

Under the Vaulted Sky
Lee, Rosemary (2014) (*Under the Vaulted Sky*) [Performance]

Abstract

Conceived and directed by Rosemary Lee
Choreographed by Rosemary Lee with input from Fiona Millward, the core team and performers.

Design Site and Costumes Louise Belson

Music composed by Terry Mann

Rosemary Lee was invited to be artist in residence in Milton Keynes for IF (International Festival Milton Keynes) 2012-14 to explore the possibility of creating a large-scale site-specific participatory work for the Cathedral of Trees, an arboretum planted in the footprint of Norwich Cathedral.

After initial research into the feasibility of achieving such project, the project was realized and presented at IF 2014 and involved almost 100 local performers, professional and non professional of all ages. The audiences (around 200-300 per performance) were led on a promenade journey through the tree cathedral, with 9 performances over five days at the start of the biannual festival.

Rosemary Lee's research questions in creating *Under the Vaulted Sky* were numerous,

How to-

- create a journey through a public site that had a theatricality and immersive quality despite the site being close to a main road and the performances being in daylight,
- create a journey with a large audience through narrow entryways and pathways but still retain the timing and pacing of a shaped set structure
- involve the audience unwittingly in a processional work
- allow the audience to enter into the contemplative quality of the work with no assistance from recorded sound or lighting, so they ended their journey whispering or silent
- involve people of all ages and experiences in a movement led project, where they would perform in close proximity to their audience
- create a strong professional ethos and performance presence in the performers
- deal with all weather eventualities despite working outdoors with no access to any indoor sites during the production and performance period.

Her influences included Norwich Cathedral, iconic imagery from various cultures, the poetry of John Clare, the colour and ornamentation of medieval art.

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