is that if one can recognise the intent of a particular scene, (for example, to encourage participants to talk about their personal lives) and then adopt the conventions of a scenario from everyday reality where this might be expected to occur (for example a psychiatrist’s office) then one justifies the actions of the performer through the scenario.

Specific fictional elements perceived in the analysed performances are described in Table 5.2 below.

<b>Clearly fictional conventions</b>	<b>Performances incorporating these elements.</b>
Non-realistic performance setting.	<i>2 Free; Rendezvous; Money.</i>

Minimal interaction (Participants positioned as observers)	<i>Money; Secret Cinema.</i>
Unconventional performer behaviour.	<i>2 Free; Rendezvous; Money; They Only Come at Night: Visions; Our Thirteenth Hour.</i>
Affected dialogue.	<i>2 Free; Rendezvous; Money; They Only Come at Night: Visions; Our Thirteenth Hour.</i>
Use of self-referential signage.	<i>2 Free; The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding;</i>
Poorly justified requests for participant action.	<i>Our Thirteenth Hour; Secret Cinema; They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>
Use of lighting in a noticeably unconventional manner.	<i>A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing.</i>
Acknowledgement of symbolic elements.	<i>A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing.</i>
Awareness of other participants.	<i>Secret Cinema, Money.</i>
Oversubscription of interactive elements.	<i>Secret Cinema.</i>
Contrived stylisation of functional elements.	<i>Secret Cinema.</i>
Imposition of rules.	<i>Secret Cinema, Money, They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>
Inconsistent / incongruent elements.	<i>Secret Cinema, Indiscreet.</i>
Performance referential props.	<i>The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding; They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>
Subject matter.	<i>They Only Come at Night: Visions.</i>

Table 5.2: Fictional elements observed in the analysed performances.

These elements are defined by the sense that they present conventions that are not familiar from everyday reality or that they incorporate elements that highlight the performative nature of the experience. It is recognised that these unconventionalities might be a conscious choice on the part of the artist or company and form part of the overall aesthetic of the performance however in some cases these unconventional elements create incongruencies or implausible elements that may detract from the overall experience of the piece by focusing the participant's attention on areas which reveal the constructed artifice of the performance.

Clearly there is no single solution to dissimulating these elements and each solution will be unique to that particular element, for example, unnaturalistic dialogue may need to be toned down and potentially inserted with pauses and other non-fluency features whereas in other cases, artists may need to find ways to justify why a participant is getting into a car or being asked to perform a particular task. Some general ways of considering each stage of a performance are described below.

# Proposed Strategies for Dissimulation

## Pre-liminal Stage Dissimulation

It is clear that the pre-liminal stage has a significant importance in determining a participant's ability to understand whether they are experiencing a performance. It is suggested that, by disguising or removing the pre-liminal elements of a performance, by replacing conventions that acknowledge the performative nature of the work with others that are familiar from everyday reality, it would be possible to remove the sense that audiences are entering a performance.

## Dissimulation through Interactivity

The above analysis suggests that a dissimulated performance needs to incorporate audience interaction in a non-directed manner unless it is adopting a particular scenario where non-communication is the norm. Performances such as *Money* (2011) that maintained a distinction between audience and performers were identified as being the most obviously fictional whereas a performance such as *Our Thirteenth Hour* (2010) which was, on the whole, completely focused upon the participant conveyed a much stronger sense that the scenario was real. This suggests that the incorporation of interactivity is an effective strategy in relation to dissimulating the overall experience. This idea presents certain problems in terms of scripting. True interactivity involves the performer responding to what the participant has said and therefore has to occur as part of a spontaneous improvised interaction. As the script for *They Only Come at Night: Visions* (2009) suggests, the stipulation of specific dialogue does not allow the required space for audience interaction. Therefore some compromise needs to be considered in relation to how such performance scripts are considered and constructed.

## Dissimulation through Naturalism

In such performances as *Rendezvous*, and *Money*, the stylised nature of the delivery in a non-naturalistic manner conveyed the sense that the performance was part of a fictional construct. Therefore, it seems important to develop a means of scripting a performance that encourages naturalistic delivery. Primarily this would insinuate the use of naturalistic

dialogue however, it is suggested that the incorporation of interactivity described above insinuates that there should be no specified dialogue because genuine interactivity is rarely pre-considered in a specific form.

### **Removal of Specific Direction**

Directed, unconventional elements were clearly identified as insinuating the fictional nature of the performance and it is therefore suggested that these should be removed from the performance altogether. Directed conventional elements were less obvious, because direction regularly occurs in everyday reality however, analysis has shown that such elements clearly need to be justified in relation to the motives and interests of specific characters (The sick man asking the participant to deliver the box in *Our Thirteenth Hour*) rather than because the performance needs participants to be in a particular place at a particular time to experience a particular event (for example, *Money* or *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*). It would appear that, by providing a clear reason for a participant to go or be somewhere, the scenario is more likely to adopt a convention from everyday reality rather than one that specifically reference the constructed artifice of the performance.

### **Avoidance of Nihilistic Destruction**

As Caillois (2001) notes, any perceived imposition of rules upon a scenario exposes its fictional nature. Requesting that audiences dress-up or prepare in some other way for the performance is one way that such a rule may be imposed. Participants who do not prepare as requested, risk playing a nihilistic role within the fictional framework with the possibility that the experience is undermined for everybody. Because of this, it has been suggested that creators of immersive experiences avoid such scenarios by avoiding making such requests for preparation and by providing the necessary equipment for participants to participate.

# Conclusions

The four questions below which were identified as being key to this section of the study and will be addressed independently below:

1. Can the proposed method of analysis be used to distinguish between different performances that integrate fictional and real elements to different degrees?

Yes, the perceptible differences between performances that were, upon experience, perceived to be more or less 'fictional' can be articulated through a detailed analysis of the conventions conveyed through each event within a piece of work. This overall way that a piece may articulate that it is performative in nature, can be broken down and articulated in a more specific manner through the use of the proposed method of analysis.

2. Can the proposed method of analysis be used to identify elements of a performance that may assist in the development of that performance?

Yes, through the identification of specific events that convey fictional or implausible elements, it is possible to make suggestions relating to the manner by which a piece might be developed to remove these elements. It is acknowledged that it is essential to take into account the artist's intention when considering this notion. Questions such as: 'Is the artist trying to present these events as reality?' or 'Does the perceived fictionality of the piece reduce the impact or plausibility of the work or does the reduced plausibility protect the participant from a potentially more emotionally disturbing scenario?' are relevant to the consideration of the work and must be taken into account when considering the success of the piece in relation to the manner by which it achieves a sense of realism.

3. Are there generally observable ways in which current pieces of work dissimulate fictional elements?



The terms used to describe immersive work also, to some extent describe the way in which they dissimulate the performance. The interaction between performers and participants; the encouragement of participants to move around and explore the performance space; and the use of discussion that encourages participants to draw from their own experiences, are all acts of dissimulation because they begin to appropriate the conventions experienced within everyday reality.

4. How might obviously fictional elements be dissimulated to make them appear more real to a participant?

The consideration of fictional elements in relation to the manner by which they present conventions which are not recognisable from everyday reality can provide the answer to how they might be dissimulated. It is clear that, through the appropriation of familiar conventions from everyday reality, obviously-fictional elements can be integrated in a more realistic manner. As an example, highly stylised dialogue with few non-fluency features might convey the sense that the speaker is delivering words from a script and therefore suggest the manner by which that particular act has been pre-arranged through an act of authorship by a third party writer or director. By utilising a style of writing that mimics the features of everyday speech or by asking the performer to improvise the dialogue, it is suggested that a sense of the 'author behind the character's words' will be reduced.

5. Is it possible to construct a piece of work that is indistinguishable from everyday reality and if so, how might this be achieved?

Based on the ideas conveyed in the above section, theoretically, it should be possible to produce a piece of work that is indistinguishable from everyday reality. Aside from the dubious ethics of this, there is a perceptible problem in terms of the fact that if a participant experiences the pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal stages of the work as being 'real' then there will no longer be a sense that they are experiencing a piece of work. Therefore, any deeper symbolic or universal reading of the perceived acts will only occur by chance. For

this reason it feels essential that some element of the work acknowledges its own fictional nature. It is suggested that to maintain complete dissimulation for as long as possible, these elements might fall in the latter part of the liminal stage or in the post-liminal stage with the pre-liminal stage and the earlier sections of the liminal stage being dissimulated as fully as possible.

The importance of the pre-liminal stage in terms of acknowledging the fictional nature of the performance has been observed within the analyses above where, in all cases the participant was aware that they would be experiencing a performance before the performance had begun. In the pre-liminal stage, the participant engages with a number of events that provide a solid indication that a performance will be experienced. Initially by specifically setting the time and the date that the performance will occur, then by providing an indication of the threshold of the performance. Therefore it is suggested that by changing the degree and manner by which participants engage with the pre-liminal stage of the performance, one can alter the degree of certainty that they have in relation to the nature of the performance. This is reflected anecdotally in performances that present themselves as reality in order to deceive participants in some way or another. This study develops this anecdotal understanding, specifically in relation to theatrical performances and provides a means for practitioners to consider the manner by which participants engage with their performances highlighting aspects of the pre-liminal stage that could be altered, if wished, to reduce the participants' ability to classify the perceived events as a performance. Common events in the pre-liminal stage are:

- Seeing publicity about the performance.
- Buying a ticket for a specific time and date.
- Remembering the ticket.
- Travelling to the event on a specific date for a specific time.
- Arriving at and entering the venue.
- Handing over the ticket.
- Waiting in the venue for the performance to begin.

Other events specific to a particular performance may also be included in this list. Through the consideration of alternative modes of delivery for these functional and administrative

elements it may be possible to remove the certainty that the performance itself is not real. Blast Theory's 1998 performance *Kidnap* is an example of the application of this idea where places were issued a significant time before the performance occurred allowing participants the time to forget what they had signed up for or, at least, to expect that they had not been selected for the experience (Blast Theory, 2011). No information regarding date, time or place was given to the participants and no ticket changed hands.

6. Do the findings inform ethical considerations relating to immersive performances?

When considering the ethical implications of immersing participants in performances that incorporate events which portray real conventions and could possibly be perceived by participants as real, it is suggested that, in the first instance, judgements are made based upon an identification and analysis of the pre-liminal stage to ascertain the degree by which participants are engaging with indicators that highlight the fact that the events in the liminal stage of the performance are not real. Another point of consideration is the difference between a participant who sees publicity relating to an event and buys a ticket and a participant who is handed a ticket and told to come and see a show. In the second scenario, the number of pre-liminal events that highlight the nature of the performance are reduced and therefore the participants' means of classifying the performance are also reduced.

All of the pieces experienced as part of this study that incorporated some challenging element to them revealed this in some way during the pre-liminal stage. In the case of *The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding, Holding* the challenging nature of the performance (the fact that one would be washed by a male performer) was stated explicitly in the festival programme and reiterated during the engagement with the usher that directly preceded the performance. To accommodate as many people as possible, participants were invited to wear swimming costume if they so wished. In the case of *Rendezvous* (where the participant was asked to lay in a coffin) and *2 Free* (where the participant was asked to undress) the challenging *nature* of the performance was acknowledged in the programme and preceding conversation with ushers without specifically mentioning how this challenging element was to be realised. Clearly there needs to be a balance created here between being honest and spoiling the performance

Having identified the above areas for consideration in relation to the act of dissimulation, this study will now go onto explore how these might be applied in a practical sense to a performance script. Firstly, looking at character and dialogue through a short script for the piece *Menagerie* before exploring the notion of dissimulation more fully in the script for *Wonderland*.

## 6. Strategies for Incorporating Interaction into Performance Scripts

As the review of relevant practitioners and the subsequent analysis of existing work have shown, the term immersive theatre incorporates a large range of different types of performance, however, the unifying similarity is the incorporation of audience members into the performance. This is primarily achieved through the inclusion of interactivity with both performers and set. To facilitate this act of incorporation, an immersive performance needs to maintain a degree of flexibility to incorporate audience responses. In support of this, the analysis of existing work in the previous chapter has highlighted the manner by which naturalistic, responsive dialogue can be used to dissimulate the performance experience. This raises questions relating to the best form and format for such a script. How does a writer negotiate the need to convey character and emotion through dialogue with the need to incorporate audience interaction? Many of the companies contacted as part of this study, devise rather than script their work.

As Punchdrunk's Colin Marsh notes –

'The devising process for a Punchdrunk show does many things but one thing it doesn't is produce a script.' (4<sup>th</sup> July, 2010)

That is not to say that the performances are not organised. Punchdrunk's multiple narrative threads are tightly controlled so that characters can meet in an apparently spontaneous manner and engage in a particular scene. The Channel 4 documentary charting the making

of Punchdrunk and the English National Opera's adaptation of *The Duchess of Malfi* (The Making of the Duchess of Malfi, 2010) shows a schematic diagram of the building overlaid with references to particular scenes (33mins) and this is clearly one way that Punchdrunk organise their performances. The implication here is that a large immersive performance such as *The Duchess of Malfi* requires multiple layers of organisation, multiple documents, each foregrounding a different element of the piece to build up an overall sense of what the piece might be like whilst allowing for audience interaction.

Interaction within performance insinuates improvisation. The creation of a performance script that allows space for improvisation suggests the need to move away from strictly defined lines towards something that resembles a performance outline recognising the collaborative nature of a theatrical performance. As Woodruff (in Levinson, 2003, p600) notes: '...no work of theatre is identical to its script'. He likens performance to football suggesting that 'Usually we agree when football is being played as we agree that Hamlet is being performed, but standards for both will be subject to change.' (p600). Existing works such as Slung Low's *They Only Come at Night: Visions* (2009) appear to have ignored true interactivity in favour of a specific script and therefore appear to create, non-realistic interactions where audience members are not allowed to change the course of the conversations that occur within the performance. Punchdrunk's *The Night Chauffeur* (2010); Villanella and Hanneke Paauwe's *Rendezvous* (2011); Ansuman Biswas' *2 Free*; and Adrian Howells' *The Pleasure of Being Washed Held and Fed* (2011) all incorporate audience interaction into the fictional framework of the performance, creating an experience that accommodates the thoughts, feelings and movements of those individuals participating in the performance. Therefore, one might conclude that a script that relies too heavily on stipulated dialogue is likely to allow little reflexivity in terms of interaction. On the other hand, a script that dictates little risks creating a performance that is disorganised with a lessened thematic engagement. This suggests that a script for a live, interactive piece of theatre must sit somewhere dictating nothing and dictating everything.

To maintain the sense of narrative around the improvised dialogue and action, conversation and plot points were stipulated ensuring that there was a continuous movement towards a climactic point (Aristotle, 2003). The technique of retroscripting was adopted from

screenwriting to fulfil this need. Used in films such as *The Blair Witch Project* (1999), *This is Spinal Tap* (1984) and *Paranormal Activity* (2007) to increase the naturalism of the performances, this approach was perceived to facilitate the aims of the script in relation to incorporating audience interaction and also by facilitating a more naturalistic delivery that would dissimulate the experience of the performance. This approach to scripting involves giving performers a number of key directions for each scene. The resulting improvisational explorations are filmed and then honed in the editing suite. Of course, in the case of live performance, this subsequent editing process is not possible and this presents a considerable challenge to the performers with respect to maintaining character.

It was felt that this challenge (with the constant possibility of going 'out of character' and undermining any dissimulative strategies that were incorporated into a performance) was likely to be unsustainable and needed to be addressed if such performances were to succeed. To achieve this goal it was decided to encourage the performer to approach the script in a different manner and therefore that the approach to characterisation needed to be reconsidered. It was decided to utilise the performer's character, augmenting the fictional character on top creating, what was termed, the char/actor.

The premise of the char/actor centres upon the position that, apart from a few key details which are important to the backstory of the piece, the history of the character is identical to that of the performer. The performer is therefore encouraged to draw on their own experiences to support the improvisation. It is directly articulated that the performer is playing a heightened version of themselves and that the further they get away from themselves, the less-successfully they are achieving the desired result. It is anticipated that the pressure on the performer to maintain character is removed because they are no longer being asked to play a character that is different to the person who they are. This places a pressure to cast the correct individuals for the part – those who actually have had similar experiences to the perceived characters where possible or, at least, have a similar outlook on life. The idea is to reduce the acting to almost zero – the performer is no longer playing a character – they are being themselves.

The specific details included to accentuate the character element of the character were added to the script in an appropriate format that didn't specify particular dialogue, for example, in

the script for *Wonderland*, included in this study, the char/actor Rab plays a kind of language game called 'The Rule of Three' which involves matching the metrical qualities of sentences to the song *Baby Face* by Whispering Jack Smith (1926). The rules for this game were set out for the char/actor so that they could apply this game whenever they saw fit as opposed to being delivered on specified occasions which, it was considered, would inhibit further exploration and application of this game.

To test the applicability and practicalities of using retroscripting in live performance, a short piece called *Menagerie* was devised which utilised the strategies detailed above. The results of this process of testing, along with relevant reflection upon along with the perceived success of char/actor augmentation and retroscripting are discussed in the following chapter.



## 7. *Menagerie*

The aim of *Menagerie* was to explore the transition from script to performance and also to understand how the dissimulative processes of retroscripting and char/actor augmentation could and would work as a means of integrating audience participation into a prepared script. This section of the study articulates the concept behind *Menagerie* and presents the Director's and Performer's scripts (see 'Scripts' below) along with an analytical commentary of the piece from a creative writing perspective. An analysis of the fictional elements of the piece is then conducted as a means of exploring the potential for development in this sense. This section addresses the following questions:

1. Can the methods of retroscripting and char/actor augmentation be used to develop a thematically strong performance?
2. What are the practical implications of using a retroscript?
3. What areas for development can be revealed through the analysis of the fictional elements that are contained within this piece?

### **Concept**

*Menagerie* was created in response to a request to contribute to the Wake Up! Festival (a day of art and performance) at the Worcester Arts Workshop (WAW) on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2011. It was repeated for 3<sup>rd</sup> year Performing Arts students from the University of Worcester on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 (on this occasion the piece was performed by four students from the group) and then at the Alone Festival of Performance on the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2011. The top floor

of WAW contains three rooms (two office spaces and a junk room), a hall and a staircase leading up to the floor. The performance made use of the staircase and particularly the junk room and was created in response to a thorough exploration of the room and its contents which included paper, art work, electrical equipment, furniture, and mannequins all of which had been haphazardly collected in the space over a duration of around thirty years. It felt like the 'memory' of the building, placed on the top floor with no windows. It had a disorganised beauty to it that seemed to reflect the clutter of life experiences and, whilst searching through the space, I found myself trying to make sense of many of the objects that were in there. I wanted to know where different objects had come from, for example, why people had abandoned their art work in this space rather than taking it home. This desire to find meaning, narrative and causality in these artefacts, was reminiscent of Jerome Bruner's assertion that humans use narratives to try to understand their lives (1991) and it was decided that, for a piece to respond appropriately to this space, it had to be about memory and loss. It was felt that the best way to make the performance about memory was to involve the act of remembering and, for this reason, it was decided that the piece should be a shared act of remembering – a conversation between two people, structured within a loose narrative arc.

Another distinct aspect of the space was the element of darkness. The lights were some way into the room and so, during the initial exploration, one had to trip and climb over boxes, umbrellas and chairs in the pitch black to get to the light switch. This created a sense of uncertainty, of trepidation that was considered suitable for the piece. This heightening of the senses through the injection of fear and unknowing is a technique used by companies such as Punchdrunk to place audiences out of their comfort zone. Woolley (1997) also suggests that a perceived threat is understood by individuals in such a way that makes the experience feel more 'real'. Hence, once a pathway was cleared through the space, it was lit with the minimum of light possible. To add to this feeling of fear, unsettling pictures of creepy looking dolls were attached to various objects. These images weren't, in many ways, really in keeping with the piece or the themes in the script however, at the time, it was felt that this obvious prompt was needed to really convey this sense of fear. The most recent performance of this piece at Alone removed these images because of the inconsistency that they created.

# Scripts

Two scripts were produced for this piece. The *director's script* being one which paints as clear a picture of the performance as possible and presents lines of dialogue with the aim of giving a director a sense of the writer's vision for the piece in terms of character and style of delivery. The *performer's script* is a retyped version of the *director's script* which articulates the main conversation points and stage directions. In this way the two scripts work together to produce the final work.

## Director's Script

The set incorporates a door leading to a staircase at the top of which is another door leading into an attic room filled with junk. At the end of this room is an envelope with the word 'Sorry' written upon it. Inside the envelope is a piece of paper upon which the words 'Are you afraid of dying?' are written. In close proximity to this letter, Char/actor 1 is sitting at a table upon which are placed a bottle of port and two glasses. One already has port in it, the other is empty. A battered deck of cards is lying face down on the table. The participant cannot see this but on each card in this deck is written a date. A second, identical deck of cards is in Char/actor 1's pocket however there are no dates written on these cards. Also in the Char/actor's pocket is a single card on its own with tomorrow's date written on it.

A sign on the first door indicates that the participant must knock. When this happens Char/actor 2 slowly descends the stairs and walks to the door. They open the door and look the audience member (participant) up and down.

Char/actor 2:           Come in.

Char/actor 2 then starts to ascend the stairs. Whilst they are walking up they ask the participant's name without looking at them.

Char/actor 2:           What's your name?

Participant:           (Responds)

If participant asks for Char/actor 2's name they respond –

Char/actor 2:           It doesn't matter.

At the top of the stairs Char/actor 2 turns to speak to the participant (so participant is still lower down on the stairs)

Char/actor 2:           You don't scare easily do you? I need to check that.

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 2:           Are you sure?

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 2:           Yeah?

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 2:           Sure?

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 2:           Ok.

Char/actor 2 shows participant to the door into the junk room.

Char/actor 2:           There is a letter for you at the end of the room.

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 2 opens the door and shows participant into the dimly lit room.

Char/actor 2:           Good luck.

Char/actor 2 slams the door behind them. The lullaby from the film *Rosemary's Baby* is playing. The participant gradually makes their way to the back of the room in search of the letter. They notice the letter and then begin to read it. The letter says:

ARE YOU AFRAID OF DYING?

Around this moment they are startled by Char/actor 1 sitting at the table in a dark corner.

Char/actor 1:           Are you afraid of dying?

Char/actor 1 gestures for them to sit down and pours them a drink. Then they pick the deck of cards up off the table and take the cards out.

Char/actor 1:           Pick a card but don't look at it.

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 1:           Put it on the table.

Participant:           (Responds)

They leave it placed face down on the table. Char/actor 1 places the cards back in the box and then puts it in their pocket.

Char/actor 1:           Years ago, a man in an old junkshop asked me to pick a card. Afterwards, he gave me these and he told me I'd have to pass it on.

Char/actor 1:           (Raises glass) To a good life!

They drink.

Char/actor 1:           So you never answered my question: Are you afraid of dying?

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 1:           Why? / Why not?

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 1:           (Giving opposite answer) I am / I'm not, or at least I wasn't. Then I began to think and, as my life goes on, I realise that I've got too much to do, and I don't want to leave my friends or my family. Not at all. Not yet. So, my answer is... yes. Yes I am afraid.

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 1: Have you ever felt that? Like death is pulling you towards it?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: Are you in love? / Have you ever been in love?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: What does it feel like? To be in love?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: Is it still the same - now, I mean?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: Then why don't you move on? I mean, why waste your time if you only have so much in the first place? Like, there's so much beauty to see. Isn't there? What's the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: I remember seeing this video – taken in the war, I think. You can see it on the internet. It's the Vietnam War, maybe a different one. It's in the jungle and there's this dead soldier lying in the frame of the shot. It's raining and there water dripping from the trees into his mouth. So much that a pool of water has collected there, in his mouth. And you think that's it, that that's the whole story, but then after a while you notice movement on the soldier's leg. Really slowly, you see this object move up the soldier's leg. After a while, the camera zooms in and you notice that it's a snail, crawling up the soldier's leg, up the side of his body, up his neck and onto his face. And it's... I don't know, kind of grotesque – I remember feeling sorry for the guy because he couldn't do anything about it. You know what I mean?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: So the snail reaches the edge of his mouth and cranes its neck out and drinks from the pool of water. And I remember thinking, you know that's amazing, it's like... life and death just so close together.

Char/actor 1 holds up their crossed fingers.

Char/actor 1: And it was the first time I realised how much life and death need each other. How one doesn't mean anything without the other. And the tragedy of death gives meaning to life. But it's so sad isn't it?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: What's the saddest thing you know?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: I... when I was like... 18, I think. Maybe 17. My friends stole their dad's car and went off driving about in it. Nothing crazy just... you know... stupid. A bad decision. (Sighs). They end up doing handbrake turns in this car park by the side of the River Nidd in Knaresborough. I don't know what happened but somehow they ended up driving the car into the river. Only one of them got out. A group of people gathered around the car as it was lifted out of the water, days later, with them still inside. Fucking horrible. I hate that – those people watching. My friends lived life, you know?... completely in the moment. And in doing so they snuffed their lives out. And it's like... do you play it safe or...

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: Pretty sad huh?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: But it's not the saddest thing I know. When I got this... (Takes a single folded card out of his pocket.) From the man in the junk shop. He made me pick that card and he told me... that's the day I'm gonna die.

Participant takes card and looks at it. It has tomorrow's date on it.

Char/actor 1: And... you see?... The date's tomorrow. And at first I didn't believe him, you know? But now... I've got too much to do and I'm not ready to go. So I'm passing it on. I'm passing it on to you.

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: You can look at your card.

Participant picks up card. Char/actor takes blank deck out of pocket and gets the cards out.

Char/actor 1: And the saddest thing I know is that...

They show participant that all the cards are blank.

Char/actor 1: ...if you had picked any other card then it would have been ok. But you picked that card and now that's the day you're going to die. Unless you pass it on.

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor 1: So good luck. Probably see you around, yeah? (Raises glass) Here's to life!

Participant leaves.

## Performer's Script

The set incorporates a door leading to a staircase at the top of which is another door leading into an attic room filled with junk. At the end of this room is an envelope with the word 'Sorry' written upon it. Inside the envelope is a piece of paper upon which the words 'Are you afraid of dying?' are written. In close proximity to this letter, Char/actor 1 is sitting at a table upon which are placed a bottle of port and two glasses. One already has port in it, the other is empty. A battered deck of cards is also on the table. On each card in this deck is written a date. A second, identical deck of cards is in Performer 1's pocket however there are no dates written on these cards. Also in the Char/actor's pocket is a single card on its own with tomorrow's date written on it.

A sign on the first door indicates that the audience member (participant) must knock. When this happens Char/actor 2 slowly descends the stairs and walks to the door. They open the door and look the audience member (participant) up and down.

Char/actor 2	Participant
Greets participant and leads them up the stairs.	(Responds)
Asks participant their name.	(Responds)
Asks them if they get scared easily and checks this to make sure.	(Responds)
Tells them there is a letter for them at the end of the room.	(Responds)
Opens door into junk room for them.	Walks into room.
Wishes them good luck.	
Slams door.	

The lullaby from the film *Rosemary's Baby* is playing. Participant gradually makes their way to the back of the room in search of the letter. They notice the letter and then begin to read it. The letter says:

ARE YOU AFRAID OF DYING?

Char/actor 1	Participant
	Enters room, walks to the back and looks at the letter.
Asks participant if they are afraid of dying.	
Indicates for participant to sit down.	Participant sits.
Pours participant a drink.	
Declares a toast to life.	Drinks.
Asks participant to pick a card but not to look at it and put it on the table.	Picks a card and puts it on the table.
Tells story about having the same done to them in an old junk shop.	
Asks participant again if they are afraid of	(Responds)



dying.	
Why? / Why Not?	(Responds)
Tells participant that they're not ready to go yet.	
Asks participant if they have ever been in love and what it felt like.	(Responds)
Asks participant what the most beautiful thing they've ever seen is?	(Responds)
Tells participant about the most beautiful thing they've ever seen.	
Asks participant what the saddest thing they know is.	(Responds)
Tells participant about a sad thing that has happened.	
But that's not the saddest thing...	
Tells story about the man in the junkshop predicting Char/actor 1's death.	
Shows participant the card with tomorrow's date on it.	
Says they are passing it on to participant and they can look at their card.	(Responds)
Thanks participant and declares another toast to life.	(Responds)
Indicates that it is time for the participant to leave now.	Leaves

# Commentary

This commentary engages with the process of developing and crafting the above scripts as a means of demonstrating that the removal of specific dialogue does not remove the ability of the piece to present a well-structured narrative and engage with particular themes.

## Plot

### Char/actor 1

The plot begins with a clear inciting incident of the char/actor's experience in the junkshop leading them to question whether the death prediction on the card is real or not. These events are insinuated through the backstory told by Char/actor 1 during the performance. This has then motivated them to 'pass on' the curse to the participant. The climactic point of this piece in relation to the char/actor is the emotional release from the potential curse. In many ways Char/actor 1's story resembles that of the Rebirth Plot outlined by Booker (2004).

#### **Falling Stage:**

Clearly articulated in the manner by which the curse has been passed onto Char/actor 1

#### **Recession Stage:**

Articulated in the notion that they didn't at first believe the curse and got on with their life.

#### **Imprisonment Stage:**

Suggested through the gradual realisation that the curse might be real and insinuating the circumstances that have given rise to the scenario set up and encountered by the participant.

#### **Nightmare Stage:**

Less well-articulated but nevertheless apparent in the notion that Char/actor 1 thinks they will die tomorrow.

#### **Rebirth Stage:**

The handing of the curse over to the participant and therefore Char/actor 1 is released.

## **Participant**

The plot begins with the arrival in the performance space and being greeted by Char/actor 2. One might say that the inciting incident is therefore the initial point of connection with the piece, the decision to experience this. This is embodied in the act of the participant knocking on the door and entering this unknown space. The participant then encounters a number of setbacks including the realisation that they must enter a dark, unknown space, and beyond this that they must answer personal questions. The card itself plays the role of the 'ticking clock' as the command 'Don't look at it' accompanied by the request to place the card on the table implies that, at some point, the card will be revealed. This introduces an element of anticipation that continues through the piece until the revelation of the climactic point where the participant realises that they have been tricked into accepting the death curse and must now live their life with this on their mind. The plot conforms to the Voyage and Return structure specified by Booker (2004) with the following points:

### **The Fall into the Other World:**

This occurs initially when the participant knocks on the door and is greeted by Char/actor 2 and is then fully realised in their entrance into the dark environment itself.

### **Initial Fascination**

With mixed feelings the participant enters and explores the environment to try to understand what is going on.

### **Frustration Stage**

The discussion with Char/actor 1 is extremely personal and requires the participant to engage with a variety of emotions that they perhaps might not have wanted to.

### **Nightmare Stage**

The set-up is revealed and the participant is introduced to the idea that they have had the day that they will die predicted by Char/actor 1 and have been handed the curse.

### **Thrilling Escape and Return**

The process of leaving the space might not be considered thrilling – to achieve this, Char/actor 1 would probably have to chase them out of the space, however, the participant

does effectively 'escape' from the space and re-joins the real world with the burden of the curse hanging over their life from this point onwards.

## Status

Johnston (in Neale, 2009) articulates the importance of characters' statuses in relation to the delivery of naturalistic performance. In the case of *Menagerie*, it was felt that the status play between performers, the set, and the participant was important to control the dramatic dynamic of the piece, to play with the status position of the participant in such a way that meant that at times the experience might have felt somewhat hostile and, at others, welcoming.

Initially, the piece sets out to lower the status of the participant wherever possible. In the initial section where Char/actor 2 firstly looks the participant up and down, then walks off, asking them their name with their back turned insinuating that they don't really care about this personal information. The next event, where Char/actor 2 turns at the top of the stairs, is intended to insinuate a higher status in a physical sense. This is then followed by the repetition of the question 'You don't scare easily, do you?' This action was performed to prime the participant to think about fear (McRaney, 2011), to make them consider the idea that they might or should be scared. By focusing upon these negative thought processes, it was hoped that a feeling of trepidation would be injected in the participant's experience, again, lowering their status in relation to the piece. This low status was compounded by the fact that the participant was ushered into a dark space and wished 'Good Luck' before the door was slammed shut behind them.

Once the participant has been surprised by Char/actor 1, their status is allowed to increase somewhat. The offering of a drink suggests a movement towards equality, as does Char/actor 1's genuine interest in the participant's response to the questions. The card trick lowers the status of the participant as it implies deceit and manipulation by Char/actor 1. As the questions begin to get more personal, Char/actor 1's status rises up to the climactic point where the participant discovers that they have been cursed. At this point their status is extremely low and Char/actor 1's is at its highest point.

## Char/actor

Whilst the specifics of the char/actor arise from the augmentation of the specific details of the character on top of the actor's own personal history, it's worth noting the character itself that is being augmented - A cursed individual motivated by the need to save their life by handing over the curse to a complete stranger by tricking them into engaging with this scenario. The character is ambiguous in this respect – they are by no means a hero, however neither are they particularly evil. Char/actor 1 is simply motivated by the fear of dying. What is interesting here is the degree to which the few stipulated actions that form the play can convey a sense of this character aside from any specific dialogue. By augmenting this darkly motivated character over the character of a performer who is essentially being asked to play themselves, we get a conflicting set of signals arising from the char/actor which can be honed into a perceptibly complex character showing shades of darkness and light as opposed to being presented as a stereotypically antagonistic character.

## Setting

As noted in the introduction to this section, the setting itself articulates the notion of memory in this piece. The darkness and cramped environment help to bring out the sense of fear in the participant and draws the participant into the scenario. The fact that the participant has to walk a significant distance before meeting Char/actor 1 means that they have invested a considerable amount in getting to this point. The music has been used to add to the atmosphere of this piece again to emphasise the feeling of fear. This was added to further by inserting pictures of deformed dolls. It was noted in feedback that this felt out of place with the piece and actually detracted from the more subtle aspects of the setting. A net curtain was placed between the two sections of the room to accentuate the feeling of exploration – this is the third space into which the participant has entered by this point. This hopefully encourages the participant to feel like they have travelled further than they really have.

## Themes and Symbolism

There is a clear engagement with theme of death in this piece, and also with relationship between life and death. Death imagery is conveyed through the pictures of the dolls; through the removal of light and entry into a confined space; through the drinking of port which looks like blood; through the stories about the soldier and the drowning of Char/actor 1's friends. Water is used as a symbol of life in 'the most beautiful thing you've ever seen' and death in 'the saddest thing...' The relationship between life and death is also symbolised in the act of holding up crossed fingers when discussing life and death being intertwined – the crossed finger symbol of course also infers the notion of luck which is implied through Char/actor 2's dialogue as the participant enters the room ('Good luck') and in the picking of the only card with the death date on it (bad luck). The use of cards themselves implies the notion of fortune, of gambling and fortune telling in the form of the tarot.

# Performer Feedback

Responses from four students from The University of Worcester who performed *Menagerie* on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 to the rest of their module group, were collected and are discussed below supplemented by my own experience of performing this piece. The responses are collected in Appendix IV.

## Retroscripting

In terms of the ease of performance, there was a consensus amongst performers that the script itself was easy to perform. It was also noted that it was felt by performers that the script made the act of improvisation easy, particularly given a bit of time for actors to 'settle into' the script. It was also noted that time to 'create our own stories beforehand' helped with preparation.

This reflects my own experience of responding to the script as a performer as I felt it was a relatively easy task to 'learn' and recall the script and relatively easy to adapt what was said to fit with the participant's response. The delivery felt extremely natural because I was recalling the events as I remembered them and didn't feel too bound to the specific phrasings of set lines. Autobiographical details were integrated during the rehearsal and preparation period and then these were supplemented by a recalled version of *Persimmon*, a piece of micro-fiction that had been produced some time before. In this way, the performance became a complicated tapestry of the real and the fictional with fictional details being added to real stories.

One performer did mention that responding to participants' answers was difficult and this, perhaps, is an indication of a conflict between the script and the scenario that was created. Again this reflected my own experience where, at times, I was felt that I was forcing the conversation back in line with the script. This might have been symptomatic of the minimal time given to preparing the script for performance as well as our limited experience of performing work in this genre. Further rehearsal would certainly have helped and I suspect a more experienced performer would have probably been able to achieve this in a much more subtle manner. In terms of the script it places a focus on these moments where the

structure imposes itself on the improvised performance and implies that this needs to be more carefully managed. One way of doing this might be to set up an open question to the participant that moves the conversation into the field of discussion that one is hoping to engage with next. In the case of *Menagerie*, the movement between the subject area of 'love' to that of 'beauty' seems much more natural than that from 'death' to 'love' or from 'beauty' to 'sadness' and this perhaps suggests that either the piece is restructured to allow for the improvisation to flow more easily between these subject areas, or, that lines of dialogue are developed that make this flow seem more natural. As an example, between 'beauty' and 'sadness' improvisation around the following idea might occur:

Char/actor 1:           The thing about beauty though is that it's so fleeting. The blossom falls so readily from the tree and before you know it it's all over. It's so sad isn't it?

Participant:           (Responds)

Char/actor 1:           But that's life. Filled with beauty and sadness. Like life and death. What's the saddest thing that's ever happened to you?

In this way the gap is bridged between the subject areas of beauty and sadness allowing the direct question at the end of this section to be more readily justified.

### **Char/actor Augmentation**

All four performers admitted to inserting their own personal experiences into the script whilst Performers 1 and 2 implied that some of the information conveyed was not factual. It seems that performers had no trouble integrating their real life experiences into the script and in this way creating the char/actor as intended. Performer 1 noted that they tried to be more neutral and indicated that they were trying to distance the character from their real experience. Intimate or personal memories were less likely to be conveyed. Performer 2 wasn't happy drawing on their own sexual experience but suggested that this might have been easier with strangers. Performer 3 seemed more open about the relationship between themselves and the participant and implied that they based their response on the level by which the participant engaged with the piece – 'If they asked back e.g. Sex, I'd say the truth'. This reflects my own experience as a performer where I felt that, if I was asking the audience to be honest about their own experiences then it was essential that I was honest about my



own. Therefore there were moments when I spoke about the death of my Grandmother, Bridget, Jean Ellis in August 2010 and the death of two friends Nicholas Parkin and Iain Cole in 1998. These were two stories in my life that I perceived to have tragic elements and which I felt I wanted to be open about. Details were elaborated to these stories to paint a more detailed image in the same way that a biographer might add detail to a scene that they were not witness to. I definitely had reservations about using the subject of my Grandmother's recent death in such a calculated way, however, it was felt that, given the honesty of some of the audience responses it was only right to respond in kind. The aim was to avoid the sense that this was simply a voyeuristic attempt to encourage participants to convey their most intimate secrets. In many ways it was the emotional sensitivity of the piece and the creation of a bond of honesty between performer and audience member that allowed this piece to transcend the theme-park horror experience.

# Analysis

## Description

The participant knocks on a door and enters a staircase where they meet Char/actor 2 who guides them up the staircase asking them whether they frighten easily. They are then shown into the performance space and told that there is an envelope waiting for them at the end of the room. They enter the room which is dimly lit. Haunting music plays as they move through the space towards the letter at the end of the room. As they open it they are interrupted by Char/actor 1 who asks them if they are afraid of dying. They are asked to sit down and then Char/actor 1 asks the participant to pick a card from a deck and told to leave the card face down on the table. Char/actor 1 pours the participant a drink of port and a toast is made. Then the initial question is reasserted. Once the participant has answered, Char/actor 1 explains that they are afraid of death. Further questions are asked about the participant's life and experiences with the performer responding in turn. Finally the nature of the card trick is revealed to be a prediction of the day the participant will die, thus saving the char/actor from a curse because they have 'passed it on'. Char/actor 1 thanks the participant for this and then asks them to leave.

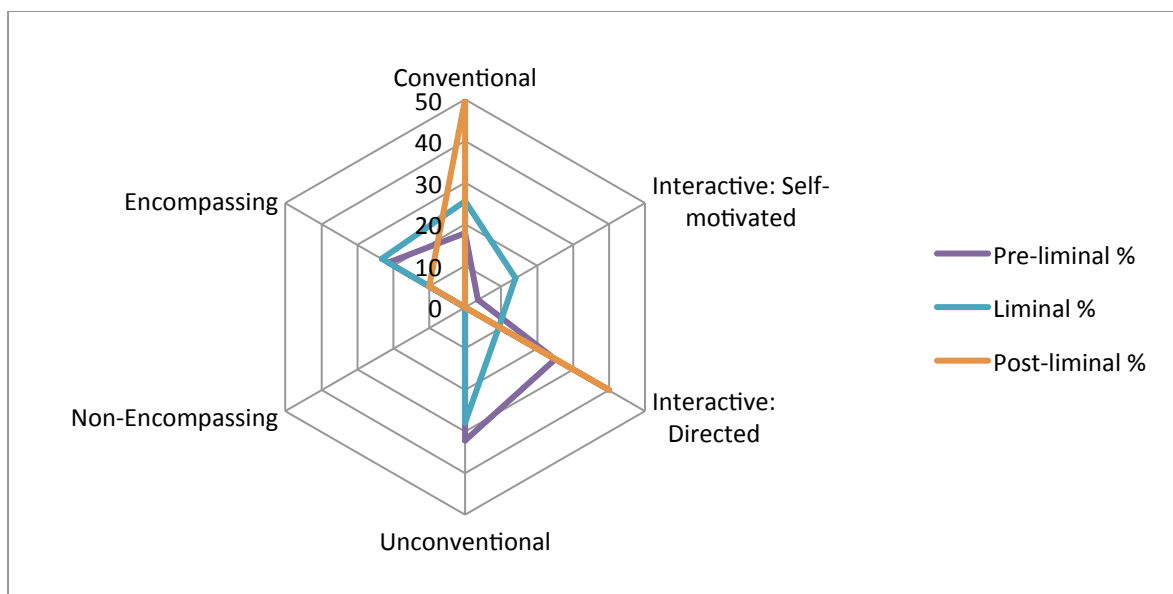


Figure 7.1 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *Menagerie*. The line between Encompassing and Interactive: Directed suggests the division between real elements (top right) and Fictional elements (bottom left).

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

The pre-liminal stage was fairly long, containing fourteen events. This stage was marked by the number of references to the nature of the performance itself but also including some of the preliminary elements of the performance. The length and nature of the pre-liminal elements of this piece suggests that participants should have been aware of the fact that it was a performance before they knocked on the door and entered the liminal stage of the performance.

## **Development**

The pre-liminal stage could be considerably disguised if the participant was not allowed to become aware that they would be engage with a constructed artifice. Invitation to come to or meet at a junkshop would have lessened participant awareness in this manner. Equally participants could be drawn in unwittingly as real customers at a real junkshop giving them no indication that they will be engaging with a performance. Owing to the nature of the death prediction, the ethical implications of disguising the performance in this manner should be considered.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Real Elements:**

Real elements within the piece included the degree of interactivity, with participants being expected to contribute a significant amount to the performance through the discussion of their own experiences. Clearly there was a physically real aspect to this performance with the participant moving through the space at their own pace and interacting with the objects within it. Also, the darkness and the sense of confinement created by the space were perceived in a genuinely real manner even though the reason that there was little light was likely to be understood as originating in relation to the performance.

### **Fictional elements:**

The space itself was a clearly heightened environment with the addition of music that was likely to have been interpreted as being linked to the performance. Whilst a significant proportion of the objects in the room could have been explained as being naturally left in the

room, the lighting and the addition of pictures of 'haunted dolls' provided an obvious indication that the space had been manipulated to some degree to serve the performance. The expositional elements relating to the 'curse' would have been likely to have been interpreted as being fictional although these formed a relatively small part of the overall conversation between Char/actor 1 and the participant. The card trick was an example of a contrived event within a fiction and, although in many ways it was physically and perceptibly real, would have been understood as a fictional construct linked to the convention of magic tricks. The death prediction was of ethical consideration however, it is suggested that by linking this to a clearly fictional story about a 'curse' within the framework of an obviously fictional performance would have provided sufficient indication that the prediction itself was not of any concern.

### **Development**

It's clear that the piece could have been developed in a number of ways to make it feel more real. Firstly, by staging the piece in a real junkshop as opposed to a constructed set that the participant explored at their own will as this would have disguised the divide between the pre-liminal and liminal stages of the performance giving the participant fewer obvious clues that they were entering a performance. The lighting and music, whilst effective in a dramatic sense could have been conveyed in a more realistic manner. In a junkshop, the music, for example, could have been on the radio at a more subtle volume. Equally, the light levels could have been justified in some way by the participant's movement into a naturally darker area of the shop such as a backroom, alcove or curtained area. Obviously-placed objects relating to the performance, such as the printed pictures of the haunted dolls, should have been removed altogether. In the junkshop setting described above, these could have been replaced by actual dolls or, perhaps, real framed photographs. The card-trick itself could have been discarded as it didn't really add anything to the piece and added to the sense of non-reality about the performance – the participant could have simply been asked to 'pick a card' without the trick element at the end being involved. Exposition relating to the curse could have also been discarded – the performer could adopt the role of the old man described in the performer's story simply stating that the date on the card was the day the participant was going to die rather than placing this act in a larger context. This would open

up some interesting subtextual elements in the piece which could be drawn out in the script relating to the performer's motivation for doing this in the first place. The impact of these changes might have some degree of ethical impact owing to the fact that the participant would have a lot less to confirm that the observed events were linked to a fictional performance.

### **Post-liminal Stage:**

The post-liminal stage was clearly perceived as being 'real' even though some of this stage occurred within the performance space itself, the manner by which the participant was engaging with the space was in a purely physically real manner. All these actions were noted as being directed because the participant was asked to leave the space by Char/actor 1.

# Conclusions

1. Can the methods of retroscripting and char/actor augmentation be used to develop a strong piece of work?

Yes, absolutely. Silent films and pieces of mime are testament to the manner by which dialogue is non-essential with respect to conveying character and theme. Making this piece has certainly foregrounded this point, highlighting the importance of set, narrative events and character action in terms of conveying the areas of thematic exploration. Punchdrunk talk about 'physical language' (Marsh, Appendix V) and the experience gained from creating *Menagerie* certainly points towards the communication that occurs through the multi-sensory experience of immersive work. In this sense, asking the performer to improvise around certain conversation points deliver doesn't really effect the narrative or overall thematic impression as long as these areas are touched upon. It suggests that a writer should consider all forms of communication when create a piece and not necessarily rely upon dialogue unless this is deemed the best way to communicate a specific idea.

2. What are the practical implications of using a retroscript?

It's clear that if a writer is asking performers to integrate their own experiences into a performance script then this needs to be facilitated, both by giving performers time to consider this and also potentially through a range of activities that allow performers to explore a particular emotional territory. Performers didn't seem to struggle with the idea that they were augmenting a number of characteristics onto their own personalities although, again, this might need to be facilitated by a director to obtain a suitable balance. It is recognised that there is the potential for the char/actor to present contrasting traits that could be used to develop a complex and engaging character. There is the potential for the elements of the *performer's script* that stipulate particular actions to feel somewhat contrived or forced and it is suggested that a writer addresses this by considering the flow of the conversation in terms of its subject matter and to produce linking sections of dialogue in places where there appears to be a sudden change in the direction of the conversation.

3. Does the analysis of the fictional elements that are contained within this piece suggest areas for development in relation to this piece?

Yes, the analysis of the fictional elements of the piece clearly highlighted a number of ways that this piece might be developed to dissimulate the performance and increase the sense that the encounter was in some way a real one. A number of specific suggestions were made that, it is proposed, would probably not have been included if different critical frameworks were applied for analysis. Therefore it is suggested that the aim to dissimulate the piece of work allows for practitioners to gain a novel perspective on their work and can provide insights into potential avenues for development. Clearly there are practical considerations here - the suggestion to develop the work by installing the piece inside an existing junk shop is far easier said than done however, such a suggestion might at least instigate the search for a suitable venue. Other suggestions, such as the removal of the card trick would provide far more applicable points of exploration which could be tested in a relatively simple manner. It is therefore suggested that this method of analysis is able to work in both a macro and micrological manner and is unbiased in the sense that it does not discern between changes that might act on the entire premise of the work and those changes which would be relatively easy to undertake. This lack of bias is perceived as giving the method of analysis value as a tool to be used by practitioners to reflect on and develop work.

A Masquerade Dance of Liars:  
Reality, Fiction and Dissimulation in Immersive Theatre.

Mark Richard Ellis

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VOLUME II of III





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## 8. *Wonderland*

### Introduction

The aim of *Wonderland* was to create a performance script that utilised the dissimulative strategies for scripting explored in *Menagerie* and integrated these with dissimulation of the other signs of performance identified from the process of analysis in chapter three to produce a piece of work that allowed the exploration of the point at which the real and fictional became indistinguishable. As described in the response to question five in the conclusion of chapter three, a fully dissimulated piece might not be read in a symbolic or universal manner at all and so it was decided that complete dissimulation would only be attempted for the pre-liminal stage and the majority of the liminal stage, before the participants enter the obviously 'fictional' *Wonderland*. From the perspective of the potential audiences experiencing this work, it was hoped to raise questions in the minds of the participants relating to the nature of reality, of belief in a consistent reality and draw attention to the manner by which this reality can be manipulated. It utilises familiar conventions from reality to create the illusion that what is occurring is real. This was problematic in some ways because it suggests engagement with the mainstay of human themes that are so familiar from soap operas. Therefore considerable thought was put into utilising recognisably real scenarios that were hopefully not staid or clichéd. Inspiration was taken from creative sources that had, to some extent, managed to mythologise everyday existence. One particular point of focus was the teen drama *Skins* created by Bryan Elsley and Jamie Brittain. In the second series, particularly Episode 6 - *Tony* (Brittain, 2008) (the

episodes are named after the teenage protagonist upon which the narrative is focused) where Brittain uses the Morpheus myth as a framework through which to explore the distorted perceptions of a post-head injury protagonist, questioning the relationship between the real and the fictional through the eyes of this character. Equally, Episode 8 of Series One – *Effy*, utilises an archetypal ‘Quest’ plot structure (Booker, 2004) integrated with mythological symbolism to create a narrative that reflects a heroic voyage into the underworld in contemporary Bristol (Brittain, 2007). This method of constructing contemporary narratives utilising mythological symbolism and archetype appeared to suggest a means of avoiding cliché whilst adding a symbolic depth to the piece. Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (2003) also reflected this journey into an alternative world and was used as a body of work to reflect ideas off in the process of interrogating the concept. Little was taken directly from the Carroll text but it provided a large number of points of inspiration from which the ideas in *Wonderland* were developed.

The script provided a means of testing various strategies of dissimulation that at key points revealed through the analysis of existing work that is articulated in Chapter Three. The manner by which perceptibly unconventional elements and events were disguised or transformed into conventional elements and events is case-specific however, for example, it was observed that the predominance of events referring directly to the artifice of the performance contained in the pre-liminal stage helped the audience member to understand that they were experiencing a fictional construct. Therefore, close attention was paid to the manner by which participants joined the performance to try to ensure that this information was removed or severely reduced.

The *director’s* and *performer’s scripts* are included below which are followed by a discussion of the dissimulative strategies applied in creating this work. This is accompanied by a description of the manner by which the piece was developed from a craft perspective. Finally, an analysis of the fictional elements conducted to identify the successes or failures of the dissimulative process and to suggest any further points for development.

# Script Introduction

*Wonderland* is a multi-stranded narrative experience set in numerous public locations which can be found in any town or city and accommodates a large-scale installed environment for its climactic point. It makes use of performances to single participants and also appropriates performance archetypes for larger audiences that regularly occur in everyday experience.

This story follows fourteen named characters from an initial meeting by chance with a participant (or participants) into a surreal collectively-dreamt world from which the participants must escape. Participants are drawn together and separated from performers and one another as the evening goes on. It is anticipated that performances will last between 4 and 8 hours depending on the thread of the play that they are engaged with.

Scripts for each character have been produced and then retrospectively into a form that aims to facilitate improvisation. These are referred to as the *director's script* and *performer's script* respectively. The designations for these scripts are not set in stone and companies should refer between them as they see fit. The only stipulation is that the piece should be based on improvisation as a means of facilitating participant interaction and therefore it is suggested that performers are not asked to learn lines in any complete manner. Because this script makes use of a number of techniques that readers may not be familiar with, time has been taken to explain these approaches and to suggest the manner by which it is thought that this script might be used. Apart from the asserted need for performers to improvise around the given framework and for production teams to honour the aims of the script, little about this script is dictatorial. This script is perceived as a jumping-off point and by no means the description of a finished performance.

## Pre-liminal Stage of Participant Engagement

One of the aims of this script is to ask the participant to question whether they are experiencing reality or a constructed fictional artifice and therefore it feels important to engage here with the manner by which this script is marketed and highlight the manner by

which participants enter the fictional world, hopefully without fully understanding that this is happening. Much thought has been put into disguising the fictional thresholds within the piece itself and, equally this should be maintained in the pre-liminal contact that audiences have with the piece.

## **Marketing and Ticketing**

For all of the performance threads except *Maid Café*, marketing would most appropriately take place by approaching individuals through an existing mailing list. In all marketing, the piece will only be referred to as a 'party' hosted by the theatre company. Participants will only be allowed to buy one ticket at a time and each ticket must be sent individually to a specific person via text or email. The aim is to avoid the scenario where one individual buys tickets for many and thus, understands more about the performance than the people for whom they are buying tickets. Once a participant has requested that they join 'the party' and payment and details have been taken, they will be given a time, date and location where they can join the experience. These will correspond to the various strands of the performance detailed in this script. A reminder should be sent out in the form of an anonymous text reminding the participant of the time and location they are due to meet including the line:

'Call me if you need me.'

This phone will only be switched on at performance times and should only be answered if is acknowledged that a particular participant has lost track of the piece (to be highlighted by the relevant performer if this occurs)

Details collected should include a link to the participant's Facebook (or other social networking) page and 'main' email addresses as a means of obtaining information regarding the appearance of the participant. At no point will the participant be asked to show their ticket. Performers should know who it is that they are waiting for.

For *Maid Café*, the event should be advertised as 'an authentic Japanese maid café experience' and will have a set start time for which participants can book tables and arrive in groups. At no point should there be any mention of the larger experience that is occurring.

With regards to the finishing time, it should be stated that the exact length is unknown but it will run on into the early hours. The entrance to the Wonderland installation should not be opened until it is recognised that those participants who will enter do not have to catch public transport home. This information might be gleaned as part of the application process so as to avoid having to discuss this on the evening.

For Rab's thread, participants will be allowed to book in groups. They will be sent an invitation to a party from Alice which suggests they turn up at around 6pm.

## **Plot Overviews**

Because of the nature of this script it feels essential to draw together the stories contained to illustrate the nature of the entire performance.

This story follows fourteen named characters from an initial meeting by chance with a participant or participants through a number of different locations and venues into a surreal collectively-dreamt world from which the participants must escape. Participants are drawn together and separated from performers and one another as the evening progresses. It is anticipated that performances will last between 4 and 8 hours depending on the thread of the play that they are participating in.

This performance favours individuals booking alone over those coming in large groups and therefore lone bookings should be allowed the opportunity for the longer one-on-one experiences. The overall plot outlines are given below however, the route to this final point (entranceway into Wonderland) will be considerably different for different participants.

## **Single Participant Performances**

*Wonderland* follows individual participants' experiences of the performance from an initial meeting with a character, through a number of venues ending in a club where a band is playing, a house party and then Wonderland, a collectively dreamt world which articulates the inner psychologies of the characters. Each of these is outlined in the appropriate script.



## **Larger Group Performances**

### **Rab's Party**

Groups of participants are invited by Alice to attend a party at Rab's flat. They enter but find Rab on his own watching home-made pornography. Rab then leaves and the participants must either make their way to the club or stay in the flat for hours until somebody returns. The group will then return en masse to the party later on and from here enter Wonderland.

### ***Maid Café***

As outlined in the appropriate script, groups of participants are invited to a dinner performance at the Moe Moe Maid Café where three psychic Japanese sisters tell them about their past, answer questions about their present and predict their deaths. At the end of this performance, the lights go out and a doorway opens into Wonderland.

## **Characters**

### **Alice**

(British / Female) Homeless sexually-liberal drifter from an upper-middleclass family. Has had sexual encounters with Rab and Pick. Wears a styled-up blue nurse's uniform with white trim.

### **Edith**

(British / Female) Sister of Lorenia. Works at Django's and is having casual sex with Forty. Doesn't know what to do with her life. Wearing an oversized American Indian design t-shirts with an eagle design on it as a dress.

### **Forty**

(British / Male) Bar owner. Sleeping with Edith and has his sights set on her sister Lorenia. An ambiguous character, obsessed with the notion of 'living', who doesn't mind hurting people if he feels that he is experiencing something new. Expensively dressed, poorly styled.

## **Kat**

(British / Male) In unrequited love with Marionetta. Nobody else really likes him. Kat is unsure of his place in the world and this uncertainty leads him to commit some fairly hideous acts. Dresses like he's from a 1970's cop show.

## **Lorenia**

(British / Female) Birdlike sister of Edith. Competes at international level in swimming. Rather conservative in her views. Dresses in 1920s style dress with feather boa.

## **Marionetta**

(Hispanic / Female) Failed Chemistry student. Nekomi's best friend. Cooks and deals her own drug H-DMT-V (Hi-Def) and other drugs to earn a living. Slightly vacant but actually a really nice person. Wears an aviator's hat with goggles resting on it.

## **Maxxy**

(British / Female / Black) Singer and front-person in the electro-pop band *Hunting Season*. Hasn't slept for two days. Wears a black corset dress.

## **Nekomi**

(Japanese / Female) Physics student. Calm, straight-thinking. Marionetta's best friend. Interested in philosophical implications of quantum physics. Wears a beanie hat with cat's ears on it.

## **Pick**

(British / Female) Detached young woman who refuses to give anybody her real name (hence the name Pick - as in 'pick a name'). Dresses like Alice Glass from Crystal Castles a hand cuff is doubled on her wrist. Pick carries a box that she says contains a black hole called M33 X-7.

## **Rab**

(English / Male). Genuine, educated, alcoholic and slightly mad – He has developed the 'rule of three' based on the song 'Baby Face' (see below). Dresses like an English gentry tramp.

### **The Rule of Three:**

The rule of three is based on the song Baby Face by Whispering Jack Smith (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TbRD0a0njQ>). Which goes:

'Baby Face – you've got the cutest little baby face.'

Focusing upon the syllabic and metric properties of the first two words:

Baby Face – we have three syllables – Bay – be face with a stress placed upon the first and last syllables –

Bay    Be    Face

/       —       /

The rule of three stipulates that any three syllables with the same stress pattern can be fit into the same line of the song.

For example:

Fish and chips – you've got the cutest little fish and chips.

Rupert Bear - you've got the cutest little Rupert Bear.

Touch and go - you've got the cutest little Touch and go.

The rule of three is both annoying and extremely addictive. It is not supposed to 'make any sense' but is simply a poetic game. When the performer playing Rab notices other people using a phrase that will fit the rule of three he will sing the line of the song inserting the relevant phrase instead of baby face.

### **Reverie**

(French /Female) Sells stolen roses from a stall in the high-street. Swears a lot. Is in love with Kat. Wears boho, market-stall chic.

### **Umeko**

(Japanese / Female) Youngest of three sisters who run the Moe Moe Maid Café. She predicts when and how people are going to die. Dresses in a plain pink kimono.

## **Katsumi**

(Japanese / Female) Middle of three sisters who run the Moe Moe Maid Café. She answers questions relating to a participant's present in a rather cryptic, abstract manner. Dresses in a relatively plain white kimono.

## **Haruka**

(Japanese / Female) Eldest of three sisters who run the Moe Moe Maid Café. She sees into participant's past revealing private information about them. Dresses in a blue, decorated kimono.

## **BM1/ BM2 / BM3**

(No specified sex or origin) Band members in Maxxy's band *Hunting Season*. Whilst they are part of the performance their scripts are not specified and therefore these three individuals should be simply asked to go along with the conversation and events that are happening. Character names are the performers' real names. They are basically themselves.

## **Locations**

Wonderland: An installed dream-world linked to Rab's flat by a tunnel that is uncovered during the performance. (See separate description of Wonderland)

Club de la Faye: Bar / Venue where Maxxy's band *Hunting Season* are playing.

Moe Moe Maid Café: A clean Military-themed Maid café set up to serve food and drinks with a small stage and karaoke system. Decorated in kawaii (cute) army regalia.

Rab's flat: A sparsely decorated basement flat with 'feature' stone/brick walls and wooden floors, bathroom, lounge, bedroom and kitchen. A hidden tunnel connects Rab's flat to Wonderland.

Marionetta's flat: A small, reasonably well kept-flat – the kitchen is filled with chemistry apparatus required to make the drug H-DMT-V.

Playground: A typical children's playground with swings, roundabout, slide etc.

### **Bars and Pubs**

The names below are given simply for clarity of reference in the script – it is anticipated that real bars that fit this description will be sourced for the actual performance.

Django's: A 1920's jazz-themed bar where Edith and Forty work.

Neutron Star: A dark futuristic bar with neon and metal furnishings. Where Pick hangs out.

Flunk: A well- furnished plush cocktail bar that Alice frequents.

The Cherry Stone: A J.D. Wetherspoons-style mass boozery. Where Marionetta breaks up with Kat.

The Oak: The real ale pub where Marionetta runs into Reverie.

The Submarine: Cool, arty but relaxed atmosphere. A warm-up pub for the in-crowd where Forty takes Lorenia after Django's closes.

### **Other locations:**

Tree: Any safe tree for the performer playing Nekomi to sit in for a reasonably long period of time. Not an easy-climber.

Bench:	Any appropriately-placed public bench.
Toilet:	Any public toilet with wooden cubicles that can be looked over / under.
Doorway:	Any doorway that provides a sheltered sitting place in from the street.
Reverie's Flower stall:	A makeshift stall set up on a street corner.
Café:	Any café / coffee shop with a sofa. Where Maxxy is found sleeping.
Streets:	Much of the action occurs whilst walking about on the streets.

## Guide to Scripting Techniques

Two scripts are provided for use. The *director's scripts* convey specific dialogue and should be used to get a sense of the story. The *performer's scripts* utilise the techniques of *retroscripting* and *augmented characterisation* (discussed below) to assist improvisation and performance verisimilitude and should be the main script used by performers. Please note: Performers should not be asked to learn and recite the director's script.

### Retroscripting

The included *performer's scripts* provide a guide to each scene and the basis for performer improvisation during rehearsal and performance. These provide a jumping-off point for improvisation and provide a structure for the piece. The dialogue itself should therefore be improvised from the ideas given in the *performer's script*. Particular attention should be given to the notion of status within the dialogue interactions (see Johnstone in Neale, 2009). In brief, Johnstone suggests that authentic dialogue can be created by characters who constantly look to place themselves in a higher or lower status position than the person they

are directly talking to (in a group this should be the individual to whose dialogue they are responding).

### **Char/actor Augmentation**

The author recognises that the majority of acted performances come from the creation of a performer / character complex. This script adapts that idea and utilises the ideas, opinions and history of the performer as the starting point for the creation of the character. Essentially the performer is being themselves with a few alterations that insinuate the character they are playing. This creation of the char/actor through the integration of the personality and motivation of the character with the performer's own personality and personal history is an essential part of the development process for this performance and will allow performers the ability to respond honestly and naturally during conversation with participants. So, for example, a character may be asked to recall a time when they played outside when they were young – this act of recollection should be inspired by the performer's personal memories and be recalled spontaneously. It is acknowledged that on repeat presentations, performers will undoubtedly draw on the same memories and, through this act, hone these into more cohesively expressed speech acts. This is acceptable however, performers are also encouraged to choose different memories when it is felt that speeches are becoming too honed.

### **Non-audience performances**

There are a number of scenes in this piece where performers are talking with no participants immediately present. It is anticipated that participants may overhear these exchanges and therefore that these should be conducted where necessary. There are also a number of scenes that are insinuated but not scripted because it is anticipated that participants have no means of overhearing the char/actor interactions.

# 'Getting to Know You'

## **Char/actor and Participant Interaction.**

Whilst there are sections in this script that give specific direction for particular points of conversation to be covered, it is anticipated that there will be various interactions between characters and participants that it would be impossible to script. This section gives basic guidance regarding how such interactions might be managed and integrated into the performance. Please note that this is only a basic guide and the choice of conversation should be left up to the discretion of the performer in the moment.

## **Basic Points of Conversation:**

Below are several questions that might be used by performers to initiate or develop conversations. This is by no means exhaustive and it is anticipated that in the process of developing the char/actor complex, performers will find context-specific questions that they themselves and their characters might ask (bearing in mind that the characters are an augmented adaptation of the performer's own personality). Performers should be encouraged to be inquisitive and ask personal and intimate questions if this seems to suit the personality of the char/actor.

- What do you do?
- Who do you know here? / Who are you with?
- Talk about another char/actor – something funny / bad that they've done.
- What music / films do you like?
- What's your favourite book?
- What are you afraid of?
- Are you / have you ever been in love?
- What do you believe in? / What's the meaning of life?
- Do you get high?
- Have you ever stolen anything?

Obviously, these aren't just questions to be rattled off one after another. Each provides a point of conversation. The char/actor must be perceived to be listening to the participant and



conducting a conversation in the same way that the performer would in everyday reality. Any response should be based upon the performer's own experience and knowledge, likes and dislikes augmented with the character's details and backstory where necessary. In many ways this script is not asking people to be good at acting but actually to be good at conversing with other people and making judgements regarding when to give information and when to stop. It is up to the char/actor to talk to and take interest in participants in a similar way to how they would in a normal social situation. Equally, if performers and participants have nothing in common or if a participant does not respond to questions then the conversation will go dead. It is not up to the char/actor to push onwards regardless. After a substantial awkward silence, the char/actors will merely go back to the other char/actors who are supposed to be his / her friends.

Char/actors should also not hold back from questioning participants' assertions regarding their life philosophies that they disagree with. For example participants asserting:

Participant: I just really think that, you know, you've got to be unemployed if you don't want to get caught up in the rat-race.

or

Participant: I don't believe in science or religion – I just believe in magic.

Might be berated by an unconvinced performer regarding their personal philosophies.

# The Wonderland Installation

## Concept

The presence of this alternative dream-world provides the crux of the story, linking the various narrative threads and providing a means of deciphering the events that have already unfolded. It also acts as a climactic point in the narrative arcs of the participants and a means of asserting the fictionality of the performance and what has come before previously. Wonderland should be a surreal, labyrinthine set drawing from the ideas and backstories of the characters as conveyed in the scripts. Each performer will be stationed in one of these rooms undertaking a performance for one participant at a time and these one-on-one performances (outlined below and described in the relevant section of the script) will be added to by the set which should contain a number of challenges and games that the audience must participate to eventually 'escape' from the piece itself. Ideas for the set are suggested below however production teams should feel free to add and elaborate on these, taking ideas from the script and site.

## Wonderland Set Description

Wonderland is accessed through a hole in Rab's flat or through the entrance in the Moe Moe Maid Café. At the climactic point of the dissimulated section of the piece, the lights in Rab's flat go out and the only light that can be seen is coming from the hole in the wall which leads to a long tunnel. The way into Wonderland is constructed so that one has to crawl through the tunnel and then through a kind of cat-flap that closes as soon as someone has come through it so that there is no way back. It is essential that the participants remain active and independent in this place - that a 'herd mentality' is not created so that people aren't following each other around. Several devices could be used to achieve this – for example –

Once a participant gets through the cat flap they enter a tiny room with three doors leading off in different directions. The door and the cat flap are connected so that the door does not become unlocked until the cat flap is closed and vice-versa. This way each participant is left to fend for themselves.

## **Suggested Rooms**

These rooms are based upon aspects of the characters' personalities as if this space exists as the physical realisation of their internal psychologies. The writer perceives each character's personality to be articulated through a number of different spaces as well as the one-on-one performances described in section three of the script. These might be collected together into areas or spread around the building. The overall feeling of Wonderland is of a labyrinth, it needs to be a big, or at least complicated, space so that participants have to explore it and will inevitably become lost. Some of these spaces are described in detail whilst others are more loosely specified. Designers should feel free to elaborate on these ideas.

Rooms / Areas are outlined below and cross referenced with the characters they are based upon so that further design aspects can be derived from an exploration of the character's personality either through the details given in this script or through rehearsal activities with the relevant performer, for example through free-writing or hot-seating the char/actor.

### **Rab**

Rab's area / rooms should be based upon the song 'Baby Face' and the concept of the rule of three. They should be shabby and might feature numerous screen projections of the home-made sex tape that he is watching at the beginning of his section. Here, Rab sits watching a large projection of the sex tape.

### **Nekomi**

Nekomi's rooms are themed around images of peril from adventure stories. Quicksand, rope-bridges, trapdoors with slides, rope swings. Think Tarzan, The Goonies, Indiana Jones, The Perils of Penelope Pitstop. At the centre, Nekomi lies tied to a railway track with the sound of a train swiftly approaching.

### **Pick**

Pick's rooms are filled with the absent-presence of sex. Cars with clothes discarded inside them; spaces under bushes with used condoms and pornography; seedy hotel rooms. There is the sense of people living inside a dark world. In the middle of this, Pick is trapped in a car that is mostly filled with water.

## **Reverie**

Reverie's rooms are based on the idea of self-loathing and romantic rejection. Restaurant tables set for one, mirrors with horrible messages written across them, roses and thorns. Here, Reverie walks up and down a corridor lined with rose bushes that gradually destroy the wedding dress that she is wearing.

## **Alice**

Alice's rooms have sexual or narcissistic themes. They could be luxurious bedrooms or S&M dungeons. Mannequins dressed like Alice. Mirrors and dressing tables. Everything is slightly tired, dated, worn. Here Alice dresses participants up as herself before apologising to her own image.

## **Kat**

Kat's rooms are based around images of butchery and vivisection. Evidence of somebody searching for something amongst the flesh of the dead. Rose petals are scattered across the floor. Blood runs down dirty sinks. Participants find Kat dissecting hearts to find the golden rings located inside.

## **Marionetta**

Marionetta's rooms are disorientating spaces with flashing lights, mirrors, one way doors. Nice images, flowers, chocolates, photos of a family on holiday are located amongst these. Marionetta dances in one of these spaces, waiting to give participants a symbol of her affection.

## **Lorenia**

Lorenia's rooms are focused around the idea of service, tables laid for dinner with service bells, old tills. Plush but dark spaces. There are images of dead birds everywhere, taxidermy, bits of skeletons, chicken carcasses. Lorenia is waiting her to serve participants with a challenge.

## **Edith**

Edith's rooms are all based around the theme of burden. Piles of rocks. Secrets written on the walls of rooms. Private letters from doctors revealing incurable illnesses; letters to adopted children from their real mothers; answerphone messages from rejected lovers who have conducted affairs. Here, Edith lays undressed on a plinth waiting to have people convey their deepest secrets to her.

# Director's Scripts

## Alice

Participant 4 is asked to go and sit in a public toilet somewhere. They are made to wait for about 30 minutes. Eventually Alice knocks on the cubicle wall.

Alice: Excuse me? Hello? Have you got any roll in there? There's no fucking roll.

Participant 4 (Responds)

Alice uses the toilet roll and then stands on the toilet seat and peers over the top of the cubicle looking down at Participant 4

Alice: Thanks. (Beat). You're not cottaging are you? You're not a cottager?

Participant 4 (Responds)

Alice: Oh...ok.

She gets down from the toilet seat, leaves the cubicle and then leaves the toilets as quickly as possible. She goes to sit somewhere in view of the toilets but quite far away – a wall or something where she can smoke a cigarette. Hopefully when Participant 4 leaves the toilets they'll come and speak to Alice. If Participant 4 follows Alice out of the toilets:

Alice: Look, I'm not interested.

Participant 4 (Responds)

Alice: Well why are you following me?

Participant 4 (Responds)

Alice: Look, I'm not into that, yeah? (She gets out her phone). What's your name?

Participant 4 (Responds)

Alice: Address?

Participant 4 (Responds)

Alice dials into the phone.

Alice: Police please. (Waits) Look there's this creepy guy / woman following me. Yeah, I'm at (name of location) – you know? The public toilets? Yeah? They just started following me.

Police: (Insinuated) Can you describe them to me?

Alice: I can do better than that. They're name's (XXXX) and they live at (XXXX)

Police: (Insinuated) So you know this person?

Alice: I just asked.

Police: (Insinuated) And they told you?

Alice: Yup. Stupid huh?

Police: (Insinuated) Are they still there?

Alice: Yup / No, they've run off.

Police: (Insinuated) Look, are you sure this is urgent?

Alice: I'm not lying.

Police: (Insinuated) No of course not ma'am but...

Alice: What?

Police: (Insinuated) ....

Alice: What? You didn't... (Hangs up – speaking to phone) Just leave me get raped why don't you?

If she can see Participant 4 then she walks over to them.

Alice: Look, I've called the police. So don't try anything alright?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Do you have a cigarette?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Well you owe me something / Thanks (as if nothing has happened).

She lights the cigarette or gets one of her own out and lights it.

Alice: So, (Participant 4's name). Why're you hanging around in a toilet then? If you're not cruising for some loving, I mean.

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: (To herself).Whatever.

She sits there smoking and contemplating the situation, looking Participant 4 up and down.

Alice: You're not really a pervert then?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Or a prostitute, or anything?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: So this has been a bit of a... misunderstanding?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Hmm... Well the police are coming to arrest you so you'd better... er... skidaddle. Before they turn up yeah?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Look...I know this great little hidey hole. They serve nice cocktails. Tell you what. To say sorry, cause, you know, I'm sorry as well, you know? I'll let you buy me a drink, yeah? For scaring me to death. And no that isn't a come on.

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: You know, Flunk? Meet you there in 20 minutes. Alright?

If Participant 4 asks her what she's doing now she Responds

Alice: I'm going to hang around here and wait for them to show up. Sort things out. Don't worry, I'll tell them you were someone else...

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: See you in a bit.

Participant 4 starts to leave.

Alice: (Calling after them) Get me a G&T.

Alice stands around for about 10 minutes and then starts walking towards the bar. In the bar, Alice locates Participant 4 who may or may not have a G&T waiting for her.

Alice: I just realised that you might have spiked me. *Have* you spiked me?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: You drink some first.

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Right. Well it's yours now. Back in a tick.

Alice goes to the bar to buy a drink. She comes back with a rum and coke.

Alice: Not that I really thought you were a rapist or anything. I just didn't fancy gin.



Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: I'm Alice by the way. (Shakes hand). So what do you do?  
Apart from the cottaging?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Participant 4 and Alice enter into a 'getting to know you' dialogue. When they finish their drinks Alice offers to buy Participant 4 a drink at another bar. They walk over to Neutron Star where Pick and Participant 3 are sitting. They enter the bar and Alice buys them both drinks. Alice notices Pick.

Alice: (To Participant 4). See that girl over there? Yeah? The kind of creepy one? I kind of know her. I bet she doesn't speak to me though.

They set off walking to a table. Alice pretends to suddenly notice Pick.

Alice: (To Pick) Hey, It's you. I thought you... disappeared.

Pick: (Shy). Yeah.

Alice: Into your... er... but I'm not supposed to talk about that am I?  
(Beat) You alright then?

Pick: Sure. Fine. Yeah.

Alice: This is (Introduces Participant 4). Met them in a public toilet.  
Not cottaging – obviously. Or prostitution. I'd be like a cottager's best score. (To Participant 4). You're definitely not a cottager are you?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Yeah...so we'll join you yeah? You know Rab's having another party tonight?

Pick: No.

Alice: Maybe we can... you know?(winks). As long as you promise not to fall in love with me again.

Pick looks at the table.

Alice: Or me you. That's dangerous territory. Deadly. Last V-day I got about ten cards. I just threw them out. It's so creepy.

Pick: Love... it's like... you've gotta... hire a priest... exorcise it.

Alice: I mean, people just think that they have the right to possess you. They send you a sad little card with a heart on it and then that's it.

Pick: Send love into the Phantom Zone.

Alice: Last time Rab had a party someone put on 'Like a Virgin' or something and suddenly everyone's getting naked.

Pick: (Smiling) They're not all like that. 'Like a Virgin' I mean...

Alice: Well, if you like getting wasted... This is already turning out to be a weird night.

Pick: It should be good.

Alice: (To Participants) So you coming? What time is it?

Pick shrugs.

Alice: We'll go in a bit yeah? I want another drink.

Alice gets up and goes to the bar. Pick's left with Participants. She doesn't say anything unless they say something to her. Alice comes back with four shots.

Alice: Nice one. Right here's to not getting caught in a toilet with no roll. (Laughs). No... here's to... er.

Pick: The end of love.

Alice: Oooh... dark. No... here's to getting fucked and getting laid. Cheers.

They drink.

Alice: Right, let's get going. We need to go to the off-license. I need some cigarettes.

They get their coats and leave. As they walk down the street, Pick and Alice drop back a bit to have a semi-private conversation.

Alice: So how's it going?

Pick: Yeah... alright. You know? (smiles)

Alice: Yeah. Cause I thought...

Pick: Ha-ha. No. I'm not depressed - just devoid. Anyway... (Picks looks at Alice) You're not that amazing.

Alice: (Smiles) Yeah I am.

Pick: Maybe.

They walk on in silence for a while.

Pick: So what you been up to?

Alice: Not much. Most of the time I'm just hanging out.

Pick: No fixed abode?

Alice: Nah... I'm not doing this because I have to. Like, anywhere I lay my hat, yeah?

Pick: Sure. How's JJ?

Alice: Yeah he's. He's alright I think. Living with his dad – obviously. I... (Pause as she thinks about her son) So yeah... anyway, so I'm like living it up. The easy life. Swimming every day. There's one up on (Address) that's pretty cool. Always seems to be empty so I go there most days. Anyway, it's not like I'm doing this because I have to. Oh and that place up on (address) with the pine lodges you know? Where Rev used to work? They've all got Jacuzzis. I go up there and just chill out all day. I am clean... smell (she lifts her arm).

Pick: I'm alright thanks.

Alice: Actually, I probably smell of Lynx. Hazard of crashing at boy's houses.

Pick: Steal something nice – *Dove, Sure*. Whatever. I'll do it.

Alice: It's alright. Look, about...

Pick looks at her.

Alice: You're cool yeah?

Pick: (Laughs). I'm fine.

Alice: Cool. I don't... I'm gonna start talking in clichés now.

Pick: It's fine.

Alice: What? Talking in clichés or...

Pick: Yeah.

They walk on for a while in silence.

Alice: (Remembering). Anyway, what's this I hear about you... Some pervert in the park?

Pick: Oh... shit... yeah. It was pretty bad. I... well you know? He got it. Close thing though.

Alice: Better than pepper spray.

Pick: Much. That was a weird night actually. I ended up at this woman's house. She started telling me how depressed she was.

Alice: Like flies to... Not that I mean you're...

Pick: Maybe I am.

Alice: (Looks at her). Nah. I don't think so. You smell too nice.

Pick: Not of Lynx then?

Alice: What's wrong with Lynx?

Pick: Well, if you're looking to pull in the ladies...

Alice: Look just because we had a bit of a thing doesn't mean I'm suddenly a fucking lesbian. Is that what you are?

Pick: No.

Alice: Exactly. I'm a people person.

Pick: That's how my mum describes herself.

Alice: Well... look, I wouldn't even call myself bi. You know what I mean?

Pick: I should be flattered.

Alice: Fucking hell you should be flattered. I'm premium cut sirloin. You're like... goat-meat or something.

Pick looks at her.

Alice: Don't call me a lesbian ok?

Pick: Dyke.

Alice: Hmm... I'll let you off that one.

Pick: Like you could...

Alice: Damn right I could. You wouldn't see me being dragged into the bushes by some weird guy.

Pick: Yeah.

Alice: I'd have him flat out on his back. I mean, how did that even happen?

Pick: I took him there.

Alice frowns. Pick shrugs. They walk on in silence.

Pick: He offered to pay me to have sex with him.

Alice: Er...well that's ok then.

More silence. They pass an off-license. Pick stops.

Alice: Their offers are rubbish. There's a (name of off - license) in a bit.

Pick: Regular?

Alice: Rab's been putting me up once in a while.

Pick nods and goes quiet.

Alice: You know I can fuck anybody I want to?

Pick: I didn't...

Alice: Good... I'm not anybody's. Not Rab's and not yours. You can all just deal with it.

Pick: Heaven forbid.

They continue walking in silence. Eventually they get to the other off-license. They go in and buy some drinks. When they've bought stuff they go and stand outside.

Alice: Don't you think it's better just to have a bloody brilliant night with somebody and then, you know, leave it at that? I mean, why let reality spoil a good night? That feeling in the morning when the happiness in your stomach makes your hangover go away? Have you ever got that? Have you ever just left it there? You know... not explored the possibilities like... like everyone says you're supposed to? (She looks at Pick for an answer) I guess not.

Pick: But you're still haunting Rab.

Alice: Yeah... but...

Pick: (Shrugs) Look... whatever, you know?

They walk to Rab's house and go in (Alice has got a key). It's fairly early and there's nobody there. Alice puts some music on and they sit and chat with the participants. After a while Alice goes to the bathroom and starts to run the bath. Then she comes back into the room.

Alice: I'll be back in a bit.

Pick: Antisocial.

Alice: I need a soak. Wash away the shame.

She goes and gets in the bath. After a while there is a knock at the door and people start to trickle in. Pick goes to the bathroom and knocks on the door.

Pick: Al...There's people here.

Alice: Just come in.

Pick: What?

Alice: Jimmy the lock with a coin or something. You know?

Pick gets a coin out of her pocket and opens the door. She goes in and locks the door behind her.

(The section in the bathroom is unscripted to give the actors a break however the conversation would be a continuation of the one on the way to Rab's – Alice is trying to justify herself to Pick but is gradually doubting herself more and more – hence the justification) Eventually Pick comes out and gets Participant 4.

Participant 4 comes in. Alice is still in the bath.

Alice: You got a drink?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Have you got a spare?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Don't worry. (Beat) Can I have a sip of yours?

Participant 4 passes her a drink.

Alice: Actually... never mind. Don't worry about it.

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: (Big sigh) Man, there's nothing like a bath when you're coming up hey?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Take it from me. (Pause). So you alright then? I'm sorry I called the police on you. Kinda funny though yeah? You forgive me?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice sits there soaking herself for a while.

Alice: (Almost to herself) Do you think she's beautiful? (Meaning Pick)

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: I don't know. I've kinda got her... under my skin. You know?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Don't tell her that though. Have you got someone?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: You like it that way?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Cool. You don't feel like / don't wanna feel like... you know? Tied down? I mean, what about all the other people you fancy? Yeah?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: I just can't get my head around it. People... (sighs) they just wanna cling to somebody. Do you know what I mean? Like they can't stand up on their own?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: And sometimes it feels good to give up everything. All that choice. I guess I'm a Pick N' Mix girl. I want the cola bottles and the... er...

Participant 4: (Suggests another kind of sweet)

Alice: Yeah...

At some point Pick starts hammering on the door.

Alice: Can you get that?

Participant 4 answers the door. Pick runs in, drops her bag and jumps in the bath with Alice and starts kissing her. Alice screams with laughter.

Alice: (Laughing). You crazy bitch. (To Participant 4) Give us some privacy will you?

Participant 4 leaves.

After a while Rab starts banging on the door because he needs the toilet. Eventually Alice and Pick come out. Rab goes in and uses the toilet.

Rab: Fucking hell the place is soaking. Fucking...

He comes out and finds Alice and Pick who are having a drink.

Rab: (To Alice) You've fucking soaked the bathroom.

Pick: Fuck off Rab.

Rab: What?

Pick: Fuck off.

Rab grabs her and drags her out of the house.

Rab: You fuck off. You fucking fuck off. Stupid dick.

Alice watches them quietly. When Rab kicks Pick out she shrugs and goes to find something to drink. Rab comes in and finds Alice.

Rab: And you can fuck off as.../

Alice: /Oh shut up you.

This stops Rab in his tracks. Alice hands him a drink.

Alice: Have a drink. You've got the cutest little have a drink.

Rab takes it off her and opens the can.

Alice: It's just fun you know? I'm not yours.

Rab: Yeah.

Alice: We can still enjoy it. Unless you're gonna go fucking crazy on me.

Rab: Crazier.

Alice: I'll break your heart Rab.

Rab: I know.

Alice smiles at him.

Alice: Good party.

Rab: How would you know?

Alice: Well *I'm* enjoying myself.

Rab: Well that's all that matters then.

Alice experiences a wave of euphoria from the ecstasy and shudders.

Alice: (Quietly) Kiss me.

Rab: Wha...

She grabs him and kisses him. Giggling they fall onto an empty chair and keep making out. At some point Pick comes back in and sits down on the floor in front of them. She gets the box containing M33 X-7 out of her bag and places it on the floor in front of her. Alice notices and stops kissing Rab. She pushes him off.



Rab: Wha...? (He notices what's going on) For fuck's sake.

He walks off.

Pick: (Distant) Shall I do it?

Alice: Is that what you want?

Pick: Maybe.

Alice: Well then, fucking do it. Do what you want.

Pick looks at Alice and then begins to open the box. The lights in the flat go out. People scream etc. When, gradually, people begin to light phones etc. Alice and Pick have gone.

## Nekomi

Participant 6 is asked to wait underneath a tree in a park. Nekomi is actually stuck up the tree and calls for help to get down. Participant 6's first task, therefore, is to find a way of helping Nekomi down from the tree. She is wearing a rucksack inside which are a picnic blanket and a number of plastic cups.

Nekomi: Thank you. Like a stray cat... (laughs) I shouldn't... (Smiles)  
Look, can I get you a drink? A saucer of milk maybe? I would like to... erm repay the favour.

Participant 6: (Responds)

If response is positive then Participant 6 accompanies Nekomi to an off-licence where she buys a 4 pack of lager. If response is negative then:

Nekomi: Ok... Thanks (Smiles)

Nekomi returns ten minutes later with a 4 pack of lager.

Nekomi: We can share these, yeah?

Nekomi puts her bag next on the bench and produces two plastic cups into which she shares a single beer. All further drinks are consumed in this manner.

Nekomi: Thanks for saving me - like my superhero. Or a fireman.  
Anyway, Kanpai!

They chink cups.

Nekomi: I know this cool place where we can go to drink. You want me to show you?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: It's not far.

They walk to the nearest children's park. When they get there she produces a picnic blanket from her rucksack. They sit on the blanket and drink from their plastic cups.

Nekomi: I used to come here when I was little. Then when we hung out as stray teenagers. Causing trouble, yeah? (Laughs). I like it here. Have you been before?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: For me it's a special place. Good memories. You know? Time is such a strange thing.

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: Are you from (name of city)

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: You used to play there? On the streets? Like a tom-cat?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: I remember when we used to visit my cousin and there was a big show there in the park. Lots of big tents. It was raining and we climbed the tents and... weeeee... down the er... roofs? That was really... fun. (Laughs)

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: You ever slide down a tent roof in the rain?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi and Participant 6 continue to talk about childhood memories. After they have finished their drinks Nekomi looks at her watch and then stands up to leave.

Nekomi: I'm late. I've gotta go. Sorry.

Nekomi turns to leave then stops.

Nekomi: Can I take your number?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: Maybe I call you sometime, yeah? Talk about being children... or cats?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Nekomi: Bye! Thank you for being my superhero. Sayonara!

Nekomi sets off walking towards the bar / gig when she gets there she buys a drink and then sits down somewhere in the middle of the room (if she's on her own) or, with Rab if he is already there. Underlined sections are to be sung to the tune of *Baby Face* (see script introduction).

Participant 6 will arrive at some point during the course of this scene. Nekomi introduces Participant 6 to the other characters. She will explain how she met them. Rab and Kat ask her how she got up the tree in the first place but she won't tell. Rab and Kat think it's weird she's just picked up a stranger. Nekomi says that Participant 6 saved her life.

Nekomi: Hey.

Rab: You alright?

Nekomi: Course. What you doing?

Rab shrugs.

Nekomi: Ok.

Rab: All these people turned up at my house. After a while I couldn't be fucked with them.

Nekomi: They still there?

Rab: There's nothing to steal.

Nekomi shrugs. They sit there for a bit listening to the music.

Nekomi: Have you seen/

Rab: /Have you seen? You've got the cutest little have you seen?

Nekomi: ...Marionetta?

Rab: Have I told you about/

Nekomi: /Yes.

Rab: I actually think I'm going mad. It's fucking everywhere.

Nekomi: Everywhere. The rule of three is here and everywhere.

Rab: Very good... Very good. You've got the...ahhh.

Nekomi: It's never going to go away. Go away...

Rab: I mean how do you get rid of it? Rid of...

Nekomi: It's like a stray cat – You're feeding it. You've invited it in.

Rab nods and takes a drink.

Nekomi: You've got caught up in a synchronicity loop. It's like getting your tail caught up in the workings of the universe. Universe. You've got the cutest little. Universe.

Rab: Fuck.

Nekomi: Or else you've just noticed a pattern of syllables that's really common!

Rab takes a drink.

Nekomi: You know it's the second don't you?

Rab: That's not the fucking point. It's driving me insane.

Nekomi: Then try to stop. Try to...

Rab: It's not just that. There's the rules of two, four... it doesn't stop.

Nekomi: 25?

Rab: Twenty-five. You've got the cutest little Twenty-five.

Nekomi laughs. They both drink.

Nekomi: So, the party's on then?

Rab: Well there's ten people sat in my fucking house. I mean, hopefully, they might have gone by the time I get back.

Nekomi: You won't know until you get back. Until that point they are both there and not there. Schrödinger's party. You just need a gun, poison gas or something.

Kat: Don't tempt me.

Kat walks through the door and goes over to the bar.

Rab: Speaking of murder... Well, I'm hoping that fuckhead's not coming.

Nekomi starts making a cross with her index fingers and trying to stop Rab from continuing. Kat begins to walk over to them.

Rab (not noticing): I mean he's just such a... such a fuckhead.

Kat: Who's a fuckhead.

Rab: (Not missing a beat). You are you fucking cunt.

Nekomi goes silent. Kat laughs.

Kat: Sure thing. You got any pills?

Nekomi: Marionetta's around somewhere.

Kat: I'm not after Hi-Def

Nekomi: Yeah, but she gets...

Kat: Well I need something. Long night ahead.

Nekomi: What're you doing tonight Kat?

Kat: Staying here for a few then off to this dick's party (gestures to Rab)

Rab: DMT. You've got the cutest little DMT.

Kat: You're not still on with that bullshit. Ladbrokes have got 10 to 1 on you losing your marbles in the next 12 months.

Rab: 10 to 1. You've got the cutest little...

Kat: You're such a dick Rab. You know you're fucking losing it. You fucking know.

Nekomi: There's ten strangers at Rab's house. He just left them there.

Kat: SUCH A DICK! What... you just left them there? Well, there's nothing to nick I suppose.

Rab: That's what I said.

Nekomi: I said it's like Schrödinger's cat, you know? They may or may not be there when we get back. The cat is neither dead nor alive...

Kat: Well I'm definitely alive.

Rab: Your spluttering heart/

Nekomi: /It's interesting you know? Like... nothing is certain. It makes me feel...

Rab: Deranged?

Nekomi: Happy.

Kat rolls his eyes.

Kat: You guys should join a club for fucking weirdos. A freak show.

Nekomi: It must be easy without a soul.

Kat: Never a chore. Anyway, it's all fucking crap. You've just gotta go with it. You try and explain it and you fucking lose it.

Rab: So what you're saying is that there's no use in trying to explain anything or thinking about things like that because...

Kat: Because it's all fucking shit.

Rab: Brilliant! I'll just... fucking shit, you've got the cutest little...

Kat: I'll take that as a sign that I'm right shall I?

Rab: Somewhere deep down in er... that...

Kat: Kat's got your tongue, have I?

Rab: I know that there is no such thing as right or wrong and that makes me weak to someone like you – who is basically an idiot.

Kat: So, not only am **I right** but I'm right because you think too much and I just fucking flow it.

Rab: Well, you win the petty argument, in a sense - but only because it's based on a premise that's completely incorrect.

Kat: No premise about my premises. You're just wrong. Face it. Fucking-wroooooong. (totally changing tack). So the party.

Rab: (quietly) I'm not wrong.

Kat: You guys wanna go in on...

Rab: (Slams his hand on the table) I'M NOT FUCKING WRONG!

Silence.

Kat: ...some pills or something.

Nekomi: Marionetta has some.

Kat: I heard she's dry. Like a desert. A dry fucked up whore. (mimicking Marionetta) 'Once upon a time there was a girl whose vagina was so fucking dry that any man she fucked turned to dust.'

Rab and Nekomi sit there.

Kat: Fuck you then. I'm off to get a drink. Want one?

Long pause.

Kat: No? Rab? You want one?

Rab: Does it come with some kind of pact?

Kat: Of course.

Rab: Being?

Kat: I don't know... er... You let me fuck your mother.

Rab: If your dick's six foot long and can pierce solid mahogany.

Kat: As if, we both know that she went for a cardboard box job.

Rab: Actually, she's on my mantle-piece. Mantle-piece

Kat: Ashes? She didn't have it off with our Marionetta did she?

Rab shrugs.

Kat: What'll it be?

Rab: Beer... Stella... You cunt.

Kat: (To Nekomi) And you my little Cheshire cat?

Nekomi: You're only calling her dry because she turned you down.

Kat: I'll call that two shall I?

Nekomi: I'll get my own.

Kat: Two then. Right...In a bit.

Kat disappears off to the bar.

Nekomi: You know you're both the exactly the same don't you? Why'd you let him buy you a drink?

Rab: Because, he's a cunt and I wanted a drink. Don't expect me to have principles. Not where beer's concerned.

Nekomi: He is your reflection Rab – everything you hate about him. That's what you're running from.

They sit in silence. Nekomi gets out her phone and calls Participant 6.

Nekomi: Hey Superman / Superwoman It's Nekomi. You know - the girl in the tree?... Hi. Yeah. I was wondering if you fancied coming down to Club de la Faye. Yeah. I'm with a few people. There's a party tonight.

Nekomi hangs up.

Rab: The tree girl? Who was that?

Nekomi: Someone I just met.

Rab: What in a tree? You're a monkey now are you?

Nekomi: I'm a Cheshire cat aren't I?

Rab: Point taken. (Frowns) So what's the tree thing about?

Nekomi shrugs.

Rab: It's like I hear you talking but the words make no sense.

Nekomi: That's because your brain is swimming in booze.

Rab: Fair enough.

Kat returns with drinks for Nekomi and Rab.

Nekomi: I said I didn't want one.



Kat: To ease my troubled conscience?

They look at each other for a moment. Nekomi sighs.

Kat: Cool. Good.

Nekomi: It's probably laced.

Rab: Actually. You're fucking right. (to Kat) Empty your pockets.

Kat: You what?

Rab: Empty your pockets now.

Kat looks at them but gives in. He empties everything out of his pockets onto the table.

Rab: Inside pocket.

He empties the inside pocket out.

Nekomi: Jeans. (beat) Back pockets as well.

Kat stands up and shows them that he's not got anything in his pockets.

Rab: Jacket.

Kat: What?

Nekomi: Let him check your jacket.

Kat: Jesus.

Kat gives Rab his jacket. Rab searches through it but finds nothing .

Rab: Clear.

Nekomi takes a drink.

Kat: You're fucking thorough – I'll give you that.

Rab: The last think I need is waking up tomorrow with an arse-full of your semen.

Nekomi spits her drink out in laughter all over Kat.

Kat: (Jumping up) For fuck's sake.

Rab: It serves you right for being such a cunt. Thanks for the drinks - now fuck off.

Kat: Fuck both of you.

Kat walks over to the bar. Marionetta walks in and goes to the bar.

Nekomi: (To Rab) What is it about those two?

Rab: Maybe she a lesbian - you know? Attracted to cunts.

Nekomi: Hmm...

Rab: Lesbian. You've got the cutest little lesbian. Hey, that one actually works.

Nekomi: Not bad.

Rab: Dripping cunt.

Nekomi: That's disgusting.

Rab: What do you want me to say? Lovely gash.

Nekomi: Say something that isn't repulsive. And stop swearing so much. It's...

Rab: Repugnant? I try my hardest.

Nekomi: It's hard work, Rab. For everyone.

Marionetta comes to sit down with Nekomi and Rab leaving her wallet on the bar. Kat grabs it and puts it in his pocket. Nekomi jumps up and hugs Marionetta.

Nekomi: Hey!

Marionetta: How're you doing?

Rab: What did *he* want?

Marionetta: He's just looking to score. I'm gonna have to go home and get some. Anyone else?

Rab / Nekomi: (separately but around the same time). Of course / Er...ok

Nekomi: I'll come with you if you want.

Marionetta: Sure. Ok, in a bit.

Nekomi: Ok. So how's it going?

Marionetta: I'm tired... Busy. You know?

Nekomi: (To herself) Yeah.... Hey, we've got to go see that (recent horror) movie. You got time this week?

Marionetta shrugs: Whenever. I'm busy but you know - flexible busy.

Nekomi: A self-made woman.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: I'll give you a bell. Tuesday maybe?

Marionetta: We could Orange Wednesday. I've got an old SIM.

Nekomi: Ok.

Rab: It's fucking shit.

They look at him.

Rab: ...the film - Just get it online.

Nekomi: You've just got high standards.

Rab: It's always held me back.

Marionetta: Saw Revs earlier.

Nekomi: Oh.

Marionetta: Yeah. Had a drink. This guy /girl as well. Got stood up for something.

Nekomi: Oh.

Marionetta: They'll probably be down later.

Nekomi: Like a date?

Marionetta: I just got talking to him / her. You know?

Nekomi: Ok. (If Participant 6 is there then she introduces them)

Marionetta: Hey.

Rab: Ladies of the night. Succubae.

Nekomi: Succubae. You've got the cutest little. Succubae.

Rab: Don't start me off again.

Nekomi: You deserve it for calling us whores.

Rab: I said ladies of the night.

Marionetta: Snow White was a whore. She got kiss-raped by the Prince.

Rab: (Looks at her funny). Ohhhhkaaaay.

Marionetta: The apple you know?

Rab: I got it.

Marionetta: Oh.

Rab: It's just... tangential.

Marionetta: Well, you know... that's what I do, apparently. Isn't it? Always moving away – always on the edge.

Rab: Anyway... where were?... That's the problem you see? You completely derail me. Succubae

Nekomi: You were calling us whores.

Rab: Ladies....yes. For picking up random people off the street.

Nekomi: It's friendly.

Rab: It's weird.

Marionetta: I heard about this woman who never spoke to anyone and died alone.

Rab: But there's a line, you see?

Marionetta: A tangent.

Rab: Maybe... not.

Marionetta: Somewhere.

Rab: Hmph.

The conversation goes dead for a while. People finish their drinks.

Marionetta: What time are people off to yours?

Rab shrugs.

Nekomi: There's people there already. Rab left ten absolute strangers in his house.

Marionetta frowns.

Nekomi: You want to go? To yours? I'll tell you about it.

Marionetta: Get it done.

Nekomi starts putting her coat on. Marionetta searches her pockets for her wallet and keys then starts looking in her bag.

Nekomi: What's up?

Marionetta looks at the bar.

Marionetta: I had them at the bar.

Nekomi: Your keys?

Marionetta:                                Yeah. Hang on.

Nekomi watches her go to the bar and asks the bar man if he's seen her wallet. He says no. Kat is standing talking to a participant or propping up the bar on his own. She goes over and asks him. He shows concern but shakes his head. Marionetta comes to sit back down. Kat walks off to speak to Reverie.

Nekomi:                                        No luck?

Marionetta:                                  Nope.

Nekomi:                                        They'll turn up.

Marionetta:                                  Yeah but I've promised you guys and Kat.

Rab:    Let's kick the fucking door down.

Nekomi:                                        And what about when the police turn up?

Rab:    We'll fucking kick them as well.

Nekomi:                                        You just want people to hate you. That's right isn't it?

Rab:    Maybe.

Kat comes over.

Kat:    Hey. No luck I'm afraid.

Marionetta:                                  Fuck.

Kat:    I'm going to try to get some. I'd get some for you but you spat on me and called me a cunt.

Rab:    Er... Look if you are, then get us some yeah?

Kat doesn't reply.

Rab:    *She* spat on you. Look - I'd call my best friend a cunt.

Kat:    Is that *begging*? I think that's begging.

Rab:    Fuck you. Get them or don't. I'm not playing.

Kat:    Look, I'll see, alright? See what happens.

Kat steps away and Marionetta touches his arm.

Marionetta:                                  (Quietly to Kat). I need somewhere to stay.

Kat:    At mine?

Rab:    Just stay at the party.

Nekomi:                                        You can stay at my house.

Kat: Not mine. Three's a crowd.

Rab: Like you're gonna pick up some fucking bird, or something.

Kat looks at him.

Kat: Fuck you all.

Rab: It's not like you're gonna be able to do anything. You'll have a knob like a cheese string.

Kat: Like yours you mean?

Rab: Just like mine. Real appealable.

They laugh.

Nekomi: You see! You love each other really.

Rab: So you gonna get them or not?

Kat: Get me a drink.

Rab: Fucking hell... alright. You can help me though.

Rab stands up and they go over to the bar.

Nekomi: (To Marionetta). So... you're in love with him, yeah?

Marionetta: Rab?

Nekomi: Kat.

Marionetta shakes her head.

Marionetta: We've got things in common. But not that. The only person I ever loved got washed away in a flood.

Nekomi: (To Participant 6) – Have *you* ever been in love?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Kat and Rab come and sit down. Somebody on stage introduces *Hunting Season* who come on and begin to play. Snippets of conversation are delivered over the band. People go and buy drinks. People go outside for cigarettes. Kat disappears at some point to Marionetta's house with Participant 8 and Reverie with the aim of breaking in and stealing her drugs.

Band Finishes.

Nekomi: To yours then? Shall we see if the cat is still alive?

Rab: I need some booze.

Nekomi: Me too.

Marionetta:                   Where's Kat?

They look around.

Nekomi:                       M – Look, I'm sure he'll catch us up.

Rab:                             Fucking better.

They finish their drinks. People go to the toilet or get into conversations. Rab goes outside to smoke then sets off with a few people. Eventually everybody collects outside. Marionetta follows Nekomi who knows where Rab's flat is. They walk along in small groups chatting. Marionetta and Nekomi walk together.

Nekomi:                       So you ok?

Marionetta:                   I'm annoyed about my wallet. (Looks at Nekomi) Fuck it.

Nekomi:                       You can stay at mine. I'm sure it will turn up.

Marionetta:                   (Smiles) Thanks.

Nekomi:                       But you'd rather stay at Kat's?

Marionetta:                   Um... we just had this thing.

Nekomi:                       And you love him?

Marionetta:                   (Laughs) No, definitely not. (Beat) I think he loves me though.

Nekomi:                       Really?

Marionetta:                   Yup.

Nekomi:                       And you had a thing?

Marionetta:                   He keeps texting me. That's all.

Nekomi:                       But doesn't Reverie...?

Marionetta shrugs.

Nekomi:                       I thought him and Reverie were like... (Sighs) It's so confusing.

Marionetta:                   Well, I'm not stopping him. He just... I don't know. It's my fault.

Nekomi laughs.

Marionetta:                   What?

Nekomi:                       It's just... well...

Marionetta:                   Yes?

Nekomi: Well... he makes out he's such a man.

Marionetta: He is...

Nekomi: No, no, no, no, no, no.... I didn't mean it like that. He just makes out he's like... king of the castle. That everything revolves around him. That he can get what he wants... You know what I mean?

Marionetta: Maybe.

Nekomi: It's only because he's scary. And now...

Marionetta: He's...

Nekomi: Yeah: Now he's less scary. He's still scary though. Like a tiger is still a monster, you know?

Marionetta laughs.

Nekomi: Maybe that's why he hates you.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: He was like...

Marionetta: I don't think he hates me.

Nekomi: But... well he pretends to hate you.

Marionetta: Maybe.

Nekomi: And Rev as well.

Marionetta: It's not my fault. Reverie was nice to me earlier.

Nekomi: She was selling your stuff at the gig.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: I mean I think so. I only noticed at the end. What was I supposed to do?

Marionetta goes quiet and looks at the ground.

Nekomi: We can get it back.

Marionetta: That's my money for the week, you know?

Nekomi: We can get it back.

Marionetta: And the cinema... My get out of jail free card.

Nekomi: (Touches her arm) It'll be ok.



Marionetta: (Looks at Nekomi and half-smiles) Yeah?

Nekomi: Yeah.

Marionetta: This is turning into a pretty shitty night.

Nekomi: I know. But... you know? It'll be ok.

Marionetta: (Unsure) Yeah.

They continue on quietly until they walk past an off-licence.

Nekomi: Wait... We need alcohol.

Marionetta: Huh?

Nekomi: What do you want? I'll get...

They go into the off-licence and buy drinks.

Nekomi: Hey M - Let's get wasted, yeah? Fuck them all.

Marionetta: (Smiles) Ok.

They open the booze and start drinking on the street as they walk to Rab's chatting about various things that they've seen on TV. Movies, music etc. Eventually they get to Rab's and go in. The party is getting going. Rab should already be there as are Pick and Alice. Nekomi and Marionetta squish into a single-seater sofa and sit there chatting and laughing. They play '*Mallet's Mallet*' where if you make a mistake you have to drink. Then Nekomi suggests they play 'Truth or drink':

Nekomi: Right, truth or drink.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: Well, you can either answer the question or drink.

Marionetta: Ok...

They ask each other a number of personal questions about various things. Sex, embarrassing mistakes. Eventually Kat comes in the door. Marionetta doesn't notice.

Nekomi: Ok... my go. Erm... So what's he like then?

Marionetta: Who?

Nekomi: (Thinking Marionetta knows he's there) Kat... in bed?

Marionetta: Um... (Goes to drink then stops). Like... all meat.

Nekomi laughs.

Marionetta: I mean... he seemed a bit embarrassed... no... shy.

Kat wanders into earshot. None of them notice.

Marionetta: Like, and when we were doing it he...

Nekomi: (Giggling and whispering) Did he make you...?

Kat is obviously listening now.

Marionetta: (Laughing) No. But...

Nekomi: (Laughing) What?

Marionetta: (Laughing) I don't know... Like...

Nekomi: (Laughing) You have to tell or drink.

Marionetta drinks

Nekomi: Awwwww....

Marionetta: (Laughing) It was like I wasn't there you know? Like (sighs and does a 'disappearing into nothing' hand-gesture). Like somebody was pulling the strings. Not him.

Nekomi: Were you high?

Marionetta: No.

Kat: Ladies.

Nekomi: Fuck.

Marionetta: (Laughing) Hey... Hi... How are you? (Laughs)

Kat: (Hold bag of pills up) Look.

Marionetta frowns.

Kat: Good aren't I.

Marionetta: Where'd you get those from?

Kat: My secret.

Marionetta: From Cal?

Kat taps the side of his nose.

Nekomi: Are they...?

Marionetta: Oh...

Kat: You want? Fiver each.

Nekomi: No.

Marionetta: I lost my wallet.

Kat: You can owe me. Here...

Nekomi: No.

Marionetta looks at her.

Marionetta: I thought we were getting wasted?

The look at each other in silence.

Kat: Last chance.

Marionetta nods.

Kat puts the bag on her lap and takes a few out. Then he reaches forward and squeezes Marionetta's cheeks so her mouth opens like a fish. He pushes a pill in then he lets go.

Marionetta: (Takes a sip of her drink)Thanks.

Kat: Wait...

He repeats the action. Marionetta watches him as he pushes another into her mouth. He doesn't take his hand off her cheeks this time. Marionetta and Kat are staring each other in the eyes.

Kat: Swallow.

Marionetta swallows.

Kat: Another.

He pushes another one in.

Nekomi: Kat - What the fuck are you doing?

Kat: You heard her - she wants to get wasted.

Marionetta swallows. Kat pushes another one in.

Nekomi: That's enough - M.

Marionetta swallows.

Nekomi: Fucking hell. Stop it! (She grabs his arm). Fucking stop it.

Kat pushes two into Marionetta's mouth. Nekomi starts hitting his arm.

Nekomi: Fucking stop it.

Kat lets go of Marionetta's face.

Kat: Sweet dreams darling.

He turns to Nekomi and holds out a handful of pills.

Kat: And for you?

Nekomi: Fuck off.

Marionetta looks at her.

Marionetta: I need you on my side.

Nekomi: You're all fucking crazy. This is...

Marionetta takes one and holds it out to Nekomi. She looks at it.

Marionetta: Fuck it, yeah?

Nekomi takes the pill and puts it in her mouth. Drinks her can to swallow it down. Kat laughs, then stands up and walks away.

Nekomi: What the fuck, M - What the fuck?

Marionetta: It'll be fine.

Nekomi: How many did....

Marionetta: About six or seven. It'll be fine.

Nekomi: Sure?

Marionetta: Don't you think I...

Nekomi: Really?

Marionetta: More than likely.

They sit there in silence for a moment.

Nekomi: Did he hear us? You know... talking about him.

Marionetta shrugs.

Nekomi: Fuck.

They sit there in silence for a few moments.

Marionetta: Truth or drink?

Nekomi: Um... (frowns)...um, ok.

Marionetta: What's the most drugs you've ever taken?

Nekomi: (Shakes her head). Like one thing.

Marionetta: Once I accidentally swallowed a gram of MDMA.

Nekomi: Yeah. I remember.

Marionetta: So I'll be fine. It's my own batch, I know the LD50.

Nekomi: Ok.

Marionetta: I can handle it.

Nekomi: Yeah, I know.

Marionetta: (Puts her hand on Nekomi's) Look after me yeah?

Nekomi nods.

Marionetta: Cool.

It is around this point that Pick opens the box and the lights go out. If this section is not finished then it continues in the dark. When the lights go out.

Nekomi: Rab... put some money on your...

They make general small talk whilst the lights are off. Eventually Marionetta gets up to go to the toilet.

Nekomi: Are you ok?

Marionetta: Sure.

Nekomi: You want me to...

Marionetta: I'll be fine.

She gets halfway to the hole to Wonderland and notices it and then comes back.

Marionetta: Have you seen this?

She shows Nekomi and any interested Participants the hole.

Marionetta: You wanna see what's down there?

Nekomi: Um...

Marionetta: Come on...

She starts to crawl down the hole.

Nekomi: Hang on...

Nekomi follows.

# Edith

Participant 2 enters the bar where Forty and Edith work. There's light music on but apparently nobody about. A handwritten sign on the bar says 'Please help yourself' and there's a glass next to it with 'honesty box' written on it in permanent marker. From the back room comes the sound of two people making love. They eventually reach climax. After about 5 minutes Edith comes out and helps herself to a beer.

Edith: Hey. You read the sign yeah?

She gestures to the bar as if to say 'Help yourself'

Participant 2: (Responds)

Edith goes and props herself up at the end of the bar. Hopefully the Participant begins to help themselves to a drink.

Edith: Make sure you've got the right change. £2.75. Put it in the glass.

Forty comes out of the back room.

Forty: (To Participant) What the fuck are you doing?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: (To Edith) Why don't you serve them... seeing as you're sitting there on your arse doing nothing?

Edith: So it's ok to have the box thing when...

Forty: Are you trying to talk yourself out of a job?

Edith: Fuck you. (S)He's doing a good job. Look – no froth, no spillage.

Forty looks at her.

Edith: (Sighs) Fucking hell.

Forty: Sorry about the service – you just can't get the staff these days.

Forty goes into the back.

Edith: (To Participant 2) He's such a... (looks over her shoulder to check if he's listening). He's such a dick. You done bar work before?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Edith: Thought so – where was that then? / Really, because you’re pretty good – you can have my job if you want. It’s a bit rubbish.

Participant 2: (Responds)

Edith and Participant 2 chat until the conversation peters out – Edith doesn’t do anything to stimulate further conversation. Participant goes and sits down. Gradually the bar fills up with people (Participant 1, Participant 2 and public). Edith serves them drinks and makes general chit-chat. Forty stays in the back. Lorenia enters and sits at the bar. Without even a greeting she begins the conversation:

Lorenia: Mum’s been asking after you.

Edith: Hello to you too.

Lorenia: Mum...

Edith: Right. Well... you know.

Lorenia: I’m sure she’d like to see you.

Edith: Tell her I’m fine. Look, it’s not like I’m avoiding her. She can come here if she wants.

Lorenia: Yeah, well maybe we could all do Sunday lunch?

Edith: Maybe a weekday yeah? No offense, but I’m not normally in a fit state on Sunday lunchtime.

Lorenia: Right.

Lorenia sits there nursing her glass. Edith serves a customer. When she’s finished she takes a swig out of a pint of beer and then leans against the beer taps near Lorenia.

Edith: I hate it when people come and see me at work.

Lorenia: (Angry) Sorry. I...

Edith: Not like that. It’s good to see you y’know? Just... (sighs) You don’t get chance to... customers are always coming in. You have to break off. You know what I mean.

Lorenia: (Smiles) Sure. (Beat). We should still get together.

Edith: Sure. What you up to tonight?

Lorenia: Probably just stay in and watch crap TV.

Edith: Really?

Lorenia: Yeeeahh. (sighs). Not very exciting.

Edith: Maxxy's band's playing tonight. I'm gonna try get off work to see them.

Lorenia: Well, it's hardly heaving.

Edith: You can be the bait. I'm sure he's got a thing for you.

Lorenia goes quiet.

Edith: Oooh. Am I to assume that the feeling is reciprocated?

A customer comes to the bar.

Lorenia: That's a big word for you.

Edith starts to serve them.

Edith: Do you know what else I know? (Beat) Paedo-necrophilia. That's fucking dead kids.

She smiles at the customers.

Edith: Hi. What can I get you?

Lorenia smiles and shakes her head in disbelief. Edith gets the customers their drinks and then goes to stand near her sister.

Edith: You *should* get out more, you know. Come with me.

Lorenia: Yeah right. I'd be dead. I don't know how you do it.

Edith: Sometimes it hurts.

Lorenia: Just be careful.

Edith: It's fine.

Lorenia: So you know what you're taking?

Edith: Well, it's the same crap. If something bad was going to happen then it probably would have.

Lorenia: Hmm...

Edith: You're right though. Lolo. You're the kind of person who'd end up on life-support. You'd pass out from a nose bleed.

Lorenia: I'm not that bad.

Edith: Sure. (Chuckles). Hey check this out. Er...

She runs through menus on an iPod. Find what she's looking for and presses play. *Low Rider* by War comes on. Edith dances about a bit on and off over the next section.



Edith: You remember we used to put dad's vinyl of this on?  
Lorenia: You remember different things to me.  
Edith: It's like your song. (To the song) LOW – RI – NIA gets a little higher.

She turns it up. Forty comes out of the back and turns it down.

Edith: Fuckhead.  
Forty: Remember that I *am* your boss. It's supposed to be 20s jive not fucking soul train.  
Edith: It's Lo's song. We used to dance about naked to it.  
Lorenia: She's lying.  
Edith: I'm trying to turn him on for you.  
Lorenia: (Embarrassed) We were, like 6 years old.  
Edith: Quite the touch Lo. He's not a paedophile.  
Lorenia: What is it with you and paedophiles?  
Forty: Shall *I* answer that?  
Edith: (Sticking fingers up) Fuck you both.  
Lorenia: Your stock response.  
Edith: You especially Lo.

Silence for a moment. Forty goes to the iPod and changes the track. Edith serves a customer.

Forty: (To Lorenia) What was *her* song?  
Lorenia: Je ne regret rien.  
Forty: That's appropriate.  
Lorenia: She hasn't always been like that. I was the bad one when we were kids. She got my cast-offs.  
Forty: Bad?  
Lorenia: I smeared jam on the next door neighbour's door handle.  
Forty: I cracked my brother's head open. And, I got bollocked for pushing over this 500 year-old wall in our garden. It was bloody listed - an insurance job to get it rebuilt.  
Lorenia: Hmm...

Forty: (To Edith) Look are you gonna bugger off soon? Save me some money.

Edith: I'll work until I want.

Forty: So you weren't gonna ask to leave early?

Edith shrugs.

Forty: Yeah right. Well *I'll* go home then.

Edith: Hold on...

Forty: What a surprise.

Edith: Go on then. If you're offering.

Forty: You off to Maxxy's gig?

Edith: Maybe.

Forty: She left these freebies. I was supposed to give them as a prize to someone. Not sure what for though. Anyway, you can have them for being the laziest employee. Take your sister.

Edith: She left some flyers you fucking idiot - it's a free gig. (Beat) Anyway, *she's* off home to froth over Simon Cowell.

Lorenia: I could...

Edith: Er... No way. I'm not talking you through a night out. You're two years older than me. It'd be like taking gran to a rave. (Puts on an old lady's voice) What do I do with this? (Edith does the tongue in cheek blowjob action)

Lorenia: Right.

Edith: I love you sis but I'd rather go with anybody else. In the world. If Hitler was here...

Lorenia: Now I'm worse than Hitler.

Edith: Just less fun.

Edith scans the bar, her gaze settles on Participant 1.

Edith: *They're* clearly not doing anything.

Edith comes around the bar and goes up to Participant 1.

Edith: Been stood up?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Don't explain. Come and see a good band. If I'm bad company then you can just go home. I'm definitely not bad company though.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Look, you've clearly got nothing better to do. Come on. Live a little. I'll get you a drink.

Edith goes and gets them both a shot of something.

Edith: (To Lorenia) See?

Lorenia: You do whatever.

Edith takes the drink back to Participant 1.

Edith: Right, we'll neck these, then I'll go for a piss and then we'll go yeah?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Cheers.

Edith downs her drink and then gets up and goes to the toilet.

Lorenia: (To Forty) I'm sorry she's a... a fucking nightmare.

Forty: (Shrugs). It's interesting.

Lorenia: But it's just constant. Everything.

Forty: It's alright.

Edith comes back from the toilet.

Lorenia: Well I'm sorry.

Edith hears Lorenia.

Edith: Sorry for me?

Lorenia: What?

Edith: (To Forty) Did she just apologise for me?

Forty shrugs.

Edith: Nice one Lo. Stick up for one another yeah? Sister's together.

Lorenia: You're the one who...

Edith: Fuck you, y'know? Dick.

Lorenia just stares at the bar in silence.

Forty: Go on. On your bike. Before somebody gets hurt.

Edith: Woooo. So you're gonna make your move?

Lorenia: Fuck off Edith!

Edith goes quiet.

Edith: OK then fine. (Smiling to Participant 1). You ready then? Cool,  
She holds out her arm so they can hook their arms through.

Edith: Ta-ra.

They leave for the gig. Edith and Participant 1 chat about Participant 1 (See '*Getting to Know You*'). Particularly about what kind of music Participant 1 likes. Edith is a big music fan and suggests loads of bands to Participant 1. She also talks a lot about getting wasted. After a short while, they reach Club de la Faye. Edith gets the drinks and then they sit down.

Edith: Can you believe my sister apologising for me? Fucks me off. I mean... (sighs) I don't know. She cares but...

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Lo's a swimmer see? So she trains every day. She hasn't got a fucking clue about everything else. I'm pretty sure she's a virgin (Thinks about this). Maybe not. I'm sure there's some changing room action goes on in those swim teams. I mean, you just would wouldn't you?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: And mum's no better. We're peas from a pod she says. Lo's the good one and I'm the one with the maggot in it. That's what you want to hear isn't it? From your own mum.

Participant 1: (Responds)

They continue to chat about families until the conversation runs out.

Edith: You ever seen this band before?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: They're alright. Had a single played by Steve Lamacq. I doubt they'll get any bigger though. Maybe.

At some point Hunting Season come on and start to play. People applaud lightly. It's techno / electro pop. Edith stands up and goes to watch them in front of the stage. When they've finished she finds Participant 1.

Edith: Alright yeah?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: I'm gonna go back and talk to them. You want to wait here?  
(Thinks for a second) actually come with... Might as well.

Edith takes Participant 1 backstage. At this point Edith basically ignores Participant 1 and talks to the band members BM1, BM2, Maxxy (a girl) and BM3. She's really flirty and kisses a few of them over the course of the scene.

Edith: I had this dream where I was walking in the desert and there was this fucking Eagle. Like something out of the Doors movie. I can't get Riders on the Storm out of my head.

BM1: Check you Martin Luther King.

BM2: I had a dream about an Eagle pecking my eyes out. Or an owl or something.

Edith: Nice. I wanna say that was good but y'know?

BM1: Have you seen Kat?

Edith: Dunno.

BM1: He was supposed to be here. Stuff for sale.

Edith: I've got something you can have.

She gets a red pill out of her wallet and puts it on the end of her tongue and holds it out to him. BM1 kisses her as he takes it off her. She wraps her arms around his neck.

BM2: Jesus.

Edith stops kissing BM1 and looks at BM2. BM1 is trying to get some more.

Edith: What's the matter? Do you want some? C'mon then.

She puts another pill on her tongue. BM2 steps forwards and they kiss.

Edith: Anyone else? Maxxy?

Maxxy: (Sighs) You know we've been... like I haven't... (Looks around) Fuck it. Come here beautiful.

They kiss and she swallows the pill. Everybody goes quiet. They stop and laugh.

BM1: Fucking hell. Do that again.

Edith: You'll have pay for that.

Maxxy: First time's free.

BM1: How much?

Maxxxy: (Punches BM1 on the arm). Fucking idiot. We're not whores you know?

BM1 shrugs.

Maxxxy: Think you're so rock and roll.

BM1: You know it.

Maxxxy holds up her little finger as if it were BM1's dick. People laugh.

Maxxxy: And that's hard.

BM1: Yeah, nice one. Anyone coming for a smoke? (Looks around room)

Maxxxy: You're on your own.

BM1 shrugs and walks out.

Maxxxy: (To Edith) You heard any Strip Steve? DJ was playing it the other night. Fucking ace.

Edith shrugs. Maxxxy puts on *Astral Projection* by Strip Steve on her iPod. They chat. After that *Baby Face* comes on.

Maxxxy: It's on shuffle.

Edith: You've heard Rab's thing?

Maxxxy: (To Edith) *You* got the cutest little baby face.

Edith: Not bad yourself. Get him to explain it to you. It's fucking stupid.

Maxxxy: He drinks too much.

Edith: Yup.

Maxxxy: Don't we all?

They all go quiet for a moment.

Edith: You know he's having a party tonight?

Maxxxy: Rab? I heard.

Edith: You coming?

Maxxxy: Well I've *got to* now haven't I?

Edith: Nice one. You finished here?

Maxxy: Gotta pack up. Not sure if we can leave the stuff here. Otherwise someone's gonna have to drive.

Edith: Right. (To Participant). You wanna go to this party now or shall we wait for them?

Participant: (Responds)

Maxxy: Who's that?

Edith: Dunno. I dragged them out of the café to come see you. I'm like their carer or something.

Maxxy: Crazy bitch.

Edith shrugs.

Edith: Right, well I'm not helping you pack up. (BM2) spazzed out last time I touched his guitar.

Maxxy: That's 'cause he wanted you to touch his cock.

Edith: Obviously. (Beat). So we'll see you outside or at Rab's. Are they still serving?

Maxxy: Don't know.

Edith: Well we'll stay if we can get a drink.

Maxxy: Right.

Edith and Participant leave and go back into the bar. They get another drink and sit down. Edith is fairly pissed by now.

Edith: So what do you do?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Was that always the plan? I mean, what you wanted to do?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Don't really sure myself. I don't want to work at that bar forever. Even though I get to do what I want, it's not very... you know?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Like, Lo's got her swimming and when that's over she'll coach people. It's fucking easy for her. You know what I mean?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: For me it's like... I don't know. I'm not good at art, I'm not good at... (shrugs) I don't know... music, like I can't play an instrument. I've had a go at mixing but... (Looks at Participant 1) Basically, I haven't got a clue.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: I mean... I can get what I want. It's just... I don't know what I want.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith and Participant 1 continue to chat. After a while Maxxxy and the band come out.

Edith: You finished?

Maxxxy: Nearly.

Edith: You gonna get a drink?

Maxxxy: (Tired) Er... yeah.

Edith: Or do you wanna go straight to Rab's.

Maxxxy: Whatever. (She sits down). We were up in Birmingham on (two days before). It was a heavy one. Then Nottingham last night. (Smiles)Not slept yet... Sorry.

Edith: That pill'll buck you up. You'll be fine.

Maxxxy: Maybe... I'm just crashing... that's all.

Edith: Well pull yourself together woman.

Maxxxy: (Smiles) Yeah.

Edith: Look, I'll get you a drink yeah?

Before Maxxxy can respond, Edith jumps up and goes to the bar. She gets two shots.

Maxxxy: (To Participant 1) It's alright for her – with her easy job. Laying the boss.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Shit... probably shouldn't have told you that. She didn't tell you? Oops. Ah well. Serves her right really!

Edith comes back with the shots.

Edith: Here you go.

Maxxxy: Sorry mate. I just told (Participant 1) about your... er... terms of employment.



Edith: Ha! Well it's not like... fuck it... he's alright. It gets me off  
(Beat) In both ways.

Maxxy: Serves you right for being a hussy.

Edith: What am I supposed to do?

Maxxy: Not screw the boss.

Edith: Maybe.

(Silence)

Edith: (To Participant 1) Look – I'm not a slut, you know?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Well, I'm sure you'd do it if you were me.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: I mean, I don't get why women are so fucking conservative about... you know... having a good time.

Maxxy: Well, there's a line.

Edith: Maybe. But that's up to me isn't it?

Maxxy: Sure is darling. (Sighs) Bottoms up yeah?

Edith: Here's to that.

They do their shots.

Edith: Right... you're coming yeah?

Maxxy: I need to sleep.

Edith: Sleep when you're dead.

Maxxy: That's gonna be tonight if I'm not careful.

Edith: You're getting old.

Maxxy: Maybe.

(Silence)

Edith: Right... let's go.

They gather themselves up and gradually move outside. Light cigarettes and then hit the road. Edith walks with Participant 1 and Maxxy.

Edith: You totally think I'm a slut don't you?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Yeah right.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: I'm not easy right? It's not like I'll go for *anybody*.

Maxxxy laughs.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Guilty conscience.

Edith: Fuck you dreamer. Just because you're going for the whole 2.4 thing.

Maxxxy: Am I really?

Edith: You could put out more.

Maxxxy: You don't know anything.

Edith: Oooo. Dirty girl.

Maxxxy: Hey, in Nottingham we went to this house party right? This guy who was on Big Brother was there. Helped me break into my friend's flatmate's bedroom.

Edith: I thought you said you hadn't slept?

Maxxxy: That's my point dumbass.

Edith: So you slept with some less-than Z-list celebrity. That'll do wonders for your credibility.

Maxxxy: He was... alright.

Edith: You see? Tweet, tweet, tweet.

Maxxxy: What the fuck's that supposed to mean?

Edith: Like love birds.

Maxxxy: That's shit.

Edith: My point is that you're not looking for a casual fling. It's always love, love, love with you.

Maxxxy: Is that so bad?

Edith: Just don't pretend you're some kind of nympho.

Maxxxy: What, like you, you mean?

Edith: At least I'm selective.

Maxxxy: ...And I let you kiss me.

Edith: Look, you're cool ok. Don't worry about it?

Maxxxy: Fine. (Beat) I can't believe I'm letting you drag me on another night out.

Edith: It's because you love me.

Maxxxy: Ha fucking ha.

The continue talking as they make their way to Rab's. Maxxxy asks Participant 1 about themselves with Edith pitching in. The focus is on sex – number of partners, notable occasions, funny things that have happened.

Maxxxy: (To Participant 1) So, like... *you're* not getting away with this. You have a boyfriend / girlfriend?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Are you in love?

Edith: How fucking fascinating.

Maxxxy: Shut it you.

Edith: What's the craziest thing you've ever done? Ever slept with more than one person in a bed?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: That's rubbish / Well that's *something*.

Maxxxy: Better than me.

Edith: You wanna play a game?

Maxxxy: What?

Edith: Like, I dare you to (thinks). I'll race you naked down the street. Actually, you two do it. You're the ones who need to live.

Maxxxy: No fucking way.

Edith: Ooohh. Somebody's chicken. (To Participant 1) What about you?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Two chickens / (To Maxxxy) (S)he'll do it. I'll tell you what. (Sets off running). The last person to catch me has to walk the rest of the way to the party in the buff.

Edith sprints down the street running as fast as she can. Hopefully, she can get to the party before anybody catches her. If not then the other non-catcher needs to fulfil the forfeit. If she gets to the party, Edith demands that they both strip off and walk in together. She will not take no for an answer. Obviously, on getting in the flat the lights should have gone out so nobody will see them anyway. Edith walks in behind them.

Edith: (To Rab) You stingy twat. Where's the lights?

Rab: You wanna go to the garage to get top up?

Edith: No.

Rab: Will your sister go for me?

Edith: Is Lo here?

Rab: Yeah. With your boss.

Edith: (Angry) What the fuck? Where?

Rab: How the fuck should I know?

Edith: Fuck. She's got training tomorrow.

Edith searches around the house pushing past people.

Edith: (Calling) Lo? Get the fuck out here now you stupid bitch. (To random party goer). Do you know my sister? Fuck you then.

Lorenia and Forty hear her calling. Forty tries to tell her to stay still but Lorenia jumps out of bed and starts getting dressed. Edith bursts in, recognises Lorenia starts to drag her out half naked and then stops.

Edith: Is he in here?

Edith jumps onto the bed and starts hitting the body under the covers. Forty is pretty well protected but he's shouting for her to get off.

Edith: Fucking twat.

Lorenia keeps shouting at Edith to stop. Eventually she gives up and drags Lorenia out in a slightly better state of dress.

Edith: Come on.

Edith drags her down the corridor with Lorenia fighting her. Lorenia falls onto the floor against the wall.

Lorenia: Stop!

Edith kicks the wall opening up the hole to Wonderland.

Edith: (Confused for a moment) What the fuck? (To Lorenia). Get up. Come on.

Lorenia starts to get up then she sees there's this lit hole disappearing somewhere. She starts to scabble down it.

Edith: What are you doing? Tries to grab her. (Calling) Lorenia!

Lorenia disappears out of sight. Forty appears next to Edith.

Forty: Where's she...

Edith: In there. (Beat). You fucking twat. (Punches Forty in the arm)

Forty: You're fired.

Edith: Fuck off I'm fired. (Looks into hole). It goes right back.

Forty: I got her to take half a pill.

Edith: Well that's something. (Calling down hole). Lorenia. (To Forty) She's gonna have to come out.

Forty: I'll go get her.

Edith: Fuck that.

She gets down on her hands and knees and crawls in.

Edith: (Calling) Lorenia – get your skinny arse out here now.

There's no answer.

Edith: Fucking hell.

Edith starts crawling down the hole.

Forty: You alright?

Edith: Just give us a moment alright? (Calling) Lorenia.

Edith crawls into Wonderland.

# Forty

Participant 2 enters the bar where Forty and Edith work. There's light music on but apparently nobody about. A handwritten sign on the bar says 'Please help yourself' and there's a glass next to it with 'honesty box' written on it in permanent marker. From the back room comes the sound of two people making love. They eventually reach climax. After about 5 minutes Edith comes out and helps herself to a beer.

Edith: Hey. You read the sign yeah?

She gestures to the bar as if to say 'Help yourself'

Participant 2: (Responds)

Edith goes and props herself up at the end of the bar. Hopefully the Participant begins to help themselves to a drink.

Edith: Make sure you've got the right change. £2.75. Put it in the glass.

Forty comes out of the back room.

Forty: (To Participant) What the fuck are you doing?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: (To Edith) Why don't you serve them... seeing as you're sitting there on your arse doing nothing?

Edith: So it's ok to have the box thing when...

Forty: Are you trying to talk yourself out of a job?

Edith: Fuck you. (S)He's doing a good job. Look – no froth, no spillage.

Forty looks at her.

Edith: (Sighs) Fucking hell.

Forty: Sorry about the service – you just can't get the staff these days.

Forty goes into the back.

Edith: (To Participant) He's such a... (looks over her shoulder to check if he's listening). He's such a dick. You done bar work before?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Edith: Thought so – where was that then? / Really, because you're pretty good – you can have my job if you want. It's a bit rubbish.

Participant 2: (Responds)

Edith and Participant 2 chat until the conversation peters out – Edith doesn't do anything to stimulate further conversation. Participant goes and sits down. Gradually the bar fills up with people (Participant 1, Participant 2 and public). Edith serves them drinks and makes general chit-chat. Forty stays in the back. Lorenia enters and sits at the bar. Without even a greeting she begins the conversation:

Lorenia: Mum's been asking after you.

Edith: Hello to you too.

Lorenia: Mum...

Edith: Right. Well... you know.

Lorenia: I'm sure she'd like to see you.

Edith: Tell her I'm fine. Look, it's not like I'm avoiding her. She can come here if she wants.

Lorenia: Yeah, well maybe we could all do Sunday lunch?

Edith: Maybe a weekday yeah? No offense, but I'm not normally in a fit state on Sunday lunchtime.

Lorenia: Right.

Lorenia sits there nursing her glass. Edith serves a customer. When she's finished she takes a swig out of a pint of beer and then leans against the beer taps near Lorenia.

Edith: I hate it when people come and see me at work.

Lorenia: (Angry) Sorry. I...

Edith: Not like that. It's good to see you y'know? Just... (sighs) You don't get chance to... customers are always coming in. You have to break off. You know what I mean.

Lorenia: (Smiles) Sure. (Beat). We should still get together.

Edith: Sure. What you up to tonight?

Lorenia: Probably just stay in and watch crap TV.

Edith: Really?

Lorenia: Yeeeahh. (sighs). Not very exciting.

Edith: Maxxy's band's playing tonight. I'm gonna try get off work to see them.

Lorenia: Well, it's hardly heaving.

Edith: You can be the bait. I'm sure he's got a thing for you.

Lorenia goes quiet.

Edith: Oooh. Am I to assume that the feeling is reciprocated?

A customer comes to the bar.

Lorenia: That's a big word for you.

Edith starts to serve them.

Edith: Do you know what else I know? (Beat) Paedonecrophilia. That's fucking dead kids.

She smiles at the customers.

Edith: Hi. What can I get you?

Lorenia smiles and shakes her head in disbelief. Edith gets the customers their drinks and then goes to stand near her sister.

Edith: You *should* get out more, you know. Come with me.

Lorenia: Yeah right. I'd be dead. I don't know how you do it.

Edith: Sometimes it hurts.

Lorenia: Just be careful.

Edith: It's fine.

Lorenia: So you know what you're taking?

Edith: Well, it's the same crap. If something bad was going to happen then it probably would have.

Lorenia: Hmm...

Edith: You're right though. Lolo. You're the kind of person who'd end up on life-support. You'd pass out from a nose bleed.

Lorenia: I'm not that bad.

Edith: Sure. (Chuckles). Hey check this out. Er...

She runs through menus on an iPod. Find what she's looking for and presses play. *Low Rider* by War comes on. Edith dances about a bit on and off over the next section.



Edith: You remember we used to put dad's vinyl of this on?  
Lorenia: You remember different things to me.  
Edith: It's like your song. (To the song) LOW – RI – NIA gets a little higher.

She turns it up. Forty comes out of the back and turns it down.

Edith: Fuckhead.  
Forty: Remember that I *am* your boss. It's supposed to be 20s jive not fucking soul train.  
Edith: It's Lo's song. We used to dance about naked to it.  
Lorenia: She's lying.  
Edith: I'm trying to turn him on for you.  
Lorenia: (Embarrassed) We were, like 6 years old.  
Edith: Quite the touch Lo. He's not a paedophile.  
Lorenia: What is it with you and paedophiles?  
Forty: Shall *I* answer that?  
Edith: (Sticking fingers up) Fuck you both.  
Lorenia: Your stock response.  
Edith: You especially Lo.

Silence for a moment. Forty goes to the iPod and changes the track. Edith serves a customer.

Forty: (To Lorenia) What was *her* song?  
Lorenia: Je ne regret rien.  
Forty: That's appropriate.  
Lorenia: She hasn't always been like that. I was the bad one when we were kids. She got my cast-offs.  
Forty: Bad?  
Lorenia: I smeared jam on the next door neighbour's door handle.  
Forty: I cracked my brother's head open. And, I got bollocked for pushing over this 500 year-old wall in our garden. It was bloody listed - an insurance job to get it rebuilt.

Lorenia: Hmmm...

Forty: (To Edith) Look are you gonna bugger off soon? Save me some money.

Edith: I'll work until I want.

Forty: So you weren't gonna ask to leave early?

Edith shrugs.

Forty: Yeah right. Well *I'll* go home then.

Edith: Hold on...

Forty: What a surprise.

Edith: Go on then. If you're offering.

Forty: You off to Maxxy's gig?

Edith: Maybe.

Forty: She left these freebies. I was supposed to give them as a prize to someone. Not sure what for though. Anyway, you can have them for being the laziest employee. Take your sister.

Edith: She left some flyers you fucking idiot - it's a free gig. (Beat) Anyway, *she's* off home to froth over Simon Cowell.

Lorenia: I could...

Edith: Er... No way. I'm not talking you through a night out. You're two years older than me. It'd be like taking gran to a rave. (Puts on an old lady's voice) What do I do with this? (Edith does the tongue in cheek blowjob action)

Lorenia: Right.

Edith: I love you sis but I'd rather go with anybody else. In the world. If Hitler was here...

Lorenia: Now I'm worse than Hitler.

Edith: Just less fun.

Edith scans the bar, her gaze settles on Participant 1.

Edith: *They're* clearly not doing anything.

Edith comes around the bar and goes up to Participant 1.

Edith: Been stood up?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Don't explain. Come and see a good band. If I'm bad company then you can just go home. I'm definitely not bad company though.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Look, you've clearly got nothing better to do. Come on. Live a little. I'll get you a drink.

Edith goes and gets them both a shot of something.

Edith: (To Lorenia) See?

Lorenia: You do whatever.

Edith takes the drink back to Participant 1.

Edith: Right, we'll neck these, then I'll go for a piss and then we'll go yeah?

Participant 1: Ok.

Edith: Cheers.

Edith downs her drink and then gets up and goes to the toilet.

Lorenia: (To Forty) I'm sorry she's a... a fucking nightmare.

Forty: (Shrugs). It's interesting.

Lorenia: But it's just constant. The drugs, the drinking.

Forty: It's alright.

Edith comes back from the toilet.

Lorenia: Well I'm sorry.

Edith hears Lorenia.

Edith: Sorry for me?

Lorenia: What?

Edith: (To Forty) Did she just apologise for me?

Forty shrugs.

Edith: Nice one Lo. Stick up for one another yeah? Sister's together.

Lorenia: You're the one who...

Edith: Fuck you, y'know? Dick.

Lorenia just stares at the bar in silence.

Forty: Go on. On your bike. Before somebody gets hurt.

Edith: Woooo. So you're gonna make your move?

Lorenia: Fuck off Edith!

Edith goes quiet.

Edith: OK then fine. (Smiling to Participant 1). You ready then? Cool,

She holds out her arm so they can hook their arms through.

Edith: Ta-ra.

They Leave

Lorenia: (To herself) Fuck. (To Forty). She's a nightmare.

Forty: What can I say?

Lorenia: Yeah. It's...it's like. I don't know. It's like somebody's pushed her self-destruct button.

Forty: Aren't we all a bit like that?

Lorenia looks at him and frowns.

Forty: I take it that you're not?

Lorenia: I just want to get by. No ups, no downs.

Forty: But that's the fun bit.

Lorenia: (Shrugs) I don't know. Maybe I don't mean that. She's just so extreme. Everything's so...

Forty: Well... (thinks) It's interesting.

Lorenia: Am I not?

Forty looks at her. Measures her up.

Forty: Well...

Lorenia: (Nervously) Haha. Right.

Forty: Seriously though - What do you want?

Lorenia: I don't know.

Forty: Money, women, sex?

Lorenia: (Laughs) Yes, give me loads of women.

Forty: You know what I mean.

Lorenia: I mean... my swimming's going well. I'm not the best yet but I'm getting there. I train, I swim, I compete. That's what I always wanted. That's what I do.

Forty: Well there you go.

Lorenia: Yup.

Forty: Men / Women?

Lorenia thinks about this.

Forty: Don't have to...

Lorenia: I think I just have to face the fact that I've failed – in a romantic sense. I'm good at loads of things but relationships (Gives thumb down). I'm too much of a push-over. Don't get me wrong, I'll find some nice guy and do all the stuff that's expected of me but...

Forty: No love. It might...

A customer comes to the bar.

Forty: Sorry.

Lorenia: No passion.

Forty serves the customer. Lorenia sits there looking around the bar. She spots Participant 2 sitting on their own.

Lorenia: Sorry about my sister.

Participant 2: (Responds)

Lorenia: She... Never mind... Maybe you weren't. Have you been here long?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Lorenia: Have they let you down?

Participant 2: (Responds).

Lorenia frowns.

Forty: Do you want a drink? Wine? I've got a nice Argentinian Red – Otra Vida.

Lorenia: Er... I...

Forty: You probably don't like red.

Lorenia: No, it's fine.

Forty: Good. It's nice. Fruity. Easy on the palette.

Lorenia: Sure. I mean, I shouldn't but... sure? (Questioning herself)

Forty pours a glass of wine and slides it over the bar.

Forty: Right, I'm going to cash up.

Lorenia: Thanks.

Lorenia sits at the bar for a while sipping her drink. She keeps looking over at Participant 2 as if thinking about things. She eventually speaks to them from across the bar.

Lorenia: What's your name?

Participant 2: (Responds).

Lorenia: Do you mind if I join you?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Lorenia: (If response is negative) Never mind. (Drinks) Look I'm just trying to be friendly, you know? You've been there on your own for ages. Maybe that's what you want.

Participant 2: (Responds)

If response is still negative then Lorenia doesn't push it any further. If positive:

Lorenia: Thanks. I'm Lorenia. Nice to meet you.

Lorenia sits down. (They have a basic 'getting to know you conversation' – see introduction). Lorenia tries to bring the conversation back around to her sister and family. Lorenia will share memories from the actor's own life in relation to playing with friends, siblings etc. Some examples of bits of dialogue are included below:

Lorenia: I'm really sorry about my sister's behaviour. I mean, it's kind of embarrassing.

Lorenia: Do you have a brother or sister?

Lorenia: Mine's... you know? A burden. We're not a very close family but, well... she doesn't make it easy you know? Sometimes I wish it was easier for us to see each other.

After a while Forty comes back in with an opened but mostly-full bottle of wine. He tops up Lorenia without asking then asks Participant 2 if he/she wants a drink. Lorenia introduces them and Forty asks them a number of direct questions about travelling, music, sport, jobs etc. This is naturally allowed to expand into various avenues but Lorenia keeps pulling the focus of the conversation back onto family. Forty tries to steer the conversation away from family and onto 'living life' – e.g. travelling experiences, parachute jumps. So there is this pull between 'home' and 'away' and 'safety' and 'adventure' occurring. Eventually this descends into a more philosophical discussion about getting the most out of life.

Forty: I mean, there was this night in Malaysia where we went skinny dipping on acid and there was phosphorescence in the water. Most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

Lorenia: I can't believe you went swimming when you were high.

Forty: It's amazing. I mean, you must get that?

Lorenia: Of course but... I mean, it's so dangerous, I mean what if something happens? What if you freak out or something?

Forty: It wasn't like that. I mean, surely you've got to take those risks? Or else you don't... nothing good happens.

Lorenia: Yeah, but you heard about that girl Pick yeah? She drove her mum's car into a river with her two friends in the back. Only she got out. I mean, was that worth it?

Forty: It's just risk. That was bad luck. You've got to take chances.

Lorenia: Well I wouldn't take *anything* and go swimming. Isn't swimming in phosphorescence enough? I mean...

Forty: I don't know. It just happened like that. You can't y'know... you can't micro-manage life, can you?

Forty gets up and goes behind the bar. He pours out three shots of Sambuca then brings them back around to the table with the bottle. He lights one and then downs it and pours himself another. Then he raises his glass.

Forty: Cheers!

Lorenia: Er...

Forty: (Friendly but forcefully at Lorenia) Cheers.

They drink the Sambuca.

Lorenia: Jesus. I'm going to have to go home after this.

Forty: Nonsense. There's a party at Rab's tonight. We're going to go for a drink somewhere else and then go there. You're going to show your sister that you're not the wilting flower that she thinks you are. (He picks up the bottle of Sambuca). Another?

Lorenia: I'm alright thanks.

Forty: Good. I would have had to charge you for it anyway. Right. Let's go. Where shall it be? Any suggestions? No? I'll choose then. (to Participant 2) Are you coming with us?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: Good. What was your name again?

They get their coats. And stand outside. Forty sets the alarm. He grabs the bottle of wine on the way out. They set off down the street. Conversation is about crazy things that have happened on nights out.

Forty: I went to this, er, psy-trance night in Leeds. Not that I'm really into that kinda stuff. Anyway, we'd all done a bit of powder and my friend's girl-friend passes me this thing that I think is a magic mushroom so I just neck it. Then she asks for the bag back and I found out it was a gram of MDMA wrapped in cling film.

Lorenia: You're lucky you're not dead.

Forty: Yeah. Well, I thought that was it then but my friend says – if anyone can deal with this it's you. So I just get on with it. Was completely gone though. Wasn't good at all. I mean, drugs are good fun and stuff but you don't want too much. It fucks you up, it's embarrassing and you don't remember anything in the morning. So basically – what's the point?

Lorenia: God. I've never done anything like that. (To Participant 2) Have you? I'm pretty sure Edith has. That's exactly what she's like.

Forty: Why are you so down on Edith?



Lorenia: I'm not. It's just... you know...

Forty: You wish you were more like her. Braver.

Lorenia: No. No way. She can do what she wants but... I don't know... it just feels so... sordid sometimes. When you go round and she's still awake, you know? - chewing her face off.

Forty: (Shrugs) Maybe.

Lorenia: Look, I know you're not going to agree with me but it's not my scene. Destroying yourself.

Forty: So what is?

Lorenia: Swimming. Watching TV.

Forty: Not very sociable.

Lorenia: I'm not. But, I mean, if you're going to train every day then you've got to put that before other things. Going out. Drinking. You know?

Forty: Maybe.

Lorenia: Haven't you had anything that it was worth giving everything up for?

Forty: Love? Kids?

Lorenia: Yeah.

Forty: Well if you love someone then you'd expect them to be similar to you right? So you enjoy doing the same things. Or else you just feel trapped. That's what fucks me off about women right? At first they're like - 'I wanna hear about your life' but it's just a fucking cover. All they want to do is stay in and watch X-Factor.

Lorenia: At least I'm honest.

Forty: I just don't get how arrogant that is. It's like - well...

Lorenia: Like... like life's something to be disposed of in front of the TV. I get what you're saying. I just...

Forty: It's like treating this opportunity like it doesn't mean anything. And you don't get another.

Lorenia: You can't do stuff all the time though.

Forty: Why not? It's like these people think that they want to live a long life but it's just filled with nothing. To live long you do nothing.

Lorenia: Maybe.

They reach the bar. They go in and buy drinks and sit down. Forty asks Participant 2 about what they think about 'making the most of life'. Conversation develops. When Participant 2 goes to the toilet Forty and Lorenia start to kiss. They're still at it when Participant 2 gets back. They notice Participant 2 and stop.

Forty: Another drink here or shall we go to Rab's?

Lorenia: I don't think I can drink any more.

Forty: Well, the night is young.

Lorenia shrugs.

Forty: (To Participant 2) You? Are you coming to this party? Should be good?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: Come on.

Lorenia: Look, maybe I...

Forty: You're not bailing on me?

Lorenia thinks about this for a minute.

Lorenia: Fuck it!

Forty: That's the spirit! Come on then.

He gets his phone out and orders a taxi for three to Rab's house.

Forty: They say it'll be about 15 minutes. Fuck it, we'll catch one on the street.

They get their coats on and go outside and set off walking down the street. A taxi comes up the road and Forty steps out to wave it. They get in. During the taxi ride Forty and Lorenia are all over each other again. The taxi drops them off at an off-license before taking them to Rab's house. Forty pays the driver and they go in.

At Rab's party they circulate a bit saying 'Hi' to few people. Forty scores some pills off Kat and he offers one to Lorenia.

Lorenia: No way.

Forty: Look, just take half. You know it's fine. Me and your sister are both testament to that.

Lorenia: Yeah but it's *me*. I'm unlucky. I'll get a bad one and keel over.

Forty: How are you unlucky?

Lorenia can't think of anything.

Forty: Cause what you're actually saying is that you're pathetic. But you're not pathetic are you? You're fitter than anyone else here.

Lorenia: Well...

Forty: Right. (He bites the pill in two keeping one bit in his mouth). Kiss me.

Lorenia kisses him. Forty pushes the half a pill into her mouth. Lorenia pulls away.

Lorenia: (Sticking her tongue out).Blah. That was a nasty trick.

Forty: Spit it out then.

Lorenia doesn't spit it out.

