

Gane Trust Scholarship Report –
Jaipur Drama Therapy Project
July – August 2017
By Ella Walmsley



Introduction

As you will recall, I set out to explore the use of Drama Therapy in alternative cultures. I spent two weeks at the TAABAR Centre in Jaipur to explore what drama therapy might bring to poor and marginalised groups in India and to learn lessons as to how experiences in India could be transferred to the UK context.

The days were filled with teaching dance, drama, singing and English. Using the skills learnt we then put on a final production. Details of a Typical Day and the Exercises and Games used in the performance process are included below. I made a diary record of each day including photos of activities in the school centre, and supplemented this through interviews with the teachers, the headmaster, children and others. This is found in the Reflective Diary below.

I hope my report gives you a flavour of what I've been able to achieve and how the children have benefitted from the project and your support. The project has taught me a lot about the vast difference of cultures, teaching, and myself. The importance of tolerance and patience, support and encouragement. Overall, I believe that this project has been a great success for the children and myself. But lessons are always there to be learned and I've captured some of these thoughts at the end of the report.

The research I have collected will now be used to help inform my 3rd year dissertation at the University of West England. I will use my findings to explore further the effects of drama and community theatre and how they can be used to deliver positive health and well-being benefits. This is just the beginning of my journey. I plan to continue to gain more work experience in this area of study, to do a post-graduate Masters in Drama Therapy and to continue to run projects such as these for people who live less fortunate lives than we do using what I have learnt along the way.

I want to thank The GANE Trust for giving me this amazing opportunity and enabling me to explore the beginnings of my career. Not only will I take what I have learnt towards my dissertation but on my path towards my future.

A Typical Day at the TAABAR Centre

9.30 – Break

- Morning warm up and play games to engage and focus the class.
- Exercises – Different confidence building exercises and games to motivate the class.

Toilet and Water Break

After Break – 12.30

- Rehearse play and make pieces of set, props and Costume (butterfly, flowers, etc.)

Rehearsing Goldilocks and the Three Bears Play

Rehearse: SCENE 1

We see Goldilocks in the forest with the flowers and the butterfly's. Goldilocks goes to the bears house. She is hungry, so she tries the food on the table. The first is too HOT, the second is too COLD, the third is JUST RIGHT. Goldilocks eats all of baby bears food.

Rehearse this scene until everyone knows what they are doing on stage and are ready to move on to the next scene. The movements are just as important as the lines.

Rehearse: SCENE 2

Goldilocks is now full of food and wants to sit down. She sees three chairs in the house. The first is too BIG, the second is still too BIG, the third is JUST RIGHT. She rests in it, but is too heavy and breaks the chair into little pieces.

Rehearse this scene until everyone knows what they are doing on stage and are ready to move on to the next scene. Remember the movements are just as important as the lines.

Rehearse: SCENE 3

Goldilocks is now very tired and decides to go upstairs to the bedroom. There she sees three beds. She tries them out. The first is too HARD, the second is too SOFT, and the third is JUST RIGHT. We see goldilocks fall fast asleep.

Rehearse this scene until everyone knows what they are doing on stage and are ready to move on to the next scene. The movements are just as important as the lines.

Rehearse: SCENE 4

The three Bears come home from hunting. They notice that someone has been eating their food. They then notice that someone has broken baby bears chair. The then walk upstairs to

find goldilocks sleeping in in baby bears bed. Goldilocks wakes up and screams. She runs away and she never returns.

Go through every scene individually until everyone is comfortable with what they are doing on stage. When polishing the play, think about how you are moving and why. Think about what you are resembling whether you are a character or an object. When speaking make sure you are loud and clear. Eye contact with the audience is very important.

Out of Class Time

- Practice each scene.
- Rehearse your lines.
- Think about what you are saying and why you are saying it.
- Rehearse your movements.
- Think about what you are doing and why you are doing it.
- Practice any dances/songs/poetry that you may want to add to the show.
- Prepare to show in next class.
- Make pieces of Set, Costume, and Props.

