

TURNED ON ITS HEAD present...



SPONGE

*"Children are like sponges.
They absorb all your strength
and leave you limp, but give
them a squeeze and you get
everything back."*

SPONGE

A performance for babies aged 4 months to children under 4, and their grown-ups

Touring Autumn 2016 – Spring 2017

The Spark Arts, Big Imaginations and Turned On Its Head present...

SPONGE

Roll, squeeze and pop yourself through a new malleable kind of family dance show, set to a 1970s-influenced score, perfect for babies, young children and families. *Sponge* is about all things spongy, a child's ability to soak information up like a sponge and the squishy, squashy texture that fascinates children and adults alike.

Dance company Turned On Its Head makes exciting participatory theatre for early years, taking children on a creative journey, engaging audiences throughout its performances and encouraging lots of family interaction. Everything in *Sponge* can be made with simple materials at home so there's plenty more fun to be had after leaving the theatre.

"Utterly charming, delightful and captivated the children and families. So deceptively simple and beautifully crafted!" Polka Theatre

"It is fun, joyful, and beautiful. I left the performance feeling stupidly happy, and my baby



girl enjoyed it too!" Polka Theatre

Logos: Big Imaginations, Z Arts, Spark Arts Council.

With thanks to Attenborough Arts, Curve, Sydney Heath.

About Turned On Its Head

Formed in 2010 the company exists to push the boundaries of participatory dance and theatre performance for children under 4 and their families. The company's work is characterised by research phases where they engage with their audiences in exploring ideas and concepts for each piece of work.

All the part of part choreographed, part improvised with the children's reactions and participation created surprising and highly engaging theatre.

'Shiny' toured nationally from 2013-2016, which included runs as Dance Umbrella first orbital tour in Oct 2014.

This year the company are researching two new projects, the touring show 'Sponge' and research into the neuroscience of play and interaction working with a Developmental Psychologist. The two projects exist side by side to inform and influence each other.

See R&D and rehearsal footage here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5r7x2HFQbE>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lwYFXfNiRM

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwxURt2DznA

Turned On Its Head

The company was formed in 2010 by Liz Clark and Oksana Tyminska, who, between them, have 40 years' experience of community and choreographic dance practice and have been touring performance work for under 5's to major venues & festivals including Dance Umbrella, Polka Theatre and Brighton Dome.

The Company's purpose is to engage young audiences and their families in a journey of discovery and imagination.



SPONGE

As a company they believe that dance can engage and be valued by all ages and abilities. They are committed to create the very highest quality performances that fully embrace, celebrate and honour the diversity of communities. They believe that live theatre should be a shared experience where audiences, including the very young and the very old, bring an important aesthetic to performances that is both valued and showcased.

“I’ve never seen a company making work for the very young that negotiates the relationships with children and parents so beautifully and it allows you to be far more daring and surprising with the kids than most companies can.”

Rosie Hunter, Executive Director, Peoples Palace Project

Artistic Director LIZ CLARK says: “We want to make theatre that places experiences of the child at the heart of it. For me, making this work was a response to the frustrations of taking my own non-hearing son to theatre performances and him not understanding that he couldn’t get on stage or touch the magical world that was being presented. Oksana and I wanted to create theatre that was close up, personal, invitational and above all, inclusive. Why shouldn’t a child’s first experience of theatre be about being so close to the performer they can touch them?”

We also want to co-create our theatre with our audience. What you’ll find when you come to see our work is that the children become immersed in the theatrical experience on their own terms and our performances give space for engaging and respecting each child’s response. We incorporate improvisation with the children and their families as active participants in telling the story. The result is beautifully moving theatre which is about each child’s own journey.”

“The Company never fails to immerse children in a world that jumps and glides and inspires great moments of child-led choreography. It’s delightful and thoroughly engaging to watch and play”

Adel Al Salloum, Artistic Director, The Spark Arts, Leicester

Previous Shows: Shiny

A dazzling show for children aged 6 months – 4 years and their grown up.



Shiny is a highly successful and critically acclaimed, unique participatory performance, inclusive and accessible for families. Shiny invites the audience into a long forgotten room, where two people

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find friendship, joy and treasures that turn from ordinary to extraordinary. Audiences are invited to watch and play as all that glitters unfolds before their very eyes.

"Shiny is a rare show that reveals itself slowly, cleverly and warmly. Well choreographed and inviting, it's structure reveals the artists clear understanding of their audience, not least through it's well paced and inclusive playfulness"

Emma Gladstone, Artistic Director, Dance Umbrella.

Venues where Shiny has visited:

- * Dance Umbrella (4 venues - The Albany, Stratford Circus, The Arts Depot, Watermans)
- * Polka Theatre, London
- * The Egg Theatre, Bath
- * The Spark Festival, Leicester
- * Juice Festival (Dance City)
- * Z Arts, Manchester
- * The Atkinson, Southport
- * The Just So Festival, Stoke
- * Curve, Leicester
- * Lakeside Arts Centre, Nottingham
- * The Royal and Derngate, Northampton
- * Brighton Dome
- * Bournemouth Pavilion
- * Riverhead Theatre, Louth, Lincolnshire
- * Countersthorpe Community College, Leicestershire
- * Connect Early Years Dance Conference, South East Dance Canterbury
- * Derbyshire Early Years Special Needs Service, Highfields School, Matlock
- * St Giles Children's Centre Lincoln,
- * Clayton Sure Start CC, Manchester

Touring Schedule – Autumn 2016

Date			Venue
Friday	19th	August	Just So Festival
Saturday	20th	August	Just So Festival
Sunday	21st	August	Just So Festival
Thursday	29th	September	Z-arts, Manchester
Saturday	1st	October	The Egg, Bath
Sunday	2nd	October	The Egg, Bath
Monday	3rd	October	Lincoln Drill Hall
Tuesday	4th	October	Louth Playgoers - Riverhead Theatre