Forty: Nice one.

At this point the lights go out. People start cheering. A few people light lighters and phones so they can see what's going on. General background chatter. People become accustomed to the light and conversation starts up again.

Rab: Fucking hell. Anybody got any cash for the meter? Anyone? Someone wanna go to the garage for me?

Lorenia and Forty go into Rab's bedroom, undress and start making love in the dark. Edith comes into the house.

Edith: (To Rab) You stingy twat. Where's the lights?

Rab: You wanna go to the garage to get top up?

Edith: No.

Rab: Will your sister go for me?

Edith: Is Lo here?

Rab: Yeah. With your boss.

Edith: (Angry) What the fuck? Where?

Rab: How the fuck should I know?

Edith: Fuck. She's got training tomorrow.

Edith searches around the house pushing past people.

Edith: (Calling) Lo? Get the fuck out here now you stupid bitch. (To random party goer). Do you know my sister? Fuck you then.

Lorenia and Forty hear her calling. Forty tries to tell her to stay still but Lorenia jumps out of bed and starts getting dressed. Edith bursts in. recognises Lorenia starts to drag her out half naked and then stops.

Edith: Is he in here?

Edith jumps onto the bed and starts hitting the body under the covers. Forty is pretty well protected but he's shouting for her to get off.

Edith: Fucking twat.

Lorenia keeps shouting at Edith to stop. Eventually she gives up and drags Lorenia out in a slightly better state of dress.

Edith: Come on.

Edith drags her down the corridor with Lorenia fighting her. Lorenia falls onto the floor against the wall.

Lorenia: Stop!

Edith kicks the wall opening up the hole to Wonderland.

Edith: (Confused for a moment) What the fuck? (To Lorenia). Get up. Come on.

Lorenia starts to get up then she sees there's this lit hole disappearing somewhere. She starts to scabble down it.

Edith: What are you doing? Tries to grab her. (Calling) Lorenia!

Lorenia disappears out of sight. Forty appears next to Edith.

Forty: Where's she...

Edith: In there. (Beat). You fucking twat. (Punches Forty in the arm)

Forty: You're fired.

Edith: Fuck off I'm fired. (Looks into hole). It goes right back.

Forty: I got her to take half a pill.

Edith: Well that's something. (Calling down hole). Lorenia.  
(To Forty) She's gonna have to come out.

Forty: I'll go get her.

Edith: Fuck that.

She gets down on her hands and knees and crawls in.

Edith: (Calling) Lorenia – get your skinny arse out here now.

There's no answer.

Edith: Fucking hell.

Edith starts crawling down the hole.

Forty: You alright?

Edith: Just give us a moment alright? (Calling) Lorenia.

Edith crawls into Wonderland. Forty doesn't follow. He goes and sits on the sofa and smokes a cigarette. Then goes to find Participant 2 – the next section is like when your drunk relative tries to impart wisdom on you – it's kind of open and honest but the implication is that they're showing off.

Forty: You've met them both. Which one do you think's better?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: They're both dirty little whores at the end of the day.

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: You know her sister'll do anything for work? Wherever I click my fingers – it's on tap.

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: But she doesn't do herself any favours see? If you know she's easy then... Maybe she's not bothered about that though. I don't know. (Laughs to himself).

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: And the swimmer. I mean, she's got the fitness but... actually, she was better than I thought she'd be but... (sighs)... it's sad. You ever....? You know?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: After a while it stops meaning anything. With anybody I think. Boring... stale. Maybe it's just me. You hit thirty and the rules change. Every fucker's getting married, yeah? Having kids. You hit forty and, if you're single then it's a fucking achievement. You know? Like... like you haven't given in. And all those boring cunts who've settled down, bought a house and trapped themselves in a bubble. It's fucking tragic isn't it? (He thinks about this for a while) But what's a boy to do?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: You seen that big hole in the wall? That's life that is – swallowing up the party. I'm not going anywhere fucking near it. I'll stay here and drink and smoke until there's nobody left. Get the last laugh yeah? Heh.

Forty continues to chat with Participant 2 – he starts to repeat some of the stories that he's already told this evening. Basically his aim is to bore the pants off Participant 2 talking about himself until Participant 2 tries to escape.

## Kat

Kat and Marionetta are sitting in The Cherry Stone having a drink. Participant 8 (Male) has been told to meet in the pub as well and to sit at a specific table nearby so that there's no way that Participant 8 isn't going to overhear the conversation.

Kat: What? So what are you saying?

Marionetta shrugs.

Kat: You can't just... do that. You know? Fuck me and then fuck off.

Marionetta: There's Reverie.

Kat: Fuck her.

Marionetta: You already have.

Kat: So? You can't be bothered about that.

Marionetta: I'm... not.

Kat: Look, just fucking bed me tonight. We'll talk about this in the morning.

Marionetta: (Frowns) You're too....

Kat: What?

Marionetta: Even though you try to be nothing, you're not. Look at your heart.

Kat: I don't get it.

Marionetta: You're like... meat and bones and sweat and...

Kat: And...

Marionetta: And I am like vapour. Like ammonia. A poisonous gas. I will kill you and you will die.

Kat: Fuck off.

Marionetta shrugs.

Kat: You should fucking lay off the Hi-Def.

Marionetta: It's the truth. You know it. That's why it hurts you.

Kat: Whatever.

Marionetta: It's true.

Marionetta downs her drink then stands up and walks out of the pub. Kat watches her leave then looks around to see if anybody has noticed the conversation. He notices Participant 8.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You fucking hear that?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: You fucking did. I saw you listening.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: I only fucked her once.

Kat takes a drink and thinks about things.

Kat: What is it about fucking women, eh?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: You got a girlfriend?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: They're like... fucking schizos. One minute: one thing. Next minute...

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: She said I made her feel like gas. I mean... to me that's a fart isn't it? I don't fucking get it.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Fuck 'em.

Kat raises his glass to Participant 8 and drinks.

Kat: I mean, they go on about us using them as fucking sex objects but like... I mean... it's not like they're good for anything else. Like, I had this friend whose missus just nagged him all the time. He fucking hated it. Like... what's the point of that? Just making someone's life miserable for no reason?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: And she's like... 'You make me feel like I'm not there' – and she doesn't just mean that I ignore her. No... that would be too straight forward. She means like... (sighs) I don't know what she means. Fucking hell.

Participant 8: (Responds)



Kat: That's the big joke. You get stuck with someone who doesn't make any sense to you. Men and Women.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: And then you're supposed to stop looking about and you're supposed to just... I don't know. It's a fucking mess.

Kat necks his drink.

Kat: Ha ha. Sorry, mate. Just... you know - Needed to get that of my chest.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: I'm not really, you know - macho scum... not macho - whatever you call it.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: When I was like, 13 I thought I had it all figured out. Like you fell in love and that was it. But the more people I fucking meet the less it makes sense. And the more you fall in love the less it means something. (Beat) Until it doesn't mean anything at all.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Pretty tragic isn't it?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Empty. Maybe that's what she means. Empty.

If Participant 8 Responds to this then they continue talking until the conversation runs out.

Kat: What you doing?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Do you want a drink?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat doesn't argue with them. He gets his wallet out and checks his money.

Kat: Watch my bag yeah?

He goes to the bar, gets a drink and then comes back to his place. He sits there for a while.

Kat: Fucking women. (Laughs to himself) Sorry mate. Don't know why you've...

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: What's your name?  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: Dr. (Name). PhD in crazy fuckers. Nice to meet you.  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: (Laughs) Don't worry, I'll leave you be now.  
Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat sits there in silence drinking his drink. If Participant 8 asks him a question then he'll respond to it and the conversation will open up again. If Participant 8 doesn't say anything then he doesn't respond. Eventually:

Kat: Look mate, you don't know where I can get some pills do ya?  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: I'm not an undercover cop or anything.  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: (If they say 'no') Thanks anyway. (If they say 'yes'). You got a number for them?  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: Do you know if they'll lay me on like... about thirty or forty - There's a big party on tonight. I'll pay for them when they're sold, yeah?  
Participant 8: (Responds – hopefully negatively – if this is still 'yes' then Kat pushes his luck even more until his request is completely unreasonable).  
Kat: Yeah, alright mate. Never mind, eh?  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: Yeah... Eh - let me get you a drink yeah? Don't tell anyone like.  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: (If no) Sure? (If yes) Cool – like payment to keep quiet yeah?  
Participant 8: (Responds)  
Kat: Cool.

Kat either goes to the bar to get a drink or else sits there and finishes his own. He picks up a flyer on the table and studies it.

Kat: (To Participant 8 - indicating flyer) You heard of these?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Sound alright. Might go.

He gets up.

Kat: What ya doing now?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Alright well... cool. Er... See ya.

Kat dawdles around getting his shit together.

Kat: You're alright, you know.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: See ya mate. Cool.

Kat leaves the pub and walks off towards the gig. When he gets there he goes straight to the bar.

Rab: Well hopefully *Fuckhead's* not coming.

Nekomi starts making a cross with her index fingers and trying to stop Rab from continuing. Kat begins to walk over to them.

Rab: Speaking of murder... Well, I'm hoping that *Fuckhead's* not coming.

Nekomi starts making a cross with her index fingers and trying to stop Rab from continuing. Kat begins to walk over to them.

Rab (not noticing): I mean he's just such a... such a *Fuckhead*.

Kat: Who's a fuckhead.

Rab: (Not missing a beat). You are you fucking cunt.

Nekomi goes silent. Kat laughs.

Kat: Sure thing. You got any pills?

Nekomi: Marionetta's around somewhere.

Kat: I'm not after Hi-Def.

Nekomi: Yeah, but she gets...

Kat: Well I need something. Long night ahead.

Nekomi: What're you doing tonight Kat?

Kat: Staying here for a few then off to this dick's party (gestures to Rab)

Rab: DMT. You've got the cutest little DMT.

Kat: You're not still on with that bullshit. Ladbrokes have got 10 to 1 on you losing your marbles in the next 12 months.

Rab: 10 to 1. You've got the cutest little...

Kat: You're such a dick Rab. You know you're fucking losing it. You fucking know.

Nekomi: There's ten strangers at Rab's house. He just left them there.

Kat: SUCH A DICK! What... you just left them there? Well, there's nothing to nick I suppose.

Rab: That's what I said.

Nekomi: I said it's like Schrödinger's cat, you know? They may or may not be there when we get back. The cat is neither dead nor alive...

Kat: Well I'm definitely alive.

Rab: Your spluttering heart/

Nekomi: /It's interesting you know? Like... nothing is certain. It makes me feel...

Rab: Deranged?

Nekomi: Happy.

Kat rolls his eyes.

Kat: You guys should join a club for fucking weirdos. A freak show.

Nekomi: It must be easy without a soul.

Kat: Never a chore. Anyway, it's all fucking crap. You've just gotta go with it. You try and explain it and you fucking lose it.

Rab: So what you're saying is that there's no use in trying to explain anything or thinking about things like that because...

Kat: Because it's all fucking shit.

Rab: Brilliant! I'll just... fucking shit, you've got the cutest little...

Kat: I'll take that as a sign that I'm right shall I?

Rab: Somewhere deep down in er... that...

Kat: Kat's got your tongue, have I?

Rab: I know that there is no such thing as right or wrong and that makes me weak to someone like you – who is basically an idiot.

Kat: So, not only am I **right** but I'm right because you think too much and I just fucking flow it.

Rab: Well, you win the petty argument, in a sense - but only because it's based on a premise that's completely incorrect.

Kat: No premise about my premises. You're just wrong. Face it. Fucking-wroooooong. (totally changing tack). So the party.

Rab: (quietly) I'm not wrong.

Kat: You guys wanna go in on...

Rab: slams his hand on the table) I'M NOT FUCKING WRONG!

Silence.

Kat: ...some pills or something.

Nekomi: Marionetta has some.

Kat: I heard she's dry. Like a desert. A dry fucked up whore. (mimicking Marionetta) 'Once upon a time there was a girl whose vagina was so fucking dry that any man she fucked turned to dust.'

Rab and Nekomi sit there.

Kat: Fuck you then . I'm off to get a drink. Want one?

Long pause.

Kat: No? Rab? You want one?

Rab: Does it come with some kind of pact?

Kat: Of course.

Rab: Being?

Kat: I don't know... er... You let me fuck your mother.

Rab: If your dick's six foot long and can pierce solid mahogany.

Kat: As if, we both know that she went for a cardboard box job.

Rab: Actually, she's on my mantle-piece. Mantle-piece

Kat: Ashes? She didn't have it off with our Marionetta did she?

Rab shrugs.

Kat: What'll it be?

Rab: Beer... Stella... You cunt.

Kat: And my little Cheshire cat?

Nekomi: You're only calling her dry because she turned you down.

Kat: I'll call that two shall I?

Nekomi: I'll get my own.

Kat: Two then. Right...In a bit.

Kat disappears off to the bar.

Nekomi: You know you're both the exactly the same don't you? Why'd you let him buy you a drink?

Rab: Because, he's a cunt and I wanted a drink. Don't expect me to have principles. Not where beer's concerned.

Nekomi: He is your reflection Rab – everything you hate about him. That's what you're running from.

They sit in silence. Nekomi gets out her phone and calls Participant 6.

Nekomi: Hey Superman / Superwoman It's Nekomi. You know - the girl in the tree?... Hi. Yeah. I was wondering if you fancied coming down to XXXX bar. Yeah. I'm with a few people. There's a party tonight.

Nekomi hangs up.

Rab: The tree girl? Who was that?

Nekomi: Someone I just met.

Rab: What in a tree? You're a monkey now are you?

Nekomi: I'm a Cheshire cat aren't I?

Rab: Point taken. (Frowns) So what's the tree thing about?

Nekomi shrugs.

Rab: It's like I hear you talking but the words make no sense.

Nekomi: That's because your brain is swimming in booze.

Rab: Fair enough.

Kat returns with drinks for Nekomi and Rab.

Nekomi: I said I didn't want one.

Kat: To ease my troubled conscience?

They look at each other for a moment. Nekomi sighs.

Kat: Cool. Good.

Nekomi: It's probably laced.

Rab: Actually. You're fucking right. (to Kat) Empty your pockets.

Kat: You what?

Rab: Empty your pockets now.

Kat looks at them but gives in. He empties everything out of his pockets onto the table.

Rab: Inside pocket.

He empties the inside pocket out.

Nekomi: Jeans. (beat) Back pockets as well.

Kat stands up and shows them that he's not got anything in his pockets.

Rab: Jacket.

Kat: What?

Nekomi: Let him check your jacket.

Kat: Jesus.

Kat gives Rab his jacket. Rab searches through it but finds nothing .

Rab: Clear.

Nekomi takes a drink.

Kat: You're fucking thorough – I'll give you that.

Rab: The last think I need is waking up tomorrow with an arse-full of your semen.

Nekomi spits her drink out in laughter all over Kat.

Kat: (Jumping up) For fuck's sake.

Rab: It serves you right for being such a cunt. Thanks for the drinks - now fuck off.

Kat: Fuck both of you.

Kat walks over to the bar. Marionetta walks in and goes to the bar.

Kat: Alright?

Marionetta: Sure. Look, I'm...

Kat: Look, you got any pills?

Marionetta: (Frowns) Er... Not on me. H-DMT-V?

Kat: Not that desperate.

Marionetta: I'll go home and get some if you want.

Kat: Yeah, whatever. I'll see if someone else's got...

Marionetta: Well just say, yeah? Fiver each.

Kat: That's a fucking rip off.

Marionetta: They're white rabbits. Good high: Clean. We've had them before.

Kat: They were free then.

Marionetta: You want me to starve?

Kat: I thought you were a gas.

Marionetta looks at her feet. Kat shrugs. They stand in silence. Marionetta buys a drink at the bar, pays for it.

Kat: Maybe I will - the pills I mean.

Marionetta turns with her drink in hand. Her purse with her key attached is on the bar.

Marionetta: Ok, cool. Come and see me in a bit yeah?

Kat: Sure.

Marionetta: Cool.

Marionetta walks over to where Rab and Nekomi are sitting, leaving her wallet on the bar. Kat slides it off the bar and puts it in his pocket. He orders a drink and pays for it. Reverie comes in and makes a beeline for him. Hopefully by this point Participant 8 has arrived at the bar and is around somewhere.

Reverie: Hey.



Kat: Alright?

Reverie: Sure. You?

Kat: You got any pills?

Reverie: Hi-Def.

Kat: What is it with Hi-Def?

Reverie: I nicked it off that dumb bitch (nodding towards Marionetta who is looking over.)

Marionetta comes over.

Reverie: Shit.

Marionetta: You seen my wallet? I think I left it on the bar. My keys as well.

Kat: Dunno.

Marionetta: If I can't find them then I can't get your order.

Kat: Right. Well, I'll help you then. Give me a minute.

Marionetta: Fuck.

She goes back to sit down.

Kat: (To Reverie) I've got them in my pocket.

Reverie: Serves her right.

Kat: Maybe.

He takes a swig of his drink.

Reverie: Nobody wants to buy this.

Kat: I'm not surprised. It's a bit hardcore.

Reverie: It's alright.

Kat: Not for me. Look... apparently she's got loads of pills at her flat. You wanna come with me and pick them up?

Reverie: Sure.

Kat: Cool. Let me make this look like it's not me.

He has a quick walk around the bar and asks a few people if they've seen a wallet. Hopefully he finds Participant 8.

Kat: Hey... alright. You came. Cool. You with anyone?

Participant 8: (Responds – hopefully they’re on their own)

Kat: Cool. (Points to Reverie) See her?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: I’m with her. You wanna go introduce yourself? I’ll be back in a minute.

He watches Participant 8 go and talk to Reverie. (If there’s any problems then he goes and introduces them) Then he walks over to Marionetta.

Kat: Hey. No luck I’m afraid.

Marionetta: Fuck.

Kat: I’m going to try to get some. I’d get some for you but you spat on me and called me a cunt.

Rab: Er... Look if you’re getting some then get us some yeah?

Kat doesn’t reply.

Rab: *She* spat on you. Look - I’d call my best friend a cunt.

Kat: Is that begging? I think that’s begging.

Rab: Fuck you. Get them or don’t. I’m not playing.

Kat: Look, I’ll see, alright? See what happens.

Kat steps away and Marionetta touches his arm.

Marionetta: (Quietly to Kat). I need somewhere to stay.

Kat: At mine?

Rab: Just stay at the party.

Nekomimi: You can stay at my house.

Kat: Not mine. Three’s a crowd.

Rab: Like you’re gonna pick up some fucking bird, or something.

Kat looks at him.

Kat: Fuck you all.

Rab: It’s not like you’re gonna be able to do anything. You’ll have a knob like a cheese string.

Kat: Like yours you mean?

Rab: Just like mine. Real appealing.

They laugh.

Nekomis: You see! You love each other really.

Rab: So you gonna get them or not?

Kat: Get me a drink.

Rab: Fucking hell... alright. You can help me though.

Rab stands up and they go over to the bar.

Kat: Cheers.

Rab: Fuck you.

Rab goes and sits down.

Reverie: (About Participant 8) Who's this cunt?

Kat: Shut up. (Beat) I'll take this out shall I?

Reverie: Cool.

Kat: (To Participant 8) We've got stuff to see to – you should come.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: (Looks at Reverie) Just a drink somewhere else. Before the band starts. Yeah?

Kat must convince Participant 8 that he has to come with them without explaining what they're actually doing. They leave the bar together.

Reverie: Which way is it?

Kat: This way.

They walk in silence for a bit.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You like to have fun?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: (To Reverie) *We* like to have fun don't we?

Reverie: Sure.

Kat: We gotta go pick up some stuff from a friend's house first yeah? Won't take a minute once we're there. It's about 10 minutes' walk.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Cool.

Reverie: (To Participant 8) So what do you do?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: (Is really critical of this)

Kat: Eh... fangs down yeah? Claws in. This guy's alright. Reverie here sells nicked flowers out of a bucket on the high street. So she's in no position to criticise.

Reverie: It pays the bills.

Kat: Hardly a career though.

Reverie: Better than being dole-queue scum.

Kat: Business is thin.

Reverie: You mean the rent boy business?

Kat: (To Participant 8) I'm not a rent boy.

Reverie: Used to be though. Sucking off politicians round Westminster. Lucrative business wasn't it?

Kat: They did me.

Reverie: How does that work? I mean that's win / win.

Kat: Who am I to question the system?

Reverie: What was it? A young David Cameron – chowing down on your saucisson. Didn't you like, think of selling them out to the papers?

Kat: It's unprofessional.

Reverie: Ah yes... the professional rent boy.

Kat: Hasn't stopped you from having a go has it?

Reverie: Fuck you.

They walk on in silence.

Reverie: (To Participant 8) You ever given or received oral sex from anybody famous?

Kat: Give it a rest.

Reverie: I know someone who had some musician put it up her arse.

Kat: Who was that?

Reverie shrugs.

Kat: So it's not true?

Reverie: It's true.

Kat: Was it you?

Reverie: You wish.

Kat: Have you ever...?

Reverie: Who hasn't?

Kat: Er... me. (To Participant 8) Have you?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: What you've never put it in in a girl's arse.

Kat: Why would I?

Reverie: Ok...

Kat: What?

Reverie: I just thought it was like, the Holy Grail.

Kat: What? Your arsehole is the Holy Grail?

Reverie: Damn right my arse is the Holy Grail – you'll be blessed if you even get the chance to drink from my arsehole. Never mind put your dick anywhere near it.

Kat: Fuck you.

Reverie: Not a chance.

Kat: Holy Grail? More like...

Reverie: Go on.

Kat: I can have your arsehole.

Reverie: Keep dreaming.

They walk on in silence.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You ever been to Amsterdam?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: We went to this, like, private cinema thing in the Red Light District. There was this video of a woman fucking an electric eel.

Reverie: Why do everybody's stories about Amsterdam revolve around some kind of... collective sexual experience? (To Participant 8) Like, do *you* watch porn with your mates?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: (To Kat) I bet *you* do.

Kat: Fuck off.

Reverie: Well why's it suddenly acceptable in Amsterdam?

Kat: I'm just telling you what happened.

Reverie: But it's fucking abnormal. You wouldn't catch that happening with women.

Kat: Women, women – (To Participant 8) We know about fucking women don't we? We've talked about women.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: You don't know shit. Neither of you.

Silence – they walk on.

Kat: What about Anne Summers parties?

Reverie: Fuck you.

(Silence)

Reverie: So what other disgusting shit tickled your fancy in the 'dam? Other than bestiality that is... Scat? Would you like me to shit in your mouth?

Kat: My friend went with a prostitute. He says he kept his socks on.

Reverie: It was you, wasn't it?

Kat: Fuck off.

Reverie: It *so* was. With your socks on – who tells their mates that?

Kat: It's true.

Reverie: Well, you'd know.

Kat: It wasn't fucking me.

Reverie: Sure.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You ever seen anything really nasty? Porn, I mean?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: What about you Rev?

Reverie: Nothing I got off on.

Kat: Yeah right.

Reverie: I mean it.

Kat: But you've seen it.

Reverie: So?

Kat: On your own?

Reverie: With a boyfriend.

Kat: Like...

Reverie: What?

Kat: Like he was trying to... what was it? And did you...?

Reverie: I'll leave that to your imagination.

Kat: What was it?

Reverie: There's no point in even trying.

Kat: I'll get it out of you.

Reverie: No you won't.

Kat: (To Participant 8) I will. I'm like a dog...

Reverie: Yes you are.

Eventually they get to Marionetta's flat. Kat lets them in. It's fairly well decorated. In the kitchen is loads of chemistry apparatus for cooking H-DMT-V. In the lounge is a terrarium filled with caterpillars. A white rabbit hops around the floor.

Kat: Why don't you sit in the lounge eh?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: (To Reverie) Right, where might she...

Reverie: You check the kitchen I'll check the bedroom.

Kat goes through the drawers in the kitchen and looks in the breadbin and fridge etc. Then goes into the bedroom shutting the door behind him. Hopefully the flat is quiet enough for Participant 8 to just about hear them talking.

Kat: They're not here.

Reverie holds up a big bag of pills.

Reverie: Ta-da!

Kat: Nice one.

She takes two out then hands him the bag.

Reverie: You take this.

Kat puts the bag in his pocket. She pushes a pill into this mouth.

Reverie: This... and this

She starts snogging his face off. Over time this progresses further.

Kat: I want it.

Reverie: What?

Kat: The Grail. The prize.

Reverie: You want the prize?

Kat: Bend over.

Reverie: It's not that simple.

Kat: What?

Reverie: Marionetta...

Kat: Don't you think...?

Reverie: You want the brown wings?

Kat: (Thinks) Alright.

Reverie: You make her pay.

Kat: She's not done...

Reverie turns around, pulls down her trousers and leans over the bed.

Reverie: You want this – you fuck this place up and then you fuck her up.

Kat: (Thinks) Yeah... yeah, alright.

Obviously the next section doesn't actually involve the actors having anal sex just a relatively realistic re-creation in case Participant 8 walks in and looks. After they get going a bit.

Reverie: You like?



Kat: Fuck yeah.

Reverie: You see, it's good yeah because if I want you to stop.

She squeezes her arse muscles and Kat cries out in pain and pulls out holding his dick. Reverie whips her jeans up, laughs and pushes him over.

Kat: Fucking bitch.

Reverie laughs then picks up a piece of furniture, jewellery box etc and throws it at Rab on the floor.

Reverie: Fucking cunt. Serves you fucking right.

Laughing she runs out of the bedroom and starts destroying the flat. Then she runs into the lounge grabs Participant 8.

Reverie: (To Participant 8) He's gone fucking mental. Quick.

She drags him out of the flat. They run down the road. Eventually they stop. A few minutes later, Kat comes out of the flat and makes a beeline for the party with the drugs. When he gets there he walks in, spots Marionetta (who doesn't notice him) but starts talking to somebody else who's there whilst listening in on Nekomi and Marionetta's conversation

Nekomi: Ok... my go. Erm...So what's he like then?

Marionetta: Who?

Nekomi: (Thinking Marionetta knows he's there) Kat... in bed?

Marionetta: Um... (Goes to drink then stops). Like... all meat.

Nekomi laughs.

Marionetta: I mean... he seemed a bit embarrassed... no... shy.

Kat wanders into earshot. None of them notice.

Marionetta: Like, and when we were doing it he...

Nekomi: (Giggling and whispering) Did he make you...?

Kat is obviously listening now.

Marionetta: (Laughing) No. But...

Nekomi: (Laughing) What?

Marionetta: (Laughing) I don't know... Like...

Nekomi: (Laughing) You have to tell or drink.

Marionetta drinks

Nekomi: Awwwww....

Marionetta: (Laughing) It was like I wasn't there you know? Like (sighs and does a 'disappearing into nothing' hand-gesture). Like somebody was pulling the strings. Not him.

Nekomi: Were you high?

Marionetta: No.

Kat: Ladies.

Nekomi: Fuck.

Marionetta: (Laughing) Hey... Hi... How are you? (Laughs)

Kat: (Hold bag of pills up) Look.

Marionetta frowns.

Kat: Good aren't I.

Marionetta: Where'd you get those from?

Kat: My secret.

Marionetta: From Cal?

Kat taps the side of his nose.

Nekomi: Are they...?

Marionetta: Oh...

Kat: You want? Fiver each.

Nekomi: No.

Marionetta: I lost my wallet.

Kat: You can owe me. Here...

Nekomi: No.

Marionetta looks at her.

Marionetta: I thought we were getting wasted?

The look at each other in silence.

Kat: Last chance.

Marionetta nods.

Kat puts the bag on her lap and takes a few out. Then he reaches forward and squeezes Marionetta's cheeks so her mouth opens like a fish. He pushes a pill in then he lets go.

Marionetta: (Takes a sip of her drink) Thanks.

Kat: Wait...

He repeats the action. Marionetta watches him as he pushes another into her mouth. He doesn't take his hand off her cheeks this time. Marionetta and Kat are staring each other in the eyes.

Kat: Swallow.

Marionetta swallows.

Kat: Another.

He pushes another one in.

Nekomi: Kat - What the fuck are you doing?

Kat: You heard her - she wants to get wasted.

Marionetta swallows. Kat pushes another one in.

Nekomi: That's enough - M.

Marionetta swallows.

Nekomi: Fucking hell. Stop it! (She grabs his arm). Fucking stop it.

Kat pushes two into Marionetta's mouth. Nekomi starts hitting his arm.

Nekomi: Fucking stop it.

Kat lets go of Marionetta's face.

Kat: Sweet dreams darling.

He turns to Nekomi and holds out a handful of pills.

Kat: And for you?

Nekomi: Fuck off.

Marionetta looks at her.

Marionetta: I need you on my side.

Nekomi: You're all fucking crazy. This is...

Marionetta takes one and holds it out to Nekomi. She looks at it.

Marionetta: Fuck it, yeah?

Nekomi takes the pill and puts it in her mouth. Drinks her can to swallow it down. Kat laughs, then stands up and walks away, bumping into Reverie who is chatting with Participant 8.

Kat: I did it. I fucked up her flat and I fucked her up as well.

Reverie: And you got what you wanted.

Kat looks at the floor.

Kat: You fucked with me. I want it all. The real deal.

Reverie: I told you: My arse is a Grail.

Kat: You fucking...

The lights go out. Reverie slips away.

Kat: I'll fucking...

He starts looking around for her but she's hiding. Kat stands by the door and waits for her. She sees him and decides to use the hole to Wonderland instead but he notices her as she starts to crawl down it and grabs her legs.

Kat: Fucking bitch.

Reverie: Fuck off.

Kat: I'm gonna fuck you until your arse bleeds.

Reverie kicks him in the face and he lets go. She crawls down the tunnel to safety.

Kat: Fucking bitch

Kat starts to crawl down after her.

## Lorenia

In bar/ café. Lorenia is sitting at the bar. Edith is working behind the bar. Forty is in the back sitting about. Participant 1 and Participant 2 are sitting at tables on their own.

Lorenia: Mum's been asking after you.

Edith: Right. Well... you know.

Lorenia: I'm sure she'd like to see you.

Edith: Tell her I'm fine. Look, it's not like I'm avoiding her. She can come here if she wants.

Lorenia: Yeah, well maybe we could all do Sunday lunch?

Edith: Maybe a weekday yeah? No offense, but I'm not normally in a fit state on Sunday lunchtime.

Lorenia: Right.

Lorenia sits there nursing her glass. Edith serves a customer. When she's finished she takes a swig out of a pint of beer and then leans against the beer taps near Lorenia.

Edith: I hate it when people come and see me at work.

Lorenia: (Angry) Sorry. I...

Edith: Not like that. It's good to see you y'know? Just... (sighs) You don't get chance to... customers are always coming in. You have to break off. *You* know what I mean.

Lorenia: (Smiles) Sure. (Beat). We should still get together.

Edith: Sure. What you up to tonight?

Lorenia: Probably just stay in and watch crap TV.

Edith: Really?

Lorenia: Yeeeaahh. (sighs). Not very exciting.

Edith: Maxxy's band's playing tonight. I'm gonna try get off work to see them.

Lorenia: Well, it's hardly heaving.

Edith: You can be the bait. I'm sure he's got a thing for you.

Lorenia goes quiet.

Edith: Oooh. Am I to assume that the feeling is reciprocated?

A customer comes to the bar.

Lorenia:                               That's a big word for you.

Edith starts to serve them.

Edith:                               Do you know what else I know? (Beat) Paedo-necrophilia.  
That's fucking dead kids.

She smiles at the customers.

Edith:                               Hi. What can I get you?

Lorenia smiles and shakes her head in disbelief. Edith gets the customers their drinks and then goes to stand near her sister.

Edith:                               You *should* get out more, you know. Come with me.

Lorenia:                              Yeah right. I'd be dead. I don't know how you do it.

Edith:                               Sometimes it hurts.

Lorenia:                              Just be careful.

Edith:                               It's fine.

Lorenia:                              So you know what you're taking?

Edith:                               Well, it's the same crap. If something bad was going to happen then it probably would have.

Lorenia:                              Hmmm...

Edith:                               You're right though. Lolo. You're the kind of person who'd end up on life-support. You'd pass out from a nose bleed.

Lorenia:                              I'm not that bad.

Edith:                               Sure. (Chuckles). Hey check this out. Er...

She runs through menus on an iPod. Find what she's looking for and presses play. *Low Rider* by War comes on. Edith dances about a bit on and off over the next section.

Edith:                               You remember we used to put dad's final of this on?

Lorenia:                              You remember different things to me.

Edith:                               It's like your song. (To the song) LOW – RE – NYA gets a little higher.

She turns it up. Forty comes out of the back and turns it down.

Edith:                               Fucker.

Forty: Remember that I *am* your boss. It's supposed to be 20s jive not fucking soul train.

Edith: It's Lo's song. We used to dance about naked to it.

Lorenia: She's lying.

Edith: I'm trying to turn him on for you.

Lorenia: (Embarrassed) We were, like 6 years old.

Edith: Quite the touch Lo. He's not a paedophile.

Lorenia: What is it with you and paedophiles?

Forty: Shall I answer that?

Edith: (Sticking fingers up) Fuck you both.

Lorenia: Your stock response.

Edith: You especially Lo.

Silence for a moment. Forty goes to the iPod and changes the track. Edith serves a customer.

Forty: (To Lorenia) What was her song?

Lorenia: Je ne regret rien.

Forty: That's appropriate.

Lorenia: She hasn't always been like that. I was the bad one when we were kids. She got my cast-offs.

Forty: Bad?

Lorenia: I smeared jam on the next door neighbour's door handle.

Forty: I cracked my brother's head open. And, I got bollocked for pushing over the old wall in our garden. It was listed. Mum and dad had to pay like a grand to have it put back up.

Lorenia: Hmm...

Forty: (To Edith) Look are you gonna bugger off soon? Save me some money.

Edith: I'll work until I want.

Forty: So you weren't gonna ask?

Edith shrugs.

Forty: Yeah right. Well I'll go home then.

Edith: Hold on...

Forty: What a surprise.

Edith: Go on then. If you're offering.

Forty: You off to Maxxy's gig?

Edith: Maybe.

Forty: She left these freebies. I was supposed to give them as a prize to someone. Not sure what for though. Anyway, you can have them for being the laziest employee. Take your sister.

Edith: She's off home to froth over Simon Cowell.

Lorenia: I could...

Edith: Er... No way. I'm not talking you through a night out. You're two years older than me. It's like taking your gran to a rave. (Puts on an old lady's voice) What do I do with this? (Edith does the tongue in cheek blowjob action)

Lorenia: Right.

Edith: I love you sis but I'd rather go with anybody else. In the world. If Hitler was here...

Lorenia: Now I'm worse than Hitler.

Edith: Just less fun.

Edith scans the bar gaze settles on Participant 1.

Edith: They're clearly not doing anything.

Edith comes around the bar and goes up to Participant 1.

Edith: Been stood up?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Don't explain. Come and see a good band. If I'm bad company then you can just go home. I'm definitely not bad company though.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Look, you've clearly got nothing better to do. Come on. Live a little. I'll get you a drink.

Edith goes and gets them both a shot of something.

Edith: (To Lorenia) See?



Lorenia:                                You do whatever.

Edith takes the drink back to Participant 1.

Edith:                                    Right, we'll neck these, then I'll go for a piss and then we'll go yeah?

Participant 1:                        Ok.

Edith:                                    Cheers.

Edith downs her drink and then gets up and goes to the toilet.

Lorenia:                                (To Forty) I'm sorry she's a fucking nightmare.

Forty:                                    (Shrugs). It's interesting.

Lorenia:                                But it's just constant. The pills, the drinking.

Forty:                                    It's alright.

Edith comes back from the toilet.

Lorenia:                                Well I'm sorry.

Edith hears Lorenia.

Edith:                                    Sorry for me?

Lorenia:                                What?

Edith:                                    (To Forty) Did she just apologise for me?

Forty shrugs.

Edith:                                    Nice one Lo. Stick up for one another yeah? Sister's together.

Lorenia:                                You're the one who...

Edith:                                    Fuck you, y'know? Dick.

Lorenia just stares at the bar in silence.

Forty:                                    Go on. On your bike. Before someone gets hurt.

Edith:                                    Woooo. So you're gonna make your move?

Lorenia:                                Fuck off Edith!

Edith goes quiet.

Edith:                                    OK then fine. (Smiling to Participant 1). You ready then? Cool,

She holds out her arm so they can hook their arms through.

Edith: Ta-ra.

They leave.

Lorenia: (To herself) Fuck. (To Forty). She's a nightmare.

Forty: What can I say?

Lorenia: Yeah. It's...it's like. I don't know. It's like somebody's pushed her self-destruct button.

Forty: Aren't we all a bit like that?

Lorenia looks at him and frowns.

Forty: I take it that you're not?

Lorenia: I just want to get by. No ups, no downs.

Forty: But that's the fun bit.

Lorenia: (Shrugs) I don't know. Maybe I don't mean that. She's just so extreme. Everything's so...

Forty: Well... (thinks) It's interesting.

Lorenia: Am I not?

Forty looks at her. Measures her up.

Forty: Well...

Lorenia: (Nervously) Haha. Right.

Forty: Seriously though - What do you want?

Lorenia: I don't know.

Forty: Money, women, sex?

Lorenia: (Laughs) Yes, give me loads of women.

Forty: You know what I mean.

Lorenia: I mean... my swimming's going well. I'm not the best yet but I'm getting there. I train, I swim, I compete. That's what I always wanted. That's what I do.

Forty: Well there you go.

Lorenia: Yup.

Forty: Men / Women?

Lorenia thinks about this.

Forty: Don't have to...

Lorenia: I think I just have to face the fact that I've failed – in a romantic sense. I'm good at loads of things but relationships (Gives thumb down). I'm too much of a push-over. Don't get me wrong, I'll find some nice guy and do all the stuff that's expected of me but...

Forty: No love. It might...

A customer comes to the bar.

Forty: Sorry.

Lorenia: No passion.

Forty serves the customer. Lorenia sits there looking around the bar. She spots Participant 2 sitting on their own.

Lorenia: Sorry about my sister.

Participant 2: (Responds)

Lorenia: She... Never mind... Maybe you weren't. Have you been here long?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Lorenia: Have they let you down?

Participant 2: (Responds).

Lorenia frowns.

Forty: Do you want a drink? Wine? I've got a nice Argentinian Red – Otra Vida.

Lorenia: Er... I...

Forty: You probably don't like red.

Lorenia: No, it's fine.

Forty: Good. It's nice. Fruity. Easy on the palette.

Lorenia: Sure. I mean, I shouldn't but... sure? (Questioning herself)

Forty pours a glass of wine and slides it over the bar.

Forty: Right, I'm going to cash up.

Lorenia: Thanks.

Lorenia sits at the bar for a while sipping her drink. She keeps looking over at Participant 2 as if thinking about things. She eventually speaks to them from across the bar.

Lorenia: What's your name?

Participant 2: (Responds).

Lorenia: Do you mind if I join you?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Lorenia: (If response is negative) Never mind. (Drinks) Look I'm just trying to be friendly, you know? You've been there on your own for ages. Maybe that's what you want.

Participant 2: (Responds)

If response is still negative then Lorenia doesn't push it any further. If positive:

Lorenia: Thanks. I'm Lorenia. Nice to meet you.

Lorenia sits down. (They have a basic 'getting to know you conversation' – see introduction). Lorenia tries to bring the conversation back around to her sister and family. Lorenia will share memories from the actor's own life in relation to playing with friends, siblings etc. Some examples of bits of dialogue are included below:

Lorenia: I'm really sorry about my sister's behaviour. I mean, it's kind of embarrassing.

Lorenia: Do you have a brother or sister?

Lorenia: Mine's... you know? A burden. We're not a very close family but, well... she doesn't make it easy you know? Sometimes I wish it was easier for us to see each other.

After a while, Forty comes back in with an opened but mostly full bottle of wine. He tops up Lorenia without asking then asks Participant 2 if he/she wants a drink. Lorenia introduces them and Forty asks them a number of direct questions about travelling, music, sport, jobs etc. This is naturally allowed to expand into various avenues but Lorenia keeps pulling the focus of the conversation back onto family. Forty tries to steer the conversation away from family and onto 'living life' – e.g. travelling experiences, parachute jumps. So there is this pull between 'home' and 'away' and 'safety' and 'adventure' occurring. Eventually this descends into a more philosophical discussion about getting the most out of life.

Forty: I mean, there was this night in Malaysia where we went skinny dipping on acid and there was phosphorescence in the water. Most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

Lorenia: I can't believe you went swimming when you were high.

Forty: It's amazing. I mean, you must get that?

Lorenia: Of course but... I mean, it's so dangerous, I mean what if something happens? What if you freak out or something?

Forty: It wasn't like that. I mean, surely you've got to take those risks? Or else you don't... nothing good happens.

Lorenia: Yeah, but you heard about that girl Pick yeah? She drove her mum's car into a river with her two friends in the back. Only she got out. I mean, was that worth it?

Forty: It's just risk. That was bad luck. You've got to take chances.

Lorenia: Well I wouldn't take *anything* and go swimming. Isn't swimming in phosphorescence enough? I mean...

Forty: I don't know. It just happened like that. You can't y'know... you can't micro-manage life, can you?

Forty gets up and goes behind the bar. He pours out three shots of Sambuca then brings them back around to the table with the bottle. He lights one and then downs it and pours himself another. Then he raises his glass.

Forty: Cheers!

Lorenia: Er...

Forty: (Friendly but forcefully at Lorenia) Cheers.

They drink the Sambuca.

Lorenia: Jesus. I'm going to have to go home after this.

Forty: Nonsense. There's a party at Rab's tonight. We're going to go for a drink somewhere else and then go there. You're going to show your sister that you're not the wilting flower that she thinks you are. (He picks up the bottle of Sambuca). Another?

Lorenia: I'm alright thanks.

Forty: Good. I would have had to charge you for it anyway. Right. Let's go. Where shall it be? Any suggestions? No? *Submarine* then. Next best place to this (to Participant 2) Are you coming with us?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: Good. What was your name again?

They get their coats. And stand outside. Forty sets the alarm. He grabs the bottle of wine on the way out. They set off down the street. Conversation is about crazy things that have happened on nights out.

Forty: I went to this, er, psy-trance night in Leeds. Not that I'm really into that kinda stuff. Anyway, we'd all done a bit of powder and my friend's girl-friend passes me this thing that I think is a magic mushroom so I just neck it. Then she asks for the bag back and I found out it was a gram of MDMA wrapped in cling film.

Lorenia: You're lucky you're not dead.

Forty: Yeah. Well, I thought that was it then but my friend says – if anyone can deal with this it's you. So I just get on with it. Was completely gone though. Wasn't good at all. I mean, drugs are good fun and stuff but you don't want too much. It fucks you up, it's embarrassing and you don't remember anything in the morning. So basically – what's the point?

Lorenia: God. I've never done anything like that. (To Participant 2) Have you? I'm pretty sure Edith has. That's exactly what she's like.

Forty: Why are you so down on Edith?

Lorenia: I'm not. It's just... you know...

Forty: You wish you were more like her. Braver.

Lorenia: No. No way. She can do what she wants but... I don't know... it just feels so... sordid sometimes. When you go round and she's still awake, you know? - chewing her face off.

Forty: (Shrugs) Maybe.

Lorenia: Look, I know you're not going to agree with me but it's not my scene. Destroying yourself.

Forty: So what is?

Lorenia: Swimming. Watching TV.

Forty: Not very sociable.

Lorenia: I'm not. But, I mean, if you're going to train every day then you've got to put that before other things. Going out. Drinking. You know?

Forty: Maybe.

Lorenia: Haven't you had anything that it was worth giving everything up for?

Forty: Love? Kids?

Lorenia: Yeah.

Forty: Well if you love someone then you'd expect them to be similar to you right? So you enjoy doing the same things. Or else you just feel trapped. That's what fucks me off about women right? At first they're like – 'I wanna hear about your life' but it's just a fucking cover. All they want to do is stay in and watch X-Factor.

Lorenia: At least I'm honest.

Forty: I just don't get how arrogant that is. It's like – well...

Lorenia: Like... like life's something to be disposed of in front of the TV. I get what you're saying. I just...

Forty: It's like treating this opportunity like it doesn't mean anything. And you don't get another.

Lorenia: You can't do stuff all the time though.

Forty: Why not? It's like these people think that they want to live a long life but it's just filled with nothing. To live long you do nothing.

Lorenia: Maybe.

They reach the bar. They go in and buy drinks and sit down. Forty asks Participant 2 about what they think about 'making the most of life'. Conversation develops. When Participant 2 goes to the toilet Forty and Lorenia start to kiss. They're still at it when Participant 2 gets back. They notice Participant 2 and stop.

Forty: Another drink here or shall we go to Rab's?

Lorenia: I don't think I can drink any more.

Forty: Well, the night is young.

Lorenia shrugs.

Forty: (To Participant 2) You? Are you coming to this party? Should be good?

Participant 2: (Responds)

Forty: Come on.

Lorenia: Look, maybe I...

Forty: You're not bailing on me?

Lorenia thinks about this for a minute.

Lorenia: Fuck it!

Forty: That's the spirit! Come on then.

He gets his phone out and orders a taxi for three to Rab's house.

Forty: They say it'll be about 15 minutes. Fuck it, we'll catch one on the street.

They get their coats on and go outside and set off walking down the street. When a taxi comes up the road, Forty steps out to wave it. They get in. During the taxi ride Forty and Lorenia are all over each other again. The taxi drops them off at an off-license before taking them to Rab's house. Forty pays the driver and they go in.

At Rab's party they circulate a bit saying 'Hi' to few people. Forty scores some pills off Kat and he offers one to Lorenia.

Lorenia: No way.

Forty: Look, just take half. You know it's fine. Me and your sister are both testament to that.

Lorenia: Yeah but it's *me*. I'm unlucky. I'll get a bad one and keel over.

Forty: How are you unlucky?

Lorenia can't think of anything.

Forty: Cause what you're actually saying is that you're pathetic. But you're not pathetic are you? You're fitter than anyone else here.

Lorenia: Well...

Forty: Right. (He bites the pill in two keeping one bit in his mouth). Kiss me.

Lorenia kisses him. Forty pushes the half a pill into her mouth. Lorenia pulls away.

Lorenia: (Sticking her tongue out).Blah. That was a nasty trick.

Forty: Spit it out then.

Lorenia doesn't spit it out.

Forty: Nice one.

At this point the lights go out. People start cheering. A few people light lighters and phones so they can see what's going on. General background chatter. People become accustomed to the light and conversation starts up again.

Rab: Fucking hell. Anybody got any cash for the meter? Anyone? Someone wanna go to the garage for me?



Lorenia and Forty go into Rab's bedroom, undress and start making love in the dark. Edith comes into the house.

Edith: (To Rab) You stingy twat. Where's the lights?

Rab: You wanna go to the garage to get top up?

Edith: No.

Rab: Will your sister go for me?

Edith: Is Lo here?

Rab: Yeah. With your boss.

Edith: (Angry) What the fuck? Where?

Rab: How the fuck should I know?

Edith: Fuck. She's got training tomorrow.

Edith searches around the house pushing past people.

Edith: (Calling) Lo? Get the fuck out here now you stupid bitch. (To random party goer). Do you know my sister? Fuck you then.

Lorenia and Forty hear her calling. Forty tries to tell her to stay still but Lorenia jumps out of bed and starts getting dressed. Edith bursts in, recognises Lorenia starts to drag her out half naked and then stops.

Edith: Is he in here?

Edith jumps onto the bed and starts hitting the body under the covers. Forty is pretty well protected but he's shouting for her to get off.

Edith: Fucking twat.

Lorenia keeps shouting at Edith to stop. Eventually she gives up and drags Lorenia out in a slightly better state of dress.

Edith: Come on.

Edith drags her down the corridor with Lorenia fighting her. Lorenia falls onto the floor against the wall.

Lorenia: Stop!

Edith kicks the wall opening up the hole to Wonderland.

Edith: (Confused for a moment) What the fuck? (To Lorenia). Get up. Come on.

Lorenia starts to get up then she sees there's this lit hole disappearing somewhere. She starts to scabble down it.

Edith: What are you doing? Tries to grab her. (Calling) Lorenia!

Lorenia disappears out of sight. Forty appears next to Edith.

Forty: Where's she...

Edith: In there. (Beat). You fucking twat. (Punches Forty in the arm)

Forty: You're fired.

Edith: Fuck off I'm fired. (Looks into hole). It goes right back.

Forty: I got her to take half a pill.

Edith: Well that's something. (Calling down hole). Lorenia. (To Forty)  
She's gonna have to come out.

Forty: I'll go get her.

Edith: Fuck that.

She gets down on her hands and knees and crawls in.

Edith: (Shouting) Lorenia – get your skinny arse out here now.

There's no answer.

Edith: Fucking hell.

Edith starts crawling down the hole.

Forty: You alright?

Edith: Just give us a moment alright? (Calling) Lorenia.

Edith crawls into Wonderland.

## Marionetta

Kat and Marionetta are sitting in The Cherry Stone having a drink. Participant 8 (Male) has been told to meet in the pub as well and to sit at a specific table nearby so that there's no way that Participant 8 isn't going to overhear the conversation.

Kat: What? So what are you saying?

Marionetta shrugs.

Kat: You can't just... do that. You know? Fuck me and then fuck off.

Marionetta: There's Reverie.

Kat: Fuck her.

Marionetta: You already have.

Kat: So? You can't be bothered about that.

Marionetta: I'm... not.

Kat: Look, just fucking bed me tonight. We'll talk about this in the morning.

Marionetta: (Frowns) You're too....

Kat: What?

Marionetta: Even though you try to be nothing, you're not. Look at your heart.

Kat: I don't get it.

Marionetta: You're like... meat and bones and sweat and...

Kat: And...

Marionetta: And I am like vapour. Like ammonia. A poisonous gas. I will kill you and you will die.

Kat: Fuck off.

Marionetta shrugs.

Kat: You should fucking lay off the Hi-Def.

Marionetta: It's the truth. You know it. That's why it hurts you.

Kat: Whatever.

Marionetta: It's true.

Marionetta downs her drink then stands up and walks out of the pub. Kat watches her leave then looks around to see if anybody has noticed the conversation. She walks down the street and goes to sit in a doorway across the road from where Participant 5 has been asked to meet. She lets Participant 5 wait until they start to walk off. At that point she calls after them:

Marionetta: Hey!

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Hey! Come here.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Hopefully Participant 5 comes over. If not then Marionetta will keep trying to until Participant 5 Responds.

Marionetta: Who are you waiting for?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Just... I saw somebody waiting there. Then *you* were waiting there.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Is it a date?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Were you late? I mean, what time did you arrange to meet?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Ok. So it wasn't a date?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: (S)he was very beautiful.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Sorry – for your loss I mean. Here...

Marionetta gets a packet of cigarettes out of her pocket.

Marionetta: Do you smoke?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: So what are you going to do now?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta starts rummaging around in her bag and pulls out a glass pipe.

Marionetta: Do you want a hit? Make you feel better?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: I call it H-DMT-V: Hi-Def. It's a synthetic variant of DMT which I've adjusted to encourage 5-HT<sub>2A</sub> activation and mixed with harmaline so you can take it orally or smoke it. It's like... I dunno, it's like you're walking around the insides of everybody's head but you can still function. Almost like being psychic but without any real meaning. I'm not sure that makes sense. Do you understand?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: I normally smoke it like a joint but it's good in a pipe as well. I put it in everything. Small amount yeah? Pills, you know? – it makes a good additive to coffee as well because the harmaline tastes like vanilla. You get the experience but... I don't know. It's weird.

If Participant 5 Responds in the affirmative, Marionetta fills the glass pipe from a bag filled with vanilla flavoured tobacco (the H-DMT-V). Whichever way, when she has finished with it, she puts the pipe and the bag of H-DMT-V on the step next to her.

Marionetta: Once, this guy asked me to meet him, in the playground – you know near (location of nearby playground) yeah? At 10 o'clock in the morning? I stayed there until the next day waiting for him. About 28 hours? I felt bad because, after an hour, I went to get some cigarettes and take a piss and I think that's when he came. I stayed there hoping he'd come back. Then I thought – maybe I'd got the wrong day. So I stayed there all night. He never turned up.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: I don't know if waiting all night was a good idea. It seemed that way at the time. Were you waiting for someone? A lover?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: I heard about a guy who was in such a rush to get to meet his lover that he took a short cut across a frozen river. Except the ice was really thin and he got dragged downstream under the water and frozen into a block of ice. *She* was left waiting as well.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta and Participant 5 sit and talk about lots of different things (see 'Getting to know you'). When the conversation peters out:

Marionetta: Well, it was nice to meet you. Maybe see you again sometime. Don't wait all night, yeah? Not unless you think it's the right thing to do.

Marionetta gets up and walks off. Forgetting the pipe and bag of Hi-Def that she's left on the step. Hopefully Participant 5 notices and chases after her. Otherwise, Marionetta will come back after a few minutes to get it. After this issue has been resolved.

Marionetta: Thanks. Hey, let me buy you a drink – you know? I feel...

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta must now try to convince Participant 5 to come with her. If they really won't come then she asks for their number and, says goodbye and walks away (she will text them later to arrange to meet at the gig). If Participant 5 agrees, they set off walking in the direction where Reverie is selling her flowers. They pass Reverie and Marionetta waves.

Marionetta: Hey, Rev.

Reverie: Alright?

Marionetta: Sure, you?

Reverie: Yup.

Awkward silence.

Marionetta: Ok, cool. Er... see you later. You off to Rab's?

Reverie shrugs.

Marionetta: Cool. Er...see you later.

They keep walking, after they're within a reasonable range of The Oak where they will meet Reverie later, Marionetta asks Participant 5 if they know anywhere good around here. If Participant 5 suggests somewhere then they go there but, as they walk in Marionetta says that the girl / boy behind the bar is an old friend and that she doesn't want to speak to them –

Marionetta: Um... wait... I can't...

Marionetta leaves. Hopefully Participant 5 follows.

Marionetta: That guy / girl at the bar? Um... (s)he's like an old friend. We used to hang out and, y'know? Get high. It's like when I first started cooking and (s)he got a lungful of anhydrous ammonia which nearly killed him / her. It wasn't my fault but... um... do you mind if we go somewhere else? Sorry... It's pretty

awkward. I use the matchbook method now. It's much safer but not as pure.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: Sorry, it's just... he / she's never forgiven me and I don't... you know... um... I don't want to get searched.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: (Smiles) So... do you know anywhere else? Maybe if we just go this way...

Participant 5: (Responds)

They set off walking.

Marionetta: I'm sorry about that. I didn't know he / she... It looked like a nice pub.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta spots Participant 9 who was standing with Reverie in the earlier scene (who has been instructed to follow them). She approaches Participant 9

Marionetta: Excuse me? Do you know where The Oak is? I'm sure it's around here.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Marionetta: Ok, cool thanks (if no). I'm sure we'll be able to find it.

Participant 9: (Responds)

They set off walking in the direction of The Oak. Hopefully, when they walk past it Participant 5 suggests they go in. If so then they run into Reverie in the doorway. If not then they walk past the door but Reverie spots them and comes outside and calls after them.

Reverie: Hey!

Marionetta stops and turns around. Reverie walks towards them.

Reverie: I need a word...

She takes Marionetta by the arm and drags her towards the nearest secluded spot.

Reverie: You heard about Rab's party yeah? You got anything to spice things up?

Marionetta: I got some H-DMT-V?

Reverie: I've told you it doesn't work. You're fucking disgusting. What about pills? I need a good time. Anyway, it makes your teeth fall out.

Marionetta: No it doesn't. I've got some pills at home.

Reverie: And so you bring out the shit?

Marionetta: It's not shit.

Reverie: So you're going home before the party, yeah?

Marionetta: I don't...

Reverie: Come on. Nobody's into your hardcore shit.

Marionetta shrugs.

Reverie: You coming in for a drink?

Marionetta: I'm with... (gestures towards Participant 5)

Reverie: Ok, cool. Come on then.

Reverie half-drags Marionetta into The Oak.

Reverie: (To Participant 5 as they go past) Alright?

They go inside and buy a drink at the bar. Reverie goes to sit down.

Marionetta: Sorry about this.

Participant 5 and Marionetta get their drinks and go and join Reverie. There are flyers for the *Hunting Season* gig on the table which is a picture of Maxxy dressed as The Queen of Hearts presented in the style of a playing card.

Reverie: So I'm speaking to Kat and he's all like (making mouth gesture with hand) mur mur mur about you. Marionetta this and Marionetta that. You must have done something to fuck him off.

Marionetta shrugs

Reverie: Not surprising you fucking Def-head. You're obviously still cooking?

Marionetta (shrugs). I've gotta live.

Reverie: Get a McJob.

Marionetta: Would you?

Reverie: Fuck no.



Marionetta: Well then... Once upon a time there was this...

Reverie: Don't start with that.

Marionetta takes a drink.

Reverie (to Participant 5): You know Kat?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: Rab? Anybody? You said he's having a party tonight?

Marionetta: Yeah.

Reverie: I'm definitely going, I think (pauses to drink). So this thing with Kat – what happened?

Marionetta: I thought we got on. I don't know.

Reverie: Nothing?

Marionetta shrugs. Reverie's phone goes off. Marionetta looks at her phone.

Marionetta (to Participant 5): Kat's like a... Rab's... It's hard... he's... a... bit... um, he's a bit weird.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: (Thinks) I... um... It's like... He's got all these things. He's really nice. He's just funny. I think he drinks too much. Too much time... on his hands, you know?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: You wanna come to his party? I mean... anyone can go. It's cool if you come... if you want to. You're welcome.

Reverie: (To Marionetta but still on phone) It's Kat. He's looking to score. You getting those pills?

Marionetta nods.

Reverie: (To phone) On her? She's got... (looks at Marionetta) Hi-Def?

Marionetta nods.

Reverie: (To phone) Yeah. (listens) Right. (listens). I can't tell her that. (listens). Ok, cool. See ya. (Hangs up)

Marionetta: What'd he say?

Reverie: He said he was going to shit all over your face.

Marionetta: I don't get the problem.

Reverie shrugs. They sit and drink for a while. Reverie suddenly thinks of something to say.

Reverie: (To Participant 5) So what you got?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: I mean, do you take, y'know pills and stuff. What's she sold you?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: You're not on a date are you?

Marionetta: (Looks at Participant 5 conspiratorially) Sure, why?

Reverie: Bullshit!

Marionetta: Why not?

Reverie: Everybody knows you like the cock / gash (opposite sex to Participant 5)

Marionetta: Everyone?

Reverie: Kat told me.

Marionetta: Right. (looks around for the toilet). Back in a minute.

Marionetta stands up and goes to the toilet.

Reverie: So how long you known her?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: Alright isn't she?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: She needs to stop cooking that shit though. It's sending her a bit... you know? And dealing.... She's gonna get herself caught.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: You got a cigarette?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: (If 'no') I'll see if she has. She owes me.

Reverie: (If 'yes') Hang on... *she'll* probably have one. She owes me loads.

Reverie reaches into Marionetta's bag.

Reverie:                                 Damn... what the fuck?... What's she keep in here. ...Aha...  
oh. Hello...

Reverie pulls out a packet of cigarettes. Then she discretely pulls out the bag of Hi-Def.

Reverie:                                 Seen this?

Shows bag to Participant 5.

Reverie:                                 Shit. We need to get rid of this. Take it and to the toilet and  
flush it.

Participant 5:                         (Responds)

Reverie:                                 Wait I'll do it.

She slips it in her bag.

Reverie:                                 Fag first. Coming?

Participant 5:                         (Responds)

Reverie:                                 If she comes back – DON'T TELL HER. I'll fucking kill you if  
you tell her. I mean that.

Reverie takes a cigarette then wanders off outside with her bag.

Reverie:                                 In a bit.

Reverie leaves. Marionetta comes back.

Marionetta:                             Where's she gone?

Participant 5:                         (Responds)

Marionetta:                             Oh. Ok.

Marionetta looks nervous. She picks up a flyer for the *Hunting Season* gig off the table and reads it.

Marionetta:                             You seen these guys? They're good.

She gets a text. Reads it then stands up and starts shoving things into her bag.

Marionetta:                             Shit. What's the time. Fuck. Um... Look... I've gotta go. I'm  
late. I'm *really* late. (She points to the flyer) Come here. In a bit.  
Yeah?

Participant 5:                         (Responds)

Marionetta:                             Right.

She dashes off leaving Participant 5 in the pub on their own. Marionetta walks across town to Club de la Faye where the gig is and goes in. Kat is standing at the bar.

Kat: Alright?

Marionetta: Sure.

Kat: You got any pills?

Marionetta: Not on me. H-DMT-V?

Kat: Not that desperate.

Marionetta: I'll go home and get some if you want.

Kat: Yeah, whatever. I'll see if someone else's got...

Marionetta: Well just say, yeah? Fiver each.

Kat: That's a fucking rip off.

Marionetta: They're white rabbits. Good high: Clean.

Kat shrugs. They stand in silence. Marionetta buys a drink at the bar, pays for it.

Kat: Maybe I will.

Marionetta turns with her drink in hand. Her purse with her key attached is on the bar.

Marionetta: Ok, cool. Come and see me in a bit yeah?

Kat: Sure.

Marionetta: Cool.

Marionetta goes to sit down with Nekomi and Rab without picking up her wallet. Kat grabs it and puts it in his pocket. Nekomi jumps up and hugs Marionetta.

Nekomi: Hey!

Marionetta: How're you doing?

Rab: What did *he* want?

Marionetta: He's just looking to score. I'm gonna have to go home and get some. Anyone else?

Rab / Nekomi: (Separately but around the same time). Of course / Er...ok

Nekomi: I'll come with you if you want.

Marionetta: Sure. Ok, in a bit.

Nekomi: Ok. So how's it going?

Marionetta: I'm tired... Busy. You know?

Nekomi: (To herself) Yeah.... Hey, we've got to go see that (recent horror) movie. You got time this week?

Marionetta shrugs: Whenever. I'm busy but you know - flexible busy.

Nekomi: A self-made woman.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: I'll give you a bell. Tuesday maybe?

Marionetta: We could Orange Wednesday. I've got an old SIM.

Nekomi: Ok.

Rab: It's fucking shit.

They look at him.

Rab: ...the film - Just get it online.

Nekomi: You've just got high standards.

Rab: It's always held me back.

Marionetta: Saw Revs earlier.

Nekomi: Oh.

Marionetta: Yeah. Had a drink. This guy /girl as well. Got stood up for something.

Nekomi: Oh.

Marionetta: (S)He'll probably been down later.

Nekomi: Like a date?

Marionetta: I just got talking to him / her. You know?

Nekomi: Ok. (If Participant 6 is there then she introduces them)

Marionetta: Hey.

Rab: Ladies of the night. Succubae.

Nekomi: Succubae. You've got the cutest little. Succubae.

Rab: Don't start me off again.

Nekomi: You deserve it for calling us whores.

Rab: I said ladies of the night.

Marionetta: Snow White was a whore. She got kiss-raped by the Prince.

Rab: (Looks at her funny). Ohhhhkaaaay.

Marionetta: The apple you know?

Rab: I got it.

Marionetta: Oh.

Rab: It's just... tangential.

Marionetta: Well, you know... that's what I do, apparently. Isn't it? Always moving away – always on the edge.

Rab: Anyway... where were?... That's the problem you see? You completely derail me. Succubae

Nekomi: You were calling us whores.

Rab: Ladies....yes. For picking up random people off the street.

Nekomi: It's friendly.

Rab: It's weird.

Marionetta: I heard about this woman who never spoke to anyone and died alone.

Rab: But there's a line, you see?

Marionetta: A tangent.

Rab: Maybe... not.

Marionetta: Somewhere.

Rab: Hmph.

The conversation goes dead for a while. People finish their drinks.

Marionetta: What time are people off to yours?

Rab shrugs.

Nekomi: There's people there already. Rab left ten absolute strangers in his house.

Marionetta frowns.

Nekomi: You want to go? To yours? I'll tell you about it.

Marionetta: Get it done.

Nekomi starts putting her coat on. Marionetta searches her pockets for her wallet and keys then starts looking in her bag.

Nekomi: What's up?

Marionetta looks at the bar.

Marionetta: I had them at the bar.

Nekomi: Your keys?

Marionetta: Yeah. Hang on.

She goes to the bar and asks the bar man if he's seen her wallet. He says no.

Marionetta: Ok. Shit... Thanks.

Kat is standing talking to a participant or propping up the bar on his own. She goes over to him.

Marionetta: You seen my wallet? I think I left it on the bar.

Kat: Dunno.

Marionetta: If I can't find them then I can't get the pills.

Kat: Right. Well, I'll help you then.

Kat wanders off to speak to Reverie.

Marionetta: Fuck.

She goes back to sit down.

Nekomi: No luck?

Marionetta: Nope.

Nekomi: They'll turn up.

Marionetta: Yeah but I've promised you guys and Kat.

Rab: Let's kick the fucking door down.

Nekomi: And what about when the police turn up?

Rab: We'll fucking kick them as well.

Nekomi: You just want people to hate you. That's right isn't it?

Rab: Maybe.

Kat comes over.

Kat: Hey. No luck I'm afraid.

Marionetta: Fuck.

Kat: I'm going to try to get some. I'd get some for you but you spat on me and called me a cunt.

Rab: Er... Look if you're getting some then get us some yeah?

Kat doesn't reply.

Rab: *She* spat on you. Look - I'd call my best friend a cunt.

Kat: Is that begging? I think that's begging.

Rab: Fuck you. Get them or don't. I'm not playing.

Kat: Look, I'll see, alright? See what happens.

Kat steps away and Marionetta touches his arm.

Marionetta: (Quietly to Kat). I need somewhere to stay.

Kat: At mine?

Rab: Just stay at the party.

Nekomi: You can stay at my house.

Kat: Not mine. Three's a crowd.

Rab: Like you're gonna pick up some fucking bird, or something.

Kat looks at him.

Kat: Fuck you all.

Rab: It's not like you're gonna be able to do anything. You'll have a knob like a cheese string.

Kat: Like yours you mean?

Rab: Just like mine. Real appealable.

They laugh.

Nekomi: You see! You love each other really.

Rab: So you gonna get them or not?

Kat: Get me a drink.

Rab: Fucking hell... alright. You can help me though.

Rab stands up and they go over to the bar.

Nekomi: (To Marionetta). So... you're in love with him, yeah?

Marionetta: Rab?



Nekomi: Kat.

Marionetta shakes her head.

Marionetta: We've got things in common. But not that. The only person I ever loved got washed away in a flood.

Nekomi: (To Participant 6) – Have *you* ever been in love?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Kat and Rab come and sit down.

Band starts to play.

Snippets of conversation are delivered over the band. People go and buy drinks. People go outside for cigarettes. Kat disappears at some point to Marionetta's house with Participant and Reverie with the aim of breaking in and stealing her drugs.

Band Finishes.

Nekomi: To yours then? Shall we see if the cat is still alive?

Rab: I need some booze.

Nekomi: Me too.

Marionetta: Where's Kat?

They look around.

Nekomi: M – Look, I'm sure he'll catch us up.

Rab: Fucking better.

They finish their drinks. People go to the toilet or get into conversations. Rab goes outside to smoke then sets off with a few people. Eventually everybody collects outside. Marionetta follows Nekomi who knows where Rab's flat is. They walk along in small groups chatting. Marionetta and Nekomi walk together.

Nekomi: So you ok?

Marionetta: I'm annoyed about my wallet. (Looks at Nekomi) Fuck it.

Nekomi: You can stay at mine. I'm sure it will turn up.

Marionetta: (Smiles) Thanks.

Nekomi: But you'd rather stay at Kat's?

Marionetta: Um... we just had this thing.

Nekomi: And you love him?

Marionetta: (Laughs) No, definitely not. (Beat) I think he loves me though.

Nekomi: Really?

Marionetta: Yup.

Nekomi: And you had a thing?

Marionetta: He keeps texting me. That's all.

Nekomi: But doesn't Reverie...?

Marionetta shrugs.

Nekomi: I thought him and Reverie were like... (Sighs) It's so confusing.

Marionetta: Well, I'm not stopping him. He just... I don't know. It's my fault.

Nekomi laughs.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: It's just... well...

Marionetta: Yes?

Nekomi: Well... he makes out he's such a man.

Marionetta: He is...

Nekomi: No, no, no, no, no, no.... I didn't mean it like that. He just makes out he's like... king of the castle. That everything revolves around him. That he can get what he wants... You know what I mean?

Marionetta: Maybe.

Nekomi: It's only because he's scary. And now...

Marionetta: He's...

Nekomi: Yeah: Now he's less scary. He's still scary though. Like a tiger is still a monster, you know?

Marionetta laughs.

Nekomi: Maybe that's why he hates you.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: He was like...

Marionetta: I don't think he hates me.  
Nekomi: But... well he pretends to hate you.  
Marionetta: Maybe.  
Nekomi: And Rev as well.  
Marionetta: It's not my fault. Reverie was nice to me earlier.  
Nekomi: She was selling your stuff at the gig.  
Marionetta: What?  
Nekomi: I mean I think so. I only noticed at the end. What was I supposed to do?

Marionetta goes quiet and looks at the ground.

Nekomi: We can get it back.  
Marionetta: That's my food for the week, you know?  
Nekomi: We can get it back.  
Marionetta: And the cinema... My get out of jail free card.  
Nekomi: (Touches her arm) It'll be ok.  
Marionetta: (Looks at Nekomi and half-smiles) Yeah?  
Nekomi: Yeah.  
Marionetta: This is turning into a pretty shitty night.  
Nekomi: I know. But... you know? It'll be ok.  
Marionetta: (Unsure) Yeah.

They continue on quietly until they walk past an off-licence.

Nekomi: Wait... We need alcohol.  
Marionetta: Huh?  
Nekomi: What do you want? I'll get...

They go into the off-licence and buy drinks.

Nekomi: Hey M - Let's get wasted, yeah? Fuck them all.  
Marionetta: (Smiles) Ok.

They open the booze and start drinking on the street as they walk to Rab's chatting about various things that they've seen on TV. Movies, music etc. Eventually they get to Rab's and

go in. The party is getting going. Rab should already be there as are Pick and Alice. Nekomi and Marionetta squish into a single-seater sofa and sit there chatting and laughing. They play 'Mallet's Mallet' where if you make a mistake you have to drink. Then Nekomi suggests they play 'Truth or drink':

Nekomi: Right, truth or drink.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: Well, you can either answer the question or drink.

Marionetta: Ok...

They ask each other a number of personal questions about various things. Sex, embarrassing mistakes. Eventually Kat comes in the door. Marionetta doesn't notice.

Nekomi: Ok... my go. Erm...So what's he like then?

Marionetta: Who?

Nekomi: (Thinking Marionetta knows he's there) Kat... in bed?

Marionetta: Um... (Goes to drink then stops). Like... all meat.

Nekomi laughs.

Marionetta: I mean... he seemed a bit embarrassed... no... shy.

Kat wanders into earshot. None of them notice.

Marionetta: Like, and when we were doing it he...

Nekomi: (Giggling and whispering) Did he make you...?

Kat is obviously listening now.

Marionetta: (Laughing) No. But...

Nekomi: (Laughing) What?

Marionetta: (Laughing) I don't know... Like...

Nekomi: (Laughing) You have to tell or drink.

Marionetta drinks

Nekomi: Awwwww....

Marionetta: (Laughing) It was like I wasn't there you know? Like (sighs and does a 'disappearing into nothing' hand-gesture). Like somebody was pulling the strings. Not him.

Nekomi: Were you high?

Marionetta: No.

Kat: Ladies.

Nekomi: Fuck.

Marionetta: (Laughing) Hey... Hi... How are you? (Laughs)

Kat: (Hold bag of pills up) Look.

Marionetta frowns.

Kat: Good aren't I.

Marionetta: Where'd you get those from?

Kat: My secret.

Marionetta: From Cal?

Kat taps the side of his nose.

Nekomi: Are they...?

Marionetta: Oh...

Kat: You want? Fiver each.

Nekomi: No.

Marionetta: I lost my wallet.

Kat: You can owe me. Here...

Nekomi: No.

Marionetta looks at her.

Marionetta: I thought we were getting wasted?

The look at each other in silence.

Kat: Last chance.

Marionetta nods.

Kat puts the bag on her lap and takes a few out. Then he reaches forward and squeezes Marionetta's cheeks so her mouth opens like a fish. He pushes a pill in then he lets go.

Marionetta: (Takes a sip of her drink)Thanks.

Kat: Wait...

He repeats the action. Marionetta watches him as he pushes another into her mouth. He doesn't take his hand off her cheeks this time. Marionetta and Kat are staring each other in the eyes.

Kat: Swallow.

Marionetta swallows.

Kat: Another.

He pushes another one in.

Nekomi: Kat - What the fuck are you doing?

Kat: You heard her - she wants to get wasted.

Marionetta swallows. Kat pushes another one in.

Nekomi: That's enough - M.

Marionetta swallows.

Nekomi: Fucking hell. Stop it! (She grabs his arm). Fucking stop it.

Kat pushes two into Marionetta's mouth. Nekomi starts hitting his arm.

Nekomi: Fucking stop it.

Kat lets go of Marionetta's face.

Kat: Sweet dreams darling.

He turns to Nekomi and holds out a handful of pills.

Kat: And for you?

Nekomi: Fuck off.

Marionetta looks at her.

Marionetta: I need you on my side.

Nekomi: You're all fucking crazy. This is...

Marionetta takes one and holds it out to Nekomi. She looks at it.

Marionetta: Fuck it, yeah?

Nekomi takes the pill and puts it in her mouth. Drinks her can to swallow it down. Kat laughs, then stands up and walks away.

Nekomi: What the fuck, M - What the fuck?

Marionetta: It'll be fine.

Nekomi: How many did....

Marionetta: About six or seven. It'll be fine.

Nekomi: Sure?

Marionetta: Don't you think I...

Nekomi: Really?

Marionetta: More than likely.

They sit there in silence for a moment.

Nekomi: Did he hear us? You know... talking about him.

Marionetta shrugs.

Nekomi: Fuck.

They sit there in silence for a few moments.

Marionetta: Truth or drink?

Nekomi: Um... (frowns)...um, ok.

Marionetta: What's the most drugs you've ever taken?

Nekomi: (Shakes her head). Like one thing.

Marionetta: Once I accidentally swallowed a gram of MDMA.

Nekomi: Yeah. I remember.

Marionetta: So I'll be fine. It's my own batch, I know the LD50.

Nekomi: Ok.

Marionetta: I can handle it.

Nekomi: Yeah, I know.