Games to Engage and Focus the Class

Name Game	Everyone sits in a circle. One person makes eye contact with another in the room. They say their name and walk towards them. Before that person gets to them they must say another person's name and walk towards them.
What's the time Mr Wolf?	Person A stands facing a wall. Rest of class are at the other end of the room. They shout 'what's the time Mr Wolf? He replies with a number and the class move that many foot steps towards Person A. The wolf can turn around at any point, if he sees someone move, they have to go back to the beginning. The aim of the game is to catch the wolf without the wolf noticing. So, you must be very quiet. The wolf can answer 'Its Dinner time' and he must turn around and catch someone as they all run to the start.
Zip, Zap, Boing	Pass the energy ball around the room. ZIP – one way, ZAP – Bounces it back, BOING – across the room.
RAH!	Bang alternative – everyone stands in a circle and the joker stands in the middle. The Joker must turn on a circle and then make a RAH! noise at one of the players. That player must duck and the two on either side must RAH! At one another. The slowest person is out and must sit down. The last two must stand back to back and walk away from each other.

	Moving on each step when the joker says a word. They must turn around on the word TIGER!
1,2,3 (Ek, Do, Teen)	Stand in a circle, take it in turns to count from 1 – 10. If 2 people say the same number, you must go back to the beginning. If you succeed, Try 1 – 20, and so on.
Slow Motion Race	Everyone must line up at one end of the room. They must race to the finish line. The person who gets to the line last wins!
Cat and Mouse	get everyone into pairs, all must link arms side by side. One person is nominated the cat and mouse. The cat must chase the mouse around the room. If the cat catches the mouse, they reverse rolls. The mouse can link on with someone else and the farthest person in the pair then becomes the mouse.
Memory Game	Everyone sit in a circle. The joker starts by saying, ‘My Best Friend went to the shop and bought...’ the next person must repeat what they said and add an item.
Sleeping Lions	Everyone must lay down on the floor. Everyone must pretend to be asleep and not move a muscle. The joker tries to distract them, though sound but cannot touch them. If the lions move, they become the distractors as well. The winner is the last lion to be asleep.
The sun always shines on	Sit in a circle of chairs, one person sits in the middle. They say ‘the sun always shines on Brunettes’ and they people who are have to move chairs. The last person must then stand in the middle.
Stuck in the mud	run around the room, if you get tagged, you are stuck in the mud. Someone else must go underneath your legs in order to free you from the mud.
Song/cannon	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3dO8SbRF9I Row, row, row, your boat, gently down the stream Merrily [4] life is but a dream.

Exercises to Build Confidence and Motivation

Story Circle	Go around the circle and say a word to add to the story.
Complete the Image	Everyone stand in a circle. Two people shake hands and freeze. The joker asks everyone what they see. One person

then comes out of the freeze frame and a volunteer takes their place. Again, ask what the players can see. Complete the image to make a different story.

- The Compliment Line** split player in two groups. Make two equal lines. Line A must stand still while line B compliments the person in front of them. Then line B moves down. Once they are all the way down the other end, Line A does the same.
- Draw Your Own Body** everyone lay on the floor with eyes closed. Think about the body and move parts, fingers, mouth, legs, eyes, head, tongue, gender, hair, belly button, feet, toes, back, shoulders and elbows. The joker places a piece of paper in front of them and ask players to draw themselves, eyes closed. Write their name on the back Take them and create a gallery. Get the players to find their own photo.
- Blind cars** Divide into pairs; one person A stands in front of person B. Person A closes their eyes. Person B must then guide them around the room without bumping into anyone else. Person B can only use a touch of the shoulders to direct their partners.
- Animal Exercise** Start off asleep as your animal, wake up see everything around you, start to walk around and play, eat things. Start to interact with other animals around you. Slowly bring your animal to a human form. How does your character talk and walk and eat? Do you notice any characteristics from your animal?
- Emotional Statues** Everyone walk around the room, The Joker must call out an emotion, and the players must create a statue to express it. It could be an object or animal. Shake it off each time and walk in neutral.
- Sad * Terrified * Sly* Cold * Cheerful * Annoyed * Triumphant * Warm * Stubborn * Lonely * Hesitant * Tepid* Energetic * Excited * Disgusted * Exuberant * Bossy * Bored * Indecisive * Jaded * Impatient * Suspicious * Exhausted * Depressed * Amused * Arrogant * Sulky* Anxious * Angry * Mischievous * Friendly * Relieved
- Mirror Exercises** Pair up with someone a similar height and size. Stand opposite each other. Person A must mirror Person B's every move. They must not talk and every move must be the same. Make sure each move is slow. Swap leaders.

