

ROOMS with a View: Evaluation from the cast of 'Speak as You find'

Older Participants:

Challenges/difficulties/ways to improve

- Sometimes nervous but amazed words just came out of your mouth without thinking.
- Not challenged 'played safe'
- It was a process of continuing education which was good for my brain so that dementia does not set in. (Henrietta)
- I didn't know what the others were doing because we did not see any other group and what they were doing. (Rachael)
- Less reliance on text
- Enjoyed the whole process the feedback was brilliant. Don't think I would change it (BB)
- Audience had to listen to the monologues only once, but we had to listen to them during practicing and performance both, say 20 times altogether and it was too much to listen to the very long ones. It was tiring and I was nearly going to sleep (Gita)
- If I am in a similar programme next time, I would like the rules for everybody to be laid out at the beginning. Also the participants to come together at times to have a say as to how things can improve and help each other (Gita)
- Getting here (public transport)
- More audiences from the community- good for them to see... for QM to use resources and expertise with a group like us. More men to come.
- More music. A type of concert. This is too university like and it's very advanced. We would have enjoyed ourselves more if it was a concert. (Rachael)
- Everything was OK with me (Henrietta)
- Learning my words although I wrote me own monologue the fact that I had to share with Sally made it difficult because I had to be specific with my words which I'm not good at. When I done it on my own I was more confident and really enjoyed it. (BB)

Amarjit:

- Enjoyed the whole process!
- Admired Sue for managing such a big group.
- Didn't like public transport.
- The glamour of the sound studio.
- Performance is like meditation
- The university open day – loved the facilities- I should be an associate!
- I liked working with young people – everyone had a laugh.
- Gave my friends and family to someone I just met who had never seen theatre before – she was mesmerised. She felt so many stories were healing and they were talking about her hard work!

Gita:

- Nice to meet people

- Learn to co-operate with people even if you find it difficult. Even if you don't agree with them.
- People adjusted really well, if there are new things give them a go. It was really enjoyable!
- When we were shortening the monologues it should have been uniform across everyone.

Rachael:

- You people help us old people. We do something active with children they are so well behaved. So many people are helpful; if I needed help someone helped me. I enjoyed everything.
- Togetherness, we are just like one family. Means a lot as it is just me and my child at home. Being with lots of people it makes me happy.

Henrietta:

- People have different personalities, different to mine. Hard to accept it and had to try to find something good in their personalities.
- Used facial gestures and sounds as well as lines
- What have you taken away from the project? That I have been made an actress.

BB

- Good experience. First time I stood up and spoke in front of people. Not bad for BB!
- I've always worked on a market stall so the estate agent scene came easily
- I can do anything I set my mind to.
- I found it really hard to learn my lines. I couldn't work it. But I done it in the end.

Young people:

Why do you think we didn't do it with just young people:

- Because to connect older and younger generations together.
- Typically – some young people see old people as lazy, boring, someone who lived their life and that's it. But when you get to know them they are 'recycled teenagers', they are funny!

Why do you think this project is important to them?

- Able to play again
- Our story was kind of plain compared to old people because they've experienced so much more than us. In the monologues.
- It was nerve racking having an audience so close and interacting.
- Awkward having MM at Mulberry school. We preferred it when it was somewhere else, we had more energy.
- Rhoda really enjoyed the sewing machine debate
- The weird places she rehearsed – the cemetery (Shahanah)
- I'm going to miss this place
- We want more than one session a week

- The dress rehearsal really boosted our confidence because that applause was so good. I realised we were doing this for an audience.
- It went so fast!
- Getting out the house on Saturdays
- It was good that we got to know each other well enough to tease each other
- A key moment was getting our costumes fitted. Then we knew it was real.
- I could always wake up for this but not for school.

After the show

- Felt glowing and elated
- Felt proud but also have really good memories of the drama we did at Bancroft
- Liked meeting Delwar Hussain afterwards and knowing he was pleased with what we did with his story

Challenges

- Disagreements meant people came out of their shells
- I couldn't come every time and I minded missing stuff
- Do you think the adults found anything challenging? No, not really

Table hosting group:

Winnie: It was a mind blowing experience. I'd never done it with so many people it was so good.

Joyce: It's my first time at this experience and I enjoyed it very much. The people around the table were so warm. Tea and cake helped. They told their story and it felt so natural. It seemed like they were comfortable and happy to do this.

Designers/Sound:

Great experience, sounded very good. Seemed well put together. Sewing machine funny I didn't get tired of it.

Nicole got me involved in it. Loved doing sound working on the interviews. New experiences. Honour to do it.

Got on with Dan. Like walking in promenade.

Enjoyed everything, found it interesting when there as stuff to do with sound, when nothing was going on it was boring.

Yasmin: Liked having to brainstorm and creating own ideas. September workshops – interested in theatre, seen plays. Worked with Chickenshed before. Worked in intergenerational pieces before. Enjoys it.

Highlight:

Audience enjoyed it as it was learning about their area or learned about it if they weren't.

Audience response

Variation in audience

Something that can be transferred to other boroughs

Hearing people's stories