Marionetta: (Puts her hand on Nekomi's) Look after me yeah?

Nekomi nods.

Marionetta: Cool.

It is around this point that Pick opens the box and the lights go out. If this section is not finished then it continues in the dark. When the lights go out.

Nekomi: Rab... put some money on your...

They make general small talk whilst the lights are off. Eventually Marionetta gets up to go to the toilet.

Nekomi: Are you ok?

Marionetta: Sure.

Nekomi: You want me to...

Marionetta: I'll be fine.

She gets halfway to the hole to Wonderland and notices it and then comes back.

Marionetta: Have you seen this? There's Hi-Def in those pills, you know?

She shows Nekomi and any interested Participants the hole.

Marionetta: You wanna see what's down there?

Nekomi: Um...

Marionetta: Come on...

She starts to crawl down the hole.

Nekomi: Hang on...

Nekomi follows.



## Maxxy

This section runs between around 2pm and 5pm. Participant 7 is asked to meet on a sofa in a particular café. When they get there they find Maxxy asleep on the sofa with half a cold coffee on the table in front of her. If they try and wake her then she doesn't wake up until they apply ridiculous force. If the Participant goes to get an employee of the café then she doesn't wake up unless considerably pushed to. When she does she looks really confused and apologises to the staff. If they sit at a table nearby then she'll pretend to be asleep for around ten minutes before she eventually starts to come around.

Maxxy: (To Participant 7) Have you got the time?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Fuck. How's anybody expected to function on an hour's sleep eh?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy gets her bag and looks inside it. She starts rummaging around. Then:

Maxxy: (To Participant 7) You got a cigarette mate?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: (If yes) Thanks.

(If no) – she starts looking through her bag then checks a side pocket and finds her cigarettes. She does a 'I've found them' gesture to Participant 7.

Maxxy: Do you want one?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy either give a cigarette to Participant 7 and they go outside or else:

Maxxy: Have you got a light?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Right.

Maxxy asks around a few tables and then, if unsuccessful, goes outside and asks people in the street. She leaves her bag on the sofa and stands outside smoking. When she's finished she comes back in.

Maxxy: (To Participant 7) That's better.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: When I woke up I thought you were my mum / dad for some reason. Fucking weird.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: You don't even look anything like my mum / dad.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Anyway, (s)he died when I was like, five so it really would be weird. (Laughs to self)

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Yeah.

The conversation dies at this point. They sit there in silence awkwardly.

Maxxxy: What time was it?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Oh yeah. One hour later. That's normal. I should keep a 'do not disturb' sign around my neck. One of those gold chains maybe.

They sit there in silence. Maxxxy gets a make-up bag out of her handbag and then gets up to go to the toilet.

Maxxxy: Can you watch my bag?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Cheers.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy goes to the toilet. When she comes back she's touched up her make-up and sprayed herself with perfume. She gets her bag and then sits down in the chair opposite Participant 7.

Maxxxy: You like music?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: My band's playing at Club de la Faye tonight. I'm supposed to be promoting it. We've been on tour. It's our home-coming.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: We're called Hunting Season. Like... you know... Felix da Housecat? Devin Dazzle?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: It's a good song (beat). Am I making any sense?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: It's all about image, see?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Hence... (sweeps her hand over her face to indicate make-up and does the happy / sad expression change in the process). See? Problem is that we've been partying since (two days before) and I'm fucking knackered. So, yeah, looks like it'll be great. (Laughs). I don't know why I'm talking to you, by the way. (Laughs) It's the lack of sleep.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: My name's Maxxxy by the way. Three Xs cause it's supposed to be like, sexy. Not four Xs like Castlemaine. Three Xs, like Love Foxxx from... erm... fucking hell. Er... From CSS.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Nice to meet you. (Shakes Participant 7's hand)

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: So yeah... Come to my gig. Um... (She gets a flyer out of her handbag). 8.30 at (name of bar). Be there or be...

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Right, I better go and hand these bad boys out (meaning the flyers). Nice to meet you. (shakes / offers hand to be kissed). Maybe see you later.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Cool.

Maxxxy gets up and goes and stands just down the road from the café and starts handing out flyers to the gig. Hopefully, when Participant 7 finally gives up waiting for something to happen, they'll leave the café. If they approach her then she tries to convince them to help her flyer the gig. (If they just walk off then she either tries to catch them or if it's too hard or she doesn't notice, then they need to be contacted to tell them to go to the gig).

Maxxxy: Alright?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: You gonna come tonight then?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Nice one. So, er.... What you doing now?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Right, good... just er... I need some help handing these out. If you want?

She keeps pushing until they say yes – if they're determined to do something then:

Maxxxy: Alright, but come back and help me in a bit, yeah? This is fucking boring.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Cool.

If Participant 7 stays then the following conversation occurs, if they wander off then this is postponed until they get back.

Maxxxy: Ok, so take these. We got this game we usually do, like, last one to get rid of them has to pay a forfeit. Only give them to people who look like they might turn up – no grannies.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Right let's go. If I finish first then you have to steal me an outfit for tonight's gig. If you finish first then...

Participant 7: (Responds)

They start handing out the flyers until one person has run out. It is arranged with a shop to let Participant 7 steal the clothes and then for the producers to pay for them afterwards.

Maxxxy: Looks like you've got to steal me an outfit. / Looks like I've got to...

They go and do the forfeit. If Maxxxy has lost then after she has done the forfeit she says:

Maxxxy: Right, well I still need an outfit so come on.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: You ever stolen anything before?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: It'll be fine – just stay calm and walk away quickly but not too quickly. Do not run until we've got around the corner. Ok?

They go to the shop, stuff the clothes into a bag and run out. They walk quickly away from the shop and then start to run. When they think they're safe they stop and sit down somewhere. Maxxxy lies on the grass / wall etc.

Maxxxy: (Out of breath) Fucking hell. Ha!

She lies there catching her breath. She closes her eyes and lies there in silence. If Participant 7 speaks or not Maxxy's next response is:

Maxxy: (Moaning) Fuuuuuuuuuucccccckkk.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: It's like it's never going to happen, you know? I'm never going to sleep. Ever. It's my punishment.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: (Pulling herself together) Right, fuck it then. Back on the horse. A drink I think. You wanna come?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: You know anywhere good?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Participant 7 takes Maxxy to The Oak. They buy a drink and sit down.

Maxxy: Cheers then!

They drink.

Maxxy: I can't believe you've never nicked anything before. What did you fucking *do* as a kid?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: I mean, it wasn't every day. Every week even. Just, y'know. Once or twice. We used to buy sweets from this shop. They were kept in this like low cupboard just below the counter. We used to stuff supersour jawbreakers into our socks.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: I can't believe I thought you were my mum / dad.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: It's the sleep deprivation.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: I once met this guy who said if you don't sleep for like 5 days then it's like being on acid. He was fucking crazy – like he was into all this lucid dreaming shit. Like that movie? He used to mix up like sleeping tablets and some other shit too. I didn't

try it but he reckoned that if you took this cocktail of drugs with other people then you could, like share dreams.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: He said that he'd had a dream orgy with loads of his friends where everybody was, like, Thundercats and he had, like, a two foot cock.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: I mean, I don't know how you know that it's really other people and that you're not just making it up. But then... that might happen anyway. Like... the world might be just inside your head. Like the Matrix or something.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: A real head fuck.

They continue to talk about various things. Movies, music etc. They order another drink each and continue to chat. When they've finished that:

Maxxy: Look, I've gotta go – sound-check. I'll see you later yeah?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Cool.

Maxxy goes to the bar where the gig is to sound-check leaving Participant 7 on his own in the pub with about 2 hours to kill. At some point they turn up at the gig. Maxxy comes up to them.

Maxxy: Hey.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Thanks for the help earlier. Doubt it'll make any difference, you know, but...

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Do you want a drink? - We get free beer.

Participant 7: (Responds)

They go to the bar. Maxxy orders two

Maxxy: I nearly dozed off for like a second earlier. Well, must have slept for like... 5 minutes. I had this fucked up dream where, like, my head was a museum or a funfair or something and

people were like wandering around in my thoughts. Like they were looking at the walls but that was like my eyes – so they weren't looking at me. You ever taken Hi-Def?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Like that - like they were looking through me. Fucking weird yeah? And then I wake up and those fucking dickheads (gestures to band) are about to draw on my face in permanent marker.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: ...So obviously I beat the shit out of them.

Maxxy get the drinks and hands Participant 7 their beer.

Maxxy: So do you know anyone here?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Well, er... (Really enthusiastic) make friends! (Laughs) – Everyone's nice. Well... most people.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Look...I gotta go. Have fun. Um, there's a party later I think. Look – (points to table with Rab, Nekomi etc on). That's Rab – it's his party. Nekomi is nice – talk to her.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: See ya.

Maxxy wanders off backstage. Participant 7 either stays on their own or goes to talk with Rab, Nekomi etc. After a while the band starts with Maxxy singing. They're an electro pop band playing mostly originals but with a few covers – including an electro version of White Rabbit by Jefferson Airplane.

After the gig the band collect backstage and talk about the gig. Edith comes in with Participant 1 and starts talking to the band members BM1 BM2, Maxxy and BM4 whilst ignoring Participant 1. She's really flirty and kisses a few of them over the course of the scene.

Edith: I had this dream where I was walking in the desert and there was this fucking Eagle. Like something out of the Doors movie. I can't get Riders on the Storm out of my head.

BM1: Check you Martin Luther King.

BM2: I had a dream about an Eagle pecking my eyes out. Or an owl or something.

Edith: Nice. I wanna say that was good but y'know?

BM1: Have you seen Kat?

Edith: Dunno.

BM1: He was supposed to be here. Stuff for sale.

Edith: I've got something you can have.

She gets a red pill out of her wallet and puts it on the end of her tongue and holds it out to him. BM1 kisses her as he takes it off her. She wraps her arms around his neck.

BM2: Jesus.

Edith stops kissing BM1 and looks at BM2. BM1 is trying to get some more.

Edith: What's the matter? Do you want some? C'mon then.

She puts another pill on her tongue. BM2 steps forwards and they kiss.

Edith: Anyone else? Maxxy?

Maxxy: (Sighs) You know we've been... like I haven't... (Looks around) Fuck it. Come here beautiful.

They kiss and she swallows the pill. Everybody goes quiet. They stop and laugh.

BM1: Fucking hell. Do that again.

Edith: You'll have pay for that.

Maxxy: First time's free.

BM1: How much?

Maxxy: (Punches BM1 on the arm). Fucking idiot. We're not whores you know?

BM1 shrugs.

Maxxy: Think you're so rock and roll.

BM1: You know it.

Maxxy holds up her little finger as if it were BM1's dick. People laugh.

Maxxy: And that's hard.

BM1: Yeah, nice one. Anyone coming for a smoke? (Looks around room)



Maxxy: You're on your own.

BM1 shrugs and walks out.

Maxxy: (To Edith) You heard any Strip Steve? DJ was playing it the other night. Fucking ace.

Edith shrugs. Maxxy puts on *Astral Projection* by Strip Steve on her iPod. They chat. After that *Baby Face* comes on.

Maxxy: It's on shuffle.

Edith: You've heard Rab's thing?

Maxxy: (To Edith) *You* got the cutest little baby face.

Edith: Not bad yourself. Get him to explain it to you. It's fucking stupid.

Maxxy: He drinks too much.

Edith: Yup.

Maxxy: Don't we all?

They all go quiet for a moment.

Edith: You know he's having a party tonight?

Maxxy: Rab? I heard.

Edith: You coming?

Maxxy: Well I've *got to* now haven't I?

Edith: Nice one. You finished here?

Maxxy: Gotta pack up. Not sure if we can leave the stuff here. Otherwise someone's gonna have to drive.

Edith: Right. (To Participant). You wanna go to this party now or shall we wait for them?

Participant: Don't mind?

Maxxy: Who's that?

Edith: Dunno. I dragged them out of the café to come see you. I'm like their carer or something.

Maxxy: Crazy bitch.

Edith shrugs.

Edith: Right, well I'm not helping you pack up. (BM2) spazzed out last time I touched his guitar.

Maxxxy: That's 'cause he wanted you to touch his cock.

Edith: Obviously. (Beat). So we'll see you outside or at Rab's. Are they still serving?

Maxxxy: Don't know.

Edith: Well we'll stay if we can get a drink.

Maxxxy: Right.

Edith and Participant leave and go back into the bar. They get another drink and sit down. Maxxxy and band pack up backstage. After 10 minutes Maxxxy comes out followed by the band.

Edith: You finished?

Maxxxy: Nearly.

Edith: You gonna get a drink?

Maxxxy: (Tired) Er... yeah.

Edith: Or do you wanna go straight to Rab's.

Maxxxy: Whatever. (She sits down). We were up in Birmingham on (two days before). It was a heavy one. Then Nottingham last night. (Smiles)Not slept yet... Sorry.

Edith: That pill'll buck you up. You'll be fine.

Maxxxy: Maybe... I'm just crashing... that's all.

Edith: Well pull yourself together woman.

Maxxxy: (Smiles) Yeah.

Edith: Look, I'll get you a drink yeah?

Before Maxxxy can respond, Edith jumps up and goes to the bar. She gets two shots.

Maxxxy: (To Participant 1) It's alright for her – with her easy job. Laying the boss.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Shit... probably shouldn't have told you that. She didn't tell you? Oops. Ah well. Serves her right really!

Edith comes back with the shots.

Edith: Here you go.

Maxxxy: Sorry mate. I just told (Participant 1) about your... er... terms of employment.

Edith: Ha! Well it's not like... fuck it... he's alright. It gets me off  
(Beat) In both ways.

Maxxxy: Serves you right for being a hussy.

Edith: What am I supposed to do?

Maxxxy: Not screw the boss.

Edith: Maybe.

(Silence)

Edith: (To Participant 1) Look – I'm not a slut, you know?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Well, I'm sure you'd do it if you were me.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: I mean, I don't get why women are so fucking conservative about... you know... having a good time.

Maxxxy: Well, there's a line.

Edith: Maybe. But that's up to me isn't it?

Maxxxy: Sure is darling. (Sighs) Bottoms up yeah?

Edith: Here's to that.

They do their shots.

Edith: Right... you're coming yeah?

Maxxxy: I need to sleep.

Edith: Sleep when you're dead.

Maxxxy: That's gonna be tonight if I'm not careful.

Edith: You're getting old.

Maxxxy: Maybe.

(Silence)

Edith: Right... let's go.

They gather themselves up and gradually move outside. Light cigarettes and then hit the road. Edith walks with Participant 1 and Maxxy.

Edith: You totally think I'm a slut don't you?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Yeah right.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: I'm not easy right? It's not like I'll go for *anybody*.

Maxxy laughs.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxy: Guilty conscience.

Edith: Fuck you dreamer. Just because you're going for the whole 2.4 thing.

Maxxy: Am I really?

Edith: You could put out more.

Maxxy: You don't know anything.

Edith: Oooo. Dirty girl.

Maxxy: Hey, in Nottingham we went to this house party right? This guy who was on Big Brother was there. Helped me break into my friend's flatmate's bedroom.

Edith: I thought you said you hadn't slept?

Maxxy: That's my point dumbass.

Edith: So you slept with some less-than Z-list celebrity. That'll do wonders for your credibility.

Maxxy: He was... alright.

Edith: You see? Tweet, tweet, tweet.

Maxxy: What the fuck's that supposed to mean?

Edith: Like love birds.

Maxxy: That's shit.

Edith: My point is that you're not looking for a casual fling. It's always love, love, love with you.

Maxxxy: Is that so bad?

Edith: Just don't pretend you're some kind of nympho.

Maxxxy: What, like you, you mean?

Edith: At least I'm selective.

Maxxxy: ...And I let you kiss me.

Edith: Look, you're cool ok. Don't worry about it?

Maxxxy: Fine. (Beat) I can't believe I'm letting you drag me on another night out.

Edith: It's because you love me.

Maxxxy: Ha fucking ha.

The continue talking as they make their way to Rab's. Maxxxy asks Participant 1 about themselves with Edith pitching in. The focus is on sex – number of partners, notable occasions, funny things that have happened.

Maxxxy: (To Participant 1) So, like... *you're* not getting away with this. You have a boyfriend / girlfriend?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Are you in love?

Edith: How fucking fascinating.

Maxxxy: Shut it you.

Edith: What's the craziest thing you've ever done? Ever slept with more than one person in a bed?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: That's rubbish / Well that's *something*.

Maxxxy: Better than me.

Edith: You wanna play a game?

Maxxxy: What?

Edith: Like, I dare you to (thinks). I'll race you naked down the street. Actually, you two do it. You're the ones who need to live.

Maxxxy: No fucking way.

Edith: Ooohh. Somebody's chicken. (To Participant 1) What about you?

Participant 1: (Responds)

Edith: Two chickens / (To Maxxy) (S)he'll do it. I'll tell you what. (Sets off running). The last person to catch me has to walk the rest of the way to the party in the buff.

Edith sprints down the street running as fast as she can. Hopefully, she can get to the party before anybody catches her. If not then the other non-catcher needs to fulfil the forfeit. If she gets to the party, Edith demands that they both strip off and walk in together. She will not take no for an answer. Obviously, on getting in the flat the lights should have gone out so nobody will see them anyway. Edith walks in behind them.

Edith: (To Rab) You stingy twat. Where's the lights?

Rab: You wanna go to the garage to get top up?

Edith: No.

Rab: Will your sister go for me?

Edith: Is Lo here?

Rab: Yeah. With your boss.

Edith: (Angry) What the fuck? Where?

Rab: How the fuck should I know?

Edith: Fuck. She's got training tomorrow.

Edith searches around the house pushing past people.

Maxxy: (To Participant 1) Great party.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxy: So worth staying up for. I'm not feeling that pill at all.

Participant 1: (Responds)

Maxxy: Let's see if anyone's got a drink.

She wanders into the kitchen and takes a drink if there are any. Then she stands around a bit in the dark. At this point she needs to lose any Participants that are attached to her.

Maxxy: (To Participant 1) Look, this is fucking shit. I'm gonna go find somewhere to sleep alright? (If Participant 1 is a boy) Don't fucking rape me. Nice to meet you.

Maxxy wanders off into the lounge, lies down and tries to get some to sleep. When the opening to Wonderland is revealed she discretely slips in.

# Pick

Participant 3 is sitting on the bench where they've been told to wait. There is a packet of cigarettes underneath the bench with 1 cigarette left inside it. Pick walks up.

Pick: Excuse me... you don't have a smoke I could borrow?

Participant 3: Er....

Participant 3 says yes or no. If Participant 3 says no then Pick points to the cigarette packet underneath the bench.

Pick: Is that yours?

Participant 3: No, no.

Pick: 'scuse me.

Pick bends down and picks up the packet. She opens it up and takes the cigarette out.

Pick: (To herself) Score. (To Participant 3) I guess you don't have a lighter?

Participant 3: Yes / No.

Pick sits down and searches through her bag. She gets out a lighter and lights the cigarette.

Pick: What you waiting for?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: Sounds boring.

Participant 3: (Responds)

They might chat a bit longer. When Pick finishes the cigarette she stands up.

Pick: See ya.

She walks off backwards making a heart sign with her hands before turning around and walking off.

Participant 3 is left sitting on the bench.

Pick goes to the nearest off license and buys a 4 pack of beer. She walks back past the bench where Participant 3 is sitting. They acknowledge on another but Pick keeps on walking. Pick sits and smokes one of her own cigarettes on a bench around the corner. After she's done that she walks past Participant 3 again. She stops this time.

Pick: I doubt they're coming.

Participant 3: (Responds)



Pick offers Participant 3 a drink of her beer then she sits down.

Pick: Is it a boy / girl? I mean, are you waiting for someone? I mean... you could be gay right?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: Right. Yeah.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick offers Participant 3 a can of beer. They sit and talk (see 'Getting to know you' in the introduction).

Pick: So what you gonna do now?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: Look, I'm not busy. There's a nice pub around the corner. If you buy me a beer I'll keep you company. I'm not a prostitute. I just want a beer.

Participant 3 (Responds – probably negatively)

Pick: Come on. What you gonna do- sit *here* all night? My offer's definitely better.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick tries to talk them into it. If Participant 3 agrees then they go. If Participant 3 refuses then Pick tells them to 'fuck off' and goes to the bar on her own.

(Script continues as if Participant 3 has agreed to come to the bar)

They walk off together. Chatting about some point they've already talked about. Pick lights a cigarette and smokes it. They get to Neutron Star. Participant 3 buys the drinks – if Participant 3 doesn't have any cash Picks says they can pay on their card. If they still refuse then Pick conjures the money from somewhere. They sit down.

Pick: Alright this place, yeah? You been here before?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: It's not my local but... y'know... you could call me a regular. Maybe not a regular. I come in a bit.

They continue the conversation. Pick's conversation has leanings towards philosophical matters or 'dark' subject areas (Death, drugs, addiction, alcohol etc.) In response to some kind of local geographical reference that the char/actor recognises Pick Responds.

Pick: It was like... we were down there when we were kids. Just messing about. Someone threw a rock at my head and I just

went down. Bang! - Blood all over the floor. I was an absolute mess. Everyone just ran off.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: Nobody found me for hours. I just kind of slept. It wasn't sleep – basically I was bleeding to death. (shrugs). Can you see the scar?

Pick parts her hairline to show then her scalp. Obviously they won't be able to see it.

Pick: It was just blackness. Infinite blackness.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: In the hospital they said I would have died. Maybe they were making a big deal about it.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: It's surprising how long people last though. I remember hearing about these kids at school. A few years above me. Apparently they watched some movie. Like, *Scream 2* or something. Then, they stabbed this kid, wrapped him in plastic, for some reason, and pushed him off a cliff in these woods. This dog walker found him a couple of days later. Apparently it was the plastic that kept him alive. Weird eh? If I stabbed one of my mates, I wouldn't wrap them in plastic.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: It's always a dog walker isn't it? I remember this time me and a friend took loads of speed and stayed out all night. Ended up sleeping in a field in the morning sun. This dog walker woke us up. They must get training for that kind of thing. 'What to do if you find a dead body'. (Laughs)

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: It's weird though. Death. It's *exactly* like a grim reaper with a big scythe hanging over you.

Alice comes into the bar with Participant 4. Pick watches her come in.

Pick: We had a thing at a party once. She doesn't talk to me.

Alice: (To Pick) Hey, It's you. I thought you... disappeared.

Pick: (Shy). Yeah.

Alice: Into your... er... but I'm not supposed to talk about that am I?  
(Beat) You alright then?

Pick: Sure. Fine. Yeah.

Alice: This is (Introduces Participant 4). Met them in a public toilet. Not cottaging – obviously. Or prostitution. I’d be like a cottager’s best score. (To Participant 4). You’re definitely not a cottager are you?

Participant 4: (Responds)

Alice: Yeah...so we’ll join you yeah? You know Rab’s having another party tonight?

Pick: No.

Alice: Maybe we can... you know?(winks). As long as you promise not to fall in love with me again.

Pick looks at the table.

Alice: Or me you. That’s dangerous territory. Deadly. Last V-day I got about ten cards. I just threw them out. It’s so creepy.

Pick: Love... it’s like... you’ve gotta... hire a priest... exorcise it.

Alice: I mean, people just think that they have the right to possess you. They send you a sad little card with a heart on it and then that’s it.

Pick: Send love into the Phantom Zone.

Alice: Last time Rab had a party someone put on ‘Like a Virgin’ or something and suddenly everyone’s getting naked.

Pick: (Smiling) They’re not all like that. ‘Like a Virgin’ I mean...

Alice: Well, if you like getting wasted... This is already turning out to be a weird night.

Pick: It should be good.

Alice: (To Participants) So you coming? What time is it?

Pick shrugs.

Alice: We’ll go in a bit yeah? I want another drink.

Alice gets up and goes to the bar. Pick’s left with Participants. She doesn’t say anything unless they say something to her. Alice comes back with four shots.

Alice: Nice one. Right here’s to not getting caught in a toilet with no roll. (Laughs). No... here’s to... er.

Pick: The end of love.

Alice: Oooh... dark. No... here's to getting fucked and getting laid.  
Cheers.

They drink.

Alice: Right, let's get going. We need to go to the off-license. I need some cigarettes.

They get their coats and leave. As they walk down the street, Pick and Alice drop back a bit to have a semi-private conversation.

Alice: So how's it going?

Pick: Yeah... alright. You know? (smiles)

Alice: Yeah. Cause I thought...

Pick: Ha-ha. No. I'm not depressed - just devoid. Anyway... (Picks looks at Alice) You're not that amazing.

Alice: (Smiles) Yeah I am.

Pick: Maybe.

They walk on in silence for a while.

Pick: So what you been up to?

Alice: Not much. Most of the time I'm just hanging out.

Pick: No fixed abode?

Alice: Nah... I'm not doing this because I have to. Like, anywhere I lay my hat, yeah?

Pick: Sure. How's JJ?

Alice: Yeah he's. He's alright I think. Living with his dad – obviously. I... (Pause as she thinks about her son) So yeah... anyway, so I'm like living it up. The easy life. Swimming every day. There's one up on (Address) that's pretty cool. Always seems to be empty so I go there most days. Anyway, it's not like I'm doing this because I have to. Oh and that place up on (address) with the pine lodges you know? Where Rev used to work? They've all got Jacuzzis. I go up there and just chill out all day. I am clean... smell (she lifts her arm).

Pick: I'm alright thanks.

Alice: Actually, I probably smell of Lynx. Hazard of crashing at boy's houses.

Pick: Steal something nice – *Dove, Sure*. Whatever. I'll do it.

Alice: It's alright. Look, about...

Pick looks at her.

Alice: You're cool yeah?

Pick: (Laughs). I'm fine.

Alice: Cool. I don't... I'm gonna start talking in clichés now.

Pick: It's fine.

Alice: What? Talking in clichés or...

Pick: Yeah.

They walk on for a while in silence.

Alice: (Remembering). Anyway, what's this I hear about you... Some pervert in the park?

Pick: Oh... shit... yeah. It was pretty bad. I... well you know? He got it. Close thing though.

Alice: Better than pepper spray.

Pick: Much. That was a weird night actually. I ended up at this woman's house. She started telling me how depressed she was.

Alice: Like flies to... Not that I mean you're...

Pick: Maybe I am.

Alice: (Looks at her). Nah. I don't think so. You smell too nice.

Pick: Not of Lynx then?

Alice: What's wrong with Lynx?

Pick: Well, if you're looking to pull in the ladies...

Alice: Look just because we had a bit of a thing doesn't mean I'm suddenly a fucking lesbian. Is that what you are?

Pick: No.

Alice: Exactly. I'm a people person.

Pick: That's how my mum describes herself.

Alice: Well... look, I wouldn't even call myself bi. You know what I mean?

Pick: I should be flattered.

Alice: Fucking hell you should be flattered. I'm premium cut sirloin. You're like... goat-meat or something.

Pick looks at her.

Alice: Don't call me a lesbian ok?

Pick: Dyke.

Alice: Hmm... I'll let you off that one.

Pick: Like you could...

Alice: Damn right I could. You wouldn't see me being dragged into the bushes by some weird guy.

Pick: Yeah.

Alice: I'd have him flat out on his back. I mean, how did that even happen?

Pick: I took him there.

Alice frowns. Pick shrugs. They walk on in silence.

Pick: He offered to pay me to have sex with him.

Alice: Er...well that's ok then.

More silence. They pass an off-license. Pick stops.

Alice: Their offers are rubbish. There's a (name of off - license) in a bit.

Pick: Regular?

Alice: Rab's been putting me up once in a while.

Pick nods and goes quiet.

Alice: You know I can fuck anybody I want to?

Pick: I didn't...

Alice: Good... I'm not anybody's. Not Rab's and not yours. You can all just deal with it.

Pick: Heaven forbid.

They continue walking in silence. Eventually they get to the other off-license. They go in and buy some drinks. When they've bought stuff they go and stand outside.

Alice: Don't you think it's better just to have a bloody brilliant night with somebody and then, you know, leave it at that? I mean, why let reality spoil a good night? That feeling in the morning when the happiness in your stomach makes your hangover go away? Have you ever got that? Have you ever just left it there? You know... not explored the possibilities like... like everyone says you're supposed to? (She looks at Pick for an answer) I guess not.

Pick: But you're still haunting Rab.

Alice: Yeah... but...

Pick: (Shrugs) Look... whatever, you know?

They walk to Rab's house and go in (Alice has got a key). It's fairly early and there's nobody there. Alice puts some music on and they sit and chat with the participants. After a while Alice goes to the bathroom and starts to run the bath. Then she comes back into the room.

Alice: I'll be back in a bit.

Pick: Antisocial.

Alice: I need a soak. Wash away the shame.

She goes and gets in the bath. After a while there is a knock at the door and people start to trickle in. Pick goes to the bathroom and knocks on the door.

Pick: Al...There's people here.

Alice: Just come in.

Pick: What?

Alice: Jimmy the lock with a coin or something. You know?

Pick gets a coin out of her pocket and opens the door. She goes in and locks the door behind her.

(The section in the bathroom is unscripted to give the actors a break however the conversation would be a continuation of the one on the way to Rab's – Alice is trying to justify herself to Pick but is gradually doubting herself more and more – hence the justification) Eventually Pick comes out and gets Participant 4.

Pick: She wants to speak to you.

Picks takes Participant 4 to the bathroom lets them in and then goes and sits with Participant 3.

Pick: Are you in love?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: Why does it feel more like an affliction than a... than something good? Like being possessed.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: Maybe... I used to have... (Looks at Participant 3). Last year I nicked my dad's car and drove it into a river with my two friends in the back.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: They didn't get out. They're... It doesn't make me want to live. Everything's so fragile but it doesn't make me want to live. And there's two girls who... I don't know... they... It's like I've got these ghosts following me. They own me.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: And I want to do them justice... you know what I mean. I want to... there's just nothing good here. Nothing that really... you know? Everything's a compromise. You ever feel like that?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: But I'm not about to top myself so what the fuck do I do?

She gets out M33 X-7 .

Pick: I got given this when I was a little girl. I can't open it because you'll die but... inside is a... (Looks at Participant 3) – Everyone thinks I'm stupid when I say this. That's why I never... well Alice believed me but... It's like carrying a huge bag on your back you know?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: I always get to this point and then I get embarrassed. (Laughs) Don't know why. (Pulls herself together). Look it's a black hole right? Yes like the ones you get in space. No it's not as big. No I don't know why. His name is M33 X-7 and he eats things and eventually he'll turn into a quasar and he'll create new stars. That's all I know.

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick: You think I'm joking right?

Participant 3: (Responds)

Pick puts the box back into her bag.





Alice:

Well then, fucking do it. Do what you want.

Pick looks at Alice and then begins to open the box. The lights in the flat go out. People scream etc. When, gradually, people begin to light phones etc. Alice and Pick have gone.

# Rab

Participants receive an invitation to a party at Rab's address instead of a ticket. Participants arrive at door which is open. If they knock, Rab answers in his boxer shorts and dressing gown. If they just walk in then Rab is sat around in his pants and dressing gown watching a porno film of himself and Alice. He goes ape shit and kicks them out.

Rab: Who the fuck are you?

Participants: (Responds)

Rab: Fuck off. (Closes door)

There are flyers on the floor relating to the *Hunting Season* gig (an image of Maxxy dressed as The Queen of Hearts in the style of a playing card) – hopefully participants will notice these and go to the gig. If they ring again, then Rab speaks through the letter box and threatens to call the police or somebody.

Rab: Look, just fuck off. I've got a list of nasty fucking people in my phone. I'll fucking call the police.

If they insist on staying there then Rab will talk through the letter box to them. Gradually coming to trust them over about fifteen minutes he'll finally let people in.

Rab: Look, I don't get what you're here for.

Participants: (Responds)

Rab: Right but I don't know you. Who told you?

Participants: (Responds – probably show invitation which is from Alice).

Rab: How d'you know Alice?

Participants: (Responds)

Rab: Well then fuck off. My party not her's.

Rab: What do you do?

Participants respond.

## **Rab asks them questions about their work / studies:**

Where do they work? What do they do? How much they earn? What do they study? What year they're in? Rab doesn't like students. Rab has the same job as the worst job that the performer playing him has had in the past and will respond using details from performer's experience of this.

### **Rab asks them questions about music:**

What music do you like? (Performer will give an honest response based on their own knowledge of music being openly rude about bands he doesn't like and genuinely engaging about bands he does like). If he hasn't heard of them then he'll admit this. Rab will also reminisce about particular songs that have personal meaning to the performer and recall a particular time in the performer's life.

(E.g. Participant says they like Rage Against the Machine's 'Killing in the Name'.

Rab: What? Originally or from Christmas?

Participant: Originally.

Rab: Loads of people like it since it got to number 1. It's just fucking a load of shit. We used to dance to it at The Harrogate Arms in like 1996. Still underage y'know? It's like in a cellar. The walls were all rough stone and you used to come away with cuts all over your fucking arms.)

### **Rab asks them about films / TV.**

Rab likes the same films as the performer playing him for the same reasons. He has seen the same films as the performer, goes to the cinema as often as the performer. You get the picture.

The overall tone of these questions is serious – Rab is trying to get a sense of whether these people are cool or not. He places cultural things like this high up on his list of priorities and judges people accordingly.

When the performer feels like he knows the people standing at the door he will let them in. If they haven't got anything to drink then he'll send them away to get something.

Rab puts some music on (performer's decision). He tells the first person he talks to about the rule of three (see introduction). Halfway through this he jumps up and digs out the song *Baby Face* and puts this on. He explains the rule of three over this. Then he puts on a 1960s-style psychedelia compilation featuring Jefferson Airplane some Angel'in Heavy Syrup etc. People sit around and drink.

Conversation at this point will be on current affairs and mutual interests and will be as much by instigated by the participants as by Rab. It's ok if it feels awkward (there's loads of people he doesn't know sat in his flat) – moments of silence should encourage participants to speak. Rab shouldn't feel obliged to speak nor to lead the conversation at all. If the atmosphere is rubbish then that's fine. If it's buzzing then that's fine as well. (Both of these states will provide motivation for Rab to go and get a shower (see below). Rab will get the number of at least one person in the room during this time.

If other participants knock at the door after this point then, after looking at them and realising that he doesn't know them he will send a participant who is already in the flat to 'interrogate them'.

Rab: (Looking them straight in the eye) Don't let them in until you know they're cool. You come and ask me before you let them in alright. I need to know they're cool.

In this scenario – when the participant comes back to say that he thinks they're cool, Rab will question the participant in the same way that he questioned the people behind the door. Rab is very thorough.

After a while, Rab goes to get a shower and get dressed. Then he goes out (he says he's going out to get cigarettes if anybody asks) leaving participants in his flat waiting and talking between themselves. After about half an hour the lights in the flat go out as if the electricity has run out. Leaving the participants in near darkness. At this point they must decide what to do. There are a lot of handmade flyers lying around for the *Hunting Season* gig. Rab will also have mentioned the band and said that they're playing tonight but will not have said he is going to the gig. Hopefully one of the participants will make the connection and go there. If not then Rab will text them at some point (Rab's phone number can also be lying around somewhere for participants to call).

Rab arrives at the bar, he buys a drink and then sits down with Nekomi (if she is already there) or somewhere in the middle of the room. When Nekomi arrives (depending on timings) she buys a drink and sits down next to Rab.

Note: Underlined sections are to be sung to the tune of *Baby Face* (see Introduction: Rule of Three).

Participant 6 will arrive at some point during the course of this scene. Nekomi introduces Participant 6 to the other characters. She will explain how she met them. Rab and Kat ask her how she got up the tree in the first place but she won't tell. Rab and Kat think it's weird she's just picked up a stranger. Nekomi says that Participant 6 saved her life. Nekomi says that she's getting some pills of Kat and asks Participant 6 is they want any.

Nekomi: Hey.

Rab: You alright?

Nekomi: Course. What you doing?

Rab shrugs.

Nekomi: Ok.

Rab: All these people turned up at my house. After a while I couldn't be fucked with them.

Nekomi: They still there?

Rab: There's nothing to steal.

Nekomi shrugs. They sit there for a bit listening to the music.

Nekomi: Have you seen/

Rab: /Have you seen? You've got the cutest little have you seen?

Nekomi: ...Marionetta?

Rab: Have I told you about/

Nekomi: /Yes.

Rab: I actually think I'm going mad. It's fucking everywhere.

Nekomi: Everywhere. The rule of three is here and everywhere.

Rab: Very good... Very good. You've got the...ahhh.

Nekomi: It's never going to go away. Go away...

Rab: I mean how do you get rid of it? Rid of...

Nekomi: It's like a stray cat – You're feeding it. You've invited it in.

Rab nods and takes a drink.

Nekomi: You've got caught up in a synchronicity loop. It's like getting your shoelace caught up in the workings of the universe. Universe. You've got the cutest little. Universe.

Rab: Fuck.

Nekomi: Or else you've just noticed a pattern of syllables that's really common!

Rab takes a drink.

Nekomi: You know it's the second don't you?

Rab: That's not the fucking point. It's driving me insane.

Nekomi: Then try to stop. Try to...

Rab: It's not just that. There's the rules of two, four... it doesn't stop.

Nekomi: 25?

Rab: Twenty-five. You've got the cutest little Twenty-five.

Nekomi laughs. They both drink.

Nekomi: So, the party's on then?

Rab: Well there's ten people sat in my fucking house. I mean, hopefully, they might have gone by the time I get back.

Nekomi: You won't know until you get back. Until that point they are both there and not there. Schrödinger's party. You just need a gun, poison gas or something.

Kat: Don't tempt me.

Kat walks through the door and goes over to the bar.

Rab: Speaking of murder... Well, I'm hoping that Fuckhead's not coming.

Nekomi starts making a cross with her index fingers and trying to stop Rab from continuing. Kat begins to walk over to them.

Rab (not noticing): I mean he's just such a... such a Fuckhead.

Kat: Who's a fuckhead.

Rab: (Not missing a beat). You are you fucking cunt.

Nekomi goes silent. Kat laughs.

Kat: Sure thing. You got any pills?

Nekomi: Marionetta's around somewhere.

Kat: I'm not after Hi-Def.

Nekomi: Yeah, but she gets...

Kat: Well I need something. Long night ahead.

Nekomi: What're you doing tonight Kat?

Kat: Staying here for a few then off to this dick's party (gestures to Rab)

Rab: DMT. You've got the cutest little DMT.

Kat: You're not still on with that bullshit. Ladbroke's have got 10 to 1 on you losing your marbles in the next 12 months.

Rab: 10 to 1. You've got the cutest little...

Kat: You're such a dick Rab. You know you're fucking losing it. You fucking know.

Nekomi: There's ten strangers at Rab's house. He just left them there.

Kat: SUCH A DICK! What... you just left them there? Well, there's nothing to nick I suppose.

Rab: That's what I said.

Nekomi: I said it's like Schrödinger's cat, you know? They may or may not be there when we get back. The cat is neither dead nor alive...

Kat: Well I'm definitely alive.

Rab: Your spluttering heart/

Nekomi: /It's interesting you know? Like... nothing is certain. It makes me feel...

Rab: Deranged?

Nekomi: Happy.

Kat rolls his eyes.

Kat: You guys should join a club for fucking weirdos. A freak show.

Nekomi: It must be easy without a soul.

Kat: Never a chore. Anyway, it's all fucking crap. You've just gotta go with it. You try and explain it and you fucking lose it.

Rab: So what you're saying is that there's no use in trying to explain anything or thinking about things like that because...

Kat: Because it's all fucking shit.

Rab: Brilliant! I'll just... fucking shit, you've got the cutest little...

Kat: I'll take that as a sign that I'm right shall I?

Rab: Somewhere deep down in er... that...

Kat: Kat's got your tongue, have I?

Rab: I know that there is no such thing as right or wrong and that makes me weak to someone like you – who is basically an idiot.

Kat: So, not only am **I right** but I'm right because you think too much and I just fucking flow it.

Rab: Well, you win the petty argument, in a sense - but only because it's based on a premise that's completely incorrect.

Kat: No premise about my premises. You're just wrong. Face it. Fucking-wroooooong. (totally changing tack). So the party.

Rab: (quietly) I'm not wrong.



Kat: You guys wanna go in on...

Rab: (Slams his hand on the table) I'M NOT FUCKING WRONG!

Silence.

Kat: ...some pills or something.

Nekomi: Marionetta has some.

Kat: I heard she's dry. Like a desert. A dry fucked up whore.  
(mimicking Marionetta) 'Once upon a time there was a girl whose vagina was so fucking dry that any man she fucked turned to dust.'

Rab and Nekomi sit there.

Kat: Fuck you then . I'm off to get a drink. Want one?

Long pause.

Kat: No? Rab? You want one?

Rab: Does it come with some kind of pact?

Kat: Of course.

Rab: Being?

Kat: I don't know... er... You let me fuck your mother.

Rab: If your dick's six foot long and can pierce solid mahogany.

Kat: As if, we both know that she went for a cardboard box job.

Rab: Actually, she's on my mantle-piece. Mantle-piece

Kat: Ashes? She didn't have it off with our Marionetta did she?

Rab shrugs.

Kat: What'll it be?

Rab: Beer... Stella... You cunt.

Kat: And my little Cheshire cat?

Nekomi: You're only calling her dry because she turned you down.

Kat: I'll call that two shall I?

Nekomi: I'll get my own.

Kat: Two then. Right...In a bit.

Kat disappears off to the bar.

Nekomi: You know you're both the exactly the same don't you? Why'd you let him buy you a drink?

Rab: Because, he's a cunt and I wanted a drink. Don't expect me to have principles. Not where beer's concerned.

Nekomi: He is your reflection Rab – everything you hate about him. That's what you're running from.

They sit in silence. Nekomi gets out her phone and calls Participant 6.

Nekomi: Hey Superman / Superwoman It's Nekomi. You know - the girl in the tree?... Hi. Yeah. I was wondering if you fancied coming down to Club de la Faye. Yeah. I'm with a few people. There's a party tonight.

Nekomi hangs up.

Rab: The tree girl? Who was that?

Nekomi: Someone I just met.

Rab: What in a tree? You're a monkey now are you?

Nekomi: I'm a Cheshire cat aren't I?

Rab: Point taken. (Frowns) So what's the tree thing about?

Nekomi shrugs.

Rab: It's like I hear you talking but the words make no sense.

Nekomi: That's because your brain is swimming in booze.

Rab: Fair enough.

Kat returns with drinks for Nekomi and Rab.

Nekomi: I said I didn't want one.

Kat: To ease my troubled conscience?

They look at each other for a moment. Nekomi sighs.

Kat: Cool. Good.

Nekomi: It's probably laced.

Rab: Actually. You're fucking right. (to Kat) Empty your pockets.

Kat: You what?

Rab: Empty your pockets now.

Kat looks at them but gives in. He empties everything out of his pockets onto the table.

Rab: Inside pocket.

He empties the inside pocket out.

Nekomi: Jeans. (beat) Back pockets as well.

Kat stands up and shows them that he's not got anything in his pockets.

Rab: Jacket.

Kat: What?

Nekomi: Let him check your jacket.

Kat: Jesus.

Kat gives Rab his jacket. Rab searches through it but finds nothing.

Rab: Clear.

Nekomi takes a drink.

Kat: You're fucking thorough – I'll give you that.

Rab: The last think I need is waking up tomorrow with an arse-full of your semen.

Nekomi spits her drink out in laughter all over Kat.

Kat: (Jumping up) For fuck's sake.

Rab: It serves you right for being such a cunt. Thanks for the drinks - now fuck off.

Kat: Fuck both of you.

Kat walks over to the bar. Marionetta walks in and goes to the bar.

Nekomi: (To Rab) What is it about those two?

Rab: Maybe she a lesbian - you know? Attracted to cunts.

Nekomi: Hmmmm...

Rab: Lesbian. You've got the cutest little lesbian. Hey, that one actually works.

Nekomi: Not bad.

Rab: Dripping cunt.

Nekomi: That's disgusting.

Rab: What do you want me to say? Lovely gash.

Nekomi: Say something that isn't repulsive. And stop swearing so much. It's...

Rab: Repugnant? I try my hardest.

Nekomi: It's hard work, Rab. For everyone.

Marionetta comes to sit down with Nekomi and Rab leaving her wallet on the bar. Kat grabs it and puts it in his pocket. Nekomi jumps up and hugs Marionetta.

Nekomi: Hey!

Marionetta: How're you doing?

Rab: What did *he* want?

Marionetta: He's just looking to score. I'm gonna have to go home and get some. Anyone else?

Rab / Nekomi: (separately but around the same time). Of course / Er...ok

Nekomi: I'll come with you if you want.

Marionetta: Sure. Ok, in a bit.

Nekomi: Ok. So how's it going?

Marionetta: I'm tired... Busy. You know?

Nekomi: (To herself) Yeah.... Hey, we've got to go see that (recent horror) movie. You got time this week?

Marionetta shrugs: Whenever. I'm busy but you know - flexible busy.

Nekomi: A self-made woman.

Marionetta: What?

Nekomi: I'll give you a bell. Tuesday maybe?

Marionetta: We could Orange Wednesday. I've got an old SIM.

Nekomi: Ok.

Rab: It's fucking shit.

They look at him.

Rab: ...the film - Just get it online.

Nekomi: You've just got high standards.

Rab: It's always held me back.

Marionetta: Saw Revs earlier.

Nekomi: Oh.

Marionetta: Yeah. Had a drink. This guy /girl as well. Got stood up for something.

Nekomi: Oh.

Marionetta: They'll probably be down later.

Nekomi: Like a date?

Marionetta: I just got talking to him / her. You know?

Nekomi: Ok. (If Participant 6 is there then she introduces them)

Marionetta: Hey.

Rab: Ladies of the night. Succubae.

Nekomi: Succubae. You've got the cutest little. Succubae.

Rab: Don't start me off again.

Nekomi: You deserve it for calling us whores.

Rab: I said ladies of the night.

Marionetta: Snow White was a whore. She got kiss-raped by the Prince.

Rab: (Looks at her funny). Ohhhhkaaaay.

Marionetta: The apple you know?

Rab: I got it.

Marionetta: Oh.

Rab: It's just... tangential.

Marionetta: Well, you know... that's what I do, apparently. Isn't it? Always moving away – always on the edge.

Rab: Anyway... where were?... That's the problem you see? You completely derail me. Succubae

Nekomi: You were calling us whores.

Rab: Ladies....yes. For picking up random people off the street.

Nekomi: It's friendly.

Rab: It's weird.

Marionetta: I heard about this woman who never spoke to anyone and died alone.

Rab: But there's a line, you see?

Marionetta: A tangent.

Rab: Maybe... not.

Marionetta: Somewhere.

Rab: Hmph.

The conversation goes dead for a while. People finish their drinks.

Marionetta: What time are people off to yours?

Rab shrugs.

Nekomi: There's people there already. Rab left ten absolute strangers in his house.

Marionetta frowns.

Nekomi: You want to go? To yours? I'll tell you about it.

Marionetta: Get it done.

Nekomi starts putting her coat on. Marionetta searches her pockets for her wallet and keys then starts looking in her bag.

Nekomi: What's up?

Marionetta looks at the bar.

Marionetta: I had them at the bar.

Nekomi: Your keys?

Marionetta: Yeah. Hang on.

She goes to the bar and asks the bar man if he's seen her wallet. He says no.

Marionetta: Ok. Shit... Thanks.

Kat is standing talking to a participant or propping up the bar on his own. She goes over to him.

Marionetta: You seen my wallet? I think I left it on the bar.

Kat: Dunno.

Marionetta: If I can't find them then I can't get the pills.

Kat: Right. Well, I'll help you then.

Kat wanders off to speak to Reverie.

Marionetta: Fuck.

She goes back to sit down.

Nekomi: No luck?

Marionetta: Nope.

Nekomi: They'll turn up.

Marionetta: Yeah but I've promised you guys and Kat.

Rab: Let's kick the fucking door down.

Nekomi: And what about when the police turn up?

Rab: We'll fucking kick them as well.

Nekomi: You just want people to hate you. That's right isn't it?

Rab: Maybe.

Kat comes over.

Kat: Hey. No luck I'm afraid.

Marionetta: Fuck.

Kat: I'm going to try to get some. I'd get some for you but you spat on me and called me a cunt.

Rab: Er... Look if you're getting some then get us some yeah?

Kat doesn't reply.

Rab: *She* spat on you. Look - I'd call my best friend a cunt.

Kat: Is that begging? I think that's begging.

Rab: Fuck you. Get them or don't. I'm not playing.

Kat: Look, I'll see, alright? See what happens.

Kat steps away and Marionetta touches his arm.

Marionetta: (Quietly to Kat). I need somewhere to stay.

Kat: At mine?

Rab: Just stay at the party.

Nekomi: You can stay at my house.

Kat: Not mine. Three's a crowd.

Rab: Like you're gonna pick up some fucking bird, or something.

Kat looks at him.

Kat: Fuck you all.

Rab: It's not like you're gonna be able to do anything. You'll have a knob like a cheese string.

Kat: Like yours you mean?

Rab: Just like mine. Real appealing.

They laugh.

Nekomi: You see! You love each other really.

Rab: So you gonna get them or not?

Kat: Get me a drink.

Rab: Fucking hell... alright. You can help me though.

Rab stands up and they go over to the bar.

Nekomi: (To Marionetta). So... you're in love with him, yeah?

Marionetta: Rab?

Nekomi: Kat.

Marionetta shakes her head.

Marionetta: We've got things in common. But not that. The only person I ever loved got washed away in a flood.

Nekomi: (To Participant 6) – Have *you* ever been in love?

Participant 6: (Responds)

Kat and Rab come and sit down.

Somebody introduces *Hunting* Season and the band come on and start to play. Snippets of conversation are delivered over the band. People go and buy drinks. People go outside for cigarettes. Kat disappears at some point to Marionetta's house with Participant 8 and Reverie with the aim of breaking in and stealing her drugs.

Band Finishes.

Nekomi: To yours then? Shall we see if the cat is still alive?



Rab: I need some booze.

Nekomi: Me too.

Marionetta: Where's Kat?

They look around.

Nekomi: M – Look, I'm sure he'll catch us up.

Rab: Fucking better.

They finish their drinks. People go to the toilet or get into conversations. Rab goes outside to smoke then sets off with a few people. Rab starts chatting with a participant.

Rab: Were you at mine before? You got drinks?

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Then we need to get some. There's three rules – you drink, you smoke, you party. Three rules, that's like...the rule of nine?  
Rule of nine...

(He goes quiet and thinks about this)

Rab: Fuck. I'll have to think about that one. Think about, you've got the cutest little think about. Gaaarr. Have I told you about the rule of three?

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: It's probably best you don't know. Probably. Fucking hell. Anyway, yeah... so what do you do?

They chat about the participants. At some point they stop at an off-licence. Rab encourages participants to buy more drinks than they need.

Rab: Can I have one of those beers. Call it party tax.

Rab takes the beer and opens the can.

Rab: Cheers. (Drinks). That makes me feel better about letting you come. One of my five-a-day, anyhow. Do you have a cigarette?

Participant: (Responds)

If offered Rab takes cigarette. If not, then he gets one of his own out. They keep walking.

Rab: You know it's all bollocks don't you? Five-a-day, I mean? I'm fairly sure eating fruit is ok. Apparently you have to eat different colours. I'm not sure there are five different colours. Green, red, yellow er... purple.

Participant: (Responds)

If Participant Responds 'blue' then Rab will argue that blue and purple are basically the same thing.

Rab: You see it's supposed to send you into a state of panic. If you can't find the 5<sup>th</sup> colour then your health will suffer.  
(remembers) Orange! But then you've got to buy five fucking different types of fruit. And red ones aren't cheap either. It's just another way to drag you into the rat race. You see? Health = money = job = control. Everything comes back to control. If a government doesn't push the control thing then it's not going to remain in power. And don't get started on the fucking Olympics.

Participant: (Responds)

At his flat Rab goes in to find the door open. Some combination of Pick, Participant 3 and Participant 4 (depending on timings) are sitting, chatting and drinking. Alice is in the bathroom. Rab will acknowledge Pick but question Participants.

Rab: (To Pick) Alright? She here?

Pick: In the bathroom.

Rab: (About participants) They with you?

Pick: And Alice. Yeah.

Or:

Rab: (To participants) Who the fuck are you?

Participants: (Respond)

Rab: This town is filled with fucking vampires.

Rab goes into the kitchen and opens a can of beer, he puts some music on. He chats with the participant that he was talking with on the way to the flat about power and governments.

Rab: I mean, they banned smoking outdoors in America. That says – 'land of the free' doesn't it? You're free if we tell you you're free. But actually you're not free. Not at all.

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: And have you heard about those chemtrail things? Like those trails that planes make in the sky. It's all bollocks, obviously, but some fucker's now trying to make us afraid of the sky. It's like... fucking Chicken Little or something.

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Fuck, I need a piss.

Rab goes to the bathroom and bangs on the door. Eventually Alice and Pick come out. Rab goes in and uses the toilet.

Rab: Fucking hell the place is soaking. Stupid fucking bitches.

He comes out and find Alice and Pick who are having a drink.

Rab: (To Alice) You've fucking soaked the bathroom.

Pick: Fuck off Rab.

Rab: What?

Pick: Fuck off.

Rab grabs her and drags her out of the house.

Rab: You fuck off. You fucking fuck off. Stupid dick.

Alice watches them quietly. When Rab kicks Pick out she shrugs and goes to find something to drink. Rab comes in and finds Alice.

Rab: And you can fuck off as.../

Alice: /Oh shut up you.

This stops Rab in his tracks. Alice hands him a drink.

Alice: Have a drink. You've got the cutest little have a drink.

Rab takes it off her and opens the can.

Alice: It's just fun you know? I'm not yours.

Rab: Yeah.

Alice: We can still enjoy it. Unless you're gonna go fucking crazy on me.

Rab: Crazier.

Alice: I'll break your heart Rab.

Rab: I know.

Alice smiles at him.

Alice: Good party.

Rab: How would you know?

Alice: Well *I'm* enjoying myself.

Rab: Well that's all that matters then.

Alice experiences a wave of euphoria from the ecstasy and shudders.

Alice: (Quietly) Kiss me.

Rab: Wha...

She grabs him and kisses him. Giggling they fall onto an empty chair and keep making out. At some point Pick comes back in and sits down on the floor in front of them. She gets the box containing M33 X-7 out of her bag and places it on the floor in front of her. Alice notices and stops kissing Rab. She pushes him off.

Rab: Wha...? (He notices what's going on) For fuck's sake.

He goes into the kitchen and gets a drink.

The lights in the flat go out. People scream etc.

Rab: Fucking hell. Anybody got any cash for the meter?

Rab: Someone wanna go to the garage for me?

Lorenia and Forty go into Rab's bedroom, undress and start making love in the dark. Edith comes into the house.

Edith: (To Rab) You stingy twat. Where's the lights?

Rab: You wanna go to the garage to get top up?

Edith: No.

Rab: Will your sister go for me?

Edith: Is Lo here?

Rab: Yeah. With your boss.

Edith: (Angry) What the fuck? Where?

Rab: How the fuck should I know?

Edith: Fuck. She's got training tomorrow.

Edith disappears to look for Lorenia.

Rab goes into the lounge to look for Alice and Pick. They're not there so he wanders around the flat looking for them.

Rab: (To himself) For fuck's sake.

Edith, Forty and Lorenia fight. Rab stands and watches them then goes to find the participant that he was talking to on the walk to the flat.

Rab: Do you have any money for the lights?

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Have you seen this?

Rab takes Participant to see hole in the all.

Rab: Someone just went down there. I wonder what it is. Dare you to see what at the end of it.

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: I'm not fucking doing it. I'm staying here to look after my flat.

Rab's role over the next section is to surreptitiously get people to go down the hole to Wonderland or at least to make sure that everybody knows about the hole.

Rab goes up to a group of participants

Rab: Alright? Have you seen Alice anywhere?

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: She must have gone down that hole.

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Haven't you seen it? The big fucking hole disappearing off into the darkness?

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Look - Come here.

Rab takes them to the hole.

Rab: What do you think's down there?

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Well, it's either really good or really bad – nobody's coming back.

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: Go and have a look will you? And come back to tell me.

Participant: (Responds)

Rab: I'm not fucking doing it. I'm not leaving all these fuckers in my flat.

After Rab knows that everybody knows about the hole Rab gets the attention of one group and says:

Rab: Right, I'm going in. You coming? I reckon something fucking goods down this hole.

Rab crawls down the hole.

## Reverie

Participant 9 is asked to stand on a corner in town. A few yards away Reverie is half way through packing up her stall (which is a bucket of water with some flowers in it placed on the ground with a sign saying 'Flowers £1.00'). After a while, she notices Participant 9 and approaches them with the leftover bunch of flowers.

Reverie: Hey... You want to buy these for your girlfriend / boyfriend?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (If yes) Cool... Thanks. So who's the lucky lady / guy?

(If no) Fuck you. I'm just trying to earn a living here.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (If yes) You waiting for them now?

(If no) Anyway, what you doing hanging round here?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: You been stood up?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Just... you've been hanging about here for fucking ages.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: You're not stalking me are you? I've got a boyfriend. He's a mean fucking cunt and he'll kill you if I tell him to.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (Looks Participant 9 up and down) Look, if I see you again...

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: So what are you waiting for?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Sounds like fucking shit.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: What's your name?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (If they didn't buy the flowers in the first place) So (insert name) you gonna buy these then?

(If they did) Well, you give those to your girlfriend / boyfriend and maybe they won't stand you up again.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (If they still refuse) Well, fuck you.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie goes back to her 'stall' and continues packing up. After a while she calls Participant 9 over.

Reverie: Look, I'm sorry ok? Bad day.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: My boyfriend just... (looks at Participant 9) never mind

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: You got a cigarette?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie takes a cigarette or goes in her bag and digs out her own and lights it.

Reverie: You looked like a lost puppy.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: I mean... you look pathetic.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: So what do you do?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (Unless it really doesn't) That sounds fucking boring. Is that, like... your career then?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: So why'd you wanna do that?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: I mean... this is fucking boring but it's not my career so like... fuck it yeah?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Like, flowers are actually pretty interesting but... well this isn't about flowers, it's about selling flowers.



Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: But it'll do for now.

They continue to chat. At some point Marionetta walks past with Participant 5. Marionetta waves at Reverie.

Marionetta: Hey, Rev.

Reverie: Alright?

Marionetta: Sure, you?

Reverie: Yup.

Awkward silence.

Marionetta: Ok, cool. Er... see you later. You off to Rab's?

Reverie shrugs.

Marionetta: Cool. See you later.

Reverie: (To herself) Fucking bitch. (Thinks for a second) Hey... Look do me a favour right? Quick... that girl yeah? I need to you follow her and find out where they're going. Quick, take my number (she pulls a pen from her pocket and writes it on the back of the cardboard sign. Call me when you find out. Make sure they don't see you alright?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Go.

Participant 9 follows Marionetta. Reverie continues to pack up her stall and then goes to the pub. After they get to the first pub and come straight back out again, Marionetta approaches Participant 9.

Marionetta: Excuse me? Do you know where The Oak is? I'm sure it's around here.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Marionetta: Ok, cool thanks (if no). I'm sure we'll be able to find it.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Marionetta and Participant 5 walk off. Hopefully Participant 9 phones Reverie and tells them where Marionetta is going.

Reverie: Ok, thanks for that. See you around mate.

She hangs up. Participant 9 is now left to their own devices for the time it takes for the next scene to occur. Reverie will ring Participant 9 when this scene is finished. Reverie makes her way to the pub and hangs about in the doorway until Marionetta and Participant 5 walk past.

Reverie: Hey!

Marionetta stops and turns around. Reverie walks towards them.

Reverie: I need a word...

She takes Marionetta by the arm and drags her towards the nearest secluded spot.

Reverie: You heard about Rab's party yeah? You got anything to spice things up?

Marionetta: I got some H-DMT-V?

Reverie: I've told you it doesn't work. You're fucking disgusting. What about pills? I need a good time. Anyway, it makes your teeth fall out.

Marionetta: No it doesn't. I've got some pills at home.

Reverie: And so you bring out the shit?

Marionetta: It's not shit.

Reverie: So you're going home before the party, yeah?

Marionetta: I don't...

Reverie: Come on. Nobody's into your hardcore shit.

Marionetta shrugs.

Reverie: You coming in for a drink?

Marionetta: I'm with... (gestures towards Participant 5)

Reverie: Ok, cool. Come on then.

Reverie half-drags Marionetta into The Oak.

Reverie: (To Participant 5 as they go past) Alright?

They go inside and buy a drink at the bar. Reverie goes to sit down.

Marionetta: Sorry about this.

Participant 5 and Marionetta get their drinks and go and join Reverie. There are flyers for the *Hunting Season* gig on the table which is a picture of Maxxy dressed as The Queen of Hearts presented in the style of a playing card.

Reverie: So I'm speaking to Kat and he's all like (making mouth gesture with hand) mur mur mur about you. Marionetta this and Marionetta that. You must have done something to fuck him off.

Marionetta shrugs

Reverie: Not surprising you fucking Def-head. You're obviously still cooking?

Marionetta (shrugs). I've gotta live.

Reverie: Get a McJob.

Marionetta: Would you?

Reverie: Fuck no.

Marionetta: Well then... Once upon a time there was this...

Reverie: Don't start with that.

Marionetta takes a drink.

Reverie (to Participant 5): You know Kat?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: Rab? Anybody? You said he's having a party tonight?

Marionetta: Yeah.

Reverie: I'm definitely going, I think (pauses to drink). So this thing with Kat – what happened?

Marionetta: I thought we got on. I don't know.

Reverie: Nothing?

Marionetta shrugs. Reverie's phone goes off. Marionetta looks at her phone.

Marionetta (to Participant 5): Kat's like a... Rab's... It's hard... he's... a... bit... um, he's a bit weird.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: (Thinks) I... um... It's like... He's got all these things. He's really nice. He's just funny. I think he drinks too much. Too much time... on his hands, you know?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Marionetta: You wanna come to his party? I mean... anyone can go. It's cool if you come... if you want to. You're welcome.

Reverie: (To Marionetta but still on phone) It's Kat. He's looking to score. You getting those pills?

Marionetta nods.

Reverie: (To phone) On her? She's got... (looks at Marionetta) Hi-Def?

Marionetta nods.

Reverie: (To phone) Yeah. (listens) Right. (listens). I can't tell her that. (listens). Ok, cool. See ya. (Hangs up)

Marionetta: What'd he say?

Reverie: He said he was going to shit all over your face.

Marionetta: I don't get the problem.

Reverie shrugs. They sit and drink for a while. Reverie suddenly thinks of something to say.

Reverie: (To Participant 5) So what you got?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: I mean, do you take, y'know pills and stuff. What's she sold you?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: You're not on a date are you?

Marionetta: (Looks at Participant 5 conspiratorially) Sure, why?

Reverie: Bullshit!

Marionetta: Why not?

Reverie: Everybody knows you like the cock / gash (opposite sex to Participant 5)

Marionetta: Everyone?

Reverie: Kat told me.

Marionetta: Right. (looks around for the toilet). Back in a minute.

Marionetta stands up and goes to the toilet.

Reverie: So how long you known her?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: Alright isn't she?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: She needs to stop cooking that shit though. It's sending her a bit... you know? And dealing.... She's gonna get herself caught.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: You got a cigarette?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: (If 'no') I'll see if she has. She owes me.

Reverie: (If 'yes') Hang on... *she'll* probably have one. She owes me loads.

Reverie reaches into Marionetta's bag.

Reverie: Damn... what the fuck?... What's she keep in here. ...Aha... oh. Hello...

Reverie pulls out a packet of cigarettes. Then she discretely pulls out the bag of Hi-Def.

Reverie: Seen this?

Shows bag to Participant 5.

Reverie: Shit. We need to get rid of this. Take it and to the toilet and flush it.

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: Wait I'll do it.

She slips it in her bag.

Reverie: Fag first. Coming?

Participant 5: (Responds)

Reverie: If she comes back – DON'T TELL HER. I'll fucking kill you if you tell her. I mean that.

Reverie takes a cigarette then wanders off outside with her bag.

Reverie: In a bit.

Reverie leaves. She phones Participant 9.

Reverie: Alright mate. It's Rev.

Participant 9: (Responds – they probably don't know who she is)

Reverie: The flower seller yeah? Look, thanks for the tip off. It's been... erm... look, can I buy you a drink to say thanks?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie's job is now to convince Participant 9 to come for a drink. If they really don't want to then she says 'fuck you' and hangs up on them. They can be contacted later about the gig.

Reverie: Cool, ok well, do you know where The Cherry Stone is

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Can you meet me there in like... 10 minutes?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Right, cool, er... see you there. Oh... what you drinking?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Cool, see you in a bit.

Reverie hangs up. She sets of towards the pub gets the drinks. Participant 9 comes in.

Reverie: Alright.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Have a seat. Look...

Reverie opens her bag and shows Participant 9 the bag of tobacco and Hi-Def.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Nicked them off that fucking bitch that you followed. Fucking deserves it too.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: She's just a nasty cunt. Her cunt's nasty.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Like fucking gangrenous. And big and gaping.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Like the mouth of a cave. (Laughs) Bats flying in and out and dead cows in there.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: And her tits are like rotten oranges. And her fucking mouth is not worthy to be spat in. For some fucking bowel cancer dog to shit in. And her eyes are like blobs of HIV infected spunk.  
(Beat) I'm fucking horrible aren't I?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: You don't have to lie to me. I'm disgusting. Like a dog sniffing a big pile of shit. Disgusting huh?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: I mean, so what would you do? Do you just keep sniffing?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: (Changing the subject) Do you want to take some Hi-Def?

Participant 9: (Responds – hopefully no)

Reverie: No?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Fuck... I'm gonna... just gonna go outside. Look after our drinks yeah?

Participant 9: (Responds)

If Participant 9 tries to convince her to not smoke the Hi-Def then Reverie assures them that she won't. She picks up her bag and goes to the toilet. After a while Reverie comes back and sits down.

Reverie: You ever seen any scat? Like... people shitting in each other's face?

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: It's fucking disgusting.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie looks at her phone.

Reverie: I gotta go. (Stands up and gets her stuff together). See ya.

She downs her drink and goes to leave. When she's half-way across the room she turns around.

Reverie: Write this down. (Waits) There's a party at (gives Rab 's address) and a gig at Club de la Faye beforehand. I might see you there.

Participant 9: (Responds)

Reverie: Later.

Reverie leaves the pub. If Participant 9 follows her then she tells them that she wants to be on her own. She walks to Club de la Faye and makes a beeline for Kat.

Reverie: Hey.  
Kat: Alright?  
Reverie: Sure. You?  
Kat: You got any pills?  
Reverie: Hi-Def.  
Kat: What is it with Hi-Def?  
Reverie: I nicked it off that dumb bitch (nodding towards Marionetta who is looking over.)

Marionetta gets up and comes over.

Reverie: Shit.  
Marionetta: You seen my wallet? I think I left it on the bar. My keys as well.  
Kat: Dunno.  
Marionetta: If I can't find them then I can't get the pills.  
Kat: Right. Well, I'll help you then. Give me a minute.  
Marionetta: Fuck.

She goes back to sit down.

Kat: (To Reverie) I've got them in my pocket.  
Reverie: Serves her right.  
Kat: Maybe.

He takes a swig of his drink.

Reverie: Nobody wants to buy this.  
Kat: I'm not surprised. It's a bit... hardcore.  
Reverie: It's alright.  
Kat: Not for me. Look... apparently she's got loads of pills at her flat. You wanna come with me and pick them up?  
Reverie: Sure.  
Kat: Cool. Let me make this look like it's not me.

Kat walks off to talk to Marionetta, Nekomi and Rab about the wallet. Reverie stands at the bar drinking her drink. Participant 8 should come over to introduce himself.



Participant 8: (Introduces himself)

Reverie: Who the fuck are you?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: So?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: Hmm... better wait here then.

Reverie turns away and doesn't talk to Participant 8. If Participant 8 tries to strike up a conversation she answers with the shortest answer possible. Kat comes back.

Reverie: (To Kat about Participant 8) Who's this cunt?

Kat: Shut up. (Beat) I'll take this out shall I?

Reverie: Cool.

Kat: (To Participant 8) We've got stuff to see to – you should come.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: (Looks at Reverie) Just a drink somewhere else. Before the band starts. Yeah?

Kat must convince Participant 8 that he has to come with them without explaining what they're actually doing. They leave the bar together.

Reverie: Which way is it?

Kat: This way.

They walk in silence for a bit.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You like to have fun?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: (To Reverie) *We* like to have fun don't we?

Reverie: Sure.

Kat: We gotta go pick up some stuff from a friend's house first yeah? Won't take a minute once we're there. It's about 10 minutes' walk.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: Cool.

Reverie: (To Participant 8) So what do you do?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: (Is really critical of this)

Kat: Eh... fangs down yeah? Claws in. This guy's alright. Reverie here sells nicked flowers out of a bucket on the high street. So she's in no position to criticise.

Reverie: It pays the bills.

Kat: Hardly a career though.

Reverie: Better than being dole-queue scum.

Kat: Business is thin.

Reverie: You mean the rent boy business?

Kat: (To Participant 8) I'm not a rent boy.

Reverie: Used to be though. Sucking off politicians round Westminster. Lucrative business wasn't it?

Kat: They did me.

Reverie: How does that work? I mean that's win / win.

Kat: Who am I to question the system?

Reverie: What was it? A young David Cameron – chowing down on your saucisson. Didn't you like, think of selling them out to the papers?

Kat: It's unprofessional.

Reverie: Ah yes... the professional rent boy.

Kat: Hasn't stopped you from having a go has it?

Reverie: Fuck you.

They walk on in silence.

Reverie: (To Participant 8) Have *you* ever given or received oral sex from anyone famous?

Kat: Give it a rest.

Reverie: I know someone who had some musician put it up her arse.

Kat: Who was that?

Reverie shrugs.

Kat: So it's not true?

Reverie: It's true.

Kat: Was it you?

Reverie: You wish.

Kat: Have you ever...?

Reverie: Who hasn't?

Kat: Er... me. (To Participant 8) Have you?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: What you've never put it in a girl's arse.

Kat: Why would I?

Reverie: Ok...

Kat: What?

Reverie: I just thought it was like, the Holy Grail.

Kat: What? Your arsehole is the Holy Grail?

Reverie: Damn right my arse is the Holy Grail – you'll be blessed if you even get the chance to drink from my arsehole. Never mind put your dick anywhere near it.

Kat: Fuck you.

Reverie: Not a chance.

Kat: Holy Grail? More like...

Reverie: Go on.

Kat: I can have your arsehole.

Reverie: Keep dreaming.

They walk on in silence.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You ever been to Amsterdam?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: We went to this, like, private cinema thing in the Red Light District. There was this video of a woman fucking an electric eel.

Reverie: Why do everybody's stories about Amsterdam revolve around some kind of... collective sexual experience? (To Participant 8) Like, do *you* watch porn with your mates?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: (To Kat) I bet *you* do.

Kat: Fuck off.

Reverie: Well why's it suddenly acceptable in Amsterdam?

Kat: I'm just telling you what happened.

Reverie: But it's fucking abnormal. You wouldn't catch that happening with women.

Kat: Women, women – (To Participant 8) We know about fucking women don't we? We've talked about women.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: You don't know shit. Neither of you.

Silence – they walk on.

Kat: What about Anne Summers parties?

Reverie: Fuck you.

(Silence)

Reverie: So what other disgusting shit tickled your fancy in the 'dam? Other than bestiality that is... Scat? Would you like me to shit in your mouth?

Kat: My friend went with a prostitute. He says he kept his socks on.

Reverie: It was you, wasn't it?

Kat: Fuck off.

Reverie: It *so* was. With your socks on – who tells their mates that?

Kat: It's true.

Reverie: Well, you'd know.

Kat: It wasn't fucking me.

Reverie: Sure.

Kat: (To Participant 8) You ever seen anything really nasty? Porn, I mean?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: What about you Rev?

Reverie: Nothing I got off on.

Kat: Yeah right.

Reverie: I mean it.

Kat: But you've seen it.

Reverie: So?

Kat: On your own?

Reverie: With a boyfriend.

Kat: Like...

Reverie: What?

Kat: Like he was trying to... what was it? And did you...?

Reverie: I'll leave that to your imagination.

Kat: What was it?

Reverie: There's no point in even trying.

Kat: I'll get it out of you.

Reverie: No you won't.

Kat: (To Participant 8) I will. I'm like a dog.../

Reverie: /Yes you are.

Eventually they get to Marionetta's flat. Kat lets them in. It's fairly well decorated. In the kitchen is loads of chemistry apparatus for cooking H-DMT-V. In the lounge is a terrarium filled with caterpillars. A white rabbit hops around the floor.

Kat: Why don't you sit in the lounge eh?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Kat: (To Reverie) Right, where might she...

Reverie: You check the kitchen I'll check the bedroom.

Kat goes through the drawers in the kitchen and looks in the breadbin and fridge etc. Then goes into the bedroom shutting the door behind him. Hopefully the flat is quiet enough for Participant 8 to just about hear them talking.

Kat: They're not here.

Reverie holds up a big bag of pills.

Reverie: Ta-da!

Kat: Nice one.

She takes two out then hands him the bag.

Reverie: You take this.

Kat puts the bag in his pocket. She pushes a pill into this mouth.

Reverie: This... and this

She starts snogging his face off. Over time this progresses further.

Kat: I want it.

Reverie: What?

Kat: The Grail. The prize.

Reverie: You want the prize?

Kat: Bend over.

Reverie: It's not that simple.

Kat: What?

Reverie: Marionetta...

Kat: Don't you think...?

Reverie: You want the brown wings?

Kat: (Thinks) Alright.

Reverie: You make her pay.

Kat: She's not done...

Reverie turns around, pulls down her trousers and bends over the bed.

Reverie: You want this – you fuck this place up and then you fuck her up.

Kat: (Thinks) Yeah... yeah, alright.

Obviously the next section doesn't actually involve the actors having anal sex just a relatively realistic re-creation in case Participant 8 walks in and looks. After they get going a bit.

Reverie: You like?

Kat: Fuck yeah.

Reverie: You see, it's good yeah because if I want you to stop.

She squeezes her arse muscles and Kat cries out in pain and pulls out holding his dick. Reverie whips her jeans up, laughs and pushes him over.

Kat: Fucking bitch.

Reverie laughs then picks up a piece of furniture, jewellery box etc and throws it at Rab on the floor.

Reverie: Fucking cunt. Serves you fucking right.