Reflective Diary

Day 1 – Meeting the Host Family

When walking into the host family home I found a group of women in colourful saris sat around the floor, talking and laughing. I was told they were meeting for a music session. As I went upstairs to unpack I heard an orchestra of Dholak drums, a Sitar and chanting. This was a very moving sound instantly immersing me into the Indian culture. This was insight into the unfamiliar life of the Indian people. I could already see that performance/music was a positive part of these women's lives. It was bringing people together. I believe that the chanting may have been religious prayer (Harry Krishna) as I could see a small shrine in the corner of the room which was lit up with candles. It was interesting to see that there were no men here, only women and children. In Indian society, it is usual for the men to go to work while the women stay at home to cook, clean and look after the children. Many of them don't get the opportunity to go to school or university. This meeting was a positive way of getting the women together to share common ground and to have fun. I am very interested to see if this is/could be used in a women's empowerment centre to lift moral and bring people closer together in a safe environment.

Day 2 – First day at the Orphanage

Waking up the next morning, I walked down into the kitchen to find two children singing English nursery rhymes into a microphone. They were singing in Indian but I recognised the English tunes clearly. It gave me strong nostalgia, reminding me of how important nursery rhymes were to me growing up. I wondered if the children at the orphanage I will be working at have had the opportunity to experience this growing up.

On the way to the orphanage, riding in the Tuk Tuk, my driver pointed out that I should look to my right. I couldn't see anything but I heard a piercingly loud Indian chant. As we got closer, I saw a crowd of people surrounding something. As we drove passed, a girl stood on a bike wheel, balancing on a tightrope. She was rapidly moving the wheel from side to side. It was brilliant. She was colourful dressed with a royal headdress on. As we drove away, the reality sunk in. This girl was no older than 6. I doubt she was performing for the love of it, she was performing to make money. This vulnerable little girl and her talents were being abused.



When arriving at the orphanage I was shocked to see how many young boys had been admitted there. I was told by the leader of the centre that some had come to the centre as slaves to the factory industry, child trafficking and even kidnapped by gangs to sell. Some were addicted to smoking and alcohol which were introduced to them through gangs at a young age. Many have tried to run away from the centre due to the strict rules prohibiting them from drinking and smoking. The centre itself was right in the heart of busy Jaipur, it was not a peaceful place. It was based over two floors consisting of four rooms. This seemed like little space for all forty boys to sleep, eat, learn and play. There was someone at the door who let us into the building, they then locked the door behind us. Every door had a lock on it. I was told there was two police officers onsite too. I couldn't help but feel a bit trapped. I wondered if the boys felt the same way. I asked why this was and Govind told me that due to the boys trying to run away from the centre the locks were there for their own safety.



After briefly being introduced to one of the teachers, I was shown to one of the boy's dorms. There, sat fifteen silent boys in four rows on the floor. I introduced myself and explained what we were going to be doing over the two weeks I was with them. They seemed very excited. Most spoke no more than 10 words of English. Govind, (Volunteering with India representative) was with me to translate. We started off with an Ice breaker. Sitting in a circle, we got to know the person next to us. We asked them the following questions.