Wednesday	5th	October	South Holland Centre, Spalding
Friday	7th	October	Curve, Leicester
Saturday	8th	October	Curve, Leicester
Monday	10th	October	The Core at Corby Cube
Thursday	13th	October	Lakeside Arts, Nottingham
Friday	14th	October	The Turnpike, Leigh Library
Sunday	16th	October	The Civic, Barnsley
Wednesday	19th	October	Blackwood Miners' Institute, Caerphilly
Thursday	20th	October	Spot On Lancashire
Friday	21st	October	Brookfields Special School (schools show) Widnes
Saturday	22nd	October	The North Wall, Oxford
Tuesday	25th	October	Sunderland City Library and Arts Centre
Wednesday	26th	October	The Atkinson, Southport
Thursday	27th	October	Waterside Arts Centre, Sale
Friday	28th	October	St Mary's Creative Space, Chester
Tuesday	1st	November	The Kirkgate, Cockermouth
Wednesday	2nd	November	Action Transport Theatre, Whitby Hall, Ellesmere Port
Thursday	3rd	November	Burnley Arts Centre
Friday	4th	November	Citadel, St Helens
Saturday	5th	November	Citadel, St Helens
Sunday	6th	November	The Boo, Rossendale
Saturday	10th	December	Lancaster Arts
Tuesday	13th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Wednesday	14th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Thursday	15th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Friday	16th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Saturday	17th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Sunday	18th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Monday	19th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Tuesday	20th	December	Barbican Centre, London
Wednesday	21st	December	Barbican Centre, London

Touring & Tech Information

Sponge will be our third show as a company. Then R&D has been commissioned by The Spark Arts. R&D sharings are being shown on:

- * **Wed 25th** and **Thurs 26th May 2016** – Performances in Children's Centres, Leicester
- * **Fri 3rd June 2016** – Performance at Attenborough Arts, Leicester

The full production is being commissioned by **Big Imaginations**.

The show will preview at **The Just So Festival, 20 – 21 August 2016**.

The show will premiere at **Z-arts, 29th September 2016**.

The Sponge creative team:

Artistic Director: Liz Clark

Associate Choreographer: Oksana Tyminska

Composer: Tayo Akinbode

Dramaturg: Pete Shenton (New Art Club)

Lighting Design: Arnim Freiss

Theatre Design: Sophia Lovell-Smith

TOUR

Availability:

Thursday 29th September – Sunday 6th November 2016 (fully booked)

Wednesday 15th – Sunday 26th February 2017

Thursday 18th May – Sunday 11th June 2017

Audience:

Babies aged 4 months – children aged under 4 and their grown-ups.

Photography:

Performance shots & studio shots available.

Merchandise:

The company will be developing a take home and make yourself prop. They will also develop online content for families to engage with at home.

Evaluation:

Our ipad apps collect data at the end of performances which can then be shared with each venue.

Publicity:

- * Full copy and images available.
- * Film trailer available.



Resources:

Turned On Its Head are trialling an app from May-Sept 2016 which may be ready for general release Spring 2017. This is not show specific but is specific to our work with families.

TECH

General:

- * **Audience Capacity** – 75, which 35 can be children. All sat within the playing area.
- * **Running Time** – 45-50 minutes, no interval
- * **Get In** – 3 hours before house opens if lighting is available. 1 hour without lighting.
- * **Get Out** – 1 hour
- * **Additional Assistance** – 1 person for get in and get out. 2 FOH staff during the performance.

Stage and Set:

- * **Dimensions of performance space**; 9m x 9m playing area with 4m height. If the playing area is any smaller then please let us know. The show can be performed in a smaller space at a reduced capacity, please contact the company for details. **The floor MUST be splinter free wooden or lino/synthetic floor. The performers are bare footed throughout the show.**
- * The audience will sit within the 9mx9m playing area.

Set:

- * The set consists of 2 book flats that are self supportive.
- * Props consist of sponges and plastic tubs.
- * The audience are required to sit on the floor. Unless a medical condition prevents, adults are required to sit on the floor with their child. Venue to supply chairs for adults that can't sit on the floor.
- * Venue to provide two chairs for behind the book flats for quick changes.

Lighting:

- * In general we require a warm wash, this is to be made up from FOH, Side and Back light. (company will bring colour)
- * 8 Parcans with colour (colour provided by company)
- * 3 specials. One for corridor effect and 2 focused on a Mirror ball. (company to bring mirror ball, 1 non dim channel needed central to the acting space)
- * Audience are lit throughout the show.
- * All Lanterns to be provided by venue.



- * Please use lanterns that are suitable for your venue.

If a pre rig can be provided at no extra cost to the company we can provide an LX plan to the venue in advance. If not, then we can rig during the get in.

Transport:

- * We will be touring in a SWB van and will require on-site parking for the duration of the get in. It would be great if we can park the van for the duration of our stay. If on-site parking is unavailable please advise of nearby parking.

Sound:

- * All sound is played from a toured Mac. We will require a mini jack input into the venue's sound desk. If the venue does not have a sound system we also tour our own.
- * There is no specific requirement for the placement of PA assuming it is of a good quality to fill the performance area.

Operation:

- * Our technician operates all sound and LX, so both sound and LX need to be at the same operating point, preferably next to the performance space.

Additional:

- * 2x Lockable Dressing rooms.
- * Drinking water

Summary:

- * Playing area 9mx9m. Audience included within this space
- * Floor **MUST** be safe for bare feet and children to crawl.
- * 1 technician for the duration of our stay.
- * Venue to supply 2 chairs for actor quick changes.

For all enquiries please contact:

Turned On Its Head

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Big Imaginations

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