Laughing she runs out of the bedroom and starts destroying the flat. Then she runs into the lounge grabs Participant 8.

Reverie: (To Participant 8) He's gone fucking mental. Quick.

She drags him out of the flat. They run down the road. Eventually they stop.

Reverie: (Laughing) He just fucking went crazy.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: Crazy bastard. Come on.

They walk down the street a bit in silence.

Reverie: You off to the party?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: You know where it is?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: Right, it's... (she gives him the correct address). I used to live there. If you just (she gives him the directions to the vicinity of the party). It's really easy to find after that. You'll probably hear it. I'd come with you but I've got shit to sort out.

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: Might see you later.

Reverie walks off and, when out of sight of Participant 8, makes a bee-line for Rab's flat. Reverie must wait outside until both Kat and Participant 8 have gone in before she enters. When she does she watches Kat force feeding pills to Marionetta. After than she goes and finds Participant 8.

Reverie: Kat yeah? You know him well?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: He's a real fucker you know?

Participant 8: (Responds)

Reverie: He just wants to fuck everybody.

Kat walks away from Marionetta and bumps into Reverie and Participant 8.

Kat: I did it. I fucked up her flat and I fucked up her.

Reverie: And you got what you wanted.

Kat looks at the floor.

Kat: You fucked with me. I want it all.

Reverie: Fuck you. My arse is a Grail.

Kat: You fucking...

The lights go out. Reverie slips away.

Kat: I'll fucking...

He starts looking around for her but she hides. Kat stands by the door and waits for her. She sees him and decides to use the hole to Wonderland instead but he notices her as she starts to crawl down it and grabs her legs.

Kat: Fucking bitch.

Reverie: Fuck off.

Kat: I'm gonna fuck you until your arse bleeds.

Reverie kicks him in the face and he lets go. She crawls down the tunnel to safety.

Kat: Fucking bitch

Kat starts to crawl down after her.



## **Performer's Scripts**

**Alice**

## Scene 1: Alice meets Participant 4

Participant 4 is asked to wait in a public toilet somewhere. After about 30 minutes Alice knocks on the cubicle wall.

Alice	Participant 4
Asks for toilet roll	(Responds)
Asks if Participant 4 is a cottager and then leaves sitting somewhere nearby to smoke a cigarette.	(Responds)
Accuses Participant 4 of being a cottager.	Hopefully Participant 4 approaches Alice.
Calls the police – they say they’ll be there in about half an hour.	Sticks around or runs off.
Find Participant 4, asks them for a cigarette then smokes it or one of her own.	(Responds)
Realises that Participant 4 isn’t a cottager and offers to buy them a drink to say sorry.	(Responds)
Tells Participant 4 to meet her in Flunk in 20 minutes and to get her a G&T.	(Responds)
Goes to Flunk and finds Participant 4 but says she’s worried about them spiking her drink so goes to get her own.	(Responds)
Chat	
Offers to buy Participant 4 a drink at another bar (where Pick is with Participant 3)	(Responds)
Go to Neutron Star	

**Scene 2: At Neutron Star**

<b>Pick</b>	<b>Alice</b>	<b>Participant 3</b>	<b>Participant 4</b>
Talks about death, recounts story where she nearly died.		(Responds)	
Picks tells a story about somebody she knows who nearly died.		(Responds)	
Tells story about sleeping outside.		(Responds)	
Tells Participant 3 that Alice doesn't speak to her.	Enters and buys drink – notices Pick and tells Participant 4 that she thinks she won't speak to her.	(Responds)	Enters and buys drink.
(Responds)	Says 'Hi!' to Pick		
(Responds)	Introduces Participant 4	(Responds)	
Is embarrassed.	Talks about Rab's last Party.		
	Talks about love and obsession.		
Pick doesn't say anything to participants unless they talk to her.	Goes to bar to buy 4 shots.		
Drink shots then leave.			

### Scene 3: Walking to Rab's Party

Pick	Alice	Participant 3	Participant 4
Talks privately about what happened between Herself and Alice.	Talks privately about what happened between Herself and Pick.	Follow behind / talk between themselves.	Follow behind / talk between themselves.
	Talks about living rough and using swimming pools and Jacuzzis to bathe in.		
Tells story about being attacked in the park and the meeting a depressed woman.	Recalls hearing about Pick being attacked.		
Pick suggests Alice might be a lesbian.	Alice kicks off describing herself as a 'people person'.		
Pick clarifies details of her story – the man paid for her to have sex with him.			
Stop at off-licence			
	Why not just enjoy one night together rather than getting into a relationship?		
Arrive at Rab's			

## Scene 4: At Rab's

Pick	Alice	Participant 3	Participant 4	Rab
Arrive at Rab's and get settled.				
	Goes to run a bath.			
Chat		Chat	Chat	Returns home. Asks where Alice is.
People start to arrive – Picks goes to tell Alice.	Alice tells her to come in.			Goes into kitchen and talks to participant who he walked back with about control and paranoia.
Talk about their relationship.				
Goes to get Participant 4	Asks Pick to go get Participant 4		Goes to the bathroom	
Picks asks Participant 3 if they're in love.	Asks Participant 4 if they've got a drink	(Responds)	(Responds)	
Recalls story about her friends dying.	Apologises for calling the police on Participant 4		(Responds)	
Shows Participant 3 MX-33, is embarrassed but tells them about it anyway. Then gets insulted because she thinks they don't believe her.	Talks about Pick, about not wanting to be tied down and asks Participant 4 what they think.		(Responds)	
Runs to bathroom opens door And jumps into bath with Alice	Laughs and kicks Participant 4 out.			

Comes out of bathroom with Alice.	Gets dressed and comes out of bathroom.			Goes to bathroom and bangs on door.
Has fight with Rab and gets thrown out.				Has argument with Pick and kicks her out.
Walks around block then comes back.	Gives Rab a drink and tells him she's not his – it's just fun. She says she'll break his heart.			Rab agrees that she'll break his heart.
	Comes up off the ecstasy and kisses Rab. They fall in to an arms chair.			Kisses Alice. They falls into an arm chair.
Sees Rab and Alice kissing each other	Alice notices and they stop.			Rab walks off into kitchen to get a drink.
Threatens to open MX-33	Alice doesn't stop her.			
Opens MX-33				
Lights go out				
Disappears				Asks Edith whether her or Lorenia will go and get his electricity topped up.
				Goes into lounge to look for Alice and Pick.
				Finds participant he was talking to earlier and shows them the hole to Wonderland.
				Convinces groups of participants to go down the tunnel.

			Once everybody knows about the tunnel he crawls into Wonderland himself.
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**Nekomi**

## Scene 1: Nekomi Meets Participant 6

Participant 6 is asked to meet Nekomi underneath a tree in a park. Nekomi is actually stuck up the tree and calls for help to get down. Participant 6's first task, therefore, is to find a way of helping Nekomi down from the tree.

Nekomi	Participant 6
Thanks Participant 6 and offers to buy them a drink.	Helps Nekomi to get down from the tree.
Nekomi goes to off-licence and gets 4 cans of beer.	
Nekomi takes Participant 6 to a nearby playground.	
Nekomi recalls a number of stories about being young and playing in and around the park.	
Nekomi takes Participant 6's phone number and leaves.	

## Scene 2: At Gig

Nekomi	Rab	Kat	Marionetta	Reverie	Participant 6	Participant 8
Is surprised.	Mentions about all the strangers in his flat.					
Cynical about it being anything special but keeps suggesting new versions.	Banter about the rule of three and how he can't stop using it and it's driving him mad.					
Makes X sign with forefingers to try to warn Rab that Kat's behind him.	Says he hopes Kat's not coming to the party.	Overhears				
	Argues with Kat keeps calling him a 'fucking cunt'.	Argues with Rab. Saying he's going mad and he's such a dick.				
Says Marionetta is coming.		Asks if they've got any pills				
Mentions strangers at Rab's house and says it's like Schrödinger's cat.		Calls Rab a fucking dick and then calls them both weirdos				
	Disagrees.	Says that it's not worth trying to explain anything - you've just got to go with it.				

	Rab gets more and more worked up.	Says Rab's wrong.				
	Shouts: 'I'M NOT WRONG!'	Asks if they want to get some pills.				
	Is cynical that it comes at a cost but agrees.	Asks if they want a drink the goes to the bar.				
Nekomi call Participant 6.						
	Accuses Kat of spiking them and gets him to empty his pockets.	Kat returns with drinks.				
Nekomi spits her drink all over Kat.	'The last think I want to do is wake up with an arse full of semen.'	Flies off the handle at Nekomi then walks away to the bar.	Arrives and goes to the bar.			
		Asks Marionetta if she has any pills.	Says she'll go home and get some.			
		Takes her wallet.	Buys drink but leaves wallet on bar.			
			Sits down with Rab and Nekomi.			
Asks Marionetta about going to see a horror movie.	Says it's shit.		Says ok. Says she's got to go and get pills from her flat.			

Mentions meeting Participant 6	Accuses them of being ladies of the night or succubae.		Mentions meeting Participant 5.	Enters		
Suggests they go and get the pills.		Tells Reverie he has got Marionetta's wallet and keys.	Realises she's lost her wallet and keys.	Says she's got Hi-Def that she nicked off Marionetta.		
		Says he hasn't but he'll help her look.	Asks Kat if he's seen them then goes to sit back down.			
		Tells Reverie about the pills at Marionetta's flat.				
		Pretends to look around the bar for Marionetta's wallet.				
		Sees Participant 8 and tells them to introduce themselves to Reverie.		Chats a bit with Participant 8.		Introduces himself to Reverie.
Says she'll get the drinks.	Says they should kick the door down.	Goes to Marionetta and tells her he can't find the wallet.	Apologises to Rab and Nekomi.			
		Says he's going to try to score.				

		He says no.	Marionetta asks Kat is she can stay at his.			
	Rab tries to undo some of the insults from before.	Kat tells him to buy him a drink. They go to the bar.				
Asks Marionetta if she loves Kat		Introduces Participant 8 to Reverie then convinces Participant 8 to come to a different bar via Marionetta's.	Says no.	Asks Kat who the fuck Participant 8 is.		
Asks Participant 6 if they've ever been in love.	Rab comes back.	Leaves		Leaves	(Responds to Nekomi)	Leaves.
Maxxy's band play.						
	After the band has finished Rab leaves taking some people with him.					
Nekomi takes the rest of the people to Rab's.						

### Scene 3: Marionetta and Nekomi Walking to the Party / At the Party

Marionetta	Nekomi	Kat	Reverie
Opens up about it.	Asks about Marionetta, Kat and Reverie.		
She disagrees.	Says Kat and Reverie hate her.		
Go into off-licence and buy booze.			
Chat about various things movies, music etc.			
Get to Rab's party.			
Squish into a one-seater chair and play truth or drink – questions about sex, embarrassing mistakes etc.		Turns up at party.	
Responds whilst laughing	Asks about Kat in bed.	Overhears.	
	Thinks that they're Marionetta's but doesn't say anything.	Butts into conversation offering pills at £5 each	Turns up at party.
Tries to stop him.	Just accepts him doing it.	Forces pills into Marionetta's mouth.	Watches this happen from a distance.
Pays for it and swallows it.		Gives Nekomi a pill then walks away.	
Re-instigate game of truth or drink – but half-hearted now.			
Tells Nekomi she'll be fine but then asks her to watch out for her.	Asks Marionetta how much she can handle.	Tells Reverie he did what she wanted.	Says he got what he wanted and that her arse is a grail.
Pick opens the box and the lights go out.			
They laugh about it and keep playing the game.		Looks for Reverie with the intention of hurting her.	Hides from Kat.

Marionetta gets up to go to the toilet find hole to Wonderland and comes back to tell Nekomi.		Grabs Reverie but she kicks him in the face.	Starts to crawl into Wonderland. Kat grabs her but she kicks him in the face.
Says they should see what's up there.	Isn't sure but is convinced by Marionetta.	Starts crawling after her.	Disappears into Wonderland
They crawl up the tunnel together.			



**Edith**

## Scene 1: Django's Bar

Participant 2 enters the bar where Forty and Edith work. There's light music on but apparently nobody about. A handwritten sign on the bar says 'Please help yourself' and there's a glass next to it with honesty box written on it in permanent marker. From the back room comes the sound of two people making love. They eventually reach climax. After about 5 minutes Edith comes out and helps herself to a beer.

Edith	Lorenia	Forty
Tries to get Participant 2 to pour their own drink.		Stops Participant 2 and tells Edith to serve them.
Slags off Forty behind his back.	Comes in, sits down and mentions how Edith never visits their parents.	
Argues mildly with Lorenia about their family.	Argues mildly with Edith about family.	
Asks Lorenia what she's doing tonight then slags it off.		
Mentions Maxxy's band and tries to convince Lorenia to come with her.	Doesn't want to go with Edith to see Maxxy's band.	
Puts on <i>Low Rider</i> by War (Lorenia's song) and recalls memory of it.		Stops <i>Low Rider</i> .
	Tells Forty that she was the naughty one when they were kids.	Asks Lorenia what Edith's song was ( <i>Je Ne Regrette Rien</i> ).
		Tells story about his childhood.
		Tells Edith she can leave early.
Refuses to take Lorenia to the gig.	Lorenia considers going with Edith.	Suggests that Edith takes Lorenia to Maxxy's gig.
Speaks to Participant 1 and convinces them to go with her.		
Gets herself and Participant 1 a shot.		
Goes to the toilet.		

Overhears Lorenia apologising for her and kicks off.	Apologises for Edith (continues apologising when she's gone)	
Drags Participant 1 out of the bar.	Explains to Forty that she's failed in relation to finding romance.	Asks Lorenia what she wants in life.
		Gets Lorenia a glass of wine then starts cleaning up.
	Apologises to Participant 2 about Edith then starts talking to him and sits down with him to have general conversation (see 'Getting to Know You') then talk about family.	
		Joins Lorenia and Participant 2 with a bottle of wine.
	Disagrees with living 'the wild life'	Talks about his exciting life experiences.
	Refuses at first then drinks Sambuca.	Gets some shots of Sambuca.
		Convinces Lorenia and Participant 2 to go for another drink and then onto Rab's party.

## Scene 2: Walking to Gig / At Gig

They leave for the gig. Edith and Participant 1 chat about Participant 1 (See Getting to Know You). Particularly about what kind of music Participant 1 likes. Edith is a big music fan and suggests loads of bands to Participant 1. She also talks a lot about getting wasted. After a short while, they reach the gig. Edith gets the drinks and then they sit down.

Edith	Participant 1
Talks about sister and problems at home.	(Responds)
Talks about Maxxy's band.	(Responds)
General chat about music / movies etc.	(Responds)

## Scene 3: After the Gig

After the gig the band collect backstage and talk about the gig. Edith comes in with Participant 1 and starts talking to the band members BM1 BM2 Maxxy (a girl) and BM4 whilst ignoring Participant 1. She's really flirty and kisses a few of them over the course of the scene.

Edith	Maxxy
Mentions a dream she's had.	
Kisses BM1 and gives him a pill.	
Kisses BM2 and gives him a pill.	
Kisses Maxxy.	Kisses Edith.
Insults BM1.	Insults BM1.

Mentions rule of three.	Puts on Astral Projection by Strip Steve. <i>Baby Face</i> comes on afterwards.
Mentions party.	
Takes Participant 1 back into bar.	Starts to pack up equipment.

Edith and Participant leave and go back into the bar. They get another drink and sit down. Edith is fairly pissed by now.

<b>Edith</b>	<b>Maxxy</b>
Talks to Participant 1 about what she wants to do with her life (and about Lorenia in relation to this)	
Offers to get some drinks in and goes to bar.	Tells Participant 1 about Edith and Forty then admits this mistake to Edith.
Tries to convince Maxxy to come to party.	Talks about staying up for the last two nights.
Teases Maxxy for being conservative.	
They leave as a group.	They leave as a group.

## Scene 4: Walking to Party

They gather themselves up and gradually move outside. Light cigarettes and then hit the road. Edith walks with Participant 1 and Maxxy.

Edith:	Maxxy:
Is concerned that she's viewed as being a slut.	
Criticises Maxxy for wanting a family and 2.4 children.	Questions Edith's lack of moral compass.
Rubbishes Maxxy's examples of when she's been 'naughty'.	Tries to convince them that she's actually really 'naughty'.

They continue talking as they make their way to Rab's. Maxxy asks Participant 1 about themselves with Edith pitching in. The focus is on sex – number of partners, notable occasions, funny things that have happened.

Maxxy:	Edith:
Interrogates Participant 1 about their relationships and sex life.	Criticises both Participant 1 and Maxxy for not being 'crazy'.
	Instigates game where person who doesn't catch her has to strip and walk to the party.
Chases Edith to party.	Runs to party.

Edith sprints down the street running as fast as she can. Hopefully, she can get to the party before anybody catches her. If not then the other non-catcher needs to fulfil the forfeit. If she gets to the party, Edith demands that they both strip off and walk in together. She will not take no for an answer. Obviously, on getting in the flat the lights should have gone out so nobody will see them anyway. Edith walks in behind them.

## Scene 5: Travelling to the Party / At the Party

<b>Lorenia</b>	<b>Forty</b>	<b>Edith</b>	<b>Rab</b>
Kisses Forty again in taxi.	Kisses Lorenia again in taxi.		
Takes pill.	Gives Lorenia a pill at the party.		
When lights go out she goes with Forty into Rab's bedroom.	When the lights go out he takes Lorenia into Rab's bedroom.	Enters party and insults Rab for not paying his electricity bill.	
		Hears that Lorenia is here with Forty.	Asks Edith if her or Lorenia is willing to go and get his electricity card topped up.
Hardly puts up a fight when Edith bursts in.	Keeps quiet when Edith bursts in.	Bursts into bedroom, drags her out of bed and halfway down the corridor.	
Escapes by crawling into Wonderland.		Tries to stop Lorenia crawling into Wonderland but fails.	
	Admits to Edith that he gave Lorenia a pill.	Follows Lorenia into Wonderland.	
	Finds Participant 2 and asks them which of Edith and Lorenia is 'better'. He then attempts to explain them both.		
	Explains to Participant 2 how he gets bored with relationships and pities people who get trapped in meaningless relationships.		
	Bores Participant 2 with same stories from earlier in the night until Participant 2 escapes.		
	After everybody has gone into Wonderland Forty follows them.		

**Forty / Lorenia**



## Scene 1: Django's Bar

Participant 2 enters the bar where Forty and Edith work. There's light music on but apparently nobody about. A handwritten sign on the bar says 'Please help yourself' and there's a glass next to it with honesty box written on it in permanent marker. From the back room comes the sound of two people making love. They eventually reach climax. After about 5 minutes Edith comes out and helps herself to a beer.

Edith	Lorenia	Forty
Tries to get Participant 2 to pour their own drink.		Stops Participant 2 and tells Edith to serve them.
Slags off Forty behind his back.	Comes in, sits down and mentions how Edith never visits their parents.	
Argues mildly with Lorenia about their family.	Argues mildly with Edith about family.	
Asks Lorenia what she's doing tonight then slags it off.		
Mentions Maxxy's band and tries to convince Lorenia to come with her.	Doesn't want to go with Edith to see Maxxy's band.	
Puts on 'Low Rider' by War (Lorenia's song) and recalls memory of it.		Stops <i>Low Rider</i> .
	Tells Forty that she was the naughty one when they were kids.	Asks Lorenia what Edith's song was ( <i>Je Ne Regrette Rien</i> ).
		Tells story about his childhood.
		Tells Edith she can leave early.
Refuses to take Lorenia to the gig.	Lorenia considers going with Edith.	Suggests that Edith takes Lorenia to Maxxy's gig.
Speaks to Participant 1 and convinces them to go with her.		
Gets herself and Participant 1 a shot.		
Goes to the toilet.		

Overhears Lorenia apologising for her and kicks off.	Apologises for Edith (continues apologising when she's gone)	
Drags Participant 1 out of the bar.	Explains to Forty that she's failed in relation to finding romance.	Asks Lorenia what she wants in life.
		Gets Lorenia a glass of wine then starts cleaning up.
	Apologises to Participant 2 about Edith then starts talking to him and sits down with him to have general conversation (see 'Getting to Know You') then talk about family.	
		Joins Lorenia and Participant 2 with a bottle of wine.
	Disagrees with living 'the wild life'	Talks about his exciting life experiences.
	Refuses at first then drinks Sambuca.	Gets some shots of Sambuca.
		Convinces Lorenia and Participant 2 to go for another drink and then onto Rab's party.

## Scene 2: Walking to Bar / In Bar

Lorenia:	Forty:
Lorenia disagrees with the party lifestyle.	Continues talking about things that have happened on crazy nights out. He hates how partners have appeared to want that and then have changed their minds after a few months in the relationship. He's concerned with making the most of life.
Kisses Forty when Participant 2 goes to the toilet.	Kisses Lorenia when Participant 2 goes to the toilet.
	Convinces Participant 2 to come to Rab's party. Orders a taxi.

### Scene 3: Travelling to the Party / At the Party

Lorenia	Forty	Edith	Rab
Kisses Forty again in taxi.	Kisses Lorenia again in taxi.		
Takes pill.	Gives Lorenia a pill at the party.		
When lights go out she goes with Forty into Rab's bedroom.	When the lights go out he takes Lorenia into Rab's bedroom.	Enters party and insults Rab for not paying his electricity bill.	
		Hears that Lorenia is here with Forty.	Asks Edith if her or Lorenia is willing to go and get his electricity card topped up.
Hardly puts up a fight when Edith bursts in.	Keeps quiet when Edith bursts in.	Bursts into bedroom, drags her out of bed and halfway down the corridor.	
Escapes by crawling into Wonderland.		Tries to stop Lorenia crawling into Wonderland but fails.	
	Admits to Edith that he gave Lorenia a pill.	Follows Lorenia into Wonderland.	
	Finds Participant 2 and asks them which of Edith and Lorenia is better. Then he attempts to explain them both.		
	Explains to Participant 2 how he gets bored with relationships and pities people who get trapped in meaningless relationships.		
	Bores Participant 2 with same stories from earlier in the night until Participant 2 escapes.		
	After everybody has gone into Wonderland Forty follows them.		

**Kat**

## Scene 1: Kat and Marionetta in Pub

Kat and Marionetta are sitting in a pub having a drink. Participant 8 (Male) has been told to meet in the pub as well and to sit at a specific table nearby so that there's no way that Participant 8 isn't going to overhear the conversation.

Marionetta	Kat	Participant 8
Says she's can't be in the relationship anymore because he's too real and she's just like vapour.	Disagrees and tries to get her to sleep with him tonight. He doesn't really understand what she's getting at.	
Downs her drink and leaves.	Sits there in silence then accuses Participant 8 of listening in.	(Responds)
She walks around corner to where she will meet Participant 5 and waits there.	Starts slagging off women then moves onto criticising monogamy – being trapped in a relationship.	(Responds)
	Says the older he gets the less he understands.	
	Offers to buy Participant 8 a drink then either way asks Participant 8 to watch his bag whilst he goes to the bar.	(Responds)
	Ask Participant 8 their name.	(Responds)
	Tries to score off Participant 8 (if they say 'yes' then he makes progressively unreasonable demands until they couldn't possibly accept his offer)	(Responds)
	Offers to buy Participant 8 another drink.	
	Shows Participant 8 Maxxy's band's flyer and says they're really good.	
	Leaves.	

**Scene 2: At Gig**

<b>Nekomi</b>	<b>Rab</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Marionetta</b>	<b>Reverie</b>	<b>Participant 6</b>	<b>Participant 8</b>
Is surprised.	Mentions about all the strangers in his flat.					
Cynical about it being anything special but keeps suggesting new versions.	Banter about the rule of three and how he can't stop using it and it's driving him mad.					
Makes X sign with forefingers to try to warn Rab that Kat's behind him.	Says he hopes Kat's not coming to the party.	Overhears				
	Argues with Kat keeps calling him a fucking cunt.	Argues with Rab. Saying he's going mad and he's such a dick.				
Says Marionetta is coming.		Asks if they've got any pills				
Mentions strangers at Rab's house and says it's like Schrödinger's cat.		Calls Rab a fucking dick and then calls them both weirdos				

	Disagrees.	Says that it's not worth trying to explain anything - you've just got to go with it.				
	Rab gets more and more worked up.	Says Rab's wrong.				
	Shouts: 'I'M NOT WRONG!'	Asks if they want to get some pills.				
	Is cynical that it comes at a cost but agrees.	Asks if they want a drink the goes to the bar.				
Nekomi call Participant 6.						
	Accuses Kat of spiking them and gets him to empty his pockets.	Kat returns with drinks.				
Nekomi spits her drink all over Kat.	'The last think I want to do is wake up with an arse full of semen.'	Flies off the handle at Nekomi then walks away to the bar.	Arrives and goes to the bar.			
		Asks Marionetta if she has any pills.	Says she'll go home and get some.			



		Takes her wallet.	Buys drink but leaves wallet on bar.			
			Sits down with Rab and Nekomi.			
Asks Marionetta about going to see a horror movie.	Says it's shit.		Says ok. Says she's got to go and get pills from her flat.			
Mentions meeting Participant 6	Accuses them of being ladies of the night or succubae.		Mentions meeting Participant 5.	Enters		
Suggests they go and get the pills.		Tells Reverie he has got Marionetta's wallet and keys.	Realises she's lost her wallet and keys.	Says she's got Hi-Def that she nicked off Marionetta.		
		Says he hasn't but he'll help her look.	Asks Kat if he's seen them then goes to sit back down.			
		Tells Reverie about the pills at Marionetta's flat.				
		Pretends to look around the bar for Marionetta's wallet.				

		Sees Participant 8 and tells them to introduce themselves to Reverie.		Chats a bit with Participant 8.		Introduces himself to Reverie.
Says she'll get the drinks.	Says they should kick the door down.	Goes to Marionetta and tells her he can't find the wallet.	Apologises to Rab and Nekomi.			
		Says he's going to try to score.				
		He says no.	Marionetta asks Kat is she can stay at his.			
	Rab tries to undo some of the insults from before.	Kat tells him to buy him a drink. They go to the bar.				
Asks Marionetta if she loves Kat		Introduces Participant 8 to Reverie then convinces Participant 8 to come to a different bar via Marionetta's.	Says no.	Asks Kat who the fuck Participant 8 is.		
Asks Participant 6 if they've ever been in love.	Rab comes back.	Leaves		Leaves	(Responds to Nekomi)	Leaves.
Maxxy's band play.						

	After the band has finished Rab leaves taking some people with him.					
Nekomi takes the rest of the people to Rab's.						

### Scene 3: Reverie and Kat Walking to Marionetta's Flat / At Marionetta's Flat

Reverie	Kat	Participant 8
	Explains to Participant 8 that they're going to a friend's house first before the pub.	(Responds)
	Tells Participant 8 about Reverie's job - stealing and selling flowers.	(Responds)
Reverie tells Participant 8 that Kat used to be a rent boy.	Tells a few stories about this time in his life.	
Says she knows somebody who let a musician have anal sex with her.	Kat says he's never done that.	
Teases Kat about never having anal sex - 'I thought it was like, The Holy Grail for boys' then says her arsehole is The Holy Grail and Kat could never have it.	Kat says he could have her arse.	
	Kat asks Participant 8 if they've been to Amsterdam and then recalls a number of seedy experiences.	(Responds)

	Kat asks Participant 8 if they've seen any really nasty pornography.	(Responds)
Nothing she got off on.	He asks Reverie the same question.	
They arrive at Marionetta's flat.		
Searches in the bedroom and finds pills.	Searches in the kitchen to no avail.	Is told to sit in the lounge.
Takes pill, pushes one into Kat's mouth gives the bag to Kat	Goes into bedroom, takes pill and puts the bag in his pocket.	
They start to kiss.		
Says he can if he promises the trash the flat then fuck Marionetta up.	Says he wants to take her up the arse.	
He agrees and they start to get it on.		
Reverie goes with it but then squeezes her arse muscles.	Kat cries out in pain, pulls out and fall on the floor.	
Reverie pulls her trousers up then throws a piece of furniture at him and runs out grabbing Participant 8 on the way		Follows Reverie.
Run down the street with Participant 8	Leaves Marionetta's and goes to Rab's party.	Runs down the street with Reverie.
Gives Participant 8 Rab's address then leaves.		Goes to Rab's party.
Goes to Rab's party.		

**Scene 4: Marionetta and Nekomi Walking to the Party / Kat and Reverie at the Party.**

<b>Marionetta</b>	<b>Nekomi</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Reverie</b>
Opens up about it.	Asks about Marionetta, Kat and Reverie.		
She disagrees.	Says Kat and Reverie hate her.		
Go into off-licence and buy booze.			
Chat about various things movies, music etc.			
Get to Rab's party.			
Squish into a one-seater chair and play truth or drink – questions about sex, embarrassing mistakes etc.		Turns up at party.	
Responds whilst laughing	Asks about Kat in bed.	Overhears.	
	Thinks that they're Marionetta's but doesn't say anything.	Butts into conversation offering pills at £5 each	Turns up at party.
Tries to stop him.	Just accepts him doing it.	Forces pills into Marionetta's mouth.	Watches this happen from a distance.
Pays for it and swallows it.		Gives Nekomi a pill then walks away.	
Re-instigate game of truth or drink – but half-hearted now.			
Tells Nekomi she'll be fine but then asks her to watch out for her.	Asks Marionetta how much she can handle.	Tells Reverie he did what she wanted.	Says he got what he wanted and that her arse is a grail.
Pick opens the box and the lights go out.			
They laugh about it and keep playing the game.		Looks for Reverie with the intention of hurting her.	Hides from Kat.

Marionetta gets up to go to the toilet find hole to Wonderland and comes back to tell Nekomi.		Grabs Reverie but she kicks him in the face.	Starts to crawl into Wonderland. Kat grabs her but she kicks him in the face.
Says they should see what's up there.	Isn't sure but is convinced by Marionetta.	Starts crawling after her.	Disappears into Wonderland
They crawl up the tunnel together.			

## **Marionetta**

## Scene 1: Kat and Marionetta in Pub

Kat and Marionetta are sitting in a pub having a drink. Participant 8 (Male) has been told to meet in the pub as well and to sit at a specific table nearby so that there's no way that Participant 8 isn't going to overhear the conversation.

Marionetta	Kat	Participant 8
Says she's can't be in the relationship anymore because he's too real and she's just like vapour.	Disagrees and tries to get her to sleep with him tonight. He doesn't really understand what she's getting at.	
Downs her drink and leaves.	Sits there in silence then accuses Participant 8 of listening in.	(Responds)
She walks around corner to where she will meet Participant 5 and waits there.	Starts slagging off women then moves onto criticising monogamy – being trapped in a relationship.	(Responds)
	Says the older he gets the less he understands.	
	Offers to buy Participant 8 a drink then either way asks Participant 8 to watch his bag whilst he goes to the bar.	(Responds)
	Ask Participant 8 their name.	(Responds)
	Tries to score off Participant 8 (if they say 'yes' then he makes progressively unreasonable demands until they couldn't possibly accept his offer)	(Responds)
	Offers to buy Participant 8 another drink.	
	Shows Participant 8 Maxxy's band's flyer and says they're really good.	
	Leaves.	



## Scene 2: Marionetta meets Participant 5 / Reverie meets Participant 9

Marionetta sits in a doorway across the road from where Participant 5 has been asked to meet. Reverie is sitting at her make-shift stall selling flowers.

<b>Marionetta</b>	<b>Participant 5</b>	<b>Reverie</b>	<b>Participant 9</b>
Shouts for Participant 5 to come over and asks if they were waiting for a date.	(Responds)	Asks Participant 9 if they want to buy flowers for their partner	(Responds)
Offers Participant 5 a cigarette and then a bowl of meth – leaves meth on step.	Accepts / Rejects	Accuses Participant 9 of stalking her and threatens to get her boyfriend to beat them up, insults them and then goes back to stall.	(Responds)
Tells story about how she waited all night for an ex-boyfriend to turn up.		Apologises to Participant 9 and then asks for a cigarette.	(Responds)
Tells fairy tale about a woman waiting for her lover.		Talks to Participant 9 about what they do as a job.	(Responds)
Leaves – forgets meth and pipe which she’s left on step.	Notices and gives it back to her.		
Offers to buy Participant 4 a drink for being honest.	Accepts		
They walk past Reverie’s stall.		Reverie gets Participant 9 to tail Marionetta and Participant 5 and call to tell her where they’ve gone.	Follows Marionetta and Participant 5
Marionetta asks Participant 4 where a god pub is.	(Responds)		Follows Marionetta and Participant 5

They go to pub			Follows Marionetta and Participant 5
Marionetta says that she knows the girl behind bar and can't speak to her.			Follows Marionetta and Participant 5
They leave the pub see Participant 9 and asks them for directions to (the name of the pub where Reverie will be waiting)			Gives them directions.
They walk in the direction of the pub where Reverie is waiting.			Participant 9 calls Reverie to tell her where they are going.

### Scene 3: Marionetta and Reverie in Pub

Marionetta	Reverie	Participant 5
Only has pills at home.	As Marionetta and Participant 5 arrive Reverie appears in the doorway and stops them. She asks them if Marionetta has any pills.	
Is dragged into pub.	Drags Marionetta into pub.	Follows
	Tells Marionetta that Kat is angry at her.	
Invites Participant 5 to the party	Tells them about Rab's party.	
	Kat phones her and asks her is she's got any pills. She says she's with Marionetta.	
	Asks Participant 5 for drugs.	
	Asks Marionetta is her and Participant 5 are on a date.	
Goes to the toilet.	Talks about Marionetta then asks for a cigarette.	(Responds)
	Goes through Marionetta's bag for a cigarette, finds meth and shows it to Participant 5.	
	Says she's going to flush the meth and puts it in her bag.	(Responds)
	Leaves	
Returns from toilet asks where Reverie's gone.		
Shows Participant 5 flyer for Maxxy's gig.		
Gets a text, reads it then says she has to leave. Tells Participant 5 to go to the gig.		(Responds)

**Scene 4: At Gig**

<b>Nekomi</b>	<b>Rab</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Marionetta</b>	<b>Reverie</b>	<b>Participant 6</b>	<b>Participant 8</b>
Is surprised.	Mentions about all the strangers in his flat.					
Cynical about it being anything special but keeps suggesting new versions.	Banter about the rule of three and how he can't stop using it and it's driving him mad.					
Makes X sign with forefingers to try to warn Rab that Kat's behind him.	Says he hopes Kat's not coming to the party.	Overhears				
	Argues with Kat keeps calling him a fucking cunt.	Argues with Rab. Saying he's going mad and he's such a dick.				
Says Marionetta is coming.		Asks if they've got any pills				
Mentions strangers at Rab's house and says it's like Schrödinger's cat.		Calls Rab a fucking dick and then calls them both weirdos				

	Disagrees.	Says that it's not worth trying to explain anything - you've just got to go with it.				
	Rab gets more and more worked up.	Says Rab's wrong.				
	Shouts: 'I'M NOT WRONG!'	Asks if they want to get some pills.				
	Is cynical that it comes at a cost but agrees.	Asks if they want a drink the goes to the bar.				
Nekomi call Participant 6.						
	Accuses Kat of spiking them and gets him to empty his pockets.	Kat returns with drinks.				
Nekomi spits her drink all over Kat.	'The last think I want to do is wake up with an arse full of semen.'	Flies off the handle at Nekomi then walks away to the bar.	Arrives and goes to the bar.			
		Asks Marionetta if she has any pills.	Says she'll go home and get some.			

		Takes her wallet.	Buys drink but leaves wallet on bar.			
			Sits down with Rab and Nekomi.			
Asks Marionetta about going to see a horror movie.	Says it's shit.		Says ok. Says she's got to go and get pills from her flat.			
Mentions meeting Participant 6	Accuses them of being ladies of the night or succubae.		Mentions meeting Participant 5.	Enters		
Suggests they go and get the pills.		Tells Reverie he has got Marionetta's wallet and keys.	Realises she's lost her wallet and keys.	Says she's got Hi-Def that she nicked off Marionetta.		
		Says he hasn't but he'll help her look.	Asks Kat if he's seen them then goes to sit back down.			
		Tells Reverie about the pills at Marionetta's flat.				
		Pretends to look around the bar for Marionetta's wallet.				

		Sees Participant 8 and tells them to introduce themselves to Reverie.		Chats a bit with Participant 8.		Introduces himself to Reverie.
Says she'll get the drinks.	Says they should kick the door down.	Goes to Marionetta and tells her he can't find the wallet.	Apologises to Rab and Nekomi.			
		Says he's going to try to score.				
		He says no.	Marionetta asks Kat is she can stay at his.			
	Rab tries to undo some of the insults from before.	Kat tells him to buy him a drink. They go to the bar.				
Asks Marionetta if she loves Kat		Introduces Participant 8 to Reverie then convinces Participant 8 to come to a different bar via Marionetta's.	Says no.	Asks Kat who the fuck Participant 8 is.		
Asks Participant 6 if they've ever been in love.	Rab comes back.	Leaves		Leaves	(Responds to Nekomi)	Leaves.
Maxxy's band play.						

	After the band has finished Rab leaves taking some people with him.					
Nekomi takes the rest of the people to Rab's.						

### Scene 5: Marionetta and Nekomi Walking to the Party / At the Party

Marionetta	Nekomi	Kat	Reverie
Opens up about it.	Asks about Marionetta, Kat and Reverie.		
She disagrees.	Says Kat and Reverie hate her.		
Go into off-licence and buy booze.			
Chat about various things movies, music etc.			
Get to Rab's party.			
Squish into a one-seater chair and play truth or drink – questions about sex, embarrassing mistakes etc.		Turns up at party.	
Responds whilst laughing	Asks about Kat in bed.	Overhears.	
	Thinks that they're Marionetta's but doesn't say anything.	Butts into conversation offering pills at £5 each	Turns up at party.
Tries to stop him.	Just accepts him doing it.	Forces pills into Marionetta's mouth.	Watches this happen from a distance.
Pays for it and swallows it.		Gives Nekomi a pill then walks away.	



Re-instigate game of truth or drink – but half-hearted now.			
Tells Nekomi she'll be fine but then asks her to watch out for her.	Asks Marionetta how much she can handle.	Tells Reverie he did what she wanted.	Says he got what he wanted and that her arse is a grail.
Pick opens the box and the lights go out.			
They laugh about it and keep playing the game.		Looks for Reverie with the intention of hurting her.	Hides from Kat.
Marionetta gets up to go to the toilet find hole to Wonderland and comes back to tell Nekomi.		Grabs Reverie but she kicks him in the face.	Starts to crawl into Wonderland. Kat grabs her but she kicks him in the face.
Says they should see what's up there.	Isn't sure but is convinced by Marionetta.	Starts crawling after her.	Disappears into Wonderland
They crawl up the tunnel together.			

**Maxxy**

## Scene 1: Café

This section runs between around 2pm and 5pm. Participant 7 is asked to meet on a sofa in a particular café. When they get there they find Maxxy asleep on the sofa with half a cold coffee on the table in front of her. If they try and wake her then she doesn't wake up until they apply ridiculous force. If the Participant goes to get an employee of the café then she doesn't wake up unless considerably pushed. When she does she looks really confused and apologises to the staff. If they sit at a table nearby then she'll pretend to be asleep for around ten minutes before she eventually starts to come around.

<b>Maxxy</b>	<b>Participant 7</b>
Asks for time.	(Responds)
Gets and smokes a cigarette	Does / Doesn't donate cigarette.
Tells Participant 7 she thought they were her mum / dad.	(Responds)
Asks for the time, tell Participant 7 how long she's been asleep for and then goes to toilet to put her make-up on leaving Participant 7 with her bag.	(Responds)
Talks about music and her band.	(Responds)
Explains she's had no sleep.	(Responds)
Goes outside to flyer for her gig.	(Responds)

## Scene 2: Flyering

Maxxy goes and stands just down the road from the café and starts handing out flyers to the gig. Hopefully, when Participant 7 finally gives up waiting for something to happen, they'll leave the café. If they approach her then she tries to convince them to help her flyer the gig. (If they just walk off then she either tries to catch them or if it's too hard or she doesn't notice. Then they need to be contacted to tell them to go to the gig).

Maxxy	Participant 7
Convinces Participant 7 to help her flyer.	Helps with flyering
Initiates competition – last one to hand out all flyers has to do forfeit.	
Suggests forfeit for Participant 7 – help to steal outfit	Suggests forfeit for Maxxy
Flyers gig.	Flyers gig.
Loser does forfeit.	Loser does forfeit.

## Scene 3: Pub / At Gig

Maxxy takes Participant 7 to a pub. They buy a drink and sit down.

Maxxy:	Participant 7
Talks about stealing things.	Encourage to talk about stealing things.
Talks about lucid dreaming and collective dreaming	
Leaves without Participant 7 to go to gig to soundcheck.	Must find something to do for 2 hours.
Sets up and sound-checks gig	
Gets Participant 7 a free drink.	Arrives at gig.
Points them towards Nekomi, Rab etc.	Possibly goes to speak to, Rab Nekomi etc.

Goes backstage.	
Comes onstage and plays gig.	

#### Scene 4: After the Gig

After the gig the band collect backstage and talk about the gig. Edith comes in with Participant 1 and starts talking to the band members BM1 BM2 Maxxy (a girl) and BM4 whilst ignoring Participant 1. She's really flirty and kisses a few of them over the course of the scene.

Edith	Maxxy
Mentions a dream she's had.	
Kisses BM1 and gives him a pill.	
Kisses BM2 and gives him a pill.	
Kisses Maxxy.	Kisses Edith.
Insults BM1.	Insults BM1.
Mentions rule of three.	Puts on Astral Projection by Strip Steve. Afterwards <i>Baby Face</i> by Whispering Joe Smith comes on.
Mentions party.	
Takes Participant 1 back into bar.	Starts to pack up equipment.

Edith and Participant leave and go back into the bar. They get another drink and sit down. Edith is fairly pissed by now.

Edith	Maxxy
Talks to Participant 1 about what she wants to do with her life (and about Lorenia in relation to this)	
Offers to get some drinks in and goes to bar.	Tells Participant 1 about Edith and Forty then admits this mistake to Edith.
Tries to convince Maxxy to come to party.	Talks about staying up for the last two nights.
Teases Maxxy for being conservative.	
They leave as a group.	They leave as a group.

## Scene 5: Walking to Party

They gather themselves up and gradually move outside. Light cigarettes and then hit the road. Edith walks with Participant 1 and Maxxy.

Edith:	Maxxy:
Is concerned that she's viewed as being a slut.	
Criticises Maxxy for wanting a family and 2.4 children.	Questions Edith's lack of moral compass.
Rubbishes Maxxy's examples of when she's been 'naughty'.	Tries to convince them that she's actually really 'naughty'.

They continue talking as they make their way to Rab's. Maxxy asks Participant 1 about themselves with Edith pitching in. The focus is on sex – number of partners, notable occasions, funny things that have happened.

Maxxy:	Edith:
Interrogates Participant 1 about their relationships and sex life.	Criticises both Participant 1 and Maxxy for not being 'crazy'.
	Instigates game where person who doesn't catch her has to strip and walk to the party.
Chases Edith to party.	Runs to party.

Edith sprints down the street running as fast as she can. Hopefully, she can get to the party before anybody catches her. If not then the other non-catcher needs to fulfil the forfeit. If she gets to the party, Edith demands that they both strip off and walk in together. She will not take no for an answer. Obviously, on getting in the flat the lights should have gone out so nobody will see them anyway. Edith walks in behind them.

**Scene 6: Party**

<b>Maxxy</b>
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Says the party is shit and goes into lounge to find somewhere to sleep and when hole to Wonderland is opened crawls in.
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**Pick**



### Scene 1: Meeting Participant 3

Participant 3 is sitting on the bench where they've been told to wait. There is a packet of cigarettes underneath the bench with 1 cigarette left inside it. Pick walks up.

Pick	Participant 3
Asks Participant 3 for a cigarette (finds cigarette under bench)	(Responds)
Asks Participant 3 why they're waiting.	(Responds)
Leaves	
Buys beer, walks back past Participant 3 and acknowledges them but keeps going.	
Comes back, sits down with Participant 3 and offers them a beer.	
Chats about stuff (See getting to know you)	(Responds)
Invites Participant 3 to pub	(Responds)

## Scene 2: Going to Pub / At Pub

They walk off together. Chatting about some point they've already talked about. Pick lights a cigarette and smokes it. They get to the bar Participant 3 buys the drinks – if Participant 3 doesn't have any cash Picks says they can pay on their card. If they still refuse then Pick conjures the money from somewhere. They sit down.

Pick	Alice	Participant 3	Participant 4
Talks about death, recounts story where she nearly died.		(Responds)	
Picks tells a story about somebody she knows who nearly died.		(Responds)	
Tells story about sleeping outside.		(Responds)	
Tells Participant 3 that Alice doesn't speak to her.	Enters and buys drink – notices Pick and tells Participant 4 that she thinks she won't speak to her.	(Responds)	Enters and buys drink.
(Responds)	Says 'Hi!' to Pick		
(Responds)	Introduces Participant 4	(Responds)	
Is embarrassed.	Talks about Rab's last Party.		
	Talks about love and obsession.		
Pick doesn't say anything to participants unless they talk to her.	Goes to bar to buy 4 shots.		
Drink shots then leave.			

### Scene 3: Walking to Rab's Party

Pick	Alice	Participant 3	Participant 4
Talks privately about what happened between Herself and Alice.	Talks privately about what happened between Herself and Pick.	Follow behind / talk between themselves.	Follow behind / talk between themselves.
	Talks about living rough and using swimming pools and Jacuzzis to bathe in.		
Tells story about being attacked in the park and the meeting a depressed woman.	Recalls hearing about Pick being attacked.		
Pick suggests Alice might be a lesbian.	Alice kicks off describing herself as a 'people person'.		
Pick clarifies details of her story – the man paid for her to have sex with him.			
Stop at off-licence			
	Why not just enjoy one night together rather than getting into a relationship?		
Arrive at Rab's			

#### Scene 4: At Rab's

Pick	Alice	Participant 3	Participant 4	Rab
Arrive at Rab's and get settled.				
	Goes to run a bath.			
Chat		Chat	Chat	Returns home. Asks where Alice is.
People start to arrive – Picks goes to tell Alice.	Alice tells her to come in.			Goes into kitchen and talks to Participant who he walked back with about control and paranoia.
Talk about their relationship.				
Goes to get Participant 4	Asks Pick to go get Participant 4		Goes to the bathroom	
Picks asks Participant 3 if they're in love.	Asks Participant 4 if they've got a drink	(Responds)	(Responds)	
Recalls story about her friends dying.	Apologises for calling the police on Participant 4		(Responds)	
Shows Participant 3 MX-33, is embarrassed but tells them about it anyway. Then gets insulted because she thinks they don't believe her.	Talks about Pick, about not wanting to be tied down and asks Participant 4 what they think.		(Responds)	

Runs to bathroom opens door And jumps into bath with Alice	Laughs and kicks Participant 4 out.			
Comes out of bathroom with Alice.	Gets dressed and comes out of bathroom.			Goes to bathroom and bangs on door.
Has fight with Rab and gets thrown out.				Has argument with Pick and kicks her out.
Walks around block then comes back.	Gives Rab a drink and tells him she's not his – it's just fun. She says she'll break his heart.			Rab agrees that she'll break his heart.
	Comes up off the ecstasy and kisses Rab. They fall in to an arms chair.			Kisses Alice. They falls into an arm chair.
Sees Rab and Alice kissing each other	Alice notices and they stop.			Rab walks off into kitchen to get a drink.
Threatens to open MX-33	Alice doesn't stop her.			
Opens MX-33				
Lights go out				
Disappears				Asks Edith whether her or Lorenia will go and get his electricity topped up.
				Goes into lounge to look for Alice and Pick.

			Finds Participant he was talking to earlier and shows them the hole to Wonderland.
			Convinces groups of participants to go down the tunnel.
			Once everybody knows about the tunnel he crawls into Wonderland himself.

**Rab**

## Scene 1: At Rab's Flat

Participants arrive at door which is open. If they knock. Rab answers in his boxer shorts and dressing gown. If they just walk in then Rab is sat around in his pants and dressing gown watching a porno film. He goes apeshit and kicks them out.

Rab	Participants
Tells participants to fuck off and closes door on them.	(Respond)
Asks them how they know about the party.	(Respond)
Asks them about their work / studies.	(Respond)
Asks them questions about music.	(Respond)
Asks them questions about film / TV	(Respond)
Lets participants in.	Enter flat.
Puts music on and talks about rule of three.	
Talks about current affairs.	
Picks one person (Participant 10) already in the party to go and interrogates them – don't come back until you know they're cool.	New participants knock at the door.
Rab interrogates Participant 10 about new comers.	Participant 10 comes back and says that newcomers seem to be ok.
Rab says they can / can't come in.	Participant 10 goes to give them the news.
Rab goes to get a shower and get dressed.	
Rab goes out to buy cigarettes and goes to Maxxy's gig.	



**Scene 2: At Gig**

<b>Nekomi</b>	<b>Rab</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Marionetta</b>	<b>Reverie</b>	<b>Participant 6</b>	<b>Participant 8</b>
Is surprised.	Mentions about all the strangers in his flat.					
Cynical about it being anything special but keeps suggesting new versions.	Banter about the rule of three and how he can't stop using it and it's driving him mad.					
Makes X sign with forefingers to try to warn Rab that Kat's behind him.	Says he hopes Kat's not coming to the party.	Overhears				
	Argues with Kat keeps calling him a fucking cunt.	Argues with Rab. Saying he's going mad and he's such a dick.				
Says Marionetta is coming.		Asks if they've got any pills				
Mentions strangers at Rab's house and says it's like Schrödinger's cat.		Calls Rab a fucking dick and then calls them both weirdos				

	Disagrees.	Says that it's not worth trying to explain anything - you've just got to go with it.				
	Rab gets more and more worked up.	Says Rab's wrong.				
	Shouts: 'I'M NOT WRONG!'	Asks if they want to get some pills.				
	Is cynical that it comes at a cost but agrees.	Asks if they want a drink the goes to the bar.				
Nekomi calls Participant 6.						
	Accuses Kat of spiking them and gets him to empty his pockets.	Kat returns with drinks.				
Nekomi spits her drink all over Kat.	'The last think I want to do is wake up with an arse full of semen.'	Flies off the handle at Nekomi then walks away to the bar.	Arrives and goes to the bar.			
		Asks Marionetta if she has any pills.	Says she'll go home and get some.			

		Takes her wallet.	Buys drink but leaves wallet on bar.			
			Sits down with Rab and Nekomi.			
Asks Marionetta about going to see a horror movie.	Says it's shit.		Says ok. Says she's got to go and get pills from her flat.			
Mentions meeting Participant 6	Accuses them of being ladies of the night or succubae.		Mentions meeting Participant 5.	Enters		
Suggests they go and get the pills.		Tells Reverie he has got Marionetta's Wallet and Keys.	Realises she's lost her wallet and keys.	Says she's got Meth that she nicked off Marionetta.		
		Says he hasn't but he'll help her look.	Asks Kat if he's seen them then goes to sit back down.			
		Tells Reverie about the pills at Marionetta's flat.				
		Pretends to look around the bar for Marionetta's wallet.				

		Sees Participant 8 and tells them to introduce themselves to Reverie.		Chats a bit with Participant 8.		Introduces himself to Reverie.
Says she'll get the drinks.	Says they should kick the door down.	Goes to Marionetta and tells her he can't find the wallet.	Apologises to Rab and Nekomi.			
		Says he's going to try to score.				
		He says no.	Marionetta asks Kat is she can stay at his.			
	Rab tries to undo some of the insults from before.	Kat tells him to buy him a drink. They go to the bar.				
Asks Marionetta if she loves Kat		Introduces Participant 8 to Reverie then convinces Participant 8 to come to a different bar via Marionetta's.	Says no.	Asks Kat who the fuck Participant 8 is.		
Asks Participant 6 if they've ever been in love.	Rab comes back.	Leaves		Leaves	(Responds to Nekomi)	Leaves.
Maxxy's band play.						

	After the band has finished Rab leaves taking some people with him.					
Nekomi takes the rest of the people to Rab's.						

### Scene 3: Rab on the way to Party

Rab	Participant
Finds a participant and asks them if they were at his house before.	(Responds)
Asks them if they've got any booze.	(Responds)
Chats about rule of three (keeps getting caught up in rule of three)	(Responds)
Stops at off-licence and encourages participants to buy beer then steals one off them (party tax). Then asks them for a cigarette.	(Responds)
Talks about 5-a-day and state-induced panic.	
Arrives at his flat.	

#### Scene 4: At Rab's

Pick	Alice	Participant 3	Participant 4	Rab
Arrive at Rab's and get settled.				
	Goes to run a bath.			
Chat		Chat	Chat	Returns home. Asks where Alice is.
People start to arrive – Picks goes to tell Alice.	Alice tells her to come in.			Goes into kitchen and talks to a participant who he walked back with about control and paranoia.
Talk about their relationship.				
Goes to get Participant 4	Asks Pick to go get Participant 4		Goes to the bathroom	
Picks asks Participant 3 if they're in love.	Asks Participant 4 if they've got a drink	(Responds)	(Responds)	
Recalls story about her friends dying.	Apologises for calling the police on Participant 4		(Responds)	
Shows Participant 3 M33 X-7, is embarrassed but tells them about it anyway. Then gets insulted because she thinks they don't believe her.	Talks about Pick, about not wanting to be tied down and asks Participant 4 what they think.		(Responds)	

Runs to bathroom opens door And jumps into bath with Alice	Laughs and kicks Participant 4 out.			
Comes out of bathroom with Alice.	Gets dressed and comes out of bathroom.			Goes to bathroom and bangs on door.
Has fight with Rab and gets thrown out.				Has argument with Pick and kicks her out.
Walks around block then comes back.	Gives Rab a drink and tells him she's not his – it's just fun. She says she'll break his heart.			Rab agrees that she'll break his heart.
	Comes up off the ecstasy and kisses Rab. They fall in to an arms chair.			Kisses Alice. They falls into an arm chair.
Sees Rab and Alice kissing each other	Alice notices and they stop.			Rab walks off into kitchen to get a drink.
Threatens to open M33 X-7	Alice doesn't stop her.			
Opens M33 X-7				
Lights go out				
Disappears				Asks Edith whether her or Lorenia will go and get his electricity topped up.
				Goes into lounge to look for Alice and Pick.

			Finds the participant he was talking to earlier and shows them the hole to Wonderland.
			Convinces groups of participants to go down the tunnel.
			Once everybody knows about the tunnel he crawls into Wonderland himself.



## Reverie

## Scene 1: Marionetta meets AM5 / Reverie meets Participant 9

Marionetta sits in a doorway across the road from where AM5 has been asked to meet. Reverie is sitting at her make-shift stall selling flowers.

Marionetta	Participant 5	Reverie	Participant 9
Shouts for Participant 5 to come over and asks if they were waiting for a date.	(Responds)	Asks Participant 9 if they want to buy flowers for their partner	(Responds)
Offers Participant 5 a cigarette and then a bowl of meth – leaves meth on step.	Accepts / Rejects	Accuses Participant 9 of stalking her and threatens to get her boyfriend to beat them up, insults them and then goes back to stall.	(Responds)
Tells story about how she waited all night for an ex-boyfriend to turn up.		Apologises to Participant 9 and then asks for a cigarette.	(Responds)
Tells fairytale about a woman waiting for her lover.		Talks to Participant 9 about what they do as a job.	(Responds)
Leaves – forgets meth and pipe which she’s left on step.	Notices and gives it back to her.		
Offers to buy Participant 4 a drink for being honest.	Accepts		
They walk past Reverie’s stall.		Reverie gets Participant 9 to tail Marionetta and Participant 5 and call to tell her where they’ve gone.	Follows Marionetta and Participant 5

Marionetta asks Participant 4 where a good pub is.	(Responds)		Follows Marionetta and Participant 5
They go to pub			Follows Marionetta and Participant 5
Marionetta says that she knows the girl behind bar and can't speak to her.			Follows Marionetta and Participant 5
They leave the pub see Participant 9 and asks them for directions to (the name of the pub where Reverie will be waiting)			Gives them directions.
They walk in the direction of the pub where Reverie is waiting.			Participant 9 calls Reverie to tell her where they are going.

## Scene 2: Marionetta and Reverie in Pub

Marionetta	Reverie	Participant 5
Only has pills at home.	As Marionetta and Participant 5 arrive Reverie appears in the doorway and stops them. She asks them if Marionetta has any pills.	
Is dragged into pub.	Drags Marionetta into pub.	Follows
	Tells Marionetta that Kat is angry at her.	
Invites Participant 5 to the party	Tells them about Rab's party.	
	Kat phones her and asks her is she's got any pills. She says she's with Marionetta.	
	Asks Participant 5 for drugs.	
	Asks Marionetta is her and Participant 5 are on a date.	
Goes to the toilet.	Talks about Marionetta then asks for a cigarette.	(Responds)
	Goes through Marionetta's bag for a cigarette, finds meth and shows it to Participant 5.	
	Says she's going to flush the meth and puts it in her bag.	(Responds)
	Leaves	
Returns from toilet asks where Reverie's gone.		
Shows Participant 5 flyer for Maxxy's gig.		
Gets a text, reads it then says she has to leave. Tells Participant 5 to go to the gig.		(Responds)

**Scene 3: At Gig**

<b>Nekomi</b>	<b>Rab</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Marionetta</b>	<b>Reverie</b>	<b>Participant 6</b>	<b>Participant 8</b>
Is surprised.	Mentions about all the strangers in his flat.					
Cynical about it being anything special but keeps suggesting new versions.	Banter about the rule of three and how he can't stop using it and it's driving him mad.					
Makes X sign with forefingers to try to warn Rab that Kat's behind him.	Says he hopes Kat's not coming to the party.	Overhears				
	Argues with Kat keeps calling him a fucking cunt.	Argues with Rab. Saying he's going mad and he's such a dick.				
Says Marionetta is coming.		Asks if they've got any pills				
Mentions strangers at Rab's house and says it's like Schrödinger's cat.		Calls Rab a fucking dick and then calls them both weirdos				

	Disagrees.	Says that it's not worth trying to explain anything - you've just got to go with it.				
	Rab gets more and more worked up.	Says Rab's wrong.				
	Shouts: 'I'M NOT WRONG!'	Asks if they want to get some pills.				
	Is cynical that it comes at a cost but agrees.	Asks if they want a drink the goes to the bar.				
Nekomi calls Participant 6.						
	Accuses Kat of spiking them and gets him to empty his pockets.	Kat returns with drinks.				
Nekomi spits her drink all over Kat.	'The last think I want to do is wake up with an arse full of semen.'	Flies off the handle at Nekomi then walks away to the bar.	Arrives and goes to the bar.			
		Asks Marionetta if she has any pills.	Says she'll go home and get some.			

		Takes her wallet.	Buys drink but leaves wallet on bar.			
			Sits down with Rab and Nekomi.			
Asks Marionetta about going to see a horror movie.	Says it's shit.		Says ok. Says she's got to go and get pills from her flat.			
Mentions meeting Participant 6	Accuses them of being ladies of the night or succubae.		Mentions meeting Participant 5.	Enters		
Suggests they go and get the pills.		Tells Reverie he has got Marionetta's Wallet and Keys.	Realises she's lost her wallet and keys.	Says she's got Meth that she nicked off Marionetta.		
		Says he hasn't but he'll help her look.	Asks Kat if he's seen them then goes to sit back down.			
		Tells Reverie about the pills at Marionetta's flat.				
		Pretends to look around the bar for Marionetta's wallet.				

		Sees Participant 8 and tells them to introduce themselves to Reverie.		Chats a bit with Participant 8.		Introduces himself to Reverie.
Says she'll get the drinks.	Says they should kick the door down.	Goes to Marionetta and tells her he can't find the wallet.	Apologises to Rab and Nekomi.			
		Says he's going to try to score.				
		He says no.	Marionetta asks Kat is she can stay at his.			
	Rab tries to undo some of the insults from before.	Kat tells him to buy him a drink. They go to the bar.				
Asks Marionetta if she loves Kat		Introduces Participant 8 to Reverie then convinces Participant 8 to come to a different bar via Marionetta's.	Says no.	Asks Kat who the fuck Participant 8 is.		
Asks Participant 6 if they've ever been in love.	Rab comes back.	Leaves		Leaves	(Responds to Nekomi)	Leaves.
Maxxy's band play.						



	After the band has finished Rab leaves taking some people with him.					
Nekomi takes the rest of the people to Rab's.						

#### Scene 4: Reverie and Kat Walking to Marionetta's Flat / At Marionetta's Flat

Reverie	Kat	Participant 8
	Explains to Participant 8 that they're going to a friend's house first before the pub.	(Responds)
	Tells Participant 8 about Reverie's job - stealing and selling flowers.	(Responds)
Reverie tells Participant 8 that Kat used to be a rent boy.	Tells a few stories about this time in his life.	
Says she knows somebody who let a musician have anal sex with her.	Kat says he's never done that.	
Teases Kat about never having anal sex - 'I thought it was like, The Holy Grail for boys' then says her arsehole is The Holy Grail and Kat could never have it.	Kat says he could have her arse.	
	Kat asks Participant 8 if they've been to Amsterdam and then recalls a number of seedy experiences.	(Responds)

	Kat asks Participant 8 if they've seen any really nasty pornography.	(Responds)
Nothing she got off on.	He asks Reverie the same question.	
They arrive at Marionetta's flat.		
Searches in the bedroom and finds pills.	Searches in the kitchen to no avail.	Is told to sit in the lounge.
Takes pill, pushes one into Kat's mouth gives the bag to Kat	Goes into bedroom, takes pill and puts the bag in his pocket.	
They start to kiss.		
Says he can if he promises the trash the flat then fuck Marionetta up.	Says he wants to take her up the arse.	
He agrees and they start to get it on.		
Reverie goes with it but then squeezes her arse muscles.	Kat cries out in pain, pulls out and fall on the floor.	
Reverie pulls her trousers up then throws a piece of furniture at him and runs out grabbing Participant 8 on the way		Follows Reverie.
Run down the street with Participant 8	Leaves Marionetta's and goes to Rab's party.	Runs down the street with Reverie.
Gives Participant 8 Rab's address then leaves.		Goes to Rab's party.
Goes to Rab's party.		

### Scene 5: Marionetta and Nekomi Walking to the Party / At the Party

Marionetta	Nekomi	Kat	Reverie
Opens up about it.	Asks about Marionetta, Kat and Reverie.		
She disagrees.	Says Kat and Reverie hate her.		
Go into off-licence and buy booze.			
Chat about various things movies, music etc.			
Get to Rab's party.			
Squish into a one-seater chair and play truth or drink – questions about sex, embarrassing mistakes etc.		Turns up at party.	
Responds whilst laughing	Asks about Kat in bed.	Overhears.	
	Thinks that they're Marionetta's but doesn't say anything.	Butts into conversation offering pills at £5 each	Turns up at party.
Tries to stop him.	Just accepts him doing it.	Forces pills into Marionetta's mouth.	Watches this happen from a distance.
Pays for it and swallows it.		Gives Nekomi a pill then walks away.	
Re-instigate game of truth or drink – but half-hearted now.			
Tells Nekomi she'll be fine but then asks her to watch out for her.	Asks Marionetta how much she can handle.	Tells Reverie he did what she wanted.	Says he got what he wanted and that her arse if a Grail.
Pick opens the box and the lights go out.			

They laugh about it and keep playing the game.		Looks for Reverie with the intention of hurting her.	Hides from Kat.
Marionetta gets up to go to the toilet find hole to Wonderland and comes back to tell Nekomi.		Grabs Reverie but she kicks him in the face.	Starts to crawl into Wonderland. Kat grabs her but she kicks him in the face.
Says they should see what's up there.	Isn't sure but is convinced by Marionetta.	Starts crawling after her.	Disappears into Wonderland
They crawl up the tunnel together.			

## **Maid Café**

This part of the performance takes place in the static location of The Moe Moe Maid Café. This is as close as it is possible to get to a Japanese Maid Café. If possible, Japanese employees should be used (if this is not possible then the nearest western equivalent should be created) Maid cafés are not sex parlours but places where Otaku (which translates basically as geeks) and other customers can go and interact with girls. The emphasis is on innocence and kawaii (cute). Although, of course, one cannot ignore the fetishistic undertones of such establishments, there are strict rules of behaviour.

### **Marketing / Payment / Entrance:**

As with the other sections Wonderland audience members are invited to be involved in an ‘experience’ but not told what this is. Participants buying tickets for this timeslot should be told to meet at The Moe Moe Maid Café and await further instructions. Customers should be welcomed at the café as if they were customers not audience members.

### **The Moe Moe Maid Cafe**

The entire feel is 1920s military kawaii – customised cute 1920s military uniforms with 1920s music playing in the background. Three sisters run the café along with a number of other maids. Their names are Haruka, Katsumi and Umeko (they are of a similar age). One of the services that the café runs is that of fortune telling. Haruka tells people about themselves by ‘reading’ cups of tea. This is based upon a basic script (see *‘Haruka’s Personality Readings’* below) but will require background research to be carried out on audience members. The actress playing Haruka might also be encouraged to undertake some training in producing cold readings. Katsumi answers questions about the immediate future, however the responses to these are conveyed in abstract metaphors (see *‘Katsumi’s Answers to Audience Questions’* below). Umeko, the youngest predicts the date and the manner by which people are going to die (see *‘Umeko’s Death Predictions’* below). She does it in a light-hearted way emphasising the ‘now you know you can make the most of your life’ aspect of the scenario.

Signs around the café say:

Prohibited Matter in Maid Café:  
NO BODY CONTACT WITH MAIDS.  
NO ASKING FOR CONTACT NUMBERS FROM THE MAIDS.  
NO ASKING FOR EMAIL ADDRESSES FROM THE MAIDS.  
NO INTRUSION OF PRIVACY, NO ASKING FOR MAIDS' WORKSHIFTS  
NO STALKING ON THE MAIDS.

(Taken from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNAh35ChqcM>)

If any of these rules are broken, maid will politely but sternly pat index fingers together to make a cross and 'point' this at the customer or they will make a cross out of their index fingers and hold it at about mouth level.

Café attendants should not be afraid to throw customers who repeatedly break the rules out of the café.

## **The Menu:**

There will be a full menu available for customers to choose from. Japanese food presented in small bowls and served by maids. There will also be a snack menu consisting of tea, coffee, soft drinks and sugary sweets, deserts, ice cream, fondant fancies 'cute little savoury snacks'. If alcoholic drinks are to be served they will be sweet cocktails (including the DNA cocktail (see <http://www.ncbe.reading.ac.uk/dna50/cocktail.html>), or wine in beakers.

## **Maid Induction:**

**The rehearsal process should not be focused on 'acting' but preparing various candidates for the role of the maid. If non-actors can perform this role more effectively then they should be used instead. The perfect solution would be to employ real maids and open a real café. The following outlines the training programme but is open for development:**

Service Etiquette:

- Service Routine to be developed through a series of role plays.
  - Konichi wa!
  - Taking orders.
  - Serving food and drinks
    - Moe power-up.
  - Initiating and playing games.
  - Sayonara!
- How to deal with wayward customers.



- The menu.
- How to serve food.
- Personalisation of Maid role
  - Focused workshop dedicated to allowing maids to find their totem animal and integrate kawaii actions that come from this animal into their service repertoire.
  - Developing maid Moe 'power-up'
  - Choosing Maid outfit from various styles.

**Role personalisation:**

Maids should create their own personal action to help customers' enjoyment for example:

- Maids will power up the food and drinks that they serve by making 'heart' shapes with their hands and send 'love' into the food that they are serving by saying 'Moe Moe Kyun'
- They will draw kawaii (cute) pictures in ketchup on customer's meals.

Maids need at least three of these actions as part of their repertoire.

Maids should ask questions to customers and respond to conversation points.

## Schedule for Evening (plot)

1. Audience enter, are seated, given a menu and served with a green tea.
2. Following this, one of the maids sings a karaoke version of *First Love* by Angel'in Heavy Syrup (see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3pckDDx77s>)
3. Orders are taken from customers relating to food and drinks that they might want.
4. Once all the tea has been consumed Haruka comes around and tells one person on each table about themselves. A chair is drawn up to the table and she sits down and talks to the customers for a time. After this she chooses one individual to tell about their personality. This is whispered into their ear.
5. Another maid sings a karaoke version of *Baby Face* by 'Whispering' Jack Smith (see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TbRD0a0njQ>).
6. Food is served.
7. After dinner, individuals are invited into a back room to speak to Katsumi who answers question that people have to ask her – her answer is conveyed through abstract metaphors that are, in a degree, based upon the different rooms in Wonderland.
8. Dessert is served.
9. Whole audience play Moe paper, scissors, stone. (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNAh35ChqcM> 6:04)
10. Another Maid sings a Karaoke number. '*He Went In Like A Lion (And Came Out Like A Lamb)*' by Tilzer (see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRAr0rUcq8s>)

11. Following this an announcement is made regarding a prediction that has been made by Katsumi regarding the arrival of Umeko's true love into the café tonight. Umeko comes around the café. She speaks to each table in turn, genuinely interested in the notion of travelling. She is very open about her own desires to escape her life here and then tells each customer how and when they will die.
12. Maid sings '  
*High Flyin' Bird* by Jefferson Airplane. (see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M51VZDQIqJc>)
13. An announcement is made – and Umeko is called up to the stage – she is visibly upset. Haruka takes the microphone and makes an announcement that Umeko will now indicate who it is who is her true love. Umeko starts to cry and says he is not here. Haruka pushes her and eventually begins to lose her temper because Katsumi cannot be wrong. Umeko cries more and says she is leaving. Haruka slaps her and Umeko, shocked by the blow now coldly states she is leaving. On the way out she trashes the café and just as she leaves Katsumi appears and lets out a horrific scream. All the lights go out (if possible glass things explode).
14. Out of the darkness there can be seen a light glowing. It is the entrance to Wonderland.

### **General Maid Banter:**

Maid banter should be spontaneous, based around politeness and showing interest in the customers whilst serving them. The concept of Moe (Mo-ay – lie Moet & Chardon) underpins the entirety of the Maid Café experience. Cute little additions are made to the service such as sending love into the food / drinks with the ‘power-up’ ‘Moe Moe Kyun’ and ‘Thank you Meiw Meiw’ (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNAh35ChqcM> 4:15 and 3:33 respectively). Maids refer to customers as Master and Lady.

The following videos provide a point of reference for the general behaviour of maids.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNAh35ChqcM> (provides a specific reference point for this script)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEP2LxAcT28>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKuD-YZ3S7I> (second half)

Overall, attitude is very happy and very polite.

## Example Maid Script:

(Not to be learned and repeated verbatim.)

Maid: Welcome back, Master, Lady. (Depending on those in group)

Maid describes facilities available. Common Maid Café activities are:

Lying with head in Maid's lap whilst talking to Maid.

Playing computer games with Maid.

Having photograph taken with Maid.

Playing paper, scissors, stone.

Maid: The special recommendation this week is ...

Maid: You may tell the maid nearby after you have made up your mind. Now excuse me.

Maid: Good evening, Master, Lady. I am XXXX, responsible for the tea making. Nice to meet you.

Maid makes tea.

Maid: It is done. To make this tea even better I put in my love. May I invite the Master and Lady to do it with me?

Maid: You go – Moe (raises left hand for half a heart), Moe (raises right hand to make a full heart) then send it into the tea by Kyun pushes heart towards tea.

Maid: (with customers): Moe, Moe Kyun!

Maid: Thank you very much Master and Lady. My Lady, please enjoy. (indicates cup).

Customer must turn the cup twice (2 x quarter turns) in their hand.

## Haruka's Personality Readings.

(Upon application for tickets, customers should be asked for their name, date of birth, address and telephone number. Research will be carried out on individual customers to provide background information to be integrated into these readings). The reading should be part of a longer chat where specific information is provided alongside questions:

E.g. (If it were possible to find this out).

Haruka:                               Where do you work?

Customer:                            I work in a bank.

Haruka:                               Your boss' name is John Smith.

Some of these other less specific statements are also integrated into the reading:

- You need people to like you.
- You are quite critical of yourself.
- You have a great deal of unused capacity which you have not turned to your advantage.
- You can compensate for your weaknesses.
- You have worried about your sexual orientation.
- People tell you that you are more relaxed than you feel inside.
- At times you have serious doubts as to whether you have made the right choice or done the right thing.
- You like change and variety but not all the time. You become dissatisfied when hemmed in by restrictions and limitations.
- You are an independent thinker. You want people to give you proof before you accept what they say.
- You have found it unwise to tell everything to others.
- Sometimes you are extroverted, sociable. Sometimes you are reserved.
- Sometimes you hope for things that you know you cannot achieve.
- You long to be in a place where all the things you worry about now are fixed.
- You wish you were a more confident person but you have never fallen to pieces. Sometimes you have felt close to the edge. You try to avoid this but when you do it then you do better than you thought.



- Nobody knows all of your secrets. Not even your close friends and relatives.
- There are definitely things you have done that you would not tell your parents about.
- It takes you a long time before you feel close enough to a friend to open your heart to them.
- You like the idea of opening up to a stranger but you never would.
- You think you are a relatively clean person. You are happy with how clean your house is but sometimes you let this slip! You wish you didn't have to spend all that time doing housework. You would like to pay somebody else to do the household chores. Housework causes arguments between you and the people that you live with. You can ignore your own mess but you notice the mess of other's.
- You enjoy listening to music. Sometimes with your friends. You like different kinds of music. You like music that moves you in some way. Some people you work with like music that you hate. Some don't like music. You feel less close to these people.
- You are not sure about everything religion says and have come to find your own set of beliefs by taking the best bits from different places. You believe that your life experiences are equally important as anything religion can tell you.
- You don't pay much attention to marketing campaigns. You distrust multinational corporations.
- You believe that you are a well-rounded person but in the past you have become almost obsessed with another. When you were younger you liked a celebrity. In the past you have become obsessed with somebody near to you. This happened at a time when you had started a new job or gone to college or university. When you met a new group of people. You could not stop thinking about this person and this was a painful time for you. You grew distant from people that you were close to. Now, you do not understand why you liked this person so much.
- Your memory is slipping. Names and faces never fit together to well. You're getting worse. You leave an item somewhere and you can't remember where you put it. You can't remember if you've locked the door, turned off the oven. The food that you were supposed to take to the party is still in the fridge. You worry about meeting large groups of people because you won't remember all of their names . You half-try ways to remember them but you forget. You feel sad when somebody forgets yours. Sometimes you have met somebody so many times that you feel that it's rude to ask. So you go on missing their names from sentences and they exist in body but not in mind.
- When you were a child you broke something of your parents. Your parents were angry. It was an ornament like a vase or a lamp or you drew on something like a book or a photograph or the wallpaper.