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- What is your favourite thing to do?
- How are you feeling today?

After ten minutes talking, we grouped back together and introduced our partner to the rest of the group. This was a good way of learning each other's names, and finding something new about one another. When speaking to the rest of the group alone this can be very intimidating and a lot of the boys were very shy. This was also an important exercise to aid active listening.

Zip, Zap, Boing - in a circle, one picks up an invisible energy ball. We pass it round. To pass it in one direction we say 'ZIP', to send it the other way we say 'ZAP', and to pass it across the room we say

'BOING'. Initially we started off sending the ball in one direction. Then progressed the exercise. All participants must be fully focused and aware of others in order for the game to flow. This game mentally prepares one for the lesson ahead. It took a bit of practice before we could get the ball around the whole circle. It was important for the boys to understand the direction and get it right rather than being speedy.

What's the time Mr Wolf? - This game was one that I loved as a child. The anticipation I felt was exhilarating. I wanted the boys to have the same experience. To explain I played the wolf. The children loved this. The teachers here are very respected by the boys. There is a clear line between teacher and student. This game blurred the line. I believe it is important for your students to see you as an equal. This way they feel more inclined to open up and be comfortable in the lessons. When I shouted the 'Dinner time' and ran after the children, they screamed and laughed. When asking if anyone else would like a go, they requested that I stayed as the wolf as they found it funny. I don't want the boys to feel any intimidation or fear in the lessons. Learning should be fun!

Blind Cars - This exercise is all about trust. Trusting in your partner to take you around the room without collision. Trust is something that may have been lost in the boys through experiences growing up. It is therefore so important for us to work on rebuilding trust and recognising the feelings and responses that occur when we have to trust and be trusted.

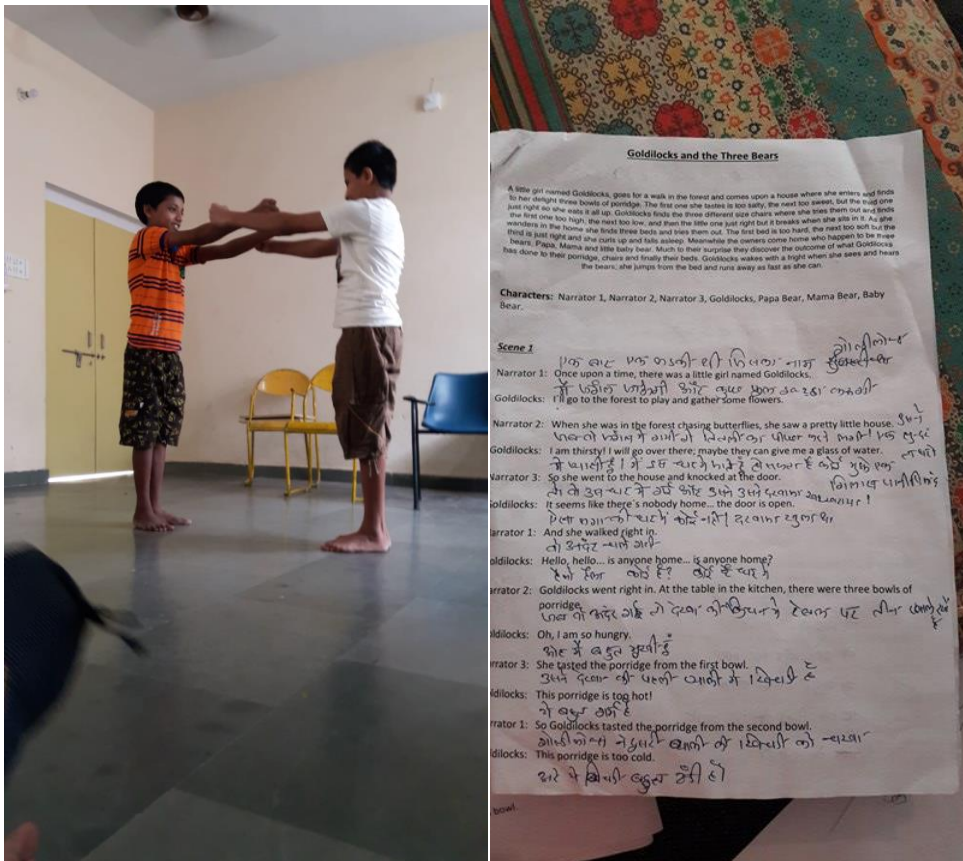
To start the boys struggled to keep their eyes closed and used vocal direction. I stopped the class and showed the boys with another teacher how the exercise should look. Due to the language barrier, I have realised how important it is to demonstrate, making it easier for the boys to follow direction.