- Sometimes you feel ill for no obvious reason. Sometimes you think you might die. Then you are glad that you didn't tell because you have stopped feeling ill. You think these feelings are down to the lifestyle that you lead. You believe that you could be more healthy and get more exercise. Sometimes you like eating rich, fatty foods. Sometimes life pulls towards eating and sometimes you worry about your shape.
- You have often considered what it would be like to kill yourself or somebody else. It worries you to think that you are capable of such a thing. It is like a piece of rice paper.
- The past is more important to you than the future. And you think about the other paths your life may have taken. A relationship that ended or never got going. You wonder if life would be any better. Sometimes you imagine that life, sitting eating dinner with another person, other children. Is that life better than yours? If you could go back, would you change your decisions? You sometimes think that you would exchange everything that you have now for everything you could have had.
- Sometimes you think about death. You can picture yourself trapped beneath a frozen lake fighting for breath. You are less adventurous than you used to be. You like to be safe. You distrust fairground rides. You are a bit scared of aeroplanes. You have dreamed of tidal waves. You are uneasy around insects and heights and spiders. You do not like to be around them for a long time.

### **Katsumi's answers to audience questions:**

Responses are loosely grouped thematically to suggest appropriate responses to particular questions. Obviously, these could be combined to develop longer more complicated answers.

#### **The Modern Age**

- Sometimes it can feel like you are drowning in a sea of faces. Then you realise that only a few have bodies, only a few have the ability to make changes.

#### **Appearance / True Nature**

- You can pretend to be a cat. You can draw whiskers on your face, drink milk from a bowl and go to the toilet in a tray, however, you are not a cat and you still only have one life.
- You can paint on the features of a child but it does not make you innocent.

#### **Procrastination – what do I do with my life?**

- It is like a green pheasant, strung up by its feet, waiting to die. Flying is an illusion. It is a momentary escape from the inevitable.
- Sometimes, a short cut requires you to paddle through a swamp.
- A short cut is always a route about which you are unsure. After time, it simply becomes the way.

#### **Morality / Guilt**

- Guilt is the beginning of justification. A scientist can place a cat in a box and fire a gun at it without ever feeling anything.
- Would it make you feel better if I locked you in a room filled with rotting meat? Then why do you do this inside your head?
- A scientist can murder a thousand cats in the name of an idea and never feel a thing.

**Perception of self / others**

- It is like bush where lovers steal precious moments having illicit sex. From one perspective a bower, from another, a cess pit.
- Your mind contains many spaces. One is a luxurious bedroom where beautiful men / women drink champagne from glasses made of cut diamond. Other rooms are the back seats of cars. In others men / women are bound in manacles and tortured, screaming out glorious exaltations of pain.

**'Do I? / Don't I?'**

- Cautious people will drown in the back seats of cars, rattling the door handles and wishing that they had never activated the child-locks.

**Longing / Relationships:**

- Condors and albatross mate for life. A swan finds a partner and never looks beyond. If humans were the same then we would not look.
- Wind blows from more to less.
- Why do think that it is a bad thing to find space within yourself for another?
- In a world like ours, filled to the brim, you should be happy to find any space at all.

## **Umeko's Death Predictions:**

- You survive a car crash in August 2031 but then die of complications in hospital on Wednesday the 1st October. Your funeral is well attended.
- You die alone at the age of 89 – your body is not found for a week. Your funeral is attended by James Ridnall the man who found you. Nobody else comes.
- You spend the last 3 years of your life blind due to diabetes. On your 75th birthday you manage to drag yourself to the window and try to throw yourself to your death. A lady called Hazel finds you and rings an ambulance. You live for another two years before you finally give up.
- You die in peace surrounded by all your family – except your son who you have a drunken fight with at Christmas in 2033 and never see again. Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2065.
- Your first child is run down and killed in four years' time. You spend three months grieving but you see no happiness anymore and take your life on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- You get breast cancer. The treatment doesn't work and you die on Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018.
- Because of the death of your mother, you take to drink and develop pancreatic cancer. You die falling down the stairs on Friday May 17<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- You die in the 2017 atomic bomb. Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017.
- You die in the war. New Year's Day 2021. It's a Friday morning.
- You die making love to your mistress. She slits your throat and steals all your money. Your daughter finds you two days later. Friday December 4<sup>th</sup> 2026.
- You are arrested for downloading child pornography in 2023. You are killed by your cellmate - Philip Williams after he hears you having a wet dream about raping a baby. Saturday August 26<sup>th</sup> 2023.
- You drown in the summer 2014 floods trying to save your mobile phone. Wednesday July 9<sup>th</sup>. I'm sorry.
- You die of a heart attack on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2054.

- You die choking on a chicken bone on Easter Sunday – April 1<sup>st</sup> 2040. Your husband thinks that it's an April Fool's Day joke and doesn't ring the hospital until it's too late.
- You are raped and killed by a gang of Lady Boys on a visit to Thailand on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2029 after celebrating American Independence Day with a group of your fellow travellers.
- A crane falls on you whilst you are Christmas shopping in Leeds. Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2032.
- You are electrocuted whilst attempting to rewire your new house. Sunday April 20<sup>th</sup> 2025.
- You die of heart failure caused by a reaction to an anaesthetic injection given to you by the dentist. You don't actually need the filling.
- A man breaks into your house whilst you are sleeping. He rapes you and then he murders you. I'm sorry, I cannot see the date. It is soon.
- You are talking on your phone and don't look before you step out into the road. The man driving the van is changing the channel on the radio. I cannot see the date.

# Outline for One-to-One Performances in Wonderland

## Alice

The participant enters and finds Alice standing in front of a mirror. She is wearing a wig that is the same colour and style as her hair is normally so, hopefully it would be difficult to tell. She turns and beckons the participant to the mirror. They stand there looking into the mirror for around thirty seconds after which Alice turns to face the participant. She removes the wig and fits it onto their head. Then she removes her dress and places it on them as best she can. She looks this distorted image of herself up and down before embracing the participant. Then she whispers into their ear:

Alice: I never told you how sorry I was. I should never have left you.

Participant: (Responds)

Alice: It's ok Alice.

Alice kisses them gently on the cheek and then leaves the room through another door that is locked behind her. Hopefully, the participant undresses before exiting the room.

## Edith

Edith is lying naked or nearly naked on a plinth in the middle of the room. There is a heap of cut Modroc on a table, a bowl of water and a permanent marker. A sign reads:

"Please write your deepest secret on the bandage provided. After you have done this, wet it and place it anywhere on her body. If you wish you can talk to her about you secret. She will only listen."

Over time the Modroc will set into a 'shell' of secrets covering Edith's body.

## Forty

The room is hung with shop mannequin torsos (both sexes) dressed in a range of clothes. Over the period of the evening, Forty selects two of the torsos and takes them over to a worktop fitted with a vice and covered in a variety of neatly arranged tools. Gradually he destroys one of the mannequins, tearing and cutting up the clothes and then using a range of tools to scratch, pierce and gradually destroy the mannequin's form. When participants enter, he will gesture to the other one as if encouraging them to join him in this act of destruction. The mannequins will not be discarded until it is essentially impossible to do any more damage to them. Once one has been discarded, another will be selected and the process begins again.

### **Haruka**

The participant enters to find Haruka kneeling on a cushion in the middle of the space. She is blindfolded. Opposite her is another cushion suggesting that the participant should kneel there. If they do she will slowly move her hands so that she is touching their face and over about 3-5 minutes slowly explore every detail with her fingertips. When she has finished she retracts her hands and sits in silence until the participant leaves.

### **Kat**

The participant enters to find Kat sitting at a table. There are rose petals scatters across the floor of the room. In front of him is a large bowl filled with pigs' hearts. One by one he silently takes them from the bowl and carefully dissects them with a scalpel, uncovering the atria and ventricles, peering in with morbid fascination. Eventually he finds what he is looking for inside each heart, a golden ring that has been previously stuffed inside. Once he has found this he discards the heart into the bucket and places the ring in a small bowl on the table. Then he takes another heart and repeats the process.

### **Katsumi**

The participant enters to find Katsumi in a noh theatre mask kneeling as if wounded on the floor. On the wall opposite her is a clock that chimes once every minute. When it does she lets out an ear-splitting scream in between which, her body trembles as if she is crying. If the participant goes to comfort her then the clock will stop chiming and she will stop screaming. If they remove the mask then she will embrace them. There is no cue for them to leave but she will not speak to them at all during this time.

### **Lorenia**

The participant enters and is seated at a table by Lorenia who is dressed as a waitress / maid. She then goes and stands in front of the participant at the other side of the table. Around the edges of the room are a collection of food and cutlery displayed on tables. On the table there is a pen and also a card in an envelope. Each card describes one object from the table and suggests two forfeits which involve that object. One involves something unpleasant happening to the participant and one involves something unpleasant happening to Lorenia. Next to each option is a tick box. The participant is asked to tick the box next to the action that they wish to be undertaken. Lorenia will then undertake that action.



## **Marionetta**

Marionetta is standing in a pitch black empty room. Every few seconds a strobe flicks on that lights the room for a moment. If the speed is correct the image in the participant's eye will not have completely disappeared before the room is relit creating an extremely disorientating experience. Marionetta moves around the room in a wild dance towards and away from the participant. She finishes close to their face and produces a rose that she hands to the participant smiling. The strobe then stops, plunging the room into darkness for a few moments before the door is opened for the participant to find their way out.

## **Maxxy**

The participant enters to find Maxxy bathing in a pool of water in the middle of the room. There is a table in the corner with a brush and ink and a sign that reads:

“Please take this brush and write your name on the body of the woman in the pool.”

Maxxy ignores them as they are doing this and then, when they have finished she looks them in the eye and slowly washes away their name from her skin. Then she goes back to ignoring them again.

## **Nekomi**

The participant enters a large dark space which is essentially a sound installation. In the centre of the space lit by a single spot, Nekomi is tied to railway tracks that extend either way into the darkness. At one end of the space, unseen in the darkness, large speakers project the sound of a train approaching, faintly at first but getting louder and louder and then sounding its horn. The participant is given a few minutes to try to unfasten Nekomi from the tracks before the 'train' reaches her. Just as the train arrives the spot goes out, plunging the room into total darkness. If they do manage to unfasten her (a difficult but not impossible job). She will cling to them, sobbing in terror as the 'train speeds past'. Either way, when the 'train' has gone the door will be opened and they will either be ushered out by Nekomi or will leave on their own.

## **Pick**

The participant enters the room which contains an old car which is (or appears to be) mostly filled with water. Lighting like the reflections off water play across the walls and a large puddle surrounds the car. Pick is inside the car, her fingers are pressed against the window so that the participant will hopefully see her in there. She seems to be struggling to stay above the water. If the participant tries to open the door then they will find that all the doors are locked and the windows are sealed shut. Pick will stare deep into the eyes of the participant but will not interact in any way.

## **Rab**

Rab sits in a shabby armchair in the middle of the room with his back to the door. On the wall, the homemade sex tape involving himself and Alice is projected in black and white. He sits there staring at it. Behind the chair there are three white plinths. Upon each is a glass of red liquid (port, cherry juice, Campari). Each is labelled with the sign "Drink Me".

## **Reverie**

Reverie, dressed in a white wedding dress, walks up and down a corridor lined with rose bushes. The dress catches on the bushes and bits tear off. The floor is covered in red paint balls, or small packets of red paint which burst when she stands on them so that the dress is gradually destroyed and stained over the duration of the piece.

## **Umeko**

The participant enters and finds Umeko sitting on a heap of sand that looks like a beach. Next to her is a sandcastle with a flag poking out of it and a bucket and spade. Umeko's face printed on the flag. Between them, is a strip of water (the sea). Sea sounds play in the background. The participant must remove their shoes and paddle through the sea to get to Umeko. Only then will she speak to them.

Umeko: I always thought the future was, you know, planned out? I don't know, maybe I've been wrong all this time.

Participant: (Responds)

Umeko: I mean, what do you think? It's like... it's like... I don't know. It's like somebody just gave me a life. But it's a big dark room and I don't have a torch. (Looks at participant for some comment)

Participant: (Responds)

Umeko: Have you ever had any dreams?

Participant: (Responds)

Umeko: Did they come true?

Participant: (Responds)

Umeko: So what did you do?

They talk a little more about the participant's dreams/aspirations until they run out of conversation.

Umeko: Will you make a sandcastle with me?

They make another tower for the sandcastle.

Umeko: What's your name?

Participant: (Responds)

Umeko takes a pen and a paper flag out of her pocket and writes their name on the flag. She gives it to the participant and gestures for them to put it in the top of the sandcastle. After that she smiles at them and says:

Umeko: Thank you. I hope all your dreams come true.

She gestures to the door and then turns her back on the participant and starts fixing up the sandcastle in some way. This is the cue for the participant to leave.

# Post-liminal Section

## Non Maid Café Characters

Three days after the events of Wonderland have transpired, the char/actor telephones their corresponding participant and either gets through or leaves a message on their voicemail. They sound vague, distant, distracted but certain about what they are saying. They are genuinely concerned about the participant.

Char/actor: Hey, it's (char/actor's name). You know? From the other night? The gig, the party?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: How are you?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: It's just... I wanted to... Look, I can't talk for long. Um... I just wanted to check that you were ok. That you made it home ok?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: Good. Cause I've been thinking about you, you know? Like, how sometimes people go out and have a good time and then they become friends? Do you know what I mean?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: It's just... I can't do that. I'm sorry because I'd like to, if I could. It's just ... impossible. Do you understand?

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: I wouldn't expect you to. It's just, the person I am... I'm not the person you met the other night. It's like... I was playing a role. For you, for everybody. I guess we all do it don't we? We're all... fabricated.

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: I just wanted you to know that. It's not that, somewhere in the darkness of my heart there isn't a tiny moth fluttering against a lightbulb. It's not that there isn't love there somewhere. The beginnings of love. Just... I don't know. It's impossible that's all.

Participant: (Responds)

Char/actor: So I wanted to make sure that you were ok. That you got home safe. We won't see each other again and I think that's ok. Is that ok? But maybe I'll miss you and maybe you will miss me. Maybe you'll think of me sometimes, trapped here in the darkness forever. Please don't come looking. You won't like what you find. I am no more.

Char/actor hangs up.

## Maid Café Participants

One of the Maids rings the Participants. They are very matter of fact, in their manner.

Maid: Konichiwa. It is (Maid name) from the Moe Moe Maid Café. Can you talk?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: I am ringing to apologise on behalf of the Moe Moe Maid Café about the interference we experienced the other night. It was as much our surprise as yours.

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: After the interference we found several souls discarded outside. We believe one of them to be yours.

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Have you been feeling any different?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Hmm... it is not always clear to people. Um... can you describe yourself? Are you an angry person?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: I mean, do you get angry a lot?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Ok, what about melancholy? Sadness, you know?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Optimistic or pessimistic?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Anxiety?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Are you a sociable person?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Ok. And you say that you have / haven't felt different?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Hmm... Ok. Hang on.... (cups hand over mouthpiece and talks to somebody). Can I have your address please?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Thank you. We think we might have your soul here. We will send it to you in the post. You should receive it in a few days. Is that ok?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: If it is wrong or does not fit then please contact us to return it. Keeping another person's soul is very dangerous. Do you understand?

Participant: (Responds)

Maid: Thank you for your help. Sorry again for the interference. Sayonara.

Maid hangs up.

The Participant is sent a dyed blown egg in the post, presented in a box wrapped in tissue paper. Hidden inside it is a small piece of paper with a phone box number written on it. Stickers advertising Moe Moe Maid Café will be placed in a clearly visible place within the phone box. If they ring it they will inevitably speak to a complete stranger.

# Creative Writing Analysis

The following section engages with the manner that theoretical assertions relating to craft have been integrated into the script for Wonderland.

## Dissimulated Section

### Plot

Each character's narrative focuses upon change in relation to the characters around them. There are four character triangles or sorts – the relationships of Pick, Alice and Rab; Marionetta, Kat and Reverie; and Lorenia, Edith and Forty, form love triangles which resolve themselves in different ways. Maxxy, and Nekomi play secondary and supporting roles within these stories. The three women in the Maid Café form a different triangle, initially reflecting the three witches in Macbeth (Shakespeare, 1992) however this breaks down because of Umeko's longing to find love and the manner by which this is managed by her sisters. These plot triangles are described in more detail below.

### Edith, Lorenia and Forty

This story revolves around the inciting incident created when the sisters fall out. This spurs Lorenia on to spend the evening with Forty resulting in them sleeping together at Rab's party and the climactic point where Edith and Lorenia argue. Lorenia moves from being responsible to irresponsible whilst Edith moves in counterpoint from being irresponsible to responsible. Forty is clearly the catalyst for this to happen and moves from being popular to being unpopular and boasting to Participant 2 until he bores them into walking away from him.



### **Pick, Rab and Alice**

The meeting of Alice and Pick in the bar provides the inciting incident in relation to their stories in this narrative which focuses upon them trying to decide on the nature of their relationship. At first this seems to go well, however the perceived union in the bathtub is then broken by Alice's decision to kiss Rab which provides the motive for Pick to open the box containing the black hole M33 X-7 in an insinuated suicide attempt which Alice buys into at the last minute. This follows the five stages of the tragic plot outlined by Booker (2004) with the 'anticipation stage' occurring around the inciting incident in the bar and Pick and Alice's admissions that they've previously had a thing together. The 'dream stage' occurs with the flourishing of their relationship and climaxes when Pick jumps into the bath with Alice. The 'frustration stage' occurs where Alice kisses Rab, and the 'nightmare stage' and 'destruction stage' where Pick opens the box containing the black hole. Rab's story begins with him watching the home made pornography of him with Alice and moves steadily towards the hope of rekindling something with Alice which is realised and then dashed at the party.

### **Kat, Reverie and Marionetta**

Their story clearly begins with the breaking up of Marionetta and Kat providing the means for Reverie to move in on Kat who has previously spurned her and, eventually, to get her revenge on both Marionetta (by stealing her drugs and breaking into her flat) and Kat by humiliating him at the flat (the climactic point of Reverie's story). This then motivates Kat to seek his revenge on Marionetta by force-feeding her a potentially dangerous amount of 'Hi-Def' at the party (The climactic points of Kat and Marionetta's stories) getting revenge for her breaking up with him. It's clear that Kat wouldn't have gone this far had it not been for Reverie and the abuse of Marionetta is his way of trying to regain some status.

## **Maxxy**

Maxxy is a secondary character and doesn't particularly change in the piece however, she provides a static lynchpin around which the story revolves which is realised fully in the fact that it's insinuated that she might be the one 'dreaming' Wonderland through a number of her lines. Her character wants to go to sleep and an internal conflict is set up arising from the fact that she can't.

## **Nekomi**

Like Maxxy, Nekomi's character provides a static hub around which the other characters revolve. Nekomi joins together the Rab, Pick, Alice and Marionetta, Kat, Reverie triangles and suggests a means of interpreting the existence of Wonderland through the foregrounding of philosophy relating to quantum physics in relation to this character. The Schrödinger's Cat link is articulated through the point where Participant 6 finds her stuck in a tree, through her use of feline-related lexis and her wearing of a beanie hat with cat's ears. It is also reinforced when she is talking with Rab and Kat at Club de la Faye.

## **Maid Café:**

The plot of Maid Café begins with the announcement that this is the day that Umeko will meet her true love and ends in the realisation that he or she is not there. This instigates her decision to leave the café resulting in Katsumi's breakdown which apparently opens the door into Wonderland.

## **Participants.**

In relation to the participants' experience of the threads other than Maid Café, the inciting incident occurs through the act of apparent chance meeting with the characters. In this way the change from pre-liminal to liminal is marked by the inciting incident and, in the same way, when the participant leaves Wonderland, entering the synthesis of the plot (Aristotle,

2003) they are also entering the post-liminal stage of the performance. The elongated climactic point beginning where the participant enters Wonderland and ending when they exit. The phone call delivered by the performer a few days after the physical performance is inserted into the post-liminal stage / synthesis of the piece to insert the liminality of the piece into the participants' everyday realities. Hopefully the effect of this will then encourage them to question the nature of perceived reality set against the installed dreamscape of Wonderland. In many ways the participant becomes the agent of their own destiny in relation to the labyrinth that Wonderland poses as it is up to them to find their way out negotiating the various obstacles, proposed by the structure of the one-to-one performances and the maze as a game within it. This is making use of fictions (games) within fictions (the installed environment) within reality (the participants' on-going perception of time and space) to highlight the nature of perception in relation to various levels of reality.

## **Character**

Whilst the use of char/actorisation makes the specification of the char/actors' histories, idiolects and interests difficult to engage with because these aspects will change depending upon the performer playing them. Character journeys have been planned out with the specified actions of each character providing a means of inserting some degree of shown characterisation. Equally the emotional responses to the events of this piece, articulated through the char/actors' actions are also clear. In this way it could be said that char/actorisation does not remove a sense of character altogether because how a person is perceived is closely linked to how an observer sees them behave. It is perceived that this functions in a similar way to the concept of showing rather than telling from Creative Writing theory. The char/actors actions therefore provide the characterisation in place of the physical qualities of the person and their idiolect. In terms of their development during the story, characters in real-time narratives are going to change in a way that mirrors character change in short stories, which more commonly play out over condensed timeframes (Neale in Anderson, 2006). As noted in the section covering plot, the progression of the characters focuses upon the transformation of their relationships with other characters with the conflict inherent in these transformations providing the dramatic interest in the piece.

## Status

Status (Johnstone in Neale, 2009) plays a key role in relation to the motivation and interactions between the char/actors and the participants experiencing this piece helping to build authenticity into the dialogue and the provide motivation for the characters in the piece.

In relation to dialogue, Johnstone notes that by having characters try to get their status slightly higher or lower than the other character made the dialogue feel 'authentic' (in Neale, 2009, p334). This authenticity can be linked to dissimulation because it reproduces naturalistic dialogue and, whilst the use of improvisation guided by the retroscript means that specific dialogue is not suggested. The script introduction notes the importance of status in relation to the approach to improvisation. As an example, this competition for higher status is illustrated within the scene in Club de la Faye where Rab, Nekomi, Marionetta and Kat are talking and Rab and Kat are vying for the higher status position by insulting each other.

In terms of motivation, status-based interactions have been built into many of the scenarios articulated through the retroscript, for example, Kat's plot is driven heavily by his desire to increase his status in relation to the other characters around him. He begins by having Marionetta split up with him, then attempts to regain status by stealing her keys and breaking into her flat, however his status is lowered further by Reverie both in the conversation on the way to Marionetta's flat and also by embarrassing him when they reach the flat. His final act of force-feeding Marionetta a dangerous amount of H-DMT-V is his attempt to regain face, however, in doing so he really shows what he has become. Kat's continued quest for higher status results in his becoming progressively more alienated from the people around him. In this way he reflects a classic tragic character such as Macbeth whose quest for higher status leads to his downfall.

## **Dialogue**

### **Director's Script**

The director's script is intended as a functional document to convey the vision of the piece, specifically a sense of the characters and the specifics of the plot and therefore, it felt necessary to hone this into a finished piece (although space was still allowed for participant interaction). It was felt that the dialogue in the director's script had to be naturalistic; convey individual characters and their motivations; and give a more intricate sense of the story than it was possible to convey in the retroscript. Therefore, alongside the status interactions described above, it was decided to insert a large number non-fluency features into the dialogue so that it more closely resembled natural speech.

### **Performer's Script**

The decision to use improvised dialogue focused around specific plot points suggested in the retroscripted performer's script was made to open up the ability for participants to interact with the char/actors of this piece. As noted in chapters three and four, the retroscript provided a means of shaping the story whilst leaving space for participant interaction. It also provided the means to avoid any affectation created by performers remembering and delivering specific lines. When incorporated with the notion of status as described above, this should convey dialogue that can respond to participant interaction in a spontaneous and naturalistic manner.

The performer's script itself utilised the director's script, taking the key plot and conversation points to ensure the story was still conveyed through the improvised dialogue. To illustrate this process of distillation, the first scene involving Maxxxy has been included below along with the accompanying retroscript to highlight this process of distillation. The attached comments in square brackets have been inserted to convey the manner by which the section above it has been articulated in the retroscript and the reasoning behind this.

This section runs between around 2pm and 5pm. Participant 7 is asked to meet on a sofa in a particular café. When they get there they find Maxxxy asleep on the sofa with half a cold

coffee on the table in front of her. If they try and wake her then she doesn't wake up until they apply ridiculous force. If the participant goes to get an employee of the café then she doesn't wake up unless considerably pushed to. When she does, she looks really confused and apologises to the staff. If they sit at a table nearby then she'll pretend to be asleep for around ten minutes before she eventually starts to come around.

Maxxxy: (To Participant 7) Have you got the time?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Cool, (stretches). Thanks.

Participant 7: (Responds)

**['Maxxxy asks for the time' – this is the first point of engagement with the Participant and a means of opening up conversation in a manner that regularly occurs in everyday reality (thereby not inferring an element of performance).]**

Maxxxy gets her bag and looks inside it. She starts rummaging around. Then:

Maxxxy: (To Participant 7) You got a cigarette mate?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: (If yes) Thanks.

(If no) – she starts looking through her bag then checks a side pocket and finds her cigarettes. She does a 'I've found them' gesture to Participant 7.

Maxxxy: Do you want one?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy either give a cigarette to Participant 7 and they go outside or else:

Maxxxy: Have you got a light?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxxy: Right.

Maxxy asks around a few tables and then, if unsuccessful, goes outside and asks people in the street. She leaves her bag on the sofa and stands outside smoking. When she's finished she comes back in.

**['Maxxy acquires and smokes a cigarette' – this describes her motivation at this point and insinuates linked behaviours with this act including dialogue and status.]**

Maxxy: (To Participant 7) That's better.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: When I woke up I thought you were my mum / dad for some reason. Fucking weird.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: You don't even look anything like my mum / dad.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Anyway, (s)he died when I was like, five so it really would be weird. (Laughs to self)

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Yeah.

**['Maxxy tells Participant 7 that she though they were her mum/dad' – This connection help to an extent to justify why she is talking to the participant in the first place. It also begins to draw the Participant 7 into Maxxy's world.]**

The conversation dies at this point. They sit there in silence awkwardly.

Maxxy: What time was it?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Oh yeah. One hour later. That's normal. I should keep a 'do not disturb' sign around my neck. One of those gold chains maybe.

They sit there in silence. Maxxy gets a make-up bag out of her handbag and then gets up to go to the toilet.

Maxxy: Can you watch my bag?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Cheers.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy goes to the toilet. When she comes back she's touched up her make-up and sprayed herself with perfume. She gets her bag and then sits down in the chair opposite Participant 7.

**['Maxxy asks for the time then goes to the toilet to put make-up on leaving Participant 7 with her bag.' – This section further propagates a link between Participant 7 and Maxxy by entrusting Participant 7 with the responsibility of looking after her bag. It conveys her as a carefree and confident who feels they are in control of this situation. It also introduces the sub-plot relating to her lack of sleep.]**

Maxxy: You like music?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: My band's playing at Club de la Faye tonight. I'm supposed to be promoting it. We've been on tour. It's our homecoming.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: We're called Hunting Season. Like... you know... Felix da Housecat? Devin Dazzle?

Participant 7: (Responds)



Maxxy: It's a good song (beat). Am I making any sense?

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: It's all about image, see?

Participant 7: (Responds)

**['Maxxy talks about music and her band' – this point is specifically inserted to draw the Participant into the next part of the performance. It also justifies, to an extent, the overly friendly interaction – Maxxy is being friendly because she wants to publicise her gig.]**

Maxxy: Hence... (sweeps her hand over her face to indicate make-up and does the happy / sad expression change in the process). See? Problem is that we've been partying since (two days before) and I've not slept. So, yeah, looks like it'll be great. (Laughs). I don't know why I'm talking to you, by the way. (Laughs) It's the lack of sleep.

**['Maxxy explains that she has had no sleep' – given that Wonderland is supposed to have been created through an act of collective dreaming this introduces this idea and foreshadows further discussion regarding sleeping and dreams, also explaining why she was asleep in the café in this first place.]**

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: My name's Maxxy by the way. Three Xs cause it's supposed to be like, sexy. Not four Xs like Castlemaine. Three Xs, like Love Foxxx from... erm... fucking hell. Er... From CSS.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Nice to meet you. (Shakes Participant 7's hand)

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: So yeah... Come to my gig. Um... (She gets a flyer out of her handbag). 8.30 at Club de la Faye. Be there or be...

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Right, I better go and hand these bad boys out (meaning the flyers). Nice to meet you. (shakes hand). Maybe see you later.

Participant 7: (Responds)

Maxxy: Cool.

Maxxy gets up and goes and stands just down the road from the café and starts handing out flyers to the gig.

**[The act of handing Participant 7 the flyer links in with the next bit of the performance and provides a backstop if Participant 7 doesn't come flyering with her in the next scene. The act of leaving the participant on their own (which is make use of a number of times in this script) increases the sensation of realism in this piece because it hands freedom of choice back to the participant – this device is used in Punchdrunk's *Our Thirteenth Hour* (2010) and is reflected upon in the analysis of the conventions presented by this piece. If the performer is acting as a 'window' into the narrative then, by leaving the participant on their own, the performance is removed and reality is restored. Clearly Maxxy is not leaving the participant absolutely on their own but is distancing herself from the participant, hopefully to re-engage with them in the next scene.]**

The comments attached to the above script were then integrated into the performer's script below with possible participant responses added.

Maxxy	Participant 7
Asks for time.	(Responds)
Gets and smokes a cigarette	Does / Doesn't donate cigarette.
Tells Participant 7 she thought they were her mum / dad.	(Responds)

Asks for the time and then goes to toilet to put make-up on leaving Participant 7 with her bag.	(Responds)
Talks about music and her band.	(Responds)
Explains she's had no sleep.	(Responds)
Goes outside to flyer for her gig.	(Responds)

## Setting

The setting of this piece within a real city articulates the aims of this research to dissimulate this section of the piece as completely as possible. The use of real locations around the city which will be populated by non-participants and will add real conventions in the same manner that was observed in Punchdrunk's *Our Thirteenth Hour* (2010). The choice to use multiple venues as opposed to one single venue was again a decision to reflect the sense of the performance puncturing reality. The decision to include a large-scale installation at the end that articulates the internal psychologies and concerns of these characters was made as a mean of revealing the fiction within the plot. It also provided a way to change the focus of the story onto the participant and their response to this alien environment. Participants are given the chance to step inside the collective minds of the people who have shaped the last few hours of their lives and are forced to engage with scenes from the actual psychological landscapes of these characters and their mind-games. The final point is that the presence of Wonderland provides a spectacular aspect to this apparently unspectacular play – it takes the established engagement with spectacle perceived in much immersive work and holds onto it until the last moment

## Themes

As noted above *Wonderland* presents reality in a number of different ways to encourage participants to question the nature of reality whilst articulating the subjective nature of experience. The realism of the first scripted section is replaced by layers of fictions, including

games, role-play, surreal dreamscapes all observed through the reality of live experience. There is an irony here in relation to the fact that as the participant is allowed inside the collected mind of the characters – closer to the reality of their subjective experience, the elements become more recognisably fictional - when they are not exploring the heads of the characters, the experience is much more realistic. Given that, as Maturana highlights, the organism is a sealed unit and all meaning is created within the organism and is not necessarily representative of an objective reality (1980) the closer we get to this created reality the more strange things get. This is reflected by the use of the metaphor of the black hole that Pick carries around with her – beyond the event horizon, space-time begins to warp. In some ways the box symbolises the skull and M33 X-7 the mind which is also represented in Wonderland and the building surrounding it. The absent presence and unknown aspect of whether the Pick believes the black-hole is there or whether she knows it's a lie, links to the nature of subjective interpretation and also hints at a possible fiction. The references to Schrödinger's theoretical cat experiment (in Wheeler and Zurek (ed.), 1983) reflects the states of existence inside and outside of Wonderland and inside and outside the reality created in the mind of the observer in constructivist epistemological theory. This links unpredictable quantum probability with the questions relating to the perception of reality and through the symbolism of the box with the Wonderland installation itself. Finally, Pick's speech about quasars implies the hope that emerges out of darkness as the energy from the black hole creates new stars and the characters in this piece aspire for something better.

On a human level this piece is about love and relationships and not being able to decide who to love and in some ways not having to decide. It's about living without really having a reason to, and about the kneejerk response to boredom which involves getting heavy intoxication in the hope that it will make life more exciting. Drugs here articulate the idea of synthetic emotion, of the desire to make oneself happy whilst also symbolising the real / synthetic relationship created by the piece itself. They also provide a narrative function in the sense that they suggest a justification for the appearance of Wonderland.

## **Non-dissimulated Section (Wonderland)**

The aim in this section was to remove the veil of dissimulation and allow the participants into a more overtly symbolic space which aimed to engage with one element of the characters' psychologies through the embodiment of these within a series of single tableaux which placed the body of the char/actor at the centre of the image. Interaction was integrated into some of these where it was felt that the character's internal psychology was non-inhibitive or longed for interaction. In the case of Kat, Reverie, Pick and Rab, interactivity with the performer is not requested although there may be other ways that the participant interacts with the space. A brief commentary about each of the fourteen pieces is included below as a means of highlighting the thought processes behind each performance.

### **Alice**

Alice is deemed to be somewhat caught up in her own self-image and hence she dresses the participant in her own clothes before undertaking a dialogue with 'herself' as a way of forgiving herself for some unspoken event in the past. It is to be assumed that this relates to the desertion of her child, however, it has been left open for the participant to make their own decision about the meaning about this apology and the ambiguity of this statement may be read in a number of different ways that will hopefully be determined by the relevance of a particular idea to the participant experiencing the piece.

### **Edith**

In the dissimulated section of *Wonderland* Edith's character moves from being irresponsible and carefree to showing some burden of responsibility. The piece described which was created to symbolise this act of taking on the burden of others. The char/actor's body is gradually covered in pieces of Modroc that gradually harden over time, covering her body in a restricting 'shell' that communicates other people's secrets and worries. This piece was created in collaboration with Charlotte Lara Hall and performed at The Fools' Ball at The Grove Malvern on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

### **Forty**

Forty uses Lorenia which results, to some extent, in her psychological destruction. These ideas of 'using' and 'destruction' were articulated through the intentional application of tools to the act of obliterating the form of a mannequin. Forty lays out another mannequin and encourages participants to undertake the same act which symbolically represents his need to justify his actions in the eyes of others.

### **Haruka**

In the Maid Café section of *Wonderland*, it is suggested that Haruka's character has the ability to read people's personalities. This piece repositions this idea. There is still the act of reading, however, this is done in a physical rather than 'psychic' manner. This act therefore could be interpreted as the physical embodiment of this psychic ability in this world of dreaming. It could also be interpreted as a revelation as to Haruka's lack of ability because her sense of sight is severely restricted by the blindfold.

### **Kat**

Kat's piece symbolises the destruction of love through the dissection of the hearts and the removal of the gold ring which overtly symbolises the lasting connection perceived within matrimonial love. The act is a grotesque act of theft which essentially relates to Kat's desire to steal and control the love of other people. The rose petals on the floor symbolically link this piece with Marionetta's and Reverie's pieces.

### **Katsumi**

Katsumi's piece symbolises the notion of tradition and duty (symbolised by the noh mask) relating to her own insinuated psychic ability which allows her to see into the participants' current circumstances. The notion of the present is clearly represented by the clock whose accelerated chiming conveys the constant passing of the present. Katsumi's screams recall pain and suggest the burden that her ability has on her. The participant is able to relieve Katsumi of this burden by removing the mask although inevitably the participant will tire of this act and leave. The mask will be replaced and her anguish will continue.

## **Lorenia**

Lorenia's piece suggests her low status and her willingness to be subjugated by another human being. Status is conveyed by the maid outfit which suggests the willingness to serve another person and the game that this conducted through the cards forces the participant to consider their role in this subjugation. Do they allow themselves the opportunity to get her to do something unpleasant or do they do it themselves?

## **Marionetta**

Marionetta's piece was created to convey some insight into her complex personality. It is wild and yet ends with a symbolic gesture of love and kindness through the giving of the rose (a symbol that links this piece with Kat and Reverie's). The lighting effect was something that was experienced in a nightclub in Castellane in the French Alps. The slight slowing of the rate of the strobe light was extremely disorientating and gave the effect that people were suddenly shifting to another position. It was thought this effect would accurately convey the sense of Marionetta's distorted perception of the world.

## **Maxxy**

The central image of Maxxy's piece is essentially based around Caravaggio's painting of Narcissus (c.1599), Bouguereau's image of the birth of Venus (c.1879). The water is therefore used as a mirror to symbolise reflection and also as a symbol of purification. The participant is asked to sign their name on Maxxy which symbolises their attempt to claim possession of her. Her washing away of the name is her rejection of this act.

## **Nekomi**

The familiar concept for Nekomi's piece is borrowed directly from movies such as Barney Oldfield's *Race for a Life* (1913) which was also felt to in some ways reference the Schrödinger's cat thought experiment that Nekomi discusses in the dissimulated section of the piece. It conveys helplessness and pressing need for assistance that she feels about the circumstance in which she finds herself.

### **Pick**

Pick's piece again suggests helplessness and references the biographical incident she relates to Participant 3 when she drove her mum's car into a river and accidentally killed two of her friends. This image is recreated with Pick trapped inside as a means of conveying the feelings of guilt she has about this event and also the sense that she is trapped by this guilt.

### **Rab**

This piece conveys the key moments in Rab's story. The obsession with Alice reflected in size of the projection of the sex tape. The shabby armchair in which he sits faces away from the participant to show where his focus lies. The three plinths represent the rule of three and the red drinks placed on each are a reference blood as a symbol of love and also to alcoholism and the associated dishevelment.

### **Reverie**

Reverie's piece goes somewhat further to explore her complex psychology. It was felt that Reverie was quite a hard and cold character in the dissimulated section and it was hoped that a different light might be shed on her outward appearance. The wedding dress overtly references her need for love with the staining and tearing of the dress conveys her feelings of rejection and psychological injury.

### **Umeko**

Umeko's piece involves the most conversation because it was felt she is the one who has been released from the restrictive bonds with her sisters. She talks about dreams and the fulfilment of wishes. The setting of the beach suggests release and the building of sandcastles is symbolic of her growth and strengthening.



# Dissimulation Strategies

The section below deals specifically with the strategies employed to dissimulate the events in *Wonderland* by appropriating conventions from everyday reality. It is important to note that the performance itself has not been staged and so these ideas have not been tested through performance however, each section articulates the thinking behind the script which is directly derived from the ideas conveyed by Schmidt (1984) that have formed a basis for much of the ideas presented in this study. As noted in the introduction, it was felt that the creation of a script was an appropriate manner to work with dissimulation because they were drawn out through a process of analysis that was based on a 'static' record of a live performance experience.

This section seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Can thinking about reality and fiction in terms of conventions be applied practically in the creation of a script for a large immersive piece of work?
2. Can dissimulative strategies observed in existing work be successfully appropriated for new work?
3. What further understanding has been developed about the methods for applying strategies for dissimulation?
4. Does the application of dissimulative strategies allow the piece to be perceived more readily as everyday reality?

These questions will be responded to in general terms within the following commentary before being answered explicitly in the conclusions.

## Pre-liminal and Threshold Dissimulation

The pre-liminal stage and performance threshold have been identified as being two of the key ways that participants determine the nature of the events that they are experiencing. The following methods of reducing the information relating to these elements have been applied as a means of inhibiting or confusing the process of definition in relation to the nature of the experience. The general approach has been to present familiar conventions that

are recognisable from the participants' experiences of everyday reality as opposed to conventions that are familiar from performances. It is hoped that by replacing performance conventions with conventions from everyday reality, participants will find it harder to determine whether they are experiencing everyday reality or a contrived, constructed and controlled performance.

Within the pre-liminal stage, several key elements were highlighted that contributed to an audience member's ability to perceive the threshold of the performance reality. These were:

- Seeing publicity about the performance.
- Buying a ticket.
- Remembering the ticket.
- Travelling to the event.
- Arriving at and entering the venue.
- Handing over the ticket.
- Waiting in the venue.
- Entering the performance space at a particular time. (Performance Threshold)

The introduction to *Wonderland* specifies the means by which these pre-liminal events should be dealt with. In many ways it would be easier to deceive unwitting participants into joining in with performance however, it was felt that this was ethically dubious and rather, that it was better to work with participants who were willing to take part in the performance. In this way the participant has some understanding of the scenario but will hopefully remain unsure as to what constitutes the performance until later on in the piece. As noted in the script introduction, the experience itself is described as a 'party' to avoid participants arriving with the preconception that they are experiencing a performance. Each pre-liminal event described above has been considered. In some cases it has been possible to remove particular events altogether however in others, further action has been taken to either reduce the effect of a particular event or to insert contradictory conventions that undermine the participants' certainty that they are engaging with a performance.

### **Seeing publicity about the performance**

All pre-liminal communications acknowledge the theatre company as organisers and conducted through the company's mailing list which will be distributed around individuals who are aware of the company's previous work and reputation. It is therefore anticipated that the participants' awareness of who is organising of the 'party' should be enough to alert them to the potential for the piece to be surprising without specifically stating that it is a performance.

### **Buying a ticket / remembering the ticket / handing over a ticket**

Participants are also asked to sign up to the 'party' themselves. It is specifically stated that only one ticket can be bought at a time and that each place must be allocated to a specific guest. This should help to avoid the scenario where one person buys a place in the performance and then gives it to a friend, thereby reducing their engagement with the pre-liminal elements that are revealed. It is hoped that by allocating places in this manner that each participant will be exposed to the same information. The places in the performance will then be acknowledged through a text or email that tells the participant to arrive at a certain space at a certain time. No actual ticket is delivered but instead, the participant's details are used to collect information about them from the internet so that the performer will know what the person they are meeting looks like. At no point is the participant asked to prove who they are. This removes the action of handing over the ticket which has been identified as a clear marker in relation to the performance threshold.

### **Travelling to the venue / arriving at and entering the venue / waiting in the venue / entering the performance space**

It would have been possible for *Wonderland* to begin, for example, at the participants' houses where no travel needed to take place however it was decided for this piece, which utilises existing locations within a city centre, that participants should be directed to a meeting point at a particular time and place. This immediately suggested that the events following it might be contrived in some manner so where it was deemed necessary to include certain pre-liminal indicators, various strategies were employed to disguise or undermine these. In most cases this involved making the participant wait. In *Pick*, *Reverie*, *Kat* and *Alice's*

threads, the participant is required to wait a significant amount of time before the character engages with them. In Marionetta's thread this is taken further and the participant is made to wait at the meeting point until they begin to leave. In Rab's thread, the opposite strategy is used and participants arrive, apparently early, before he is apparently ready. It was hoped that, by playing with the participants' expectations relating to the perceived conventions of plays and theatre-going in this way, it would be possible to inject doubt into the participants' minds relating the exact nature of what they were experiencing.

In *Maid Café* a different approach is explored. The participants are invited at a specific time to a specific location. In this manner they are perhaps, primed to experience a performance of sorts and, in the case of this thread of the piece, the performance is framed within the conventionally familiar scenario of the café. The experience of the maid café is used as a means of fulfilling the participants' expectations with what might be considered a 'substitute performance'. The participants enter the maid café and experience the service and karaoke performances delivered by the staff. This fulfils their expectations and, it is assumed, they stop thinking that what they are experiencing might be part of a larger performance. If delivered authentically, it is anticipated that the participant will see Katsumi, Haruka and Umeko along with the other maids as simply 'doing their job' – that they are 'real' people undertaking a role as part of a service experience. To facilitate this, the performers playing the maids are employed and trained to serve the participants in much the same way that any other waitress may be. The only difference is that they are asked to undertake slightly different activities as part of this service. It is never acknowledged that they are 'actors' playing a role. When the doorway to Wonderland opens up, the participants will suddenly realise that the maid café was only the first part of a larger experience. The non-reality of the café will be revealed and, it is hoped, this will provoke participants to consider the contrived nature of other constructed environments that they encounter in everyday existence.

### **Initial point of engagement with performers**

A number of the threads required the performer to assume the role of a stranger approaching the participant. It was immediately evident that this could feel extremely contrived and this presented the challenge of authenticating this initial point of engagement. In Alice, Edith, Forty, Kat, Lorenia, Marionetta, Maxxy, Pick and Reverie's threads the

characters are introduced in such a circumstantial manner and therefore it was deemed necessary to articulate a reason for these char/actors to speak to the participant. In most cases this motivation is purely self-serving. It was observed in everyday reality that spontaneous communication between strangers on the street occurs most often in specific circumstances and therefore, these situations were recreated so that the engagement didn't feel as if it had been set-up. So, for example, a number of the char/actors ask the participant for a cigarette as a means of justifying that first point of contact. After this point, further conversation could occur without it feeling too contrived. However, it was felt that after a while the participant would be gaining a degree of certainty that this interaction was linked to the performance and therefore it was decided to undermine this further by having the char/actor walk away. This was deemed to reflect the expectations observed from everyday reality. The conversation is conducted as 'payment' for the cigarette and then, when that is finished, the stranger has fulfilled their end of the bargain and leaves. The revelation that certain char/actors asked for cigarettes even though they had their own provided a character nuance that hopefully conveyed the selfish nature of these individuals.

In Edith and Lorenia's sections, the initial part of the performance is overheard and does not in any way encompass the participants waiting in the bar. The participant is not told to observe the sisters' conversation, however, my making them sit on their own, it is somewhat inevitable that they will follow this conversation at some point. There is a similarity here with Deborah Pearson's *Indiscreet* (2011), where the participant could not help overhearing a conversation that was being conducted in the corridor outside of the room where they were waiting. In the case of *Indiscreet*, the focus was less upon the story itself which at times was interrupted or drowned out by passers-by, and concentrated upon the act of listening from the participant's point of view, as a means of encouraging the participant to think about the nature of performance, voyeurism and storytelling and the lack of clear divide between this contrived scenario and a similar situation in everyday reality. In *Wonderland*, it was decided that the details conveyed in this conversation were less important than the sense of these two characters' relationship which, it is hoped, would come across clearly over the course of the scene. Later, in both Edith and Lorenia's threads, their relationship is discussed directly with the participant as a means of reiterating this directly.

In Rab's thread, he displays a lack of interest in the participants to undermine their certainty that they are in the right place at the right time. If they walk into the building they are quickly thrown out after finding him, on his own, watching home-made pornography, a scenario which is set up to look like the participants were not expected. If they knock then he eventually comes to the door and tells the participants to go away. In both scenarios the apparent lack of interest in the participants has been used to present alternative conventions to those that one would expect from a performance. It also 'activates' the participants because they have to work to get into his house rather than simply being welcomed in. It is hoped that by presenting different conventions to those anticipated, that the participants will hopefully try to find an explanation from everyday reality to understand the scenario as opposed to one that relates to a performance.

In Nekomi's thread she is found standing in a tree from which she cannot climb down. This scenario is fairly obviously contrived so considerable effort had to be put in to undermine the participant's certainty that this wasn't a part of a performance. Immediately the participant is required to seek help. Following this they have a significant conversation but Nekomi then leaves them on their own and it is up to the participant to call her as a means of re-joining the experience. By leaving the participant on their own, it is anticipated that they will be uncertain as to what to do. In some ways they are being allowed to return to everyday reality by removing their connection with the piece that occurs when the character is present. However, they are provided with the means of re-joining the piece as they are guided towards the next location. Therefore the presented convention is different to that which is likely to have been anticipated as part of a performance where one would expect the audience to be constantly attended to or acknowledged in some way.

## Liminal Stage Dissimulation

Conventions that insinuated the fictional artifice of the piece were articulated in Table 4.2 and are reiterated in Table 8.1 below and presented alongside the methods used to dissimulate these specific elements. These ideas are discussed in more general terms.

Observed fictional conventions	Methods of dissimulation
Obvious performance setting.	Through the use of real settings.
Minimal interaction (Participants positioned as observers)	By ensuring that interaction occurred throughout the piece.
Unconventional performer behaviour.	By utilising char/actorisation to encourage performers to play heightened versions of themselves.  By mainly using realistic scenarios and by encouraging naturalistic speech and behaviour.
Affected dialogue.	By encouraging improvisation through the use of the retrospect.
Use of self-referential signage.	By ensuring performers were adequately prepared to engage with a specific participant.  By using the characters to create the fiction of the scenario within a real environment and lead the participants in this manner.  By utilising real spaces.
Poorly justified requests for participant action.	By reducing the number of direct commands to participants.  By attempting to justify any requests for action.
Use of lighting in a noticeably unconventional manner.	By utilising real settings and not using theatrical lighting.

Acknowledgement of symbolic elements.	By avoiding any reference to the piece as a fictional artifice.
Awareness of other participants.	In most of the one-on-one sections, other participants were not engaged with until Rab's party. In cases where multiple participants were brought together, the premise that they were going to experience a party and the positioning of other participants as party goers helped to remove the sense that they were a collective audience.
Oversubscription of interactive elements.	Interaction did not occur in designated spaces and instead was managed by the performers themselves.
Contrived stylisation of functional elements.	Real functional elements such as bars were used. In the case of Maid Café, the café was presented as a real establishment and not part of a performance experience.
Imposition of rules.	The performance contained no directly designated rules.
Inconsistent / incongruent elements.	The premise of the piece is not undermined by elements which are not justified by the narrative framework.
Performance referential props.	All props are presented as real objects in real spaces. There are no props that specifically assist the performing of the piece.
Subject matter.	<i>Wonderland</i> uses a largely realistic subject matter with only Pick's 'black



	hole' being the only obviously fictional element although this does depend on how the performer delivers this section of the piece.
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Table 8.1 Methods of dissimulation conducted upon observed fictional conventions.

## General Approaches to Liminal Stage Dissimulation

### Interaction and Character Dissimulation

The techniques of retroscripting and char/actorisation have been incorporated to produce spontaneously improvised performances structured around a central narrative thread. Performers can therefore respond in a natural way to any discussion that enquires about the character's personal history. Discussion of the viability of using these techniques has been covered in the chapter that focuses upon *Menagerie* and so will not be repeated here.

### Emotional Dissimulation

Whilst it would be difficult to predict the range of emotions that participants may feel when experiencing this piece, there are certainly numerous instances when the piece asks participants to engage with challenging situations that will hopefully inspire genuine emotion. In a general sense, participants are challenged to contribute their own stories to the conversation which, it is hoped, would inspire a range of emotions. Participant 7 is challenged to shoplift with Maxxy, an act which is likely to inspire a range of specific emotions. The participants in *Maid Café* are challenged to engage with the knowledge that they will die on a particular day and how that will happen. Participant 4 is asked to talk to Alice whilst she is in the bath. Participant 1 and Participant 2 are asked to sit in a Django's bar and then left for a considerable time before being asked to trust a stranger and accompany them somewhere. Finally all participants are asked to crawl into *Wonderland* and experience the emotional responses to the darkness and unknown which has been

observed in the in the work of Punchdrunk and Ansuman Biswas. As noted by Lamarque (2005), counterpart theory suggests that these emotions have their own reality distinct from the perceived reality of the scenario that one experiences. Therefore it is possible to be really afraid during an experience that one knows to be contrived although this sense of fear may be reduced or limited through the understanding that, for example, the implied threat will not realise itself. Therefore, by encouraging direct emotional engagement, one is integrating an emotional reality into the piece and thereby dissimulating the fictional artifice through this act.

### **Environmental Dissimulation**

The majority of *Wonderland* takes place in and around the bars and streets of an unspecified city with the hope that the use of a real environment will remove the sense of simulation with respect to the piece. In the case of the Moe Moe Maid Café, it is anticipated that the artificial constructed environments conveyed by restaurants and cafes in everyday reality will give the experience of the maid café an air of surrealism without making it feel contrived for the purpose of a performance. The performances within the café themselves should be justified by the sense that performers are undertaking tasks directly linked to the running of the business and are not pretending to do so. By adopting the functionality and conventions of a real café, the space becomes a real café rather than a simulation of a café.

### **Narrative Dissimulation**

The fictional narrative of *Wonderland* is communicated through the interaction with the performers within a real setting, thereby presenting the fictional elements alongside conventions that are familiar from everyday reality. In addition to this, further dissimulative techniques have been utilised to play with the way participants are exposed to the narrative and to undermine the expectations of audience members in relation to the conventions presented by other works of theatre.

## **Exclusion**

As noted above, in several of the threads, participants are required to wait for significant periods of time before interaction occurred. This technique was also applied to the liminal stages of the performances and was seen to reflect conventions observed within everyday reality where action and events are not continuous. It was also felt that the act of waiting reasserted the need for participants to take responsibility of choice regarding the unfolding events. For example, in Maxxy's thread, Participant 7 is made to wait several hours before the gig whilst Maxxy goes to set up her equipment. In this manner it was hoped Participant 7's experience will be self-directed for a large proportion of time allowing the experience of everyday reality to be reinstated before Participant 7 engages with the performance again.

In a different sense, participants are regularly excluded from interacting with the char/actors who may distance themselves from the participants and have their own conversation in which participants are not included. For example when Edith takes Participant 1 backstage after the gig, she has an elongated conversation with Maxxy that, on paper doesn't include Participant 1 at all. They are left as a spare part, excluded whilst the char/actors discuss their own lives. Equally, the discussion that happens between Rab, Chesh, Kat and Marionetta does not include any participants until the anticipated arrival of Participant 6. There are members of the audience scattered around the room who may catch some of the conversation but it will be overheard as opposed to being delivered directly to the participants themselves.

## **Removal of Stipulated Participant Direction**

Analysis of existing performances, particularly *Money* (Shunt, 2010) and *Once Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Secret Cinema, 2010) noted that 'fictiveness' was particularly conveyed by specifically requesting that participants engage in non-conventional acts. Therefore, every effort has been made to remove such elements from the script for *Wonderland*. For example, participants are always invited to follow the char/actors and are never told to do so

as part of the performance. This slight difference opens up the potential for participants to decline the offer and be left on their own. This means that the participant is constantly buying into the performance by choosing to follow the char/actor. This makes the act of following the performance self-motivated as opposed to directed and, in line with the observations collected through the process of analysis, insinuates a freedom of choice that reflects the conventions of everyday reality.

### **Integration of Participant Role / Motivation:**

Many of the participants are asked to help the char/actors in some way. The more significant occasions include when Reverie asks Participant 9 to follow Marionetta; Nekomi asks Participant 6 to help her get down from the tree; and Maxxy asks Participant 7 to help her flyer her gig or steal something to wear. In all threads of the piece, smaller demands are made of the participants such as when they are asked for cigarettes. Although prompted by the aims of a fictional construct the conventions of, for example, being asked for a cigarette are the same as they would be in everyday reality. In this particular case the relationship between reality and fiction becomes extremely complicated because, whilst the demand itself is prompted by the fictional construct, the cigarette is real, the purchase of the cigarettes would have been a real act and, in most cases, the work undertaken to earn the money to buy the cigarettes would be part of the participant's everyday reality. In this way the fictional act draws upon the real histories of the participants to dissimulate itself so that the relatively complex act of asking for and receiving a cigarette appears as a mixture of the two apparently opposing states of real and fictional by incorporating some real and some fictional elements together.

The contrived and simulated nature of the experience is revealed at the moment the participants see the installed environment of Wonderland. The decision to do this was taken because, as noted in chapter three, the complete dissimulation of a piece of work may potentially result in the non-recognition of the piece as a piece of performance. It is also hoped that the shift from dissimulated performance to a clearly demarcated performance will allow the participants to gain a different perspective on the preceding events and also to allow the piece to shift from realism to surrealism in a similar way to Carroll's original.

Therefore no attempt was made to dissimulate the Wonderland experience although, clearly there is a sense that there is a physical and sensory reality to the environment and, it is anticipated, an emotional reality relating to the experience of exploring the installation. The narrative itself becomes fragmented, drawing upon bits of information and backstory delivered during the realistic section of the performance and foregrounded by the one-on-one performances. It is the physical realisation of the character's internal psychologies in the same way that Carroll's Wonderland could be read as an exploration of Alice's.

Specific approaches to liminal stage dissimulation derived from previous analysis

Table 4.1 highlights strategies for dissimulation utilised in existing works. These are reiterated in table 8.2 below with accompanying examples from *Wonderland* as where these strategies have been reapplied.

<b>Conventions appropriated from everyday reality.</b>	<b>Instances in <i>Wonderland</i> where these occur.</b>
Physical contact with performer.	Where Edith drags Participant 1 out of the bar.
Interaction between performer and participant.	Throughout
Use of real setting.	Throughout pre-liminal and liminal stage.
Significant degree of physical movement.	Throughout
Freedom to move anywhere within performance.	Throughout
Real subject under discussion (e.g. The participant's life).	Between the participants and performers throughout.
Responsive dialogue.	Between the participants and performers throughout.
Nudity.	When Alice is in the bath.
Overheard Conversation in realistic context.	Overhear Edith and Lorenia talking in Django's bar.

Interference from non-performance sources.	Interference is extremely likely to occur when using real bar spaces.
Real work undertaken.	When Maxxy asks Participant 7 to help her to flyer the gig and go shoplifting with her.  When Participant 6 is asked to find a way of getting Nekomi down from the tree.
Real sense of fear / challenge	When Maxxy asks Participant 7 to go shoplifting with her.

Table 8.2: Conventions appropriated from everyday reality by existing works as identified in chapter three and examples of their application in *Wonderland*.

## Post-liminal Stage

The analysis of existing work noted an overall shift in the post-liminal stage to more familiarly 'real' conventions, conventions that are generally familiar from the observer's experience of everyday reality. This shift back to 'real' conventions marks the end of the liminal stage of the work, assuring the participant that they have 'returned to everyday reality' and are not experiencing the contrived events of a performance. *Wonderland* intervenes in this 'return to everyday reality' by having the char/actor phone the participant a number of days later and re-impose the fictional world of the piece on the participants' everyday realities. It is hoped in this way the end of the piece is less clearly defined.

# Conclusions

1. Can thinking about reality and fiction in terms of conventions be applied practically in the creation of a script for a large immersive piece of work?

Yes, the consideration of the manner by which the events that make up a piece of work utilise or disregard the conventions of everyday reality can highlight particular events that could be considered for dissimulation. Consideration of the observer's/analyst's own understanding of the conventions that are perceived in everyday reality can provide practical suggestions for the manner that dissimulation may be implemented. It is suggested that, because this process relies upon the observer's/analyst's own understanding of reality, that this process is relatively easy to undertake and is deemed both practically useful and also economically viable in the sense that it doesn't require a huge expenditure of energy on the person developing the work.

2. Can dissimulative strategies observed in existing work be successfully appropriated for new work?

Yes, strategies for dissimulation perceived in existing work can be articulated in general terms and reapplied in new work. This study has shown this process through the analysis of work as a means of identifying strategies for dissimulation that are employed in existing works and reapplying them in the script for *Wonderland*.

3. What further understanding has been developed about the methods for applying strategies for dissimulation?

One phenomenon that has been revealed somewhat accidentally by this work is the means of appropriating scenario-specific conventions to disguise fictional artifice. This can be observed most clearly in the *Maid Café* section of *Wonderland*. The scenario created in *Maid Café* involves three apparently psychic sisters who tell participants about their past, present and future utilising techniques borrowed from cold reading (Brown, 2006) and therefore presents a number of elements that might easily be recognisable as fictitious. The impact of

this is somewhat reduced by the set-up itself and the fictional elements do not reveal the larger fictional artifice. This is because the conventions of this space appropriate conventions apparent in settings familiar from everyday reality such as cafés, restaurants and bars where expected behavioural conventions are different and where performance is a familiar aspect of the experience. In this manner, the performance elements of *Maid Café* are justified and explained by the setting so the larger fictional scenario is not suggested through the performance. Participants should feel like they are inside a café watching a karaoke, rather than feel that they are inside a performance space watching a performance. There is no doubt that the presence of such a café outside of Japan is a contrivance however, this contrivance is self-justifying as a novel or exotic experience brought over from Japan. Everyday reality contains many similar experiences in restaurants which decorate themselves in a style relating to the origin of the style of cooking that they produce. Therefore the novel environment of the maid café justifies itself in relation to the familiar conventions utilised by other restaurants.

The above example, therefore demonstrates the way that a means can be found to include novel or unusual elements into a performance without encouraging the participant to question whether they are still experiencing reality. As long as the potentially unconventional elements are justified by placing them in a context that regularly uses unconventional setting and performance then the participant should see it as being real. You could install trees and zoo animals in cages into a space and as long as there was somebody trying to sell you something then the space would likely to be perceived as a shop, if somebody was trying to serve you food then it would be probably perceived as a café or restaurant. This therefore suggests that the perceived function of the space is more important than the décor. A mechanic's garage is somewhere where somebody fixes cars. As long as the space refers to itself as a garage and there is a car being fixed then the décor could theoretically be anything. The implications of this are fascinating and, it is suggested, might present a point of study in future research.



- Does the application of dissimulative strategies allow the piece to be perceived more readily as everyday reality?

Yes, the analysis of *Wonderland* (See Appendix I) articulated through in Figure 8.1 below shows a higher proportion of events located in the 'real' side of the chart that as opposed to the 'fictional' one. This highlights the success of the piece in relation to conveying the narrative through a constructed performance reality that uses the conventions perceived in everyday reality.

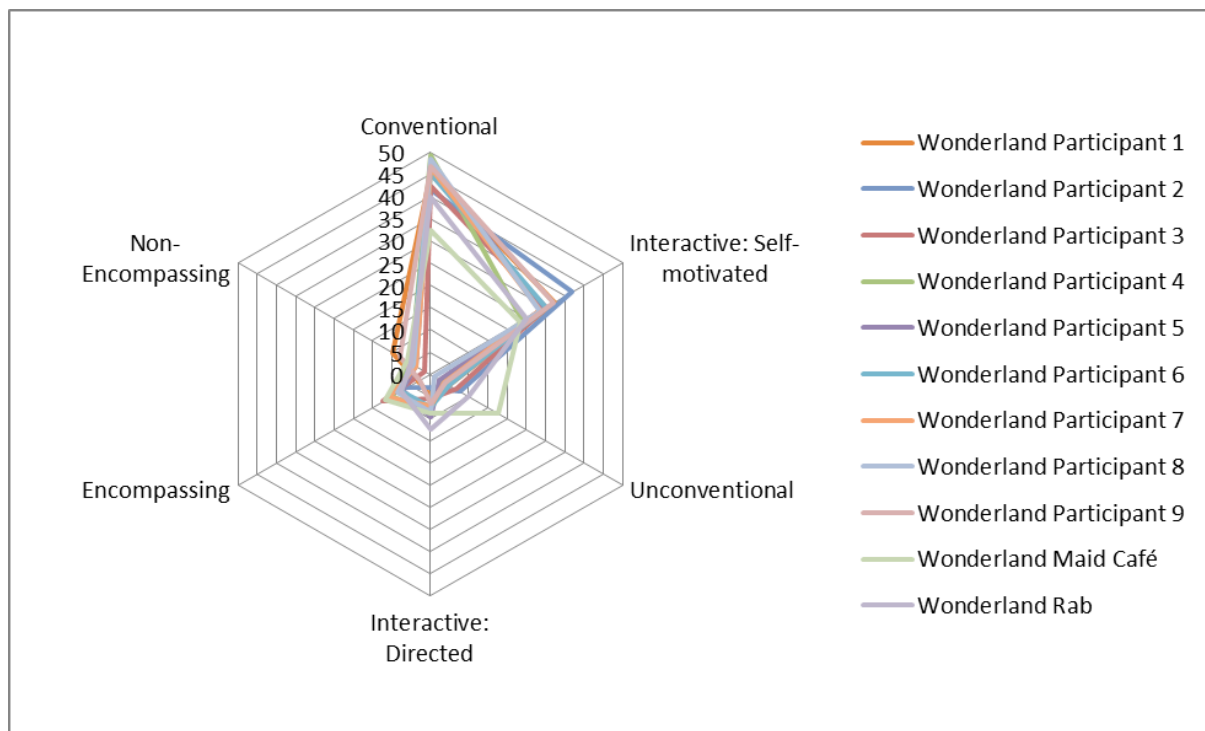


Figure 8.1 Relative proportions of elements conveying the notion of fiction and reality in the various stages of the performance *Wonderland*. The line between Encompassing and Interactive: Directed suggests the division between real elements (top right) and Fictional elements (bottom left).

## 9. Final Conclusions

Thinking about the understanding of everyday reality as the recognition of a set of familiar conventions can be used to explain the manner by which the concepts of fiction and reality as perceptibly distinct classifications can become capable of blending together through a piece of artistic work that utilises familiar and non-familiar conventions together as part of the whole experience. Recognition of the way the conventions of everyday reality are utilised alongside novel conventions in immersive works allows the creation of an analytical framework that engages with these particular elements. This proposed method of analysing perceived fictional elements within a piece of immersive theatre has been tested and findings reveal it can produce relevant and unbiased points of engagement that can be used in the development of pieces of immersive work.

Dissimulation is a case-specific act but generally involves replacing perceptibly fictional elements or events that imply conventions that are unfamiliar from everyday reality with elements or events that imply familiar conventions. Dissimulative strategies also can be readily appropriated from existing pieces of work and, in both cases described above, should lead to a piece of work more completely resembling everyday reality. It would be entirely possible for a piece of work to be completely dissimulated however such a piece of work may not be recognised or read as a work of artistic intent. Complete dissimulation is undoubtedly ethically dubious however it has been acknowledged that, with respect to the perception experience of a partly dissimulated piece of work, in general, the pre-liminal

stage sufficiently indicates to the participant that the subsequent events that they experience are not to be considered as being part of everyday reality.

In terms of the creation of immersive pieces of work, it is proposed that retroscripting and char/actor augmentation are two ways that a script might encourage sustainable naturalistic performance through improvisation whilst also providing sufficient structure to convey a particular narrative. It is suggested that, whilst retroscripting and char/actor augmentation allows performers to prepare relatively quickly for a piece of work, reducing rehearsal times, there are key points of consideration in relation to the links between the character and actor in the char/actor complex. The script for Wonderland has shown that retroscripting and char/actor augmentation can be applied successfully in a larger piece that utilises multiple narrative strands.

It is suggested that further application and exploration of the techniques and thinking described in this study are practicable and present a useful way for practitioners to consider and develop new pieces of immersive work.

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A Masquerade Dance of Liars:  
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VOLUME III of III





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## **Appendix I: Analyses of Existing Work**

# 2 Free - Ansuman Biswas (2011)

## Pre-liminal Stage

### **Seeing publicity about the performance**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

### **Buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Remembering ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Travelling to the event**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Arriving at and entering the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Handing over the ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Waiting in the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of taking being asked to take my shoes and socks off**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being given a lantern and a sand timer**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being told about that the gong will ring when you have five minutes**

Encompassing

Unconventional

**The act of being shown what the gong will sound like**

Encompassing

Conventional (in that somebody ringing a gong is a convention experienced in everyday reality)

**The act of being told about the sign on the door**

Expositional

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of being told to go and explore**

Encompassing

Conventional

# Liminal Stage

## **The act of entering the first room**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

## **The setting of the room with the chair the other door and the sign**

Unconventional

## **The act of sitting in the chair**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

## **The act of reading sign on the door**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

## **The information conveyed through the sign**

Encompassing

Unconventional

## **The act of opening the door**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## **The act of entering the inner room**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The setting of the inner room**

Unconventional (it was effectively a black box))

### **The act of seeing the human form**

Conventional

Encompassing (because of the apparent lack of 4<sup>th</sup> wall)

### **The act of realising that the human form was bound**

Conventional (if you saw a bound up person in another scenario you would not think 'this is a fiction' it is the context not the event itself)

Encompassing (because of lack of 4<sup>th</sup> wall)

### **The act of realising that the human form was naked**

Conventional (if you saw a naked person in another scenario you would not think 'this is a fiction' – it is the context not the event itself)

Encompassing (because of lack of 4<sup>th</sup> wall)

### **The act of closing the door**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (the first sign mentioned about closing the door behind you)

### **The act of reading the sign**

Interactive: Directed (The first sign mentioned the second sign)

Conventional

**The information on the sign telling you to 'Remove all your clothes and when you have done that, you may feel free to unbind the other person in the room '**

Unconventional

Encompassing (The sign was written in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person)



**The act of removing all my clothes**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional (It is the combination of context and action that makes this event unconventional)

**The act of unbinding the man**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of him singing at me (but never talking)**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of him taking the lantern off me**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of him lowering the lantern so I could see his legs were bound**

Unconventional (It drew attention to the need to do this for the performance to continue)

Encompassing

The act of him leaning on me

Interactive: Directed

Unconventional (If this occurred in everyday reality then one would assume it was part of a trust game and not conventional behaviour)

**The act of me supporting him**

Interactive: Directed

Unconventional (If this occurred in everyday reality then one would assume it was part of a trust game and not conventional behaviour)

### **The act of him pulling back the curtain to reveal the shower**

Unconventional

Encompassing

### **The act of entering the shower**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (One of the interesting elements of this performance was how you were directed through it without a single word)

### **The act of being washed**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (I didn't instigate this action)

### **The act of being dried**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (I didn't instigate this action)

### **The act of having oil rubbed on my body**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (I didn't instigate this action)

### **The act of being embraced by the man**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (I didn't instigate this action)

## **Post-liminal Stage**

(The ringing of the gong was chosen as the marker that began the post-liminal stage because of the awareness this brought of the end of the performance – that one would encounter no

more following this point. One could argue that the act of dressing was an act created specifically by the performance however, I felt that in this act I was preparing in relation to the 'outside world' as opposed to the liminal world. At this point it felt like the worlds had separated again – he went his way and I went mine)

**The act of the gong ringing**

Unconventional (as it drew attention to the durational aspect of the performance)

Encompassing

**The act of the man going and kneeling down as if in prayer**

Unconventional (because it was only prompted by an element of the performance)

Non-encompassing (the man no longer paid attention to you)

**The act of putting my clothes back on**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of leaving the inner room**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of leaving the outer room**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of putting my shoes back on and talking to the usher**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# *A Little Piece of a Beautiful Thing* - Barnaby Stone (2011)

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

### **Seeing publicity about the performance**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

### **Buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Remembering ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Travelling to the event**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Arriving at and entering the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Handing over the ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Waiting in the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The act of waiting outside the room**

Interactive: Directed

Unconventional

### **The act of being told not to cross the white line**

Encompassing

Conventional

## **Liminal Stage**

### **The act of entering the room**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

### **The act of speaking to Barnaby Stone**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

### **The act of him asking my name**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

### **The set: Bare room with tools in. A large beam and plaques of wood around the wall**

Unconventional

**The act of him telling me about the history of the beam**

Conventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of watching him put on a wood-working apron**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of him asking me to pick a peg**

Interactive: Directed

Unconventional

**The act of him switching on the spotlight**

Non-encompassing

Unconventional (The spotlight was there to cast his shadow onto the wall as opposed to provide light to help him work)

**The act of watching the shadow**

Non-encompassing

Unconventional

**The act of him hammering the peg in**

Conventional

Encompassing (it was the peg that I had chosen)

**The act of him sanding it down in stages**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of watching him saw the end off the beam**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of being told to cross the line to come and look at the sawn off end of the beam**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of having him explain that the pegs represented conversations that gradually faded**

Encompassing

Unconventional (due to the conveyed symbolism)

Expositional

**The act of having him break the wood in two and inset one half into an envelope for me**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of having him place his half in the line around the edge of the room**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of being shown the other pieces of wood**

Encompassing

Unconventional

## **Post-liminal Stage**

### **The act of leaving the room**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## ***Indiscreet* - Deborah Pearson (2011)**

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

### **The act of waiting on a chair**

Unconventional (This was clearly linked to the performance)

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of being made to wait longer than initially thought**

Unconventional (This was clearly linked to the performance)

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of being escorted to the kitchen**

Unconventional (this act clearly linked to the performance)

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of being seated in the kitchen**

Unconventional (This was clearly linked to the performance)

Interactive: Directed



**The act of being told that I would know when it had finished**

Unconventional (This was clearly linked to the performance)

Encompassing

## **Liminal Stage**

**The act of overhearing the story about the lovers' relationship over time**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of the speakers being drowned out by children**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of the speakers being interrupted by other participants asking for directions**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of hearing the speakers talk about a ship in a bottle in a box in a big, yellow, industrial kitchen**

Unconventional (Because the kitchen that they were talking about wasn't the kitchen I was sitting in)

Encompassing

**The act of hearing the speakers walking off**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of looking in the box in the kitchen**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## **Post-liminal Stage**

**The act of leaving through the doorway at the end of the kitchen into the garden area**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## *Money – Shunt (2010)*

### **Pre-liminal Stage**

**The act of buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

Clearly this act set up the expectation that on the date and time stated on the ticket one will be engaging with a theatrical performance – there is no attempt to disguise the fact that this is not a performance.

**The act of walking into the venue**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed (Due to allocated time and venue of performance)

Whilst the venue itself made use of a warehouse there were the conventional ticket takers, conveniences and entrance that one would associate with a theatre or other traditionally theatrical space.

**The act of handing over a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This exchange symbolises the entrance into the theatre and is the mutual acknowledgement that an exclusive performance of limited capacity will occur in the immediate future.

### **The act of seeing the large performance space**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

The set for Money (an extravagant creation insinuating Victorian machinery) was set up at the end of the warehouse some distance from the bar / holding area for participants. The seating was positioned in such a way that meant that participants were sitting facing the set drawing a line between the set and the audience and positioning the audience as spectators and thereby acknowledging the artificiality of the situation.

### **The act of watching the performers come out**

Unconventional

Encompassing (They were facing the audience)

The performers began to exit the machine and walk or climb around the outside of the space implying that this was their space that the audience were entering rather than a shared space. Again the performers were set at a distance from the audience and did not interact with participants emphasising this point – the performers status was raised by the act of setting up an observing mass.

### **Costumes**

Unconventional

Performers were dressed in a manner that differentiated them from the audience thereby highlighting the difference between participants and performers and through this acknowledging the artificiality of the production.

### **The act of being invited into the machine en mass**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

By moving the audience en mass the performance disregarded the individual, removing their freedom of choice and implicitly highlighted the role of the participant as observer as opposed to participant – that this was a show for the audience as a whole rather than one where each individual would experience something particularly different.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **The Set**

Unconventional

### **The act of standing in the room**

Unconventional

Encompassing

### **The act of having the lights go out**

Unconventional

Encompassing

The experience of being plunged into darkness is extremely real in a physical sense and, whilst it is clear that the act is motivated by the performance, this does not change the experience itself. It also raises the real response – what will happen next? Given that the participants are now in the performance space, one might anticipate some form of interaction based upon the act of lowering the participants' collective status by effectively making them blind.

### **The act of the lights coming back on**

Unconventional

Encompassing

This is a real physical experience that reflects the convention experience in everyday reality, however it was clearly motivated by a need of the performance.

### **The act of noticing that one is stood in a different room without having moved**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Clearly this experience does not link to a commonly understood convention and yet there is a physical reality to this event which is undeniably real. In this way this act resembled a magic trick where one is aware of the contrived nature of the act but is simultaneously bewildered by the degree to which it feels physically real.

### **The act of sitting down**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This emphasised the role of the audience as observers of the performance, drawing a relatively clear line between the liminal space of the performance and the non-liminal space occupied by the audience. The 4<sup>th</sup> wall was not directly specified and there was some limited acknowledgement of the audience as spectators however little participation occurred or was asked for.

### **The act of listening to actors talk in an abstract and cryptic manner**

Unconventional

Encompassing (participants were recognised within the space)

The dialogue itself was relatively abstract referring to the abstract liminal world of the performance as opposed to world recognised as everyday reality. This highlighted the

contrived nature of the experience, placing participants in a lower-status position due to the lack of understanding regarding the subject and meaning of the conversation.

### **The act of going upstairs**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This act movement was a physically real experience through a clearly fictional space and was in no way different from the convention experience in everyday reality. The act was motivated by the direction of the ushers and performers and not as a free act of choice by the participants. This therefore reinforced the element of control and the positioning of participants as observers to the performance.

### **The act of being given a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This act of being given and drinking a glass of sparkling wine was a physically real experience which, on the whole resembled the convention experienced in everyday reality. It should be acknowledged that drinks at bars are given away less often than they are sold and this difference suggests some kind of authorship in terms of the preparation of the correct number of drinks and the motive behind this.

### **The act watching balls dropped from a net onto the glass top**

Unconventional

Encompassing (In a spatial sense)

This was real in a physical sense, however the non-conventional presence of the glass floor and the contrived nature of the balls being collected into the net in the first place suggest a degree of authorship and purpose.

### **The act of throwing the balls at one another**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This spontaneous act occurred between participants and incorporated both a physically real and interactive element into this performance along with allowing freedom of choice for participants to decide whether to engage in this act or not and the physical need to dodge the flying balls. Interestingly, the act of creating a game within a clearly fictional scenario actually felt more real rather than less real.

### **The act of watching actors perform silently through the glass on different levels**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

Again, the distance between the audience and the performers and the silent differentiation of the performance area created by the performer's movements (when they were on the same level as ourselves) or the glass itself acknowledged a difference between the performer and participant that reinforced the act of performance.

### **The act of going back downstairs**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This act movement was a physically real experience through a clearly fictional space and was in no way different from the convention experience in everyday reality. The act was motivated by the direction of the ushers and performers and not as a free act of choice by the participants. This therefore reinforced the element of control and the positioning of participants as observers to the performance.

### **The act of sitting in the 'House of Commons'**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

This emphasised the role of the audience as observers of the performance, drawing a relatively clear line between the liminal space of the performance and the non-liminal space

occupied by the audience. The 4<sup>th</sup> wall was not directly specified and there was some limited acknowledgement of the audience as spectators however little participation occurred or was asked for.

### **The act of listening to more abstract dialogue**

Unconventional

Encompassing

This further reference to the liminal world of the performance as opposed to world recognised as everyday reality highlighted the contrived nature of the experience for the audience, placing them in a lower-status position due to the lack of understanding regarding the subject and meaning of the conversation.

### **The act of leaving the performance space**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This act of leaving the performance space into the bar area confirmed the fact that a performance had been experienced, strictly dividing the performance reality from everyday reality. However the act of moving itself is inherently real in a physical sense.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

### **The act of leaving the larger space**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



# *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* - Secret Cinema (2010)

## Pre-liminal Stage

### **Buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

Clearly this act set up the expectation that on the date and time stated on the ticket one will be engaging with a theatrical / cinematic performance – there is no attempt to disguise the fact that this is not a performance. The ticket was sent via email along with cryptic clues regarding the nature of the performance. The venue was not revealed.

### **Being given clues about the film being shown**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

The giving of clues is a convention associated with power, or withheld information and with a difference in status. It does not necessarily infer fiction for example, one could get clues to the nature of their birthday present, it does, however, infer a secret. Secrets are not inherently non-fictional (as secret could be a lie for example) but they purport to reveal an unknown truth about something and therefore, fact or fictional the information that they are conveying is presented as fact as a fictional secret is meaningless.

### **Being asked to learn the words to the sound of silence**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This is a real act motivated by a direct command as part of a fictional piece of performance. It is an act of performance in and of itself linked to the real convention of learning a song.

### **Being sent an email from The New Wellbeing Foundation**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

(Email attached on next page)

This email purporting to be from The Wellbeing Foundation is written in the style of a relative informal letter from a company below is an analysis of the conventions contained with the letter: These will be gauged against the normal conventions of letter writing.

### **Being sent as an email**

Conventional

Encompassing

Whilst the formatting into electronic form does not essentially undermine the convention of message sending itself, it does make delivery more easy and this way reduces the gravitas of the message itself. The electronic version also has no true original physical form (even if printed out) and therefore is more easily changed or copied without being obvious to the reader. The inherent understanding of this means that the reader must approach the information in the letter with more cynicism and be more inclined to disbelieve the assertions made within.

### **Being decorated with Secret Cinema, The Guardian and Microsoft Windows Phone logos and adverts**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Non-encompassing

Clearly this undermines the sense of The New Wellbeing Foundation letter as having non-fictional intent, reminding the audience member about the performance that this letter relates to.

### **Inclusion of the address**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

This specifically links to the convention of letter writing and there for enhances the sensation that this is a real letter.

### **Direct greeting**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **Details of admission times and date**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

### **Request to replace your Facebook picture with a picture of a yoga position**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

This request is unconventional and is not one that is likely to be made by a genuine health organisation, though one can image that more dubious organisations may try to take over an individual's personality by asking them to perform acts such as this. In the case of this performance it also reminds one of the multi-media nature of the event emphasising the fictional motivation of this act.

### **Being asked to call a number for details of the meeting point**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

There is a physical reality to this act of dialling the telephone and listening to the message on the other end which outlines to location for the rendezvous. The fact that the call is made from a real location unlinked to the performance itself will make this act feel more real.

**Being asked to 'Please wear warm clothes and dress as yourself. Bring one pair of slippers, dressing gown, a bag for your shoes'**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

The notion of preparation conveys the idea that the person asking one to prepare understands the scenario that will unfold and therefore that the scenario is of a specific type. This does not inherently imply fictionality however and doesn't necessarily sit outside conventions experienced in everyday reality – one is often asked to prepare for various situations in particular ways (wear sturdy footwear, dress smart-casual) however, linked with the notion of secrecy the implied scenario becomes more clearly a result of an act of authorship. One must prepare for the constructed scenario rather than link one's attire and behaviour with the expected conventions of the scenario one is entering.

**Being asked to bring 'a toothbrush, a first class stamp and a photograph of someone or something you love'**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

Some of these requests sit outside the expected conventions of everyday reality. Being asked to bring a toothbrush is utterly conventional, however one is rarely asked to bring a stamp or a photo of 'someone or something you love' – one might choose to bring a photo such as this but would rarely be asked to. These two actions infer various tasks occurring within the performance and because of the nature of control linked to being requested to undertake these action one is being manipulated by a specific act of authorship specifically for the purposes of this event.

**Being asked to bring cash for prescription medication and food from the foundation's canteen**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

This implies the fictitious convention within the performance of being served alcoholic beverages in paper bags similar to those in which one receives prescribed medicines from a pharmacy. Because one is aware that one is not being prescribed medicine then the act of pretending to imbibe medicine is made apparent thereby making the participant complicit in the fictional make-believe.

**Being told that you will be discharged before midnight**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

This appropriation of medical language to describe the theatrical convention of the show's finishing time, serves to highlight the make-believe of the situation. It also goes against conventions observed in the medical profession because patients would not be discharged this late in the evening.

**Being asked to register before the performance on The New Wellbeing Foundation's Website**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This act in itself implies direction – one is not undertaking this act on one's own volition – you are being asked to register and this implies control which implies authorship which implies that this act forms part of an act of making believe. One could imagine a more effective scenario where participants were sent a mental health questionnaire which they filled in and following the result their information was forwarded The New Wellbeing Foundation's website. This way participants are not just registering with the fictional foundation but being absorbed into the fiction through their own actions – freedom of choice is implied and because of this the progression to this later stage appears to occur because of

the answers given. The implied other state of 'not being forwarded onto the foundation' reinforcing the choice that has occurred, implying freedom which removes the sense of authorship.

**Being told not to disclose any part of the programme until November 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

Again this links to the sensation of control which implies repetition and authorship – the programme would not have to remain a secret if it were a one off. The fact that it isn't, insinuates that this is a performance and suggests that the authors of the performance (Secret Cinema) need to control information to be able to do what they do. Everyday reality, of course, does not repeat itself and therefore the notion of repetition goes against this perceived convention.

**Being asked to meet at Ladbroke Grove subway station at 18.15**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This convention in itself does not go against convention, however when linked to the understanding that one is to be attending a performance or kinds then the time, date and location given suggests the point where the threshold will be crossed into the liminal stage of the piece. This 'entry point' into the performance is a commonly recognised convention of theatrical performance.

**Being asked to wear your dressing gown**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

This directed unconventional act is clearly performed for the benefit of the fictional performance as opposed to a self-motivated act by the participant.

### **Arriving at the station**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This is a self-motivated conventional act performed with the intention of engaging with the performance – the participant is aware of the performance that they are going to see.

### **Being given directions to the venue**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This is a directed conventional act with the implied common knowledge of the performance.

### **Walking to the venue**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (They supplied the directions but it was my choice and relied upon my ability to follow the map)

Conventional act with the purpose of aim of getting to the venue where the performance was being held.

### **Accessing the venue**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Linked to a performance convention of entering the venue (liminal stage).

### **Being given a wristband**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

(Linked to performance convention of having ticket). Arrival at the venue seemed to warrant the receiving of the wristband – the ticket number held on an email on my phone was not requested and therefore I didn't have to show my ticket to get in.

### **Being given a surgical gown**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

Appropriated the convention of wearing medical clothing in hospital however this occurred outside which in an unconventional place to undertake this act. Act simultaneously directed and self-motivated: I wanted to wear the gown to engage with the performance. They wanted me to wear the gown for the sake of the performance.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Walking into the hospital**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed (Conventional physical act of walking into a building)

Unconventional setting clearly appropriated for the use of the performance (this wasn't a real working hospital).

### **Seeing other participants**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

Constantly seeing other participants who are behaving like participants and not displaying the behavioural conventions related to the place and subject of the performance and therefore not consistent with the liminal world reminds the participants that they are part of a performance reinforcing this fact.

### **Buying a 'prescription'**

Unconventional (Performance Aware – because it was for a drink and not a real prescription)

Interactive: Self-motivated



One received a prescription card that then needed to be taken elsewhere – one was also aware that one would use it to buy a drink and not medicine.

### **Using the prescription to buy drinks**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Seeing performers and participants sitting around in a circle talking**

Conventional (Appropriated convention recognisable from One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest)ing

Non-encompassing (Therefore one was cast as a spectator on what was happening.)

### **Watching performers start leaping around shouting and playing music**

Non-encompassing

Unconventional – (linked to a performance convention) – people do not normally start singing in public apart from as part of a performance. (Did not appropriate performance conventions).

Watching somebody play the violin.

Unconventional – (in relation to situation – doubly so as didn't seem to fit with conventions of this performance space – just somebody playing a violin)

Non-encompassing

### **Watching somebody dance around in a chicken head**

Unconventional (didn't fit with performance reality or everyday reality)

Non-encompassing

The opportunity to don chicken head and join in was available but one felt like one was breaking the codes of the performance reality even though this was supplied as part of that reality. In the same way I didn't wouldn't want to don a chicken head and dance about in everyday reality, I felt I didn't want to here.

### **Having my head stroked by a performer**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **Going to look at the postcards**

Encompassing

Unconventional (in that postcards from patients would not normally be displayed for others to see)

### **Noticing the Windows Phone product placement**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Non-encompassing

### **Crawling into a hole in the wall that went nowhere**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Unconventional (In that, one crawled into the hole for the sake of crawling into the hole and not for any other reason)

### **Watching people be interviewed**

Non-encompassing (In that we couldn't get in to experience this aspect of the performance)

Unconventional (In that one wouldn't normally be allowed to watch a psychological interview take place)

This lack of ability to become involved but ability to view what was going on meant that one was placed in the position of an observer rather than a participant.

### **Trying to get into the experimental surgery ward**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Unconventional (In the sense that one was aware that the experimental surgery wards aren't really present in hospitals today but the notion of a ward was an appropriated convention)

### **Finding it closed**

Encompassing (In that if something is closed then it means one cannot enter which infers a relation with the observer)

Conventional (the convention of something being closed is familiar in everyday reality – was frustrating in this sense because you felt like you were missing out – that the act of being closed was part of some organisational reality and not linked to the reality of the performance)

### **Having the doors shut**

Encompassing

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

One became aware of the other participants and your role within the performance as a mass spectator rather than an individual participant.

### **Having the room fill with smoke**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

### **Having the Sound of Silence play over the tannoy**

Unconventional

Encompassing (Because of relevance of this song set up before)

### **Singing along to the sound of silence**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Unconventional (Performance Aware due to pre-meditated nature of this act)

## **Post-liminal Stage**

### **Being shown into our seats**

Interactive: Directed

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

### **Watching 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional (The actual act of watching a film is a commonly occurring convention in everyday reality)

### **Being interrupted part-way though by characters from the film**

Unconventional (Performance Aware. Also people don't normally interrupt films in this way)

Encompassing

(This act served to make one draw connections between the film and the performance thereby highlighting the differences and reminding one that not only wasn't this reality but it also wasn't an external expression of universe of the film. It was a non-perfect copy)

### **The act of film ending**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Non-encompassing

### **Leaving**

Interactive: Directed (In that one didn't have the choice of staying)

Conventional

# ***Our 13<sup>th</sup> Hour – Punchdrunk (2010)***

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

**The act of being told to go to the bar by Colin Marsh**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

**The act of finding the bar**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of getting my name on the list**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

**The act of waiting in the bar**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of speaking with the people organising the event**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of having my name called**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

### **The act of walking to the car**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

## **Liminal Stage**

### **Act of getting into a car with strangers**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This clearly is not an act that one undertakes regularly in everyday reality and requires a large degree of trust on behalf of the passengers. I have actually done this in real life before and the real feeling of nervousness was actually similar to those experiences though, in the case of this performance, there was also an underlying sense of safety accompanying this. I would say that the sense of nervousness actually arose from the sense of wondering what to expect rather than any real sense of danger though one was aware of the trust that one was placing in the hands of the driver. In this sense this act does not sit outside the field of everyday experience but does is extremely uncommon – if this was not linked with the underlying knowledge that it is a performance (which is definitely possible) then it may be taken at face value, however most participants would link the act of getting into the car with the title of the piece and this would raise the perceived notion of authorship. Also the presence of the Stella Artois Black decal on the car would link to the reason that the participant was involved in the first place (participants had to buy a pint of Stella Artois Black to get the chance to win a ticket), however, the scenario might arise where a participant is accompanying a friend who won the tickets and had no knowledge of the initial promotion such as that scenario described by Miller (2010)

### **Set (Inside of the car)**

Conventional

### **Act of being driven**

Conventional (It was reminiscent of being in a taxi)

Encompassing

### **Without any knowledge destination or location**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Again, this is a possible but uncommon experience in everyday reality – normally destination are clearly stated before one sets off. An obvious exception is the notion of the mystery tour where one signs up for this experience of travel without understanding of where one is going. Similarly theatrical rides such as a ghost train make use of a sense of the unexpected to create unease with the participant. In this case the participant is secure in the knowledge of the destination but what will happen in between is unknown. The Night Chauffeur removes knowledge of both of these aspects (journey and destination) reducing the feeling of security further though, because the cars are returning one might expect the journey to be circular, however, this is by no means certain. Because the format is similar to that of a ghost train, I would suggest that this raises the sense of authorship and fabrication.

### **Act of being required to assist an apparently extremely ill man**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

On its own, this act would be completely justified in a real situation and whilst is not necessarily a common experience in everyday reality, given the correct circumstances this scenario could easily occur.

### **Act of listening to a story about a man putting his heart in a box**

Unconventional

Encompassing (It was more of a monologue than a conversation)

Expositional

This is clearly a fictional construct because the scenario itself would easily be recognised as impossible, however, in a metaphorical sense, of course, the notion of the heart could be said to mean anything. As a participant I didn't take this aspect of the story as a metaphor and therefore assumed that this was fictional. The manner by which this was performed also led me to believe that it was written because of the lack of glitches in the delivery. It is my memory that this section was accompanied by dramatic music which also added to the sense of performance as opposed to the scenario actually happening.

### **The Act of being asked to deliver a box to a stranger waiting on a street corner**

Conventional (Because it is clearly feasible that one might be asked to this in everyday reality – the man in the car knew the woman so she was not a complete stranger)

Interactive: Directed

This act on its own links to familiar conventions in everyday reality – the act of delivering a parcel to a stranger, and is therefore in itself utterly believable, however the context within which this act occurred made this act feel like it was a fabricated aspect of this performance.

### **The Act of delivering a box to a stranger waiting on a street corner**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This act on its own links to familiar conventions in everyday reality – the act of delivering a parcel to a stranger, and is therefore in itself utterly believable, however the context within which this act occurred made this act feel like it was a fabricated aspect of this performance. Certainly, the act of getting out of the car full of strangers and delivering what is expected to be a man's heart to a stranger standing on a street corner is reminiscent of a scene from a film rather than something that would occur in everyday reality. The act of leaving the car on my own placed some responsibility on me in relation to how I should or might act and brought in a sense of choice that was not present in the initial parts of this piece. This sense of freedom of choice increased the perceived variability in what might happen and in this sense felt more like a real act rather than one that was part of the fictional construct.



### **The Act of being left behind by a car**

Unconventional (People don't normally ask you to deliver something and then drive off)

Encompassing

This event, though clearly unnerving, is not a particularly common experience in everyday reality and therefore was perceived as engineered dramatic act and not a real act of desertion. This was reinforced by the fact that I was still with a performer rather than being left completely on my own to make my own decisions.

### **The act of offering the package to Bridget**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The Act of Bridget refusing to take the package so that I had to keep it**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

In many ways, this felt rather unnatural – in that it doesn't fit with normal conventions of behaviour and in some ways goes against the expected response when one attempts to hand over a package. It does not sit outside the range of possibility though just rather towards the edge.

### **The Act of being asked to walk with her**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

Again, this raised my awareness of the contrived nature of the performance given that this act sits on the edge of expected behavioural conventions. It certainly insinuates the performer's control of the situation and certainty of what might happen. There is a security in this act that insinuates control. The act of walking off with a strange person in an area I

didn't know again, insinuates this mutually understood notion that there was a degree of safety within the performance.

### **The Act of being asked if I liked to play games**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Again, this behaviour sits on the edge of expected conventions. The question itself seemed unrelated to the situation and in this way contrived as part of the performance. My response was fairly muted in relation to this – I found it difficult to answer, perhaps because there was no clear context to the discussion – it was her (the performance's) agenda and didn't necessarily relate to the situation / scenario that we were engaged in.

### **The Act of being asked to chase her and chasing her**

Conventional (A fiction of its own by instigating a game which made the overall situation seem more real)

Interactive: Directed

This was the resolution of the question about games where it suddenly made sense why I was asked this. Conventionally this relates more to the behaviour of a child than that of an adult and therefore sits on the edge of expected behaviours between two adults. Having said that the physical act of chasing was extremely visceral – it was hard to catch Bridget up and it required a high level of exertion on my part. This exertion had a physical reality – emphasised by the fact that it appeared like she wasn't going to stop running which you might expect in a staged situation to get to the next bit of the conversation.

### **The Act of being asked if I was in love and what that felt like**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This required me to draw on my own experiences and, in this way engaged with the real act of recalling real memories from my past. Again, I was somewhat blocked by this question, finding it hard to respond, partially because I was taken by surprise by how personal a

question that was (which, sits outside the expected range of subjects for general conversation with other people). However this confusion was created by the very real conflict of whether to give a straight answer to Bridget because of the attraction I felt towards her at that moment – a part of me was convinced that this was a real situation.

### **The Act of being asked if man in the car was ok**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This sat happily within the behavioural conventions that one might expect when discussing a potentially dying man with his daughter. I found it much easier to respond to this question than some of the other questions that she asked. Perhaps because the answer required less consideration, perhaps because the answer was contained within the world of the performance as opposed to drawn in from outside.

### **The Act of her asking for the box**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This was clearly supposed to symbolise Bridget's change of heart. In terms of the preceding conversation it made sense that she now was willing to take the box and whereas her initial rejection felt more contrived, this act felt more natural.

### **The Act of looking at the watch with 13 hours marked on it**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

The act of being shown the watch did not really go against convention – the fact that I was being shown a personal artefact felt in line with the personal level of the questions that I had been asked previously. Obviously the watch with the 13<sup>th</sup> hour marked on it felt contrived as it so clearly went against the conventional presentation of any watch and referenced numerous fictional works that have used the 13<sup>th</sup> hour to mark some supernatural occurrence.

### **The Act of being given the napkin**

Unconventional

Encompassing

The fact that Bridget didn't write on the napkin but had it pre-written in her pocket felt rather contrived. Also the clear connection with the brand that was being marketed drew a link to the reason for the performance as a marketing activity.

## **Post-liminal Stage**

### **The Act of being left on the street alone with only Bridget's directions to guide me**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed (I was left I didn't choose to be left)

Once Bridget had left, one became aware of the reality of the street and the need to take responsibility for one's actions. This sense of freedom of choice, of the need to make decisions and not have them made for you, of the need to take responsibility for oneself seemed to underpin this shift from performance to everyday reality – in the performance, you are freed of the need to make choices but now you have to do that and doubt creeps in. Of course, one is left by people all the time in everyday reality however one has not been driven around unknown streets, then left on a street corner with a stranger who has then asked you to chase her down another road. The notion of being left alone on a dark street without knowing where you are at all is extremely unfamiliar and yet this was the point where one re-engaged with everyday reality.

### **The Act of finding my way back to the Chamberlayne**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

The walk back to the Chamberlayne was actually a rather long way along a straight road and there was no indication that I was going in the right direction. The real sensation of doubt began to creep in and also the feeling that I had gotten lost which provoked further linked emotions. There was a physical and emotional reality to this act accompanied by my own sense of responsibility for my actions that I hadn't had when engaged in the performance.

# *Rendezvous-* Villanella and Hanneke Paauwe

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

### **Seeing publicity about the performance**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

### **Buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Remembering ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Travelling to the event**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Arriving at and entering the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Handing over the ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Waiting in the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of waiting in the attic area**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of going into the first room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being told to take my shoes off**

Unconventional (it pre-supposes a reason for doing so)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being led to the next room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of entering the room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being directed to climb into the coffin**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being asked to close my eyes and having my arms arranged across my chest**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of having my photo taken**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **The act of opening my eyes**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## **Liminal Stage**

This point was chosen as the beginning of the liminal stage because of the sensation of practicality and self-awareness that occurred in terms of having my photo taken. Up to this point the performance was aware of itself.

### **The act of hearing another person moving around in the room**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **The act of having the woman ask me about my life**

Conventional (Even though I was answering the questions as if I was dead, I was still responding in a genuine manner based upon my understanding of my own life)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The act of being asked about my achievements**

Conventional (Even though I was answering the questions as if I was dead, I was still responding in a genuine manner based upon my understanding of my own life)

Interactive: Self-motivated



**The act of being asked whether people would be sad about my death**

Conventional (Even though I was answering the questions as if I was dead, I was still responding in a genuine manner based upon my understanding of my own life)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being kissed on the forehead**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of having a feather placed on my chest**

Unconventional

Encompassing

## **Post-liminal Stage**

**The act of the other performer coming in and telling me to get out of the coffin**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of going back into the first room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being given a photo of myself in a coffin**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of putting my shoes back on**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of leaving the room**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

***The Pleasure of Being: Washing, Feeding,  
Holding* - Adrian Howells (2011)**

**Pre-liminal Stage**

**Seeing publicity about the performance**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

**Buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Remembering ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Travelling to the event**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Arriving at and entering the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Handing over the ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Waiting in the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being seated in a small curtained room**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being asked to read the guidance on the performance**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being asked if I understood the guidance**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being shown into the changing room**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being told to knock on the door when I was ready**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

# **Liminal Stage**

**The act of entering the changing area**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of getting undressed and putting my clothes I the basket**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of knocking on the door**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of the door being opened**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of being asked to 'come in'**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of entering the room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of Adrian introducing himself to me**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of explaining about locking the door**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of being told to disrobe**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being asked to test the bath water**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of getting into the bath**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being asked if the bath water was too hot**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (Because it required a response)

**The act of being told to close my eyes**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of having rose petals (I think) dropped on my face**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of being washed**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of being told to open my eyes**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being told to stand up**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being helped out of the bath**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being dried**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being given a glass of water**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of putting my robe back on**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of watching Adrian arrange the cushions and sitting down**

Unconventional (Act was aware of the task that was being undertaken as part of the subject of the performance – you were aware of the act of preparation that you were not originally)

Encompassing

**The act of being told to sit between his legs**

Unconventional (see above)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being embraced**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of being asked if I wanted some chocolate**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being fed white chocolate**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being told that this was the end of the performance**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

**The act of being released**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of 'coming to' for a moment**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of getting up**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of saying goodbye**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## **Post-liminal Stage**

**The act of leaving the room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of getting dressed**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of leaving the dressing room**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



# *They Only Come at Night: Visions - Slung* **Low (2009)**

## **Pre-liminal Stage**

### **Seeing publicity about the performance**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Encompassing

### **Buying a ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Remembering ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Travelling to the event**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Arriving at and entering the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Handing over the ticket**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

### **Waiting in the venue**

Unconventional (Performance aware)

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The act of being escorted to the car by a guide**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

## **Liminal Stage**

### **The act of getting into a car**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of the car speeding off into the car park leaving the guide behind (inferred)**

Unconventional

Encompassing

### **The act of being assigned a colour**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of being introduced to Milo**

Conventional (possible recognition of role within performance)

Interactive: Directed

### **The act of having the driver turn up the radio**

Conventional (Possible recognition of performance convention)

Non-encompassing

### **The act of having Glitch interfere with local radio**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of listening to the Glitch say: 'And in the place where the dogs licked the blood...'**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of having the driver trying to change the station**

Conventional (in terms of changing the radio station when there is something on that one doesn't want to listen to)

Non-encompassing

**The act of Glitch's voice speaking in different languages**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of hearing snatches of speeches from various tyrants**

Unconventional (The link to the real speeches may be apparent; however this would not normally occur in everyday reality)

Non-encompassing

**The act of hearing new reports of terrible disasters**

Unconventional (The reports themselves would be recognisable as real, the reason that these are being played is unconventional)

Non-encompassing

**The act of hearing dialogue from previous They Only Come at Night Shows**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of hearing the final prayers of the dying**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of hearing Quinn speaking directly to them**

Unconventional

Encompassing (The participant is not able to respond, however neither are they set up as an observer because the speech is directed at them)

**The act of having the driver turn the car radio off**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of having the radio turn itself back on again**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of the Glitch talking to them and telling the driver to run**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of having the driver check the radio**

Conventional (In that experience strange broadcasts on the radio would encourage you to check it)

Non-encompassing

**The act of having the driver apologise to them**

Conventional

Encompassing (The apology does not anticipate a reaction that will change the course of the performance)

**The act of having something heavy land on the car and begin to crawl around**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of the driver running off and being chased by the thing on the car**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of Quinn instructing participants to listen to him**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of Quinn acknowledging that Milo is with him**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of telling them to remember their colour, find the corresponding path and to put on the headphones**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of getting out of the car and standing in a circle of salt**

Interactive: Directed (The performance has done enough to make the participant want to stand in the salt-circle in case this is all real)

Unconventional

**The act of reading the words 'You will not die here' in salt**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of Quinn instructing participants what to do**

Interactive: Directed

Unconventional

**The act of hearing the driver begging for his life and screaming**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of being told not to run**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of listening to Quinn and Glitch talk to one another**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

Expositional

**The act of Glitch explaining about seers**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of listening to Glitch monologuing**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of observing the family tree**

Unconventional

Encompassing (It positions the participant as the observer)

Expositional

**The act of being aware that Glitch / Quinn can see them**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of Glitch explaining who he is**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of hearing Quinn talk to himself and then apologise for that**

Conventional

Encompassing

The act of hearing Quinn explaining that the vampires only hunt by hearing

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of hearing something stalking around the audience**

Conventional (In the physical sense of linking positional sound with movement)

Encompassing (In the sense that the sound is moving around the participant locating them at the centre of the action)

**The act of listening to Quinn monologue**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of hearing the same speeches repeated**

Unconventional (Both in terms of hearing the speeches at all and also hearing them repeated)

Non-encompassing

**The act of seeing non-human footprints along the path**

Unconventional

Encompassing (As it positions the participant as the person who finds the footprints)

**The act of listening to Glitch talk about fear**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**Alex**

**The act of seeing a head appear from a large cardboard box**

Unconventional (People don't generally hide in boxes)

Encompassing

**The act of being mistaken for Gatekeeper66**

Encompassing (Because the script does not insinuate that this will turn into a conversation)

Conventional

**The act of having Alex communicate on a phone whilst talking**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of being offered a ready salted crisp**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

**The act of having Alex explain about Quinn**

Encompassing

Expositional

Unconventional

**The act of having Alex go back to his cardboard box and pull out a motion tracker**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of having Alex explain about the situation itself**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of Alex inferring that they're setting up a perimeter**

Unconventional (Appropriates military convention)

Encompassing

**The act of Alex inferring that Gatekeeper66 has been killed**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing Alex talk about how he loves her**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing Alex explain how important they are**

Unconventional

Encompassing



**The act of seeing Alex produce a baseball bat from his box**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing him stick crisps to it**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing the motion tracker beeping**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of being told to go on without Alex**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of being handed three packets of crisps**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of hearing Alex acknowledge 'the calm before the cliché'**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

**The act of the participant being shoved out of the door**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of hearing Alex screaming**

Conventional

Encompassing

## **Ralph**

### **The act of rounding the corner**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

### **The act of seeing Ralph tying a tourniquet around his arm and wearing hockey pads on his elbows knees and chest**

Unconventional

Encompassing

### **The act of having Ralph scream 'Get away from me!'**

Encompassing

Conventional

### **The act of explain how he's fought off some vampires with exaggeration**

Unconventional

Encompassing

### **The act of seeing Ralph shoot the participant a look to see if they're fooled by his bravado**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **The act of having him explain about his clothes**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **The act of seeing Ralph become distracted by participant's outfit**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **The act of Ralph acknowledging lack of weapons**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of looking at his bloodied arm**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of Ralph gauging participant's reaction**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of him muttering 'Oh... oh god. Please don't. I don't even know why I'm - '**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Ralph collapsing against a wall**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Ralph being scared of participant**

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of him worrying about dying**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of him 'lame'ly throwing sachets of salt at participants feet'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of recognising participant isn't a vampire**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing a 'distant scream'**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of having Ralph tell participant to be quiet**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of picking himself back up**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of Ralph 'staring into the middle distance, seeing something [participant] is not'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of noting that they're on the other side of the car park**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing Ralph giving himself motivational coaching**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of having Ralph extend his hand**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of Ralph recoiling at the sight of blood**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of watching Ralph puff on an inhaler**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of looking through the exit**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Ralph making a pun about it being dead**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Ralph smacking his head**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of having him explain about Quinn**

Unconventional

Expositional

Encompassing

**The act of watching Ralph look at box full of stationary items**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of having Ralph stare at something over participants shoulder**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing howls and snarls**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of having Ralph explain about the voice in the back of his head**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of Ralph explaining that they're not just bait**

Encompassing

Unconventional

Expositional

**The act of having Ralph throw salt around participant and explain about the salt**

Encompassing

Unconventional

Expositional

**The act of having Ralph lead participant to the next exit**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of having Ralph explain about how he had to leave work**

Encompassing

Conventional

Expositional

**The act of having Ralph wince at things participant can't see**

Encompassing

Unconventional

**The act of Ralph putting down his box and drawing a line in the salt**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of Ralph deciding he will stay and fight**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of Ralph revealing the giant wooden salt grinder**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Ralph telling participant to go ahead whilst he waits**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of Ralph giving them his card**

Interactive

Conventional

**The act of Ralph asking participant to check in with him.**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of Ralph asking participant to go for a pint sometime.**

Interactive: Self-motivated (The participant is free to respond how they like)

Conventional

**The act of participant hearing noises (not specified) behind them.**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Ralph indicating that participant should go.**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of Ralph shoving participant through the door.**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of Ralph shouting about not being tough enough for this world**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing Ralph scream.**

Conventional

Encompassing (In a positional sense – Ralph is in close proximity to participant)

**Anne**

**The act of seeing Anne, dressed in bedraggled clothes with a shopping trolley, turn to face participant.**

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of being told to stop.**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of being asked if she can trust participant.**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of having Anne walk away.**

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of Anne acknowledging that she can hear him too.**

Encompassing

Unconventional

**The act of having Anne look them up and down**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of Anne noting that participant is not a vampire.**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of acknowledging that the vampires will be with them soon.**

Encompassing

Unconventional

**The act of Anne speaking to somebody who is not there.**

Conventional (In that some people do this in everyday reality)

Non-encompassing

**The act of being asked who they are then saying that it doesn't matter.**

Conventional

Encompassing



**The act of Anne getting a torch out of her pocket and pointing it at the wall.**

Conventional

Encompassing (The gesture is made to show the participant something).

**The act of seeing the wall covered in chalked writings.**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing the 'Night Family Tree'.**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing (In that the information does not appear to refer to the participant)

Expositional

**The act of seeing a map of where participant has walked and where they will go.**

Encompassing

Expositional

Unconventional (Draws attention to pre-planned element of the – highlights limited free choice)

**Act of being told about Anne's history.**

Conventional

Expositional

**Act of being told about UV, skin and sunlight**

Unconventional

Expositional

**Act of being told about Quinn**

Unconventional

Expositional

The act of Anne miming being in a straightjacket

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of being told that they're in danger**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of having it explain how sunlight kills the vampires**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of being asked if participant has read the reports about her**

Interactive: Self-motivated

Conventional

Expositional

**The act of having Anne explain that she 'didn't kill those youngsters'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of having her explain about Quinn**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of hearing Anne say she's going to kill you**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of realising that she's talking to somebody else**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of explaining about Glitch**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of explaining about herself and Quinn**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**The act of watching Anne pace out the length of the room and shine her torch on the walls**

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of watching her stalk the space as if chasing the glitch**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing the shadows of the vampires gathering behind her**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of her taking handfuls of salt out of her baggy pockets and throwing it over her shoulder**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of her shining the torch**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing the equation with sodium chloride on it on the wall**

Unconventional

Expositional

Encompassing

**The act of having her show participant the documents detailing her crime**

Expositional

Encompassing

Conventional

**The act of her putting on the cracked sunglasses**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of ushering the audience over to the exit**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of her giving the salt to the participant**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of having her explain that 'they'll still be looking for her'**

Encompassing

Expositional

Conventional

**The act of her looking at the approaching vampires, trembling**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of her bashing her salty hands on her head**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of pointing the torch at the participant and then turning it off**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of saying: 'Sunlight, salt and you. My three illuminations'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of her turning on the lamp on the trolley**

Encompassing

Unconventional

**The act of the UV lamp illuminating: 'In the place where the dogs licked the blood... the dogs will lick your blood too.'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of being shoved out of the door as the UV cuts**

Interactive: Directed

Conventional

**The act of hearing her final scream**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing 'shadows converge'**

Unconventional

Encompassing (As it positions the participant at the centre of the action)

**The act of meeting up with other participants**

Unconventional (This will probably act as a reminder of the nature of the performance)

Encompassing

**The act of being plunged into total darkness**

Conventional (In the sense that the presence and absence of light is one which is familiar in everyday reality)

Encompassing (Places the participant at the centre of the experience)

**The act of lights coming back on to reveal a car 'blasted with blood'**

Unconventional

Encompassing (Places the participant at the centre of the experience)

**The act of hearing dogs go silent**

Conventional (In the sense that sounds start and stop in everyday reality)

Non-encompassing

**The act of seeing a hand write 'YOU HERE DIE' on the car window**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing Quinn and having him quiet them**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of having Quinn pour salt around them then adding the letters N and T (to form the word NOT)**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of seeing the machine which Quinn is using to jam Glitch's transmission**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of watching Quinn fight the vampires**

Unconventional

Encompassing (In that the action occurs in the physical space around the participants)

**The act of Quinn explaining about 'only seeing shadows'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of having the sequence from the beginning repeated**

Unconventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of Quinn hitting a switch that illuminates the exit**

Unconventional

Encompassing

### **The act of being chased by Glitch through the exit**

Interactive: Self-motivated (participants are not being told to this – the decision will be their own, however there is only one real choice)

Unconventional

### **The act of arriving outside with the Guide**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## **Post-liminal Stage**

The post-liminal stage is not articulated in this script.

## **Appendix II: Analysis of Menagerie**



# Menagerie

## Pre-liminal Stage

**The act of being approached by a performer and asked if you want to experience the piece**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of listening to an explanation about the performance**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

**The act of signing up for the performance**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of suggesting a time to arrive for the performance**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of arriving at a particular time**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Act of knocking on a door and waiting for it to be opened.**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being greeted**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The act of being led up the stairs.**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being asked if they get scared easily.**

Unconventional (Performance Aware) – this event clearly made reference to the performance.

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Act of having a door opened**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Act of being told there is a letter from them at the end of the room.**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**The act of being directed into a dark room on their own.**

Unconventional (A guide would normally take the lead when entering an unfamiliar space)

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being wished 'good luck'.**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Act of having the door slammed behind them.**

Unconventional

Encompassing

# **Liminal Stage**

**Act of walking into and navigating through a dark room.**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Overall setting.**

Unconventional

**Designated route through the space**

Conventional

**Arrangement of artefacts in this space**

Unconventional (On the whole, one could image that this was a realistic space in this respect except for the placing of the pictures of dolls which were clearly there for the sake of the performance)

**Act of picking up and opening an envelope**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being surprised by performer sitting out of sight in a chair**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**Act of being asked by a stranger if they are afraid of dying**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Act of being asked to pick a card**

Conventional (Because this event makes reference to a performance convention that is familiar from everyday reality and does not directly refer to the larger meta-performance)

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being told a story about the performer undertaking the same act in a junkshop**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**Act of being asked to make a toast**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Act of listening to somebody talking about whether they are afraid of dying**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Act of be asked by a stranger if you have ever been in love**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Act of listening to a stranger talk about this**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**Act of be asked what 'the best sex they've ever had' is and responding to this**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Act of being asked what the most beautiful thing they've ever seen is**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Act of listening to a stranger talk about a video of a snail crawling over a dead soldier**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**Act of being asked what the saddest thing they know is and responding to this question**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Act of listening to a stranger talk about how their friends died in a car accident**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Act of listening to a stranger talk about this**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Act of listening to story about performer going into a junkshop and having their death predicted**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**Act of looking at death prediction**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being shown a set of blank cards from which they are supposed to have drawn their card from**

Unconventional

Encompassing

**Act of being asked to leave**

Conventional

Encompassing

## **Post-liminal Stage**

**Act of leaving through dark room**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**The act of walking through the door**

Conventionala

Interactive: Directed

**Act of being thanked by the 2<sup>nd</sup> performer**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Act of going back down the stairs**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Act of leaving through the door**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed



## **Appendix III: Analysis of Wonderland**



# Wonderland

## Participant 1 (Edith)

### Pre-liminal Stage

**The act of being told to meet at a bar at a certain time**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

### Liminal Stage

**The act of entering a bar**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**The act of buying a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of sitting down**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

These actions reflect the conventions commonly associate with the act of visiting a bar and therefore, whilst the participant will be aware of the fact that they are waiting to join some kind of experience there is no specific reason for them to link this fact directly to the people in the bar. They are probably more likely to expect somebody to turn up and join them

unless they have specific previous knowledge of this establishment. Non-participants in the bar will also provide a real backdrop to this scenario.

### **The act of overhearing dialogue from the bar**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

There is no reason why this should be taken to be part of the performance. The char/actors are performing to one another rather than to the participant – this breaks from the conventions commonly associated with theatre and therefore, I would suggest, would not be interpreted as such.

### **The act of being spoken to by member of staff and asked if they've been stood up**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This might be interpreted as being linked to the performance – it's likely be that the participant is constantly trying to work out what is going to happen though so this will probably be one event within several perceived possible events by the participant. It's likely that this event will appear to be more defined than other events and therefore it is suggested that there is a low-level of interaction between a participant and Edith which insinuates that she is just a friendly person. The act of her speaking to the participant will hopefully not be interpreted as part of a performance.

### **The act of being asked to come to a gig**

Unconventional (people rarely ask strangers to come with them)

Interactive: Self-motivated

This behaviour breaks the conventions associated with everyday reality and is likely to be the first indication that Edith is linked to the performance. Having said that the participant

will hopefully have received no further clues as to this fact so that there is still doubt in their mind. The build up to this act will supply further information to the participant about the contrived nature of this act. So, for example, if Edith asks two or three people before Participant 1 and Participant 1 observes this then they are less likely to think that this is contrived because it could quite easily have been the other people rather than Participant 1.

### **The act of being bought a shot**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

Once the threshold is crossed by Edith and her and the convention is set up that Participant 1 and Edith interact then this act in itself should in no way insinuate a higher act of authorship. This act relates to a reasonably familiar convention experienced in everyday reality which is the symbolic act of two people drinking the same drink.

### **The act of watching Edith start a fight with Lorenia**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

Depending on how this aspect of the performance is played will determine to what extent this act I construed as being pre-ordained. If the convention that Lorenia is Edith's sister is already established and that Participant 1 has previously observed them bickering then this will feel less contrived that if these conventions have not already been established.

### **The act of being led out of pub by Edith**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

It is possible that this act will be interpreted by Participant 1 as being part of the performance and a transitional element taking them to a new scene, hopefully, the length of

time Participant 1 has already spent in the bar and the scenario leading up to their leaving together will go some way to make this less obvious.

### **The act of being asked about music and talking about nights out**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Hopefully this discussion is justified by the scenario that has been created – the questions themselves relate to the participants everyday realities and therefore the responses themselves should be genuine adding a sense that this situation is real. The banal nature of these questions as well reflect the conventions of introductory discussion as recognised in everyday reality.

### **The act of having somebody explain about their family**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This delivery of backstory and personal history should feel genuine as it should be linked to the char/actor's own experiences with family and therefore, conversation has the ability to meander about as necessary. If this is integrated with the participants own experiences then there will be information conveyed by the participant that is drawn from their own personal experience and understood as having really happened.

### **The act of being asked if they've seen the band before**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Again, this question links to Participant 1's own experience and therefore the response should be a genuine one. They won't have seen the band because they haven't existed before this moment, however, the asking of this questions implies that they have.

### **The act of being taken backstage**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (participant has choice whether to go or not)

Given that Participant 1 has just experience the hubbub or a bar and watched a real gig – the act of going backstage should feel real – the performance aspect of the gig is self-justifying in relation to familiar conventions from everyday reality and need not be interpreted as part of a larger performance to explain why it is occurring. Hopefully Participant 1 will understand that Edith knows the band and the act of going backstage will not feel like something special – particularly considering that it is only a small venue.

### **The act of watching Edith spontaneously kiss BMs**

Conventional (Borderline – but this activity does happen in everyday reality)

Non-encompassing

### **The act of watching Edith give BMs pills**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

### **The act of watching Edith kiss Maxxy**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

This behaviour hopefully fits with Participant 1s perceived understanding of Edith's personality. It is behaviour on the extremity of convention but does not completely break convention to the extent that it will be automatically interpreted as contrived and fictional.

### **The act of listening to Maxxy and Edith talk**

Conventional

Encompassing

Because this is justified by the motivation to find out what Maxxxy is doing after the gig and should not appropriate recognisable theatrical convention (Maxxxy and Edith are not 'performing' to Participant 1) then there is no reason to suspect that it will be interpreted as an element of performance.

### **The act of being asked if they want to go to Rab's party now or wait**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This seeming handing-over of choice to Participant 1 should make it feel as if they have the ability to possibly step outside of the performance and therefore will add to the sensation that these events are contrived as part of a larger performance.

### **The act of being asked what they want to do with their life**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Whilst this conversation is seemingly more significant than banal conversation about hobbies, music etc. it is hopefully justified by the scenario that has been created – the questions themselves relate to the participants' everyday realities and therefore the responses themselves should be genuine, adding a sense that this situation is real.

### **The act of being told Edith is sleeping with Forty**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Given Edith's previous behaviour this should probably not be surprising – also, considering that Participant 1 is probably only aware of Forty in passing and he will have seemingly no significance to Participant 1 then the information will appear to have no obvious expositional purpose. The fact that it's Maxxxy telling Participant 1 this rather than Edith

links this act to Maxxy's possible desire to raise status over Edith – this motivation justifies the act and links Maxxy's act with familiar convention from everyday reality of the revealing of somebody else's secret as a means of raising the speaker's own status.

### **The act of being asked by Edith if they think she is a slut**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This act appears to be a justified as an attempt by Edith to excuse her behaviour or at least save face in relation to the revelation of personal and possibly damaging information.

### **The act of leaving the pub**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Hopefully, is this act is arranged in such a way that it appears to happen very naturally when people finish their drinks then it will not interpreted as being motivated by the desire to move the performance along.

### **The act of being asked again if they think Edith is a slut**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Again, this reinforces Edith's motivation to save face and therefore should be justified by this motivation.

### **The act of listening to Maxxy and Edith argue about philosophies on sex**

Conventional

Encompassing

Hopefully the participant will see the natural progression from Maxxy's original statement regarding Edith sleeping with Forty and therefore the transition into this more general discussion of life-philosophies should feel unprompted.

**The act of being asked if they've got a boyfriend / girlfriend and being asked if they're in love**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This response will directly link to their own experience and will therefore hopefully be considered as a genuine question relating to their relationship status – there is not clear motivation for this question in relation to a higher fiction for this act to be interpreted as such. Hopefully the directness of the 'are you in love' question will be cushioned somewhat by the preceding question – if it is delivered in a light-hearted manner then there is no reason why this should not be interpreted as a spontaneous question.

**The act of being asked what the craziest thing they've ever done is**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Given Participant 1's understanding of Edith's set of values and what interests her then this should not feel out of place – Edith is clearly trying to place herself in the highest status position because it is likely that she has got the craziest stories to tell.

**The act of being asked if they want to play a game**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This might feel somewhat contrived but will hopefully be cushioned by the discussion on doing 'crazy' things. Hopefully this will be interpreted as a spontaneous idea from Edith. The fact that she changes the rules of the game would insinuate this act of spontaneous creation.



### **The act of chasing Edith down the street**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Should be justified by the creation of the game – the physical act of running down the road has its own reality.

### **The act of walking into a dark flat with people inside**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This should feel somewhat strange but hopefully will be justified by Edith's response – she clearly understand this as something that has happened before and therefore this insinuated historical knowledge hopefully cushions the notion that the lights going out is linked to a specific theatrical convention.

### **The act of being left to their own devices**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

This break from anticipated conventions of performance because there is no longer the possibility of somebody behaving like an actor this means that it is likely that the participant will not know how to interpret the scenes within the flat. None of these break conventions of everyday reality to the extent that they should be interpreted as being part of a larger performance.

### **The act of crawling into Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This act is clearly contrived and one that is not experience in everyday reality but rather recalls conventions linked to play for example adventure playgrounds, obstacle courses or children's soft-play areas.

## Wonderland

### Participant 2 (Lorenia and Forty)

#### Pre-liminal Stage

**The act of being told to meet at a bar at a certain time**

Unconventional (performance aware)

Interactive: Directed

#### Liminal Stage

**The act of walking into a bar with nobody about**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

This is unusual and would probably make the participant think that they were in the wrong place or had come at the wrong time. Having checked these details, there would be no apparent justification as to why the bar is empty but open and therefore may be interpreted as being a contrived event that is linked to the performance.

### **The act of reading a sign that says 'Please Help Yourself'**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Again, this sits on the edges of conventions experience during everyday reality – there is the notion of the honesty box (which may in turn recall the scene in Clerks (Smith, 1994) however, I suspect that this would be interpreted as being a part of the performance. I would suspect that given the nature of the scenario and the fact that they are probably expecting to be tested, the participant will carry out this action whereas they might not in a different situation.

### **The act of hearing two people making love in the back**

Unconventional

Encompassing

Linked to the previous points – this act breaks conventions normally experienced in everyday reality and therefore would probably be interpreted as part of a performance. Of course, there is a physically real aspect to standing in an empty bar listening to the sound of two people making love but it is likely that this will be interpreted as 'performance reality' as opposed to 'everyday reality'.

### **The act of being told to help themselves**

Encompassing

Conventional

### **The act of helping themselves to a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

Again, this breaks commonly perceived conventions of everyday reality, however, the participant will be anticipating some aspect of a performance at this point and if they are basically ignored by Edith at this point, this will go some way to undermine their expectations of perceiving a performance which they will most likely expect to experience through interaction.

### **The act of being asked – ‘What the fuck are you doing?’**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

I would suggest this act is a destabilising force that undermines the strength of the view that this is a performance – the interaction has occurred that the participant is expecting, however the fact that they are the focus of this negative attention, would force them to take this seriously – because the consequences of not taking this seriously could inflame the situation.

### **The act of being asked if they’ve done bar work before and where that was**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

The fact that this question asks the participant to respond in a genuine manner based upon their life experience means that this will hopefully feel like a genuine conversation.

### **The act of chatting until the conversation peters out**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This ‘petering out’ is a convention commonly associated with conversation in everyday reality and breaks conventions associated with performance where the expectation is for more fluent, continuous speech.

### **The act of going to sit down on their own**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This breaks conventions associated with performance where the expectation is for actors to be performing for participants. Going to sit on your own in silence destabilises the certainty that this is a performance because it more closely reflects conventions recognisable from everyday reality.

### **The act of watching conversation at bar**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

This places the participant in the position of the voyeur making the decision (if it is taken) to listen in on the conversation to be one that they make on their own. The char/actors are not interested in the participant or in performing for the participant and therefore the participant is effectively listening in on a private conversation in exactly the same way that they might in everyday reality. This act therefore, more closely reflects everyday conventions as opposed to those associated with performance.

### **The act of having Lorenia apologise about Edith**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This act appears to be justified as a response to the argument that Participant 2 should have been privy to although the fact that Participant 2 is being spoken to directly might suggest that this is part of the performance.

### **The act of being asked if they've been sat there long and whether they've been stood up**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Again, this direct interaction might suggest that this is part of a performance, however, the act of questioning relating to the status of the participant suggests that Lorenia hasn't noticed them there which breaks the convention of performance because the performance needs the audience to exist. A non-awareness of the audience suggests a lack of performance. Again, the notion of them being stood up puts the emphasis on non-performance frameworks because it is not a self-referential statement in terms of the performance but acknowledges a bigger reality and the idea that people will have various reasons to be at this place at this time.

### **The act of being asked their name**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This will hopefully feel fairly justified in terms of being a natural development in the conversation – it also insinuates that Lorenia doesn't know their name and therefore acknowledges the unknown within the situation which implies random reality rather than constructed fiction.

### **The act of being asked by Lorenia if they mind if she joins them**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The act of being spoken to by Lorenia about general things**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Hopefully this discussion is justified by the scenario that has been created – the questions themselves relate to the participants everyday realities and therefore the responses

themselves should be genuine adding a sense that this situation is real. The banal nature of these questions as well reflect the conventions of introductory discussion as recognised in everyday reality.

**The act of listening and having input into conversation about life experiences**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of drinking a shot of Sambuca**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being asked if they are going to the next pub with Lorenia and Forty**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being asked their name again by Forty**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of getting their coats and standing outside whilst Forty locks up**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of engaging in conversation about crazy nights out**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being asked about 'making the most of life' by Forty**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of going to the toilet**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of coming back to find Lorenia and Forty kissing**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of being asked to come to the Party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of getting in a taxi with Forty and Lorenia**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of being left to their own devices at Rab's party**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**The act of being plunged into darkness**

Unconventional



Encompassing

**The act of having Forty ask them which of Edith and Lorenia do they think is 'better'**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of having Forty talk to them about Edith and Lorenia**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of having Forty bore them with the same old stories until they make an excuse to leave**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**The act of entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# Wonderland

## Participant 3 (Pick)

### Pre-liminal Stage

**The act of going to sit on a bench**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

### Liminal Stage

**The act of being approached and asked for a cigarette and lighter**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching Pick find one on the floor**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked what they're waiting for**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left on their own**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Noticing Pick walk past again**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Having Pick come past again and talk to them**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being offered a drink of Pick's beer**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked who they're waiting for**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they're gay**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being offered a beer**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Chatting to Pick**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked to come with Pick to buy her a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Going into a bar with Pick**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've been there before**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked to look for a scar on somebody's head**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being spoken to about morbid subject matter**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having Alice pointed out**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being told about Pick's history with Alice**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Listening to Pick talk to Alice**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being introduced to Participant 4**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Drinking a shot**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Leaving the bar (and probably chatting with Participant 4)**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Entering Rab's flat**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Sitting and chatting with Pick and Participant 4**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they're in love**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked why it feels more like an affliction than something good**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told about Pick's involvement with her friends' deaths**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked whether they think that everything is a compromise**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told about MX-33**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they think Pick's joking**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told to 'Fuck off' by Pick**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Watching Pick go to the bathroom**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being left on their own**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Having the lights go out**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# Wonderland

## Participant 4 (Alice)

### Pre-liminal Stage

**Being asked to wait in a toilet**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

Liminal Stage

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**Being asked to pass some toilet roll**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being peered at over the top of a cubicle**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked if they are a cottager**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being left alone in the toilets**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked why they are following Alice**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being accused of being a cottager**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked their name and address**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having the police called on them**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being re-approached by Alice**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked for a cigarette**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked why they're hanging around a toilet**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having Alice realise that they're not a cottager**

Conventional

Encompassing



**Being asked to buy Alice a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being told to meet in a bar in 20 minutes**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being told to buy Alice a Gin and Tonic**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being asked if they've spiked her**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having their drink turned down**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked what they do**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being taken to another bar**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having Pick pointed out to them**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **Sitting down and chatting with Pick and Participant 3**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Listening to Alice and Pick chat**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **Sitting with Pick whilst Alice goes to the bar and buys four shots**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Drinking the shot**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Leaving the bar**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Chatting with Participant 3**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Overhearing Alice and Pick chatting**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

### **Going into Rab's flat**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left by Alice to do what they like**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Sitting with Pick and Participant 3**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching people enter**

Conventional

Encompassing (Other participant's / Char/actors are entering a space already inhabited by Participant 4)

**Being left by Pick to do what they like**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told that Alice wants to speak to them**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Chatting with Alice whilst she's in the bath**

Conventional (If justified by Alice's previous behaviour)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching Pick jump in the bath with Alice**

Conventional (If justified by Pick's previous behaviour)

Non-encompassing

**Being kicked out of the bathroom**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Watching Pick get kicked out**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being at the party on their own**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being plunged into darkness**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Crawling into Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# Wonderland

## Participant 5 (Marionetta)

### Pre-liminal Stage

**Being told to stand on a street corner at a specific time**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Being made to wait for a long period of time**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Deciding to leave**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### Liminal Stage

**Being shouted at by Marionetta and told to 'come here'**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being asked who they're waiting for**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being told that somebody has just left**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked whether it was a date and whether they were late**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told that (s)he was very beautiful**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being offered a cigarette**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked what they're going to do now**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they want a hit of meth**

Conventional (Unusual but certainly not inherently unbelievable)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Talking to Marionetta about missing lovers**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left with the pipe and meth**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked to go to a pub with Marionetta**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Walking past Reverie's flower stall and chatting with Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Suggesting a pub to go to**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Leaving the pub because Marionetta knows somebody in there**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being taken to another pub by Marionetta**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being stopped by Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Going into the pub**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being bought a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Sitting and chatting with Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Listening to Reverie talk to Marionetta about someone that they don't know**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being asked if they know Kat**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having Marionetta explain who Kat and Rab are**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked what Marionetta's sold them**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having Reverie ask them if they're on a date with Marionetta**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked how long they've known Marionetta**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've got a cigarette**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



**Being shown the meth by Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (It is part of a conversation)

**Being drawn into the act of flushing it down the toilet**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching Reverie steal the Meth and leave**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (It occurs as part of a conversation)

**Being asked my Marionetta where Reverie's gone**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left on their own**

Conventional

Non-encompassing (This is an interesting point – is the performance still occurring or does it stop for a period of time?)

**Turning up to gig on their own**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching the band**

Conventional

Encompassing (The band are playing to the audience)

**Walking with somebody to Rab's**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being at party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching Kat force pills down Marionetta's throat**

Conventional (In that it doesn't defy believability that this might happen)

Non-encompassing

**Being plunged into darkness**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# Wonderland

## Participant 6 (Nekomi)

### Pre-liminal Stage

**Being asked to go and sit on a park bench**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

### Liminal Stage

**Finding somebody up stuck a tree**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having to find a way to get them down**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being offered a drink in return for helping**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having that drink bought from an off-licence**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being taken to a park to drink the beer**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being told a story about sliding down the roof of tents**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked for your number**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left alone in the park**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being called by somebody you've just met and asked to come to a bar**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by Chesh' friendly previously behaviour)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Sitting in a bar and talking with strangers**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told about the rule of three**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being told that Rab has left 10 strangers in his flat**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (It forms part of a larger conversation)

**Being asked for / offered drugs**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they have ever been in love**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Walking with another participant to the party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being at party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching Kat force pills down Marionetta's throat**

Conventional (In that it doesn't defy believability that this might happen)

Non-encompassing

**Being plunged into darkness**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# Wonderland

## Participant 7 (Maxxy)

### Liminal Stage

#### **Entering the café**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

#### **Finding somebody asleep on the sofa where you were supposed to sit**

Conventional (It doesn't break from possibility)

Encompassing

#### **Watching Maxxy wake / be woken up**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

#### **Being asked the time**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

#### **Being asked for a cigarette / light**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

#### **Being told that Maxxy thought that Participant 7 was her mum/dad**

Conventional (Because it relates to the admission of a mistake – she doesn't actually think they are her parent which would be clearly wrong)

Encompassing

**Being asked to watch Maxxy's bag**

Conventional (Though unusual behaviour I feel that this fits with Maxxy's other behaviour)

Interactive: Directed

**Being told about and invited to a gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told Maxxy's name**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked by Maxxy to help flyer a gig**

Conventional (Again hopefully this fits within Maxxy's perceived field of behaviour)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being pushed into a game – last one loses has to do a forfeit**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being involved in stealing clothes from a shop**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being invited for a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked about whether they've ever stolen anything before**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told about collective dreaming**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (It forms part of a conversation)

**Being left in a pub on your own**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Having to kill around 2 hours on their own**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Meeting somebody at a gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being bought a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told about somebody not getting any sleep**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being asked if they know anybody here**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



**Being told to 'go and make friends' and shown a group of people to talk to**

Conventional (Again, unusual behaviour but hopefully fits within Maxxy's anticipated field of behaviour)

Interactive: Directed

**Watching Maxxy perform in the band**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Unspecified behaviour – being left to do what you want**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Walking to a party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (It is formed by conversation and movement)

**Being at a party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being plunged into darkness**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# Wonderland

## Participant 8 (Kat)

### Liminal Stage

#### **Entering Pub**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

#### **Overhearing Marionetta and Kat talking**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

#### **Being asked if they heard the conversation**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

#### **Being asked if they've got a girlfriend**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

#### **Being ranted at about women**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

#### **Being apologised to**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Having Kat explain himself to them**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (This forms part of a longer conversation)

**Being asked what they're doing**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being offered a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked to watch Kat's bag**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being asked their name**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told that Kat will leave them alone**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they know where Kat can score some pills**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if Kat can buy them a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've heard about the Snakes and Flowers**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked what they're doing now**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left on their own**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Having to make their own way to the gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Bumping into Kat at the gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told to introduce themselves to Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being called a cunt by Reverie**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by her behaviour – impact could easily be reduced with an accompanying smile)

Encompassing

**Being invited to come with Reverie and Kat**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Leaving the bar**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they like to have fun**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told they're not going to the pub straight away**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being asked by Reverie about their job and having her be really critical of this**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told that Kat was a rent boy**

Conventional

Encompassing

Expositional

**Being asked if they've ever received oral sex from anybody famous**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by the characters and tone of the previous conversation)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've ever had anal sex**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by the characters and tone of the previous conversation)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've ever been to Amsterdam**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they watch porn with their mates**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by the characters and tone of the previous conversation)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've ever seen any really nasty porn**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by the characters and tone of the previous conversation)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Arriving at and entering Marionetta's flat**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Seeing the chemistry equipment for cooking meth**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being told to wait in the lounge whilst Kat and Reverie ransack the house**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Listening to the sound of them having anal sex**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Listening to the sound of Reverie destroying the flat**

Conventional

Encompassing (due to the relative proximity of the noise)

**Being dragged out of the flat by Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Running down the street**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being given the correct address of the party but poor directions**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Arriving at the party on their own**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Seeing Kat arrive**

Conventional

Encompassing (Due to the relevance of his arrival)

**Speaking to Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching Kat threaten Reverie**

Conventional

Encompassing

**The lights going out**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Being left on their own**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Crawling in to Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

# **Wonderland**

## **Participant 9 (Reverie)**

### **Liminal Stage**

**Going to stand on a street corner**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

**Being made to wait**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being asked to buy some flowers for their boyfriend / girlfriend**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



**Being asked why they're waiting there**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they've been stood up**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being accused of stalking Reverie and being threatened about her boyfriend**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked their name**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked again to buy the flowers**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left alone**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being called over to Reverie's stall and apologised to**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked for a cigarette**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told that they look like a lost puppy and pathetic**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (This occurs as part of a larger conversation)

**Being asked what they do and being told it sounds boring**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked why they want to do that job**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being engaged in general conversation**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Listening to Marionetta and Reverie chat**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being given Reverie's card and asked to follow Marionetta**

Unconventional (It is suspected that this request will be considered to be part of a performance)

Interactive: Directed

**Following Marionetta**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being asked by Marionetta where a particular pub is**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Contacting Reverie**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left on their own for a considerable amount of time**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being phoned by Reverie and asked to go for a drink**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Meeting Reverie in the pub**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being shown a big bag of drugs**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (This occurs as part of a larger conversation)

**Being asked if they think that Reverie is disgusting**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being asked if they want to take some crystal meth**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being left on their own whilst Reverie goes to the toilets**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Being asked if they've ever seen any scat**

Conventional (Hopefully justified by her previous behaviour)

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Being told about the party and the gig and being told to write it down**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

**Being left on their own**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

**Going to the gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Watching the band**

Conventional

Encompassing

**Unspecified behaviour – being left to do what you want**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

**Walking to a party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (It is formed by conversation and movement)

### **Being at a party**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **Being plunged into darkness**

Conventional

Encompassing

### **Entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

## **Wonderland Participants – Maid Café**

### **Pre-liminal Stage**

#### **The act of being invited to come to the Maid Café**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Encompassing

To an extent, this depends on how the Maid Café is sold to participants – ideally this would be via the notion that the theatre company has set up a Maid Café as an end to itself rather than the Maid Café being a part of a larger performance. Numbers should be limited and participants should not be charged to enter but should be charged for food and drinks. These conventions should therefore replicate those of a normal café and do not insinuate something different. Explanation of the fact that participants have to book particular slots

will have to be considered, however, this could be explained by the expected popularity of the opportunity or, as a way to protect the Maids.

## **Liminal Stage**

### **The act of entering the café**

Unconventional (Performance Aware)

Interactive: Directed

participants will hopefully enter the café as if it is a café and not part of a larger performance and therefore will expect to engage with similar conventions as to those experienced in any other café situation (be it a slightly stylised one). participants will be greeted by

### **The act of sitting down and looking at a menu**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This act replicates the conventions that would be expected when entering a café in everyday reality.

### **Being spoken to by Maid**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

It is unlikely that participants will have direct experience of Maid Cafés, however, the open acknowledgment that this is a concept taken from Japanese culture will mean that participants should be more open to the stylised elements of this experience. The Maid performance are justified by the act of serving the customers and will hopefully not be interpreted as part of a larger performance, in fact, the links between the Maid Café and the Wonderland will only become obvious in hindsight and there is no reason to suspect that participants will understand that Kasumi's predictions link to a physical manifestation inside an installation unless participants have been forewarned in some manner.

### **The act of listening to a maid sing karaoke**

Conventional

Encompassing (She is performing to the audience)

This will sit happily with the common understanding of Japanese culture and self-justifies as a performance aspect of the café experience as opposed to being a part of something larger. The song choices may be linked to the larger performance in the minds of some participants who have had previous experience of other strands of this performance. The Angel'in Heavy Syrup song is chosen simply because it fits with the general aesthetic and because it links with Maid Café narrative relating to Umeko finding her true love, however this could be justified in relation to this point. Some participants may associate *Baby Face* with the other narrative threads and in this way become suspicious of the links between those threads and this experience highlighting act of authorship that has created this performance. *He Went In Like A Lion (And Came Out Like A Lamb)* was chosen in relation to the act of entering a potentially terrifying space (Wonderland) and the associated transformation of participants confidence into trepidation. *High Flyin' Bird* might be linked by some knowledgeable participants to the song *White Rabbit*, also by Jefferson Airplane which of course makes numerous references to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. This act would require further knowledge relating to the fact that the Maid Café was in any way linked to the performance entitled Wonderland.

### **The act of having their orders taken**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This adheres with the conventions expected when visiting a café.

### **The act of having Haruka 'read' their personality**

Unconventional (Possibly justified by the fact that it is a performance in itself – disguising the fictional nature of the meta-performance)

Interactive: Self-motivated

Clearly this does not sit happily with the expected conventions related to visiting a café, however this act itself does not imply a larger act of authorship and can be justified in relation to the experience of the café itself.

### **The act of having food served**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This adheres with the conventions expected when visiting a café.

### **The act of entering backroom to speak to Kasumi**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

Again, this could be justified as part of the café experience and does not necessarily insinuate that it is part of a larger act of authorship. The decoration of the backroom itself should be justified by the insinuated act authorship by the sisters and not as part of a theatrical experience. The presentation of a false explanation for the creation of this environment probably fulfils the need to explain this point in the minds of the participants and stops them from looking further into the manner by which this space has been created to observe the fiction.

### **The act of having their questions answered by Kasumi**

Unconventional (Possibly disguising the nature of the meta-performance)

Interactive: Self-motivated

participants are not expected to link the responses that Kasumi gives them to the spaces within Wonderland unless they have been forewarned of this – this performance is itself justified by experience put forward by the café.

### **The act of having desert served**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



This adheres with the conventions expected when visiting a café.

### **The act of playing paper, scissors, stone**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

Whilst this game would not sit happily with the conventions in a normal café, it is possibly justified within the exotic nature of this particular café experience.

### **The act of having their deaths predicted**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

The taboo nature of this act is rather strange in relation to any experience and, whilst probably cushioned by the exotic nature of the café may feel contrived unless it is justified as being part of the experience of this café.

### **The act of watching Umeko be called up on stage**

Conventional

Encompassing

This specific act carries a large part of the narrative element of this experience in that it is supposed to be tonight when Umeko finds her true love. For this reason it could easily make participants aware of a higher authority in relation to this whole experience. If this evening is advertised to the presented to the participant as 'a special night where Umeko's true love is revealed' then there is the risk that the overlap with the other performances will be revealed and therefore the fictional aspects will be made obvious. However, if this is downplayed somewhat – it is a normal night in all respects except that Umeko's true love is here then there is the risk that her following response is not justified sufficiently. The scenario needs to leave her embarrassed enough to warrant her following reaction.

### **The act of watching the sisters argue**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

As noted above, this needs to be pitched at just the right level to warrant Umeko's reaction without overdoing it and making it obvious that the whole scenario is contrived. The argument will come out of this naturally if this aspect is correctly pitched.

### **The act of watching Umeko storm out and trash the café**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

Again, there is a risk of this seeming extremely contrived – an over-reaction will probably reveal the nature of the performance. This needs to be toned down to realistic level – perhaps just one thing gets broken.

### **Being plunged into darkness**

Conventional

Encompassing

There is a definite physicality to having light sources removed and in this sense the lack of light is a real phenomenon however, this is a convention that is familiarly from theatre – given that, at present there is no clear justification for this happening and that it occurs at a climactic point in the performance, it is expected that participants will recognise this act as being part of a fictional construct. This seems less important considering that they are about to enter a surreal dream-like installation however it may be that this act of dimming the lights removes some of the impact that might arise from entering the space. It therefore feels necessary to justify the lights going out by linking this with the item that Umeko breaks explained by the idea that breaking the item could have tripped the fuse box. I would have liked to have all the lights explode but I'm not sure this is possible.

### **Entering Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Directed

The response to this act will depend on the layout of the café and the manner by which this section of the performance is portrayed. If the entrance into Wonderland can be manipulated so that it appears to be the same way that the participants came in then the expectation will be that they are leaving the building as opposed to entering this other space. Also, if the maids respond as if they are simply ushering everybody out of the room because they have to because the lights have gone out then this links to the expected conventions relating to health and safety practices. participants think they are being led out of the café because it is dark and will therefore accept this as a justification for the act as opposed to something that has been engineered to continue the performance. Obviously there will be a point when it becomes clear that all is not as it should be and they have entered a different space where different aesthetic rules apply.

# Wonderland

## participants – Rab

### Pre-liminal Stage

#### **The act of being invited to a party at Rab's flat**

Conventional

Encompassing

This act could be justified if the participant thinks they are being invited to a party rather than a performance. Then the knowledge of the party will fulfil the question posed by signing up for this experience rather and it will not be anticipated that they are also engaging with a performance.

### Liminal Stage

#### **The act of going to Rab's flat**

Conventional (If participants think they are going to a party)

Interactive: Directed

participants are likely be imagining a particular scenario that involves music, enough space to hold a reasonable number of people and the presence of these people. The arrival at the flat will not present any of the conventions and should therefore cause participants to question whether they are at the right address.

#### **The act of finding Rab in his underwear watching porn**

Unconventional (Unless justified by his behaviour and the atmosphere of the flat)

Interactive: Self-motivated (As it is the participant who is doing the discovering)

### **The act of being kicked out**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

If participants choose to enter the flat they will be confronted by this scene which again does not portray any of the conventions expected from a party. Rab might admit that he is having a party later but this will not fit with the information that participants have been given. The invasion of somebody's personal space and the associated feeling that they have got the information wrong will hopefully convey the impression that this is a 'real' place and not a space appropriated for a performance. Being kicked out of the flat links to the convention of personal / private space familiar from everyday reality and is an appropriate response in this situation.

### **The act having to wait outside**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

Should participants knock / ring and be made to wait outside by Rab – this will link to the convention of personal / private space and insinuate that they have got the wrong place. However, to experience the part of the performance that occurs inside Rab's flat they need to be kept at the door. The act of doing does not follow conventions of interaction normally experienced in everyday reality (participants would normally be sent away) and this is likely to make the fact that they're being made to wait outside feel like it's part of a performance. An answer to this might be that Rab drags one person inside the house and interrogates them alone – this will mean that any accompanying participants will have to wait outside for their friend and will provide some justification for them staying there. It is still likely that this rather unusual scenario will be interpreted as being part of a performance.

### **The act of being threatened that Rab will call the police**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated (As this forms part of a conversation)

This sits relatively comfortably with the conventions linked to personal / private space and whilst the response is rather extreme it will probably be taken seriously by participants because ignoring the threat might get them into serious trouble. If this was combined with the act of dragging one participant into the flat then it places the others in an interesting predicament and will likely generate a range of real emotions linked to that scenario.

### **The act of being spoken to through the letterbox**

Unconventional (Unless justified by his previous behaviour)

Interactive: Self-motivated

This feels somewhat contrived / stylised, however, in the above situation where one participant is dragged into the house it feels more justified because Rab could easily be overpowered by a larger number of people. He is trying to determine whether they are 'safe' or not before he opens the door – in many ways he has got himself into this situation and this act of speaking through the letterbox is a way to solve the problem.

### **The act of being asked questions about where they work / music / films etc**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Hopefully this act of interrogation is somewhat justified by the scenario that has been created – the questions themselves relate to the participants everyday realities and therefore the responses themselves should be genuine adding a sense that this situation is real. The banal nature of these questions as well reflect the conventions of introductory discussion as recognised in everyday reality.

### **The act of eventually being let in**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

This act reflects the end of the situation and should be partially justified as part of Rab's apology – he lets them in because they got through this whole situation and become closer because of this.

### **Being sent to the door to interview new arrivals**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

Being now familiar with Rab's strange behaviour this feels somewhat more justified than it perhaps might. It also acknowledges what Rab has put the original participants through and therefore is almost carried out because it's the only right thing to do.

### **Being interrogated by Rab as to whether they are cool**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This strange behaviour does link with the previous events – it also shows that Rab has got a certain standard that needs to be maintained and makes the interrogated participant implicit in that standard – this goes some way to repairing some of the 'damage' done by the initial act – Rab is acknowledging that participants are 'cool' and that they have the ability to judge this in relation to other people.

### **The act of being left by Rab whilst he showers**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

This is somewhat unusual behaviour but is justified to an extent by the scenario that has taken place. It disregards commonly perceived conventions of performance because the only candidate for the role of performer disappears, leaving only participants on their own.

### **The act of being left by Rab in the flat**

Conventional

Non-encompassing

Again, this disregards commonly perceived conventions of performance because it hands over the responsibility of choice regarding what they do next to the participants. By leaving them on their own any notion of performance will be removed and yet they will be sitting in

a space that, originally might have been interpreted as a space where a performance was occurring.

### **The act of being randomly plunged into darkness**

Conventional (Given that there's no dramatic reason for this event)

Encompassing

This act will not be dramatically linked, in that it does not obviously coincide with a moment of dramatic tension and should occur long enough after Rab has left to not be linked with this act. It might be interpreted as a means of getting participants out of the flat because having lights switched off is a convention linked to the end of something. To justify this event, the meter needs to be at zero and all electricity should be switched off rather than the lights.

### **The act of having to work out where to go next**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

There will be an obvious amount of uncertainty linked to working this out – if the whole experience is contrived then there is a reason to believe that the flyers have been left there for a reason, if this is some kind of bizarre scenario occurring in everyday reality then there may be no link. Obviously the act of deciding is real and, whilst this problem is engineered, the result is by no means pre-ordained. In this way the act of deciding is a real one even if the events giving rise to this problem are not. Participants may become aware of the manner by which this problem has been created and perceive this as an indicator that they are involved in a performance. Perhaps Rab could ring a house phone at some point to confirm where he has gone so that this problem is negated.

### **The act of going to the gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated



### **The act of arriving at the gig**

Conventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

### **The act of watching the band**

Conventional

Encompassing

Rab's presence at the gig should confirm that participants have made the right choice, however, given that the gig takes place at an existing venue and is attended by more than just the participants who have been at Rab's party, it will probably feel like a real event and therefore raise doubts in the minds of the participants as to the real / contrived nature of this event.

### **The act of going back to Rab's**

Conventional

Interactive: Directed

Returning to Rab's flat with a number of other people will probably confuse participants experience of Rab's flat – on one hand this is a real remembered place that participants have previous experience of, on the other hand the reason participants were there in the first place is linked to the attempted attendance at a performance. Hopefully, the latter part of participants time at Rab's will have undermined the first part and therefore the flat will be remembered as a real place. There is no doubt that there is a considerable number of different elements interacting at this point.

### **The act of being plunged into darkness again**

Conventional

Encompassing

Again, this will be familiar and this familiarity may undermine the sense that this convention is commonly associated with performances.

## **The act of crawling into Wonderland**

Unconventional

Interactive: Self-motivated

This act is clearly contrived and one that is not experienced in everyday reality but rather recalls conventions linked to play for example adventure playgrounds, obstacle courses or children's soft-play areas.

## **Appendix IV:**

# **Performer Responses to Menagerie**

<b>Question:</b>	<b>Performer 1</b>	<b>Performer 2</b>	<b>Performer 3</b>	<b>Performer 4</b>
<b>Did you enjoy performing in this way?</b>	Yes it was the first time I had performed to just one person in such a small space.	Yes, I enjoyed the close interaction with other member – was an unusual way to perform.	Yes, it was interesting.	Yes, interesting doing it one to one with only a rough script to go by.
<b>Was the script easy to perform? (Please give reasons to support your answer)</b>	Yes, as we were briefed before and the key words on the fridge helped.	Yes - the script was extremely opening allowing you to improvise and add to it.  No – You need to be prepared for answers and react in a certain way.	Definitely, especially after the demonstration. & the words on the fridge.	Yes, it highlighted the main questions and each question followed each other. You could explore the questions in your own personal way.
<b>Did the script make the act of improvisation easy?</b>	Once I had performed a few times and relaxed into it, it felt more comfortable.	Yes, because we had time to create our own stories beforehand -> and script was loose.	Yes, it wasn't strict so you had freedom to expand on subject.	Yes, it was basic but left it up to the audience, improvisation got easier as we went along.
<b>How / in what ways did you connect with the character and the situation?</b>	I tried to be more neutral (?) so I didn't connect straight away but I enjoyed being scary and making people jump.	Added to the script by explaining own 'personal' happenings. Dominating the situation was easy as the audience member entering felt	When they shared personal experiences with you. Made you feel closer to them.	I thought about real life answers to the questions and how I would react if I was in the audience.

		uncomfortable and unsure.		
<b>To what extent did you draw on your own experiences and feelings?</b>	For the happiest thing I used my own experience but I wanted to focus on the audience member and their experience.	Some of the information given was factual yet I did not feel comfortable drawing on my own sexual experience -> maybe if the audience were strangers.	I gave them a true story about suicide. If they asked back e.g. Sex, I'd say the truth.	I brought back past memories that I hadn't thought about for a while.
<b>How well do you think the audience members bought into the performance?</b>	I felt, if it was people I didn't know it would be different, but people did open up and each performance was different due to how they first reacted.	Extremely well, they answered questions willingly.	If they went in sceptical the atmosphere was different.	They all were different, but the people who got more in depth and were open added to the performance more.
<b>What, in your eyes, could be improved?</b>	There could be more space so I could of sat comfortable and some audience could sit down properly.	Set – pictures (remove maybe)  Plot – point of story – develop more -> what have questions got to do with story.	Have playing cards around the room rather than creepy pictures.	I thought I worked better without music and the natural sounds added more. – To do it to strangers.
<b>Other comments:</b>	I loved scaring people. I would like to do this style of performance	(No comment)	(No comment)	(No comment)

	again. I would like to do this performance again.			
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**Appendix V:  
Interview with Colin Marsh and Maxine Doyle from  
Punchdrunk**

**INTERVIEW WITH COLIN MARSH (CM ) AND MAXINE DOYLE (MD)  
BY MARK ELLIS (ME)**

**CM** I actually started working here with the candidate, successful candidate as it were because it fits his availability. I don't know if any of you bumped in to each other. The woman who got the gig as it were someone called Rose Biggins, think she trained at Warwick as far as I remember, did a BA at Warwick, think she, I shouldn't sound so vague but we'd, Jenny and I had geared up to having Rose here the first time for about 6 weeks, and a series of interventions had stopped that, including this week and landslide yesterday in Cornwall which meant that she couldn't get up from Exeter.

**ME** Oh no way.

**CM** At all, neither could Jane Milling, you remember Jane.

**ME** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**CM** The tutor, so they rang us about 9 in the morning and said there's been a landslide in Cornwall there are no trains coming through Exeter.

**ME** No way

**CM** Yeah. It was a shame coz we'd been trying to at least do the orientation bit with Rose for about 6 weeks, and Felix and Max are very busy coz they've this show happening, New York, they're obviously getting married in 2 weeks time so I haven't even seen him for over a week coz he's just too busy.

**ME** Yeah, well

**CM** Any road

**ME** Thank you again for meeting with me, that means a lot, obviously you're incredibly busy.

**CM** That's alright

**ME** I thought I would just start by kind of going over a very short amount of time what I'm doing and what I'm looking at, before I take you in that sense. Obviously I'm kind of taking immersive theatre and looking at what interests me is the relationship between, or the perceived relationship between reality and fiction, which I sort of naively started to look at before I realised how hideously complicated the subject was, and looking at how I can model reality really to sort of get over the sense of, you know, what is happening in Punchdrunk performances and obviously other companies who produce work in the same vein, so that's, you know, involved modelling reality, seeing what is happening in the minds of the audience which is kind of the perspective I'm taking, and I'm really trying to



understand kind of whereabouts immersive theatre sits and also how, what could be done in terms of practitioners to move things in either direction, you know, how audience members are picking up indication of the performance against the kind of realness of it, as it were, and really looking at how those two things sit together, either happily or unhappily, so I think I'm kind of getting to the point where I understand that now and I think its really just, you know, hope to speak to, obviously you guys, and just really kind of get a sense of your perspective, because obviously I'm not a practitioner, I'm you know a...

Researcher, I'm gonna, am adapting 1984 as a script for kind of immersive performances, the kind of creative aspect of my piece, and obviously so that in a sense some of those practical questions are sort of a bit linked to that so, and obviously I know you guys don't really work with scripts do you?

**CM** We can talk about that.

**ME** Yeah, we'll talk about that, erm, so its interesting for me, coz obviously my background is in creative writing so I'm kind of come at this from this direction, and probably to overcome, or face some hurdles that I know kind of exist but the idea is to kind of meet head on and see what happens and see that challenges from a writers perspective

**CM** Yeah

**ME** Of how that can kind of work in terms of

**CM** Can I just ask you a question then?

**ME** Absolutely.

**CM** Are you in this process or is part of what you're doing in this process treating the experiential nature of say Punchdrunk's work as a distinct kind of experience from say sitting in a theatre watching a play?

**ME** I think having, I think its quite clear that it is a distinct experience that it does in a sense, I mean I use the term separative theatre to mean theatre where the audience

**MD** Separative, is that your term?

**ME** Yeah, I had to invent something (Collin's phone ringing)

**CM** Sorry, I won't answer this

**MD** Aaah, you could say that our work's separative.

**CM** Just let it ring

**MD** As well as immersive

**ME** Yeah well that was one of the questions I wanted to go into

**CM** So, yeah so there are two different, there are two broad differences

**ME** Yeah absolutely, but I... obviously it sits on a continuum from

**CM** Yeah yeah, I'm asking particularly that because the more erm, I had an interesting conversation last night with somebody from the Arts Council who, reading between the lines, was suggesting that actually er, what Punchdrunk would call immersive isn't really that different from the play we've just been watching

**ME** Right right

**CM** Which was a fantastic production at the Young Vic called the Glass Menagerie, I mean that was incredibly moving, brilliantly performed, beautiful to look at, you really felt like you were, the audience were all immersed in you know in the normal sense of sharing an experience,

**ME** Yeah

**CM** But I would absolutely disagree, I think there is a as a complete and utter difference in physically actively having to engage, even if its just moving from here to there

**ME** Yeah

**CM** Or that a performer comes and sits next to you it's, a completely different thing and it might sound really obvious but I think there's a huge amount, apparently what this, you know the doctorate thing that we interviewed you for, is trying to get underneath because its too easy otherwise to, as some critics have done on Punchdrunk's work, to sort of right it off as being only sensory and only experiential or, but it's not even experiential because everything's experiential, and it's kind of not taking it, it's not going deeply enough so that's why I'm interested in your starting point and I think that'll be true of Rose the student that has actually got that post because otherwise we're not really, we're not investigating the right thing, there is a diff, obviously I, there's a rhetorical question coz I think there's huge difference.

**ME** (laughing) I think there's a huge difference as well and I guess in a way I want to get to the bottom of that difference really and try and define it really.

**CM** I think its great that you are and the more people that try to the better coz

**MD** There's also a huge similarity I mean

- CM** Well it might be but lets talk about it, but I mean, because the other part of what this Arts Council person was suggesting was that it was somehow therefore quite a short-lived trend rather than something that has any substance over time, I mean interesting, because Arts Council generally are hugely respectful and they enjoy what we do, it doesn't really matter who it was, it's just that the inference was that A its not as complex as people think or as the hype would tell us and that actually its just part of the ongoing pushing boundaries that theatre has always done, and you see I'm obviously convinced that it's not just Punchdrunk, that there is a different form of expression that is evolving and that audiences in 10 years time might, it could be norm to go to
- MD** It could be its own form
- CM** You know, yeah exactly
- ME** Yeah
- CM** So sorry that's a complete, its just to sort of set a few thoughts in place at the beginning coz erm, you know that we're very happy to answer your questions directly about process and all that its just like what context we're putting it.
- ME** Yeah
- CM** I would say that there is something very special in the positive sense of the word you know about work like this that is very different anyway.
- ME** I think just sort of to maybe deposit er, I think that the fact that you place the audience member in a completely different position is, you have to, you can't ignore that I think and to sit in a seat and watch a production is sort of doesn't... it might immerse you... you might sort of engage with the emotions of the characters and everything but it doesn't... you don't become an actor you're not asked to act and I mean that by just kind of moving between from one space to another and I think that's probably... there is a difference there and you can't deny that
- CM** Yeah
- ME** You know what I mean? By no means I personally don't think this is a short lived phenomena, I think that audiences have been separate for too long and actually to kind of recapture its magic, theatre needs to kind of embrace them which is why I'm so interested and excited by the whole phenomena really and kind of where its going and how and why I want to kind of involve myself in it and study it really so that's you know, so I kind of answered that question.
- CM** Well, good
- MD** Can I just very quickly get a pen, sorry.
- CM** I need to put my glasses on, its getting dark in here. Won't be able to see anything.

**MD** You can have achieving great art for everybody.

**CM** Well erm, we can probably stick to the order of the questions you've got here actually for a bit and then and if we want to, coz I can stick around for a little bit

**ME** Yeah that's great, so obviously the first one being erm, how would you describe the work of Punchdrunk in your own words really?

**CM** Well,

**MD** The hardest question

**CM** Yeah, I'll just erm be devil's advocate. I've been trying for probably for the last 7 years to hone it down to one word and that was immersive eventually, but now that immersive has become such a kind of erm, tainted word, which it is now, everybody is immersive

**ME** Yeah

**CM** I think they need to start looking again so that's just an obviously quite a flippant way to answer the question, erm but I would, if anybody had asked me what is it Punchdrunk does, I would say its immersive theatre and then you would have to explain what you meant by that which would be a very complicated conversation.

**ME** Yeah

**CM** Erm, but its back to what we were just saying, I would, I'd keep it that simple at the moment because I think its about trying to distinguish between all these vying cause on your attention you know?

**ME** Yeah yeah absolutely

**CM** Erm, but it doesn't help the fact that immersion covers all sorts of other erm ways of engagement as well and I used to think that was okay coz I'd rather be in that camp with you know, video gamers than in the camp with, you know, when the National Theatre says its doing an immersive production

**ME** Yeah

**Cm** Then they just mean basically the audience is standing up in a space and the set is all around, you know, its not quite what I would say, so that's me just from a kind of, in a sense being objective

**ME** Yeah

**CM** Whereas Max can talk about it as an artist you know.

**MD** Yeah, I suppose its something about work which challenges the role of the audience as spectator. I think it's a bit of work that, to call it Felix's phase, he would say "puts the audience as the epicentre of the work"

**ME** Right

**MD** So I think from a conceptual point, we're always generating work which is about triggering and challenging audience responses, erm, the work is narrative, its both linear and non-linear, its both disjointed and fragmented and regular, I think its erm, its work that shifts between a passion about the spectacular and about the intimate and its work that tries to merge both of those pathways during the course of one evening.

**ME** Okay, yeah, great

**CM** Seems to sum it up. And is it theatre, I mean is that a word you would

**MD** I would absolutely use it

**CM** You would, yeah

**MD** Yeah, yeah

**CM** No, I'm just interested because

**MD** From my point of view, I mean I don't know about Felix's point of view, but from

**CM** And others we work with they don't necessarily use that word, you know some of the design people, people involved in a production

**ME** Yeah

**CM** They don't necessarily go home every night saying they work in a theatre production

**ME** Right

**CM** You know that's not the

**MD** It's labels

**CM** It's labels, yeah

**MD** Theatre, it's a theatre production, its dance actually, it's a gig, it's a cinematic trip, it's a kind of, I think, it challenges language actually, it challenges the use - it defies language, it defies what, it is because by its very nature it's anti-language.

**ME** Yeah

**MD** Dialogue, so

**CM** And it lets the audience also make their own interpretation doesn't it

**MD** Yeah, I think its

**CM** So some people

**MD** Its about ownership, its about erm, its about almost creating a work that is absolutely controlled by its makers and then relinquishing that control and giving it to the audience

**ME** Yeah yeah

**MD** So its several, yeah, I mean its very different work with an audience in it.

**ME** Yeah yeah

**MD** Than one with an audience not in it

**CM** That might come up in terms of some of the questions later on

**MD** Yeah, two very different kind of products actually

**CM** Yeah coz you create the material but then actually the thing that happens with the audience coming in

**MD** Is a different thing

**ME** Mmmmm

**CM** There's another editing process goes on

**MD** Yeah, yeah

**ME** Okay

**CM** That the audience are sort of part of because you're watching their behaviour aren't you.

**MD** Absolutely, I mean that's, kind of goes into process, but that's, you create the show, we all create the show together and we kinda think we know what it is and then the audience come in and there are massive erm, they're a massive variable in that event

**ME** Right

- MD** And so that's often, we talk about having to have this, what we call this 2 weeks preview period in our work when we begin to make the show proper.
- ME** Right, okay.
- MD** And that's about watching the flow of the audience, watching their responses, their reactions and actually trying to refine and craft the work so the audience feel like they have this huge freedom and they don't feel like they're in a world of chaos
- ME** Yeah
- MD** If we didn't go on this sort of journey of kind of um... you know in the moment sort of editing erm, you'd have a clash, a huge clash between the audience and the work I think, you know, so when we have audiences in the building it's the final process of making.
- ME** Yeah. And how do you think that kind of, how do you sort of see that changes, what is the way that you kind of change the performance to sort of absorb into accommodate the audience?
- MD** It's a combination of us as a team having an outside eye to very crudely know, okay we need a distraction, a two minute scene at that point to distract the audience to break up the flow because there's too much congestion at this point in space, and we need to sort it out, so it's a combination of us setting new parameters and setting new boundaries and the performers actually instinctively learning how to
- CM** Shape things
- MD** Yeah, learning how to mould their shows so that they control it in terms of time, so that, you know, that can be really crudely, like performers three nights, you realise there's no one to following him, his stories getting lost so he coughs or vomits on the stairwell to get attention or its, its really about, its very real actually in terms of reality
- ME** Yeah
- MD** Its about making decisions real time and then there's decision
- CM** Yes
- MD** Those decisions then become fixed moments so it's a learning process, its not, the structure's very tight but then people have to improvise to layer the structure so gradually it becomes more and more complex.
- ME** Right, okay.

- CM** I was gonna say it's, there are similarities to us, you know, watching a really brilliant actor on stage, because even that really brilliant actor, no matter how much they prepared in rehearsal, what makes them really brilliant is the way that they then respond to the nuances of the audience's reaction, and that's no different really from our performers have to be able to do.
- MD** Yeah but the reaction tends to be more, it tends to be more about dominated by space and time actually rather than response.
- CM** Yes, well that's because of the separatist nature
- ME &**
- MD** Yeah, yeah
- CM** The positioning of the two parties, but its not unlike really, and the way that a good actor will then play on that each performance because he's learnt, or she's learnt
- MD** Exactly, yeah
- CM** I can play with them there
- MD** And then you log that and it grows
- CM** Or similarly you might let things go that in rehearsals seemed brilliant, but actually once you've got 16 people surrounding you, you discover you have to somehow
- MD** Yeah, I mean actually its about the performers learning to control the audience without them feeling like they're controlled
- ME** Yeah
- MD** Its about how, as a performer, how can I sustain this moment of tension when actually an audience can break it like this if I'm not in control of the moment, so, and its interesting in that, skipping a bit, but in the process we do so much work about tension, our performers are highly tuned tension magnets.
- ME/** Laughing
- MD**
- MD** There you go, there's a good tag line. Erm, yeah and its
- CM** They are, and that, I mean again I've said this to you before
- MD** Cor blimey
- CM** That's where its sort of merges with really street theatre as well, the performers are so tuned in to peoples smallest responses that you can pick on somebody and it will immediately galvanise a whole group of people to look at the right thing.



**ME** Yeah

**CM** Erm but the other side to that point is how much we depend on performers who are not selfish because if they were they'd be all doing their own show

**ME** Yeah

**MD** And we've had that

**CM** And the audience would notice that

**MD** And we've had that so much, yeah, its very important that sense of ego

**CM** We've only suffered once or twice with particular performers who

**MD** Yeah had an ego

**CM** Not being able to just let go and appreciate the audience really

**ME** Right

**CM** So its very interesting

**ME** In terms of their perspective it's quite a different way of working to stand on a stage and you know, performing scripts.

**CM** Not everybody can do it. Dancers tend to be able to do it better than actors oddly enough.

**ME** Right

**CM** Coz actors do like their distance

**MD** Well it's

**CM** I would say, I'm generalising

**MD** And also its because a dancer's body is much more about 360 degree sensibility, whereas a conventional training, not all that does but it's more about this, this is the distance and they're much more two dimensional, erm, they're not used to having eyes in their backs.

**ME** Yeah

- MD** Those kind of things, and you know, in the majority, not all of our projects but certain, most of the projects that I've been directing with Felix are dancer driven, and actually
- CM** But again I mean that fits in with other questions that arise out of this kind of work and what makes it different because it's such a physical language rather than in the way some other companies tend to base things on the spoken word, it offers, I think much broader depth of immersion is there's less opportunity for you to be kind of knocked out of your, you know, words can often distract you in a way.
- ME** Yeah
- CM** They make you think about the wrong thing, so if you like, not the wrong things, but, you know physical language is so complex to work out anyway, it keeps your concentration, people are just, you know, more fascinated maybe. That would be my claim, you know that if you're using a text there is a danger that the text becomes the only place for the meaning.
- ME** Yeah, I think obviously as a writer that's particularly interesting because again we're very much attached to the text than kind of, how people, what people say and when people say it, and I think erm, I mean obviously that needs to be broken down, I see that that isn't something that you can be precious about in terms of producing scripts as it were, I'm definitely certainly interested in how, and unfortunately I don't think it's something I'm going to be able to test out but I think erm, it's kinda of look at, it's called retro-scripting where isn't it where you leave open to the actors to kind of improvise, but it's still controlled.
- MD** I'd say it's actually one of the biggest issues is more about in terms of this convention that we've, you know that we've kind of created that we embody, it's more about the distinction in the space between voice and body and the voice can only do so much within these bigger spheres it cannot, and actually it can't always take on the building, whereas the body can take on the building in different ways and it can be, it can transform itself to be something quite extraordinary in the way, with the voice it's a completely different sort of set of, you know, it's a different kind of conundrum. We've been toying with it, we've been toying with, we did a research project last year where we were kind of asking the question how do we reinvest in words, how do we reinvest in the voice, how do we bring dialogue in, because even as a choreographer director, I'm interested in words and language and I'm interested in the sort of
- CM** Well I mean actually think about your history coz I used to work with Max in her dance company, your shows always involve the dancers talking.
- MD** Yeah, I mean maybe
- CM** And in fact she then refused to have to work with Punchdrunk and no body talked for a while

- MD** But I'm interested in the specificity that you can get with text and also, you know, the sense how, what else it can offer, and I'm also struck really honestly with moments in our work where I felt like I really could do with some more information here to fulfil the experience intellectually and otherwise, and so we've been, we worked, we did some research last year and exactly asking those kind of questions, and you know it comes, for us it comes down to technology and it comes down to how we would work with technology within the building, so
- ME** I suppose as well people don't project to rooms in real life, so as soon as someone starts projecting to a group of people when they're not giving like a lecture or kind of, you know, delivering a talk about something, then that, the whole premise crumbles to the ground coz it becomes no longer intimate and everyone's aware of their role within this kind of relationship.
- MD** Yeah, I mean actually when the company started before I was working, you know Felix was working with text, with Shakespearian text, but the audience sizes were much much smaller and it was about, it was really intimate, it was about conversation that exactly, you know, would be like this and you would come right into that moment as an audience and so when we have used text apart from a couple of moments, erm, its been about the intimate, its been about the filmic and it works beautifully when there's few audience.
- ME** Right
- MD** But then as soon as you have more than three or four it falls by the wayside.
- CM** It comes quite conventional but we can't help it, it starts to become
- MD** I mean we had a strong lead during one of the main stories, really two really brilliant actors was driven by the text, you know, it was scripted, its one very funny pieces where this particular story had a script and in some places, you know it didn't work at all, in some places it work really well you know, but I remember coming in just saying you've got the words we have to turn it on its head, we have to turn you upside down when you're speaking, we have to... so there the imagery of it because otherwise its like two talking heads, too weird in this world and if I did that show again I'd say take the text away actually because it lacks you know ..
- CM** But I've always said that there's also, I think you're saying the same thing Max, there's
- MD** Yeah
- CM** There's definitely a place for text because if it's that less is more principle, coz then when you use it its some much more powerful when you do have to speak.
- MD** Yeah, its just finding the how
- CM** And of course the problem with words is I think unless you are a writer, you know, any word immediately sets up some kind of erm, hierarchy really coz every bodies going to interpret the word in a different way.

**MD** It's also interesting

**CM** So it can be a limiting thing, you know, of course but I found I'm listening to plays as well but I'm saying in this kind of work, you've to be so careful about what you let people say in a sense because it can take you off in all sorts of

**MD** And also it can be

**CM** Blind alleys

**MD** Disempowering to, for the performer to, who have may been so extraordinary in some of the physical moments

**CM** I guess one thing you could talk about would be why you and Felix decided to, within the structure of Masque of the Red Death for example, there's the Palais Royale, you know where there's real time apparently Vaudeville acts going on with a compere whose speaking and introducing and actually it's a huge investment in the spoken word and perhaps its works because its

**MD** Conventional

**CM** It's a convention that's contrasting what's going on outside if you like, but I mean did you talk much about what that, in a sense we all joked at the time about saying oh Punchdrunk doing its first stage show, it actually a little stage with some actors on it. I mean where did that come from as an idea?

**MD** Errrm

**CM** Or did you not worry too much about it

**MD** We didn't worry, we didn't worry, I mean we would have, to be honest we would have a writer work with us in hindsight, we didn't have a writer which would have made life so much easier, but we would have had a script before we started.

**CM** Tommy wrote most of his own script didn't he

**MD** Yeah, but it felt right because it's a

**CM** Yeah, no it wasn't bad what he wrote

**MD** It's a conventional space of viewing and it's a cabaret convention so it felt really exciting to have such a harsh contrast to the kind of predominately silent droning dream world that was outside.

**CM** Did you see that show?

**ME** No I didn't unfortunately.

- MD** Sorry I think we are going off track. Do you want to keep pulling us back?
- ME** Yeah sure, why it's interesting I like the debate. So, in terms of performances I mean just to kind of put into words again, what would you say that aims are of Punchdrunk or what are the aims of a Punchdrunk performance, what do you set out to do in terms of the audience really and how, well not in terms, just in terms of anything really?
- MD** Well, disorientate, er, we wanna kind of shake, it's all about shake the audience up, its trying to move them than some kind of out of body experience, offer them something memorable and impress images on their minds so that they can take the show away from them, erm, er, what else do we always try and do? Surprise the audience, surprise ourselves, I mean that's the... Commit, offer, entice the audience to be curious that seems to be. I think we're really, I think the work is really really generous in terms of, I feel like we put everything we can out there within the, you know in terms of, within the space and within the body for the audience to take to choose to, so we want people to be curious.
- ME** And keep it sought of, in the reading that I've done, the people keep articulating in the idea that it reduces audience members back to a kind of childish state of...
- CM** Yeah, if Felix was sitting here he would, the first thing he would say was that it was about waking people up and sort of reminding them that, you know, they're more than the person that's, you know, anybody there, its about everything you've brought with you, echoing back to when you were much less, when your sense of yourself much less like in childhood when you're not conscious in that way, you're not monitoring yourself, so that's what its for about, for Felix isn't it,
- MD** Yeah
- CM** it absolutely about liberating people's sense of self without being too pretentious.
- MD** Yeah
- CM** So your reaction purely, you know, authentically
- ME** Yeah
- CM** And children will do that naturally and we forget how to do it as we get older, it's a hard trick to pull off all the time though, especially when there's a lot of things vying for your attention, so, for example some people take that as a signal to kind of like a kid in a chocolate factory, just sort of go mad and that's fine, other people it can take them quite a while to realise they've got permission, they're the ones I always like to watch coz you can just see them over the evening becoming more confident, erm, and then there's people who just lock into it very quickly and they get on the boat and they're just, you know, they just follow in their instincts and probably not even thinking until later, my god that was amazing I actually did this and did that and did that really happen, there's all that and these are the things, I mean, to pick on a later question you've got there, those are the kind of things that people will tell you time and time again

- ME** Right
- CM** Especially during the show if you meet somebody in the bar and you ask them how its going, they'd always start positively and say "god I saw this amazing", you know they do, very rarely do people sort of go "mmmm well it's very interesting" they don't analyse it in that way and I think that's part of what we're trying to do. To cut out the sort of censoring process.
- ME** The critical faculties kind of reduce back with the
- MD** Its interesting coz the critical head within all of us which kind of plays the "I don't know how to do this",
- CM** Or "I'm embarrassed", "Don't make me do that"
- MD** "I'm embarrassed" or "I feel stupid", "I don't get this game", I mean I think sometimes that's difficult and I think we, you know, we really respect our audience for battling with those voices which might paralyse you into not moving at all because you don't know your place in this world so it is, we do, there is a struggle I think sometimes for audiences in terms of confidence and er,
- CM** And again that's where the performers probably more than anything
- MD** Yeah
- CM** Help that yeah, you know, pull people through that to a certain extent. I mean, that leads you into that, partly I would say into that question some people often ask about you know, 'Would you describe your work as interactive?'
- CM** I mean - 'Is your work interactive?' Its never struck me as being interactive coz I define that as something quite specific but there is definitely an interaction going on and sometimes it's more overt because a performer will take you by the hand or would just use you as he's moving by or she's going up a ladder or whatever and you know, again by my saying, they're very aware of including the audience.
- MD** It very layered the level of interaction within the work I think, it can be something as, you know, you're interacting coz you're there, you're on a physical journey, you're going on a physical journey, but it can be as interactive as a performer just catching your eye, that's one level, and then there's a level of interaction which kind of uses touch as a starting point for those interactions, they sometimes can be very subtle and very fleeting and very momentary depending on the character and there's a level of, there's a third level which of about a very intimate interaction between one performer and one audience member in a private locked space, so its layered in that sense.

- ME** Cool. Erm, right... how do you see the role of, I mean you've probably answered this slightly anyway but, in fact you have kind of answered it so I'll skip forward coz I don't want to clearly you know, go back over old ground and I'm sure will cover
- CM** I mean that it, your question there though Max should definitely say what reactions have been by audience members to your work coz there's lots of recorded evidence we could give you access too, loads of people have written reams to us, which is lovely, but on a more immediate level, I would say it makes people want to talk about it, it makes people want to communicate, without a doubt in a way that I, might have said this when we interviewed you, I've not noticed that as a general rule, people always, you know, you get out in the interval or you come out at the end, people will say something, "that was very nice", but very quickly they're into "so what are you doing tomorrow?", and that tends to be the opposite with Punchdrunk's audiences, they tend to want to, they don't want, its not so much they don't want it to finish, they want to sort of somehow resolve what's happened and you can only do that by talking to your mates or asking somebody who happened to know.
- MD** We, I mean the concept; Felix's concept actually manipulates that by the bar by always having this central construct of the bar within the building because.. in Manchester we didn't have that and I'd say lots of probably things are lost because of that and I think at this kind of place of exchange is really essential and I think actually reactions to our work are always extreme, they're either extremely transformative, we've changed somebody's life, or often some people can have really, you know, we're charlatans
- CM** They're very puzzled and yeah, yeah
- MD** We're charlatans, its you know
- CM** Well there's that but one of the main ones is being people being confused, yeah, but wanting to understand
- ME** Right, I mean confused about, kind of, the narrative?
- CM** The structure and what might have happened to them and whether or not they saw the whole thing or whether they missed something, often whether they miss something, 'What are you playing at?' this looks great but I haven't a clue what's going on, that's quite a common one, erm, to people who are convinced they've worked the whole thing out, you'll be surprised how many people, it was amazing coz I did that and then I knew I understood, you know its like some sort of revelation, that's fantastic, it's a whole range of things isn't it?

- MD** What was it I found, always find really interesting is the kind of reactions in the kind of 'I didn't see everything and I missed it' that sort of how greedy audiences are actually and you have a conversation with people who've been in the building for 3 hours and you say okay what did you do, what did you discover, you know, A they'll list a whole section of big performative juj that they had and then their experience about the space and then... but that's sense that kind of hunger that there's more and they didn't have it, kind a sense of slightly feeling, you know, like they've missed out on something, which I think is very interesting about us as consumers, and us as humans.
- CM** Well quite, and that ties into what you were saying earlier, we are very generous and I think often, this is something we are victims to and is certain extent generally, we always try to give more, but that then sets up the expectation of more, quite literally, like in between shows, people, they want more the next time, you know, and I never really thought about this until we'd done three or four shows and Felix had always said 'ah but its got to top the last thing' and I used to think I mean, no it doesn't you know, you just need to do what the next thing is. There is that sense that it has to always lift the stakes every time, partly because your first time people have huge expectations, second time, then third and fourth and partly because that first experience for anybody has to be almost perfect and that's such a huge standard to set yourself as an artist isn't it for a company to say well you know, we can, and of course the better we've got at it, the more we want to do that for our own
- MD** For ourselves
- CM** For ourselves because nothing else will do and it's a huge responsibility, you know its not always possible to do it, I don't mean artistically, I just mean practically, you know the opera this year was a huge challenge because people were expecting not only what Punchdrunk might do with a different art form and a particular art form at that, but physically you know? - How we could make opera work in the space, well, an opera or the operatic form work in a space with a 69 piece orchestra all those logistical things, it's a huge expectation that most of that audience brought with them.
- ME** I suppose the risk is as well is that people become, start to become comfortable in that situation they become kind of
- CM** Totally yeah
- ME** Veterans almost, and they, coz I mean someone I know has been to a number of your productions and he sort of said 'you have to do this' and he was sort of explaining to a friend, you hadn't 'you have to do this' and 'you have to sort of put yourself'.. and I thought you don't, you know
- MD** There's no rule book
- ME** There's not the same rules.



- CM** I don't know what you do about that though, erm, coz we weren't aware of that until probably Faust. By Faust we knew having done Firebird Ball and Sleep No More that audiences were coming with more expectation, sort of thinking they were know in advance what to expect and actually at that stage coming along really excited coz that's what they wanted, that's what they were coming for
- MD** That's what
- CM** But after Faust it became much more knowing in audiences like, sort of, I always use the man in the queue thing, some of the stuff you hear people saying to each other as you go up the stairs to, you know, get through before they come in, its extraordinary the amount of erm, the need that people have to be able to explain even before they've put the mask on, and that of course wasn't the case six years ago.
- MD** I think our work is much much more sophisticated than it was when we started six years without a doubt, my work anyway is definitely much more sophisticated than it was when we began, just because of that, that desire to challenge an expectation to match it and to challenge it and to give people what you think they want and then giving them something else that maybe they don't want.
- CM** Yeah, may be I'm just talking about the degree of surprise that the company's work trades on. Its harder to protect that as time goes by because, I mean a simple thing, they use the masks, we sort of realised that you can't do that forever, it's a great convention but it may be, might not work for everything, the show in Manchester the audience didn't wear masks, you know for example, so
- MD** The mask has become its own, I mean it is its own form for me, I think it's just its own form of theatre.
- ME** Yeah
- MD** I think we could potentially keep creating work with the mask and with these conventions if we chose to and it would be accepted as its own form so we're not going to do that but you know, it could be the alternative way of viewing a show.
- ME** Yeah, Why, I think its interesting because you look at, we as human beings in our every day lives interact with authored environments which you might kind of consider fictional, you know, we walk in to a shop when its an authored environment and yet we perceive it as being real, do you know what I mean, we don't see, we don't walk into H&M for example and go 'this is a', you know 'this is a complete'
- CM** Space capsule or whatever
- ME** Yeah, exactly, its not all fake it's a real experience and I think erm, that we do constantly engage with, you know, towns, cities are an authored environment and so almost there is that kind of, I don't know where I was going with that, but there is that kind of, you know, to divide kind of Punchdrunk performance and as a non-reality, is quite interesting, coz its

- CM** Felix talks about hyper-reality a lot, which, if some things back to what you were saying earlier on that I think certainly two of the devices are really critical to how people make sense of it or distinguish between whether they've got lost in a different reality or not or whether they're just in a recognisable thing and that's the level of detail that some of the design goes in for which can just stun you into believing, you know, momentarily that you're in a different world, and then the performers themselves because they're behaving in a way that isn't like the shop assistant, you know, entirely, but is only just slightly different so you're not quite sure if, you know..
- MD** Yeah, I mean it's the, you know, it's an atmosphere that's on, if for what atmospheres and they do actually when... often our show begins sometimes an atmosphere isn't settled and if you feel like you've walked into a HMV shop or a museum, and we have to fix that coz we haven't yet an atmosphere kind of temperature gauge actually, that's a huge barometer in terms of setting the world aside in terms of realities, hyper realities and we play on you know, in terms of sound tracks and sound worlds we play very much on those cinematic, the way that cinema pulls into a story and distances you from the real world, I mean it's all of those tricks to the whoosh you into a hyper reality quickly, yeah it is interesting.
- ME** I mean when you start to model reality you realise that it is only a set of conventions as a performance is as, you know, a more conventional piece of fiction it meant, and actually if for example you were to put on show that mimicked exactly the conventions of reality, then without any indication that it wasn't reality, then people would just believe it I think because there's no demarcation of the fiction as it were, of the performance and I think its all those kind of
- MD** There is all of those both realities are in place actually though, I mean its like, there's a reality, the level of reality and a hyper reality that's where they meet, you know so that the real experience of walking round a corner, or opening a door into a room, the reality of what, the reality of the way you negotiate an everyday space is there fundamentally in the concept.
- ME** It's a physical reality perhaps not a thematic reality
- MD** Yeah, yeah, but then we manipulate that so that you walk round a corner, you see something, you walk round another corner, you open a door, you open another door and you enter a dark space or there's another door behind it, you're jolted out of your real world you know, so its yeah
- ME** Yeah that's interesting, I hadn't thought of

**CM** I was just getting side tracked there thinking about playwrights really or you know, the idea of drama and what its, where its evolved to in the attempt to be a kind of barometer of reality and you know, there's been all sorts of, particularly in the last two or three hundred years, notions about realism and so on and how you can present reality in a fictional way and erm, its interesting isn't it because it's a long time since I thought about any of this, but I mean Greek theatre was attempting to make things very immediate but in a highly stylised kind of way, I mean including the covering the actor's faces in these immovable masks as a way of mediating reality really or explaining it but in a, even then in accepting that reality is something quite intangible, I'm not being very articulate, but you know what I'm saying

**MD** Yeah

**CM** And so you get play writes like Ibsen who are trying to sort of convince you that what you're watching is real people doing real things and real things are happening to them and yet its incredibly artificial by its very nature when you put people into the situation, you've already got a lot more chance of bringing reality to life than switching it on and off.

**MD** And that, and I'm sorry to play my dance card again, but that's actually where dance and choreographic process and dance history plays such as massive part in that when you go see a really evocative piece of dance theatre, good dance theatre like C de la B or Vanderkeybus or Pina Bausch, it is very real what's happening to the body on that stage in that moment of time is very real, it's not fake, people are exhausted, people are sweating or they're crying or in some cases they're bleeding, you see their reality playing out ahead of you and I think that's why this work draws itself so, aligns itself so closely to the physical embodied world as opposed to the world that's mediated through voice.

**ME** You can so easily be.. convey none truths in, you know what I mean, you can easily say something that isn't real

**MD** Exactly, exactly

**ME** But you can't, it's very hard to do something that isn't real.

**MD** Exactly, somebody says to I'm distraught, maybe you believe them, maybe you don't but if you see that state, you feel it, you don't need the words to communicate that to you, you

- CM** And there's something about being on your feet or at least in the same space rather than that separateness because that just appeals to your, most people's, natural ability to take it more seriously. I know that it can't be light hearted as well but to get more involved more quickly. Even that brilliant production last night, I did have a few tears, I often think if something's any good. I was trying to analyse why it was moving me so much and it was because of my own personal connections with what play write was saying, but of course my life story is nothing like that tragedy in that story, but there are some many things that touch you because, you know, in this particular case, because I've got children of my own, one of my sons is a reclusive person and the main character in that play is, it's about a girl whose life is completely destroyed by her shyness really and the way her mother then fantasies that really she's not that thing that she really is, and that person having to right to be that person, so it's a very, you know, there's all sorts of deep things about watching some body's life played out in front of you, but it would have been, Tennessee Williams, Punchdrunk should definitely look at Tennessee Williams as a source I think because he's dealing with these things that are apparently quite obvious and very dramatic and heightened but underneath them are these really minute things that people do to each other that just make it real
- MD** Very fragile isn't it
- CM** Very fragile, so anyway that's off track, but it's all in the same area isn't it, it like how
- ME** Absolutely
- CM** How conscious is any audience member of the reality around them let alone in the reality that you're inviting them into whether its in our work or a stage play, you know, are you analysing, you need to talk to audience you know to get, to try and get
- MD** And that's where the two immersions meet isn't it because its this sense of absorption of being absorbed in any event that, I mean in art, so to go back to something I was saying earlier about it
- CM** Yeah, absorption is a good word actually; maybe we should talk about absorption more than immersion.
- MD** Yeah absorption about the intimate and spectacular but there's a sense in our work that we push these individual journeys, we encourage, encourage, encourage but we have these events where we deliberately bring audience together and it's the shared experience of theatrical spectacle that we are absolutely pulling on them, erm,
- ME** Do you find audience members interact coz obviously being masked they're kind of disguised
- MD** We don't like it when they do that.
- ME** I mean not in a kind of 'oh I've come with my partner'

- CM** Sometimes I do
- ME** But in terms of kind of strangers
- CM** Yes, I mean think that's yes
- MD** They've done something, sometimes you have interesting, you have an audience rescuing or helping a performer
- CM** Yeah and you have, there's a very subtle thing that happens a lot which I love, unfortunately we can never really record any of our stuff as it's so dark, there's fantastic moments where people, it can be just five or six people on a landing and a fight breaks out in front of them, and on a great night they're so tuned in with each other that they all kind of move out the way at the same time. It's like watching, I've said this to you before I'm sure, it's like watching, they become dancers because they're so ready for anything and if a body comes in front of them they all scoot back at the same time. I mean it happened a lot Red Death coz there's lots of things
- MD** And in Faust actually
- CM** Faust I remember less so as
- MD** I remember the diner and they'd been moment when there was a kick being and a huge drop underneath and sometimes people would walk over his head... Faust was swinging
- CM** Faust always seemed to have so much more space around him than Red Death coz I don't know what that's about whether it's some kind of collective thing we've got deep in our psyche as herd animals that we do behave
- MD** Of course yeah coz they're not robots. I mean everyone has kinetics and that's what we play on
- CM** And by the same token, coz the opposite side of the coin is that you get some poor bloke whose stuck in the middle of something and just freezes and has no idea, or it's usually men, unless physically conscious women, women tend to be a bit more agile, just frozen, because there's something happening around them, they literally don't know what to do, they just put their arms by their sides and, but that's just as valid a reaction as it's also the kind of...
- ME** Yeah kind of, that reaction kind of creates an issue that I suppose then actors have to again engage within to work around them so

- CM** I mean one thing I would say which we haven't touched on in terms of that whole thing with the audience is, but we never embarrass the audience and a lot of work does, a lot of what people would call site-specific theatre, I don't mean that in a dismissive way, kind of puts people on the spot and that's where I think the mask helps of course coz then you might be feeling terribly embarrassed when nobody can see you, but we would never kind of want anybody to feel uncomfortable, which sounds a bit feeble but there's no point to it.
- ME** Not in that sense anyway
- CM** It has to be about empowering not about sort of
- MD** Awkwardness, you don't want people to feel awkward, you don't want them to feel abused or manipulated. They should always be sensual, exciting, it should always make you feel charged and greater than yourself rather than smaller than yourself, I mean, and its interesting you know, the performer, you know there's been occasions where, you know Felix and I had an experience where I've been pushed by somebody, and I've been pushed by a performer that's been too rough, and its really its like its, kind of a red alert, don't push people, don't shove them
- CM** You can be strong but you've got to respect the
- MD** You can be strong, you can be direct, but its about respect yeah
- CM** Well it's skill, its about knowing how firmly to place the hand or, most performers learn that, some people just do take advantage of it now and again coz they get too caught up in their own urgency
- MD** There's also a very fine line you know, and Felix often quite likes to really to push the edge of that, that's his nature as an artist and I would urge as much, in terms of an actual director
- CM** I think that's an interesting point, but I think Felix tries to always provide a get out, its just that you might not necessarily be quick enough to understand that you can get away from this or you don't have to, you know, it is that thing, it often happens in those more open ended one-to-one type things like in Faust. Where you had the shops, so they were you know, Katy Balfour character for example, before she became the granny, inviting you into their space and she can paint your nails or whatever she's going to do, but it'll go further if you play the game, but there'll always be the opportunity, the doors still open if you wanna, or there's a window and people can look in, or even when its behind a closed door, it's not, its taking the lead from the audience, or at least its on equal terms it's not about challenging it really so that you'd run out of the room screaming.

- MD** No, no there isn't but I think what I mean is there is an edge, there's like, I can feel more comfortable pushing the kind of sensual, erotic edge between an audience member and a performer, that feels a safer place to read something than a violent edge, so for me as a woman an edge of violence was, whereas I would push absolutely push the violence in the performance.
- CM** But I mean that's, Felix was sought of.. you should talk to him, maybe send him a few questions, I mean he was playing in the finale of *It Felt Like Kiss*, which was absolutely about trying to terrify the audience, but at least you started off as a group being scared and then it was broken up and you all ran off and you may have lost the people you were with but then you would catch up with people again, and then you had a choice to go together into the unknown, the very, very end, so potentially that was actually a very dangerous situation to put people in because they could have got hurt and even though we were very careful about how this was staged, so they shouldn't have hurt themselves but, you know some people respond to that particular challenge and they run like hell, like I do, I could have run, I mean I was running in the dark, you just think well if they'd been something in the way I'd have been knocked out, I was going to get away from what was behind me, you know what I mean, it's, and er, well anyway that's, there is a challenge in there, and in fact what this, I would say from my point of view leads me towards is looking at the whole way that you create something as producers that's apparently quite dangerous, but of course isn't going to hurt you, coz that's the other thing Felix is playing with, fear and you being responsible for yourself and again that in the modern world, that's something we're not really used to anymore coz we're also used to bravado and being with our mates or you know, 'aaah, that's alright, that's alright', so yes we're definitely trying to
- MD** And I'm really interested in pushing an emotional level of emotional danger within the performance which offers the context which then you go and receive, have an experience of you own with an audience, so yeah.
- CD** Good. This is very interesting. I'm sticking around for a bit, I'll check my emails, I don't have anything to do yet.
- ME** Erm, so I suppose this leads us on to or sort of discuss how people describe, you know, feedback to you, I suppose, if you, I mean if you'd been willing to allow me access to something, some kind of feedback stuff, I'd be really interested to see, I don't know if that's something you wanna do, if you don't, then that's absolutely cool as well.
- CD** There's a couple of documents you're very welcome to have, I mean there's both *Faust* and *Red Death* we did erm, we kept a log of all of the feedback received through the website.
- MD** And the book, the comments book, I almost like the old fashioned
- CD** They're harder because you'd have to come here to read them and they're not in the office anyway, but we always keep like a guest book and people write pages of about various

- MD** The difference between a comments book and online is that the comments book is immediate so you capture it
- CD** Of course and people are on the way out so they wanna say something
- MD** Sometimes its less thoughtful than the reflective feedback
- CD** Yeah, on balance the guest book does though provide the rawest responses lets say, but the website feedback is fascinating because er, one thing that you notice in it is, there's a kind of very collective sense as well as an individual response, erm, and of course the thing about the website feedback is that nobody has asked, we don't ask people to do that, they just do it. They send us an email. We haven't to date, I mean we might want to be more scientific about this in the future, I don't know, but you know, its people just wanting to, sometimes its just a simple saying thanks, but they'll always qualify it with you know, 'I took my husband and it was the most amazing night ever' or whatever, erm, they'll always be something personal attached to it, and then some people have actually literally sat down to write you quite a considered paragraph or two and in some cases page about, you know, what they experienced and that's quite, I've always found that a great pleasure because in my previous work with other companies, I've never had that kind of degree of interest, unless you've really begged them to, you know, fill in a questionnaire. This is people just voluntarily wanting to tell you, and sometimes actually its not necessarily always positive. Sometimes its, you know, if you'd just done this, you know, sometimes its quite, they want to be constructive
- MD** Sometimes they're horrible to be honest
- CD** And now and then you get some really rude ones just saying you're a bunch of wankers or whatever, you know, but I mean that's always true of everything
- ME** Just need to
- CD** By far and away there's kind of very position response from people and like I said before that need to communicate back which is fantastic
- MD** Yeah having to share something
- CD** And we've got to look after that really. We've always tried to. Its gets harder the more well-known you are because the picture gets more clouded.
- ME** Yeah
- CD** We'd hate it if people thought we were trying to manipulate.
- ME** I suppose that leads onto the next question really as to what do you think is behind, what do you think you've kind of captured in the imagination of the general public really that's kind of erm, worked behind your success for want of a better phrase?



- CD** Yeah, I mean on a really, I have to think about a question like that all the time, if you asking say, the Arts Council for money because its about trying to articulate why you're doing it and if I was being really, you know, at the risk of being pretentious, I think it is about trying to change people, it's a belief that art can change people, it can change them, not just their behaviour for half an hour, it will actually change them on an accumulative basis, I don't know if that's very popular thing now that we've culture that is so, you know, fragmented, and there is so many, like I said pulls on your attention. Do we any longer need iconic, you know, master artists or a canon of work or an art form that is distinguishable from another coz all those things are up for grabs, but I think there's something basically at the end of the day in there, which I was saying this Arts Council officer last night, that people will always want, and its something about the being in the moment, the live moment that I think people will always want to experience coz its not like anything else but that might be just me being very old fashioned and sentimental, you know
- MD** I agree
- CD** The power of art
- MD** I think on a really crass level its about, its something about being given permission to run around huge empty buildings.
- CD** Yes and that of course. Yeah I mean that's why I said I'm bordering on being pretentious there but on a different level, its just about pleasure.
- ME** Yeah. It's no surprise to me
- MD** Forbidden pleasure... That's different, its not a pleasure, it's about pleasure that's forbidden to us as
- CD** Yeah but some of it's just to your pleasure, it's a great pleasure in just listening to those two guys in the Mask of Red Death doing that ridiculous Victorian musical hall song so well, its completely random.
- MD** But I think going through a back door into a big empty building, you know, being given permission to play like a child.
- ME** Clearly triggers a response in people that has an importance really I think
- CD** I think so. I mean I'm personally am very optimistic about people's capacity to enjoy art, its not a very popular concept because you know, the accusation is always, 'oh but its just for a certain minority, there's only certain people that, you know, that have got either the capacity or the conditions in which they can enjoy it and it's a luxury for some people or art is inherently elitist and all the rest of it'. I don't think that's true otherwise I would personally involved in it so long, if it was some kind of self indulgence, I've never felt that, I've

always felt, coz you see it happen time and time again people, it affecting people and people being animated by it, and it can be sometimes quite rarified stuff, you know, goodness knows I not a big lover of opera but it's fantastic to see the audience with the opera we just did, at the end of the evening quite a, you know in some ways, predicable bunch of people being completely, do you know just the looks on people's faces is enough for me, not always

**MD** Yeah I don't if we turned people onto opera

**CD** I don't think it was, I'm not saying it was a transformative rollercoaster of success, there were lots of issues around it and problems with it, but erm, yeah, all I'm saying is we were able to take people, to shift them to a difference place and there will have been a lot of people there who that would have in one way or another been their first experience of something quite like that.

**MD** Yeah

**CM** Erm, yeah so I have great faith in sort of human beings capacity to go outside simple fixes

**MD** Yeah

**ME** Yeah, what I was going to say its no surprise really that an art form that places the audience at the centre of it is popular with the audience, you know what I mean, people like to be close to the centre of things, you know what I mean, so in away it's a fairly kind of obvious thing to happen really, you know,

**CD** Well either people love it or hate it.

**MD** Exactly some people have nearly forgotten about them, which is very funny.

**CD** I also think it's a cultural thing that people, sounds corny, but people are more active and so some of it encourages them to be active is more appealing than sitting down. Sounds really straightforward and obvious but I think that's true. People like doing things and they like to go and look for things and, you know, and they don't want things too packaged either I think, you know, or it's certainly that's definitely how Punchdrunk has always approached marketing, you know its not about trying to for you to know in advance what it is you're going to get, you do the opposite of that and leave it really mysterious and then people can come in, and you know, hopefully they come with as little baggage as possible, that's what Felix would always say as well, he doesn't want anybody to bring anything with them, or to feel that they need to bring something, of course on a practical level we deal with that a lot coz people will ask you, they'll say 'do I need to wear anything special', or 'what times does it start', you know and sometimes there's no simple answer to that question coz it, you know, of course there's a structure but its not, it doesn't play by those rules.

**ME** Yeah, yeah, its interesting coz we're going to a Secret Cinema tomorrow and they said oh you know you have wear a dressing gown, you have to bring some slippers in a bag, and if I don't wanna do that I just want to kind of

**CD** You don't have to, a friend of mine went the other night, he didn't and I said oh well didn't you feel really kind of conspicuous coz everybody else was dressed up as, I can't tell you, do you know which film it is?

**ME** No I don't

**CD** I won't tell you then, and he said 'no, no its fine', he didn't feel out of place at all.

**ME** Right that's okay then

**CD** But yeah they do.

**ME** its interesting that it kind of got

**MD** How much did you pay for the tickets?

**ME** Twenty five quid I think

**CD** Blimey that's not bad

**ME** Yeah, but erm just whole kind of having to do stuff before you get there really kind of

**CD** Well I know it is kind of difficult

**ME** Felt a bit put out.

**CD** No I think you're right, I think we are talking here about doing something the reverse of that which is to not, you don't want people to be prepared at all,

**ME** No exactly

**CD** Ideally, you know, it's the old cliché we might have been through.

**MD** Also we

**CD** Felix would also just say a time and a place and not even a title and hope that people would turn up.

**MD** And we do that work, we aim to provide you with whatever you need for that evening. It is quite interesting.

**ME** I think its really important and I didn't realise until I was put in the situation where I had to prepare and I thought you know, actually, you know I'm quite a busy person

- CD** You don't really want to do it
- ME** I don't want to learn the lyrics to whatever
- CD** I mean in some ways I'm going to compare a
- MD** Why you going to Secret Cinema
- ME** Coz I feel its like kinda of relevant and I want to experience it
- MD** Oh okay, so you're going with your research head on rather than being a
- ME** As a punter, well a bit of both you know what I mean
- MD** Yeah, probably your punter, your average punter of Secret Cinema will being going coz
- CD** Coz you do dress up
- MD** They want to dress up and they want to... because that's
- CD** And that's fine provide people, like you're saying, I think I'd been the same, as long as it doesn't stop you going, then its ok, but it could be a reductive thing in that it only becomes for people who want to play to that level, erm, coz we're in the future looking at, in a sense, nothing to do with Secret Cinema, looking a new models for Punchdrunk work that is, that possibly inshorthand places much more emphasis on play, and I'll be interested to see how that develops because I'm one of these people that hates fancy dress or any sense that you're on show, because I think if evolves naturally in a show like in Red Death you were given a coin at the beginning of the evening, and then if you wanted to, or actually get in there you could hire a cloak and a hat if you wanted too, you didn't have to, erm, and that, like you're saying that was us providing the equipment rather than, it's a different thing to actually, I mean it's fantastic you're asking people to enter into a game, but I think we would never be quite so overt as that coz it borders on something else which is about, it's that whole argument about kind of conscious and unconscious actors, you know, are the audience actors in a Punchdrunk show, I would say they are, but A its not our intention to make them do that, they become that, maybe in what you're describing you're already saying you can be an actor in this, well I know that's what Secret Cinema are about, you know, basically its using that model.
- MD** Also the clash between the like aesthetic of, like I imagine at Secret Cinema it would look great ....
- CD** Yeah's three hundred people dressed up in a certain way and they're in a certain environment and there's a certain movie to go with it, of course its fantastic sense of occasion
- MD** But in our work to date, well these pieces we're talking about, not necessarily in the future, but you have to allow possibility for the performance to elevate itself from the audience, and in Mask of the Red Death we, people had capes on and we did have people with hats and then we took all the hats off people because it was too bold, it was actually too bold an aesthetic

- CD** And most of the capes got nicked only a few weeks in, but erm, there's something there actually Max again not comparing it at all to what you described Secret Cinema about the sort of ownership of the experience really isn't it, it has to be, for us I think you would say you want people to build that for themselves coz it will make, it will have more meaning, and be more memorable we hope... eventually, coz I think one thing we are about it's not, you know, it's sort of steering away from superficial things, which why its irritating sometimes if a reviewer will say you know, 'well this is just a bunch of sensory experiences' because you know they have their opinion, but they're not trying hard enough really basically if they can dismiss something that's actually very, very layered as Max is saying, you know they're not looking hard enough, or they're trying too hard sometimes as well, and they get what they see as what's in front of them and not going further with it. Interesting.
- ME** I think the thing with secret cinema as well is that you talk about kind of making people feel awkward and I think that does make people feel awkward
- CD** Some people would feel awkward and like you're saying it might be the difference between going and not going, when you sit there and think 'do I really want to dress up, no I don't really, aaah but I wanna go', you know and it puts you in that funny, slightly compromised position, I mean I'm just naturally not a dresser upper
- MD** Well years ago not now
- CD** I might have been when I was, yeah that's true
- MD** As a child
- CD** Yeah as a child. No in fact dressing up is lovely, I don't have anything against dressing up, but I much prefer it be something that seems to evolve than happen, by accident.
- ME** Yeah, the place rather it it, oh I dunno
- CD** I mean actually to be fair though, we ought to tell you that coz you've probably forgotten this coz I have, with Mask of the Red Death we actively encourage people to dress up, we did
- MD** Oh we did but not in fancy dress
- CD** I mean we didn't specify anything, we just encouraged people to, especially at weekend nights to come kind of in the vein of... and sometimes people did turn up in quite elaborate Victorian outfits, so we have toyed with that actually and forgotten we'd done that.
- MD** And very different that being specific, I mean we just encouraged people to look fancy
- CD** Dress up a bit, smart
- MD** If they wanted to look fancy for the weekend to be part of a party.

**CD** Anyway

**MD** We digress

**ME** So kind of moving on to processes and practices, in terms of the text, I mean obviously, you know, you can see by looking at the text there appears to be a short start jumping off point as opposed to a you know something that kind of limits, but how would you kind of articulate that in your area of words really?

**MD** Erm, I mean the text is incredibly important to the final production in that we take it on all of its levels and on its dimensions, so its really important that its embedded within the scenography that's its embedded within the score, that its embedded within the action and the choreography, erm that's it at its core that the structure of, you know the contents of the text is really embedded in the work I think the sense that the text is unimportant to us as a company I think comes from a sense that you're, the way that you receive the text as an audience is through choice so therefore it's, it feels random and it feels fragmented, but it's very rigorous, and it's very structured, but we don't pay very much attention to the psychology of the text, we pay some attention to it, but we don't sit around a table for weeks and take a sort of psychological approach to the text, and that's not to be dismissive of that approach, that's just to be realistic about what we have to achieve in the time, I mean if you have longer, I love to sit around and talk for three weeks about the text, but we don't really always allow ourselves that time - our reactions tends to be much more immediate and more subtle, and in terms of, I remember someone asking me once how commitment the company were to storytelling, and we, yeah a really interesting question because there's a clash, there's a massive clash and it's this is what we were talking about earlier in that there's actually two events and there are two products and there are two works in place, with the work we create without the audience in it, which we've crafted, which is where the storytelling, where at least half of the main characters is really clear, where all of the characters pretty much have a sensual arc, but the audience, when the audience come into that, because of the way they receive it is non-linear then it can seem like that we've given up on the storytelling.

**ME** Right

**MD** Whereas we haven't its there, but we just ask you to find it and follow it if that should be your desire. I suppose we kind of, its anti that kind of Hollywood, I always use this quote, but it's a really, I keep it with me all the time and its we're really influenced by David Lynch's film making, who would be one kind of heroes in terms of content, concept, aesthetics, sound all of those things and he talks about narrative, he's anti-Hollywood and he talks about narrative being a formidable barrier to the dreaming mind, and that always really strikes a chord with me because its about, you know, goes back to that sense about wanting audiences to tap into the work on a dreamlike, sensory, spontaneous, immediate level, and if you're, in order to get an audience to follow a narrative, then you have to be more overtly manipulative and you have to push that structure upon them.

**ME** Yeah

- MD** Whereas we want the structure to come to them and for them to find their way through that journey.
- ME** So its almost like you have to reduce those kind of markers of narrative to achieve that effect really as opposed to
- MD** We don't reduce the markers of narrative, if anything we boost them up because otherwise it would be absolutely invisible, er but so the markers of narrative are as big as we can make them but in this world where you in a big building over six floors you might stumble across Macbeth murdering Duncan but you have no context of that until perhaps you see him later on in the banquet when Banquo's ghost enters and maybe the scene you've seen earlier sort of make sense, then maybe you start to put them
- ME** So their there sort of in retrospect almost but not you know, when you're experience something you don't feel driven to kind of chase them in a linear...
- MD** No, but I mean you might do, some people are, and we hope, we want to put that out as an offer, sometimes its about luck and it's about opportunity and it's about
- CD** I was about to say its about the opportunity for 'I didn't see that coming' rather than 'I saw that coming', which is what Hollywood is about, particularly the more familiar you get with it. I'm sure as a writer you're aware of the conventions of a movie, within the first five minutes you sort of can work it out.
- ME/** Yeah, yeah, absolutely
- MD**
- CD** So then it's about how people respond to that, 'I didn't see it coming' and that's when they could go flying off to chase, cause they're making a momentary sense of something that might five minutes later have turned into something, like 'right okay, it's just children' – something's going on that
- MD** And when we're kind of planning the shows, like we plan pretty much everybody's journey through the space and that, to a large extent that's narrative driven but then there's also those lovely random moments when we just have character A and character B and a space that's empty and they need to meet, so therefore they, we have to create a scenario which brings this space and these characters and that moment in time together, that's becomes part of our devising process so, I mean actually we are writers, we write, we write a script, I mean it's not the words that a performer delivers but we give them a script in terms of their journey and their scenarios and their situations, and we invent affairs, and murders and
- CD** Back stories
- MD** Addictions, yeah

- CD** Yeah, but I mean that in some ways is quite a conventional thing that you do when you're analysing a play in rehearsal, the performers generally, using decent methods of trying to create
- MD** But the backstory becomes the front story
- CD** Yeah yeah, but of course but I
- MD** That's what's really exciting about it, the offstage becomes the onstage
- CD** Again it's how you interpret a written script is fascinating as play write producers have scripted and see their work and they see things that they may not have realised were there, but the added dimension is that its made real through the performer and so the script takes on an even more of a resonance so that's the interesting thing about plays when you read them it's a very different experience as well isn't it when you read, coz you're using imagination to picture what the writer's really... but if you make that become a real situation, you've only got your imagination to work with really, coz we don't direct people about where to go or any of that stuff as you know
- MD** Then its all you know, it's the whole kind of ideas of deconstruction in terms of how we read meaning, how we make meaning and all those factors that influence it, narrative structures make or suggest that meaning is fixed and it just isn't and I think our work really
- CD** Fluid, yeah that's good, that's true actually
- MD** Really pushes that that fluidity, and I love that about it, I love that you come from the banquet and you're lost within a pine tree or someone grabs your hand and it's the *seemingly* randomness of it, the spontaneity of it
- CD** Yeah and those moments where you, even if you're familiar with the show coz obviously we chance to see things quite a few times, you come out of a certain space and wander off in 'I'll go this way tonight' or 'I won't go left I'll go right' and you might spend five minutes and nothing happens, you can't sort of, well nothing happens you don't find anything, you don't see anybody really, happened a lot in Sleep No More I noticed this second time around. It's not about knowing where things might be, it's about what just, mainly the time factor, you can't really be sure what might be going on at any moment even though



CD it is happening in the same places at the same time on a regular basis each night, the tiny things that happen will just lead you to a lull as I would call it, lets be positive about it, sometimes its really frustrating coz you think oh no I've... what am I going to do ...and then something happens and it just brings it and it's been important that you've had that odd funny empty dead space behind you coz it really illuminates the thing you've encountered.

MD As a director of this kind of work, I have to be absolutely focused in terms of if I'm on a show and my intention is to give feedback to people, I have to make a decision before I begin

CD Yeah not to be distracted

MD What I'm going to do, who I'm going to follow and what I'm gonna, so I can't allow myself to be pulled off and drawn, and if, coz I can still have my own experience as an audience within that work when I'm not being a director of it

ME Yeah, yeah

MD So its kind of, yeah it's, I mean I suppose to be... to honour Felix, it's the brilliance of the concept and I mean what we've done with it as a company is make a concept that can exist for lots of audience, more audience, than a few, and make it and make it much much more complex and actually it's the complexity of it, the absolute complexity of it and the military operation which allows it to breathe which kind of make it this really solid body of work

ME Yeah. I've got to say the thing that almost amazes me most is the level of organisation that clearly goes on like from you know finding new buildings, setting everything, its just seems like a you know a

CD It is a... if somebody said to me now you know 'do that' I'd think of god that's going to be such a lot of work, but its partly coz we've all gone on the road together with it really, coz there wasn't, prior to Max joining the company and when I met Felix the same time, Punchdrunk had done really interesting stuff but actually on like not just... for a tiny group of people only for a couple of nights in some cases, so all the kind of seeds were there but you know it was really... Sleep No More was the thing that actually turned the corner because the previous show The Tempest, which neither of us were involved in, don't know if you saw it, I went to see, it was very shackled to Shakespeare's text and it was beautiful to look at but it was clearly asking too much of the audience because your instincts are trying to construct

Shakespeare's play coz it was all there, all the scenes were there acted out, all the characters were there just spread around a building and I found it really disappointing, coz I could see that it was brilliant but I didn't really want to watch The Tempest.

ME Right, yeah, yeah

MD I think actually one of the bigger turning points for us was actually a turning point but... was really, I think it interesting , I was thinking about this recently but we made Firebird relatively quickly after Sleep No More a year after Sleep No More we really upped the scale of the building but we kept the size of show pretty much the same size and we spread the show over the building and what happened was the design, you know Felix and his new team then met pretty, you know not not completely significantly met the design challenge of working in a bigger space and the show didn't match that, it wasn't big enough, it wasn't enough and you know so for me it felt that the show failed so that so that feels like my responsibility so when we came to do Faust in this epic space, epic space means, does mean more audience, so we upped the cast but as well as upping the cast we need to up the complexity of the layers of narrative so actually there was enough stuff for audience to find and enough complexity within it

ME Yeah

MD So actually that shift from Firebird to Faust was huge because we were dealing with scale in a much more effective way. That's actually what I'll be thinking about in New York.

CM Everything seems to be about scale really. How do you make something intimate when you know you're in a massive building within five minutes, maybe twenty minutes and all those risks you take that there'll be people who may have to be, you know, walk a lot before they'll meet anything or there'll be people who are just lucky and everything just happens in front of them, or you only ever see you know, one thing that makes any sense.

MD I don't mind those chances I enjoy the fact that people can take those chances with the work.

CM No I just thinking in terms of scale because you know we're grappling at the moment with how you can do a Punchdrunk show say for eight hundred people

ME Right

CD Er, I don't know, erm the maximum figures that's the challenge really, then its sounds like its coming down to a way of zoning a building so that you know you're containing a certain number of people in a place before they can move onto the next place, and of course you try and apply the same rules so that it didn't feel like you were being corralled or anything, erm, but it's a huge question mark over that as to what the final experience might feel like and is it possible to manage that number of people on the move and give them all a

MD Yeah, we were all very nervous moving from forty people

CD Yeah, I know we were. It's the scale, that's what I'm saying

MD To two hundred people, yeah its all

ME And is the sort of single setting of one building important to the company as a work or have you considered or have you considered a kind of you know using multiple smaller venues?

CD Yeah, interesting

MD Well, yes

CD It's a hot topic. I'm just going for a quick pee actually.

MD In terms of sort of work to date or not ...? Yeah we thought about buildings with certain, that sense of journey and it is something that new Punchdrunk, new work has been thinking about but it always comes down to how do you keep the experience and the atmosphere

ME Yeah

MD How do you..

ME Join the time in between

MD Yeah exactly. When we've used buildings.. In the opera week we joined two buildings together but you know people just went through a very crass tunnel on a funny little route but it allowed, it didn't actually, you still sort of lost it a little bit but you want to try and keep so its that transitional space. I suppose the challenge is to make the transitional space as exciting, or as relevant to the location.

ME Yeah, yeah, Integrate that into the performance somehow or other

MD Yeah

ME Question whether it is actually transitional space or whether it's still *the space* as it were

MD Yeah or the transition goes away or becomes the space but it's a different kind of space

ME Yeah

MD But Colin should talk to you a little before he finishes about some of the new work or some of the new ideas dealing with taking audiences over huge distances

ME Right. think Felix mentioned something about when I had the interview before about getting people on a plane and taking them off into... (laugh) dunno really, but yeah, so

yeah I'll get him to talk about that

MD Okay

ME Erm, So how, I'm kind of aware of time, how are you

MD What time is it so...

ME Its ten to six

MD Yeah actually I've got to go

ME Right, no that's absolutely fine. It's gone way over what I expected to be honest

MD I've got to rehearse at quarter to seven and I've got to get into town so I need to go, I'm sorry

ME Please don't worry

MD Goodness we've been chatting for ages

ME I thought an hour might have gone, I didn't think best part of two hours had gone

MD I know we've been chatting for ages. Oh well it was lovely talking to you... for ages.

ME Yeah you to

MD I hope you get on well with your course

ME Thank you.

## **Appendix VI:**

### **Interview with Gry Worre Hallberg**

**(Fiction Pimps // House of Futures // Sisters Hope // Club de la Faye //  
The Poetic Revolution)**

## **Context / Perspective / Plans**

### **How would you describe your work?**

The manifestation of 'Cracks' in everyday life – Sensory fictive parallel universes that aim at activating the aesthetic dimension of experience and reflection, to enrich any given situation and the persons involved in it.

### **Aims – what do you hope to achieve with your work and how do you go about achieving it?**

Look here: [www.thepoeticrevolution.com](http://www.thepoeticrevolution.com) (site will continuously be developed), [www.sistershope.dk](http://www.sistershope.dk) [www.fictionpimps.com](http://www.fictionpimps.com) and [clubdelafaye.wordpress.com](http://clubdelafaye.wordpress.com)

### **How do you see the role of the audience in relation to your work?**

As written in our Club de la Faye manifest:

“The marvels of social energy: Inclusion

For us the greatest potential in influencing audience lies in their inclusion into our fictional universe. We are not a bunch of artists with the 'look at me' attitude. It is intriguing to think how much more one can discover about oneself in relation to an issue/story art touches upon, if one gets a chance to be creatively involved on equal terms. It's a meaningful exchange process that makes a difference for both us and audience: they are expected to co-create fiction by taking an active part. From the other side they are given an inspiring playground for expressing themselves as unique individuals. What performing gives us is interactive unpredictability. We enrich people by creating provocative framework, but we are also being challenged by them – in that way we get influenced by the audience during the whole process of improvised interactions, and not only during the final feedback they give by applauding or not. It is also important that interactions can be silent and indirect,

merely based on sharing the same space. There is however no pressure on any of the interacting sides to be active, as both has freedom to stay “spectators”. In the meeting between our developed fiction and the situation we come to perform in, we create new situations, thereby showing the potential for breaking conventional structures of behavior. We provide an opportunity to experience a setting in a new light. This, we hope, will call for the imagination, lust and will to change, as well as acknowledging that it can be done.

Where we work, we collaborate with the situation, we come to perform in. The structure is never fixed, and it is also up to the participants to develop the rules of the game. For example at Jazzhouse – We come to their place, and interact with people on their terms. We enter the stage of everyday life – we boost and pimp this place and this situation, but we do not define it – it is not a closed art piece but an interaction with everyday life!”

### **What have reactions been by audience members to your work?**

Wish you spoke Danish because then you would understand what was said in these films that are documentations of audience members immediate reactions in the post-liminal phase (right after having left the liminal phase of the manifestation): [http://fictionpimps.com/?page\\_id=37](http://fictionpimps.com/?page_id=37) (see The Crack day one & two), but maybe you can sense the impact that the manifestation have had. We would never call them audience members something corresponding to the fiction. In the case of The Crack, we would call the visionaries. In the manifestation we are about to manifest this summer, the fiction is a travel agency: Future Mind Tours a Bureau Reisende the participants will be ‘travellers’...

### **How have they described your work to you?**

Among others: As cracks in their everyday life. As a sensuous space that is allowing another mode of being. As a place where time and space are dissolved.

**How do you see the relationship between reality and fiction working in your performances?**

Check out this project for my ideas on the relationship between reality and fiction in my work as it is an exploration of this: <http://eour.wordpress.com/>

## **Processes / Practice**

**Can you give me an overview of the process of devising a production?**

Our work is very much inspired by the formation of the ritual as structured by the ethnographer Arnold van Gennep (1909) with its pre-liminal (separation), liminal (transition) and post-liminal (reincorporation) phase. Thus there will always at least be a space serving the double function of preparing the visitors for the separation with everyday life in the pre-liminal phase and reincorporating them in the post-liminal phase. As part of the post-liminal phase interviews with visitors was carried out, allowing the experience in the liminal (transitory) phase to integrate into everyday life, by verbalizing and reflecting upon how the somatic teachings could serve as something constant in the everyday life and not just as a quick fix.

**What, if any, thought do you put into the scenes and dialogue of your piece – is this prepared or improvised or somewhere in-between?**

Scenes and dialogue is improvised within the fictional framework, that then on the other hand is pre-written. However certain rituals and techniques will be up our sleeve and introduced when it is considered to benefit the expression as a whole.

**How has the process of creating changed over the course of the company's history?**



Generally our work seeks to encourage rather than provoke, to inspire and include rather than scare and exclude. And generally we are continuously in a process where we seek to establish this to a still larger degree.

**What have you learned about the act of producing such work?**

So many things, Mark! Among other: That if you take the chock-effect away you have to seduce the audience in some other way, refinement of techniques on how to activate the aesthetic dimension, the sensuous life and the poetic self. That the participants must learn to create sensations and universes like this in their own life, not to be depended on some external force/source to create it for them, and in continuation of this, to resist the temptation to seduce them without making the methods of seduction (more or less) transparent. One way of creating transparency is by showing the transformation of the performers and by talking about the fiction and the performative possibilities on a theoretical meta-level in the fiction.

**What have you learned about the way audiences experience your work?**

As a crack in their everyday life, and we want to inspire them and even teach them how to make their own cracks in their everyday life. This fall I will do a course on this on Aarhus University.

**Future**

**How do you see the company and performances developing in the future? – in what directions do you see yourselves going?**

To inspire others to take part in The Poetic Revolution ([www.thepoeticrevolution.com](http://www.thepoeticrevolution.com))