Day 3 – Introduction to the Play

Warm up - 1: clap, 2: jump, 3: touch the floor (Hindi translation - Ek, Do, Teen) - The aim of this exercise is to engage and focus the class. At first due to the language barrier they weren't understanding what I was asking them to do. I then tried by using Hindi numbers and it began to flow better. The children were engaging and really listening, waiting to hear the next direction. There was a lot of energy in the room and it bought up the general moral within the class.

RAH! - This game is an adaptation of 'BANG'. In the original game, everyone stands in a circle. One stands in the middle and shoots at someone. That person's ducks and the two on either side shoot at each other. The slowest is killed and must sit out. As I didn't know the extent of the boy's background, I didn't want to bring up any bad memories that may have involved gang and gum crime without knowing how to deal with it. To tackle this issue, I adapted the game so we all played tigers. There are many tigers in India so this was a known animal to the boys. We began by going around the circle giving our best tiger impression. Before progressing with the game. This is another good game for gaining focus amongst the class. All participants must be fully away of what is happening around them in order to go further in the game.

Mirroring - This was the first time I saw the boys truly tuning into one another. To begin with they were using vocal direction to communicate with their partners. I then demonstrated with another teacher so they could see that the voice isn't necessary for this exercise. With a little practice the boys began communicating through the body and eye contact, it was lovely to see how focused they were. There was a lot of determination to get it right. As an extension, we spent 20 minutes learning a short sequence which we all then performed. Many of the boys were shy and didn't want to go up, but with a little encouragement everyone performed. Each piece was well prepared and created strong response from the audience. Everyone left the stage with a smile. This was an important for the boys to know that everyone was feeling uncomfortable and they were not alone.



After mirroring, a drama teacher from another orphanage came in and helped translate the script I'd brought in; 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' into Hindi, the children's first language. In Hindi, he explained to the children what the play was about, who the characters were and its background. We then started to devise the first scene. We created a forest by physicalizing trees. We talked about what a tree looks like and the different ways we could use our body to recreate a forest with people.

Day 4 – First Rehearsal

Ek, Do, Teen - This warm up today had improved from yesterday the kids were walking around on their own not looking for my direction. They were actively listening to me. Each movement was done in unison. They were truly focusing on the exercise rather than focusing on understanding what I was asking them to do. The class were also a lot more focused after the exercise than they were yesterday. I was beginning to see a real change in the effort from the boys and the energy being produced in the room.

After the warm up the kids asked to play 'Cat and Mouse' again, they were very excited and all wanted to tell the new members how the game was played. Although this is a game that mainly involves running around aimlessly it is a form of play which is very important when a child is growing up. These children won't have had a youth in which they are able to play. The centre is very strict on education the expectations how the children should be and present themselves. This is good as all children need boundaries but there must be a balance in order for the child to have the best chance of positively exploring themselves and the life around them.

Mirroring - The children asked to do this exercise again today. They were less shy and all enjoyed having a go with myself. Once I demonstrated, I walked around the room and observed. I used words such as 'Didi - slower' to direct them. We then had another showcase of the work that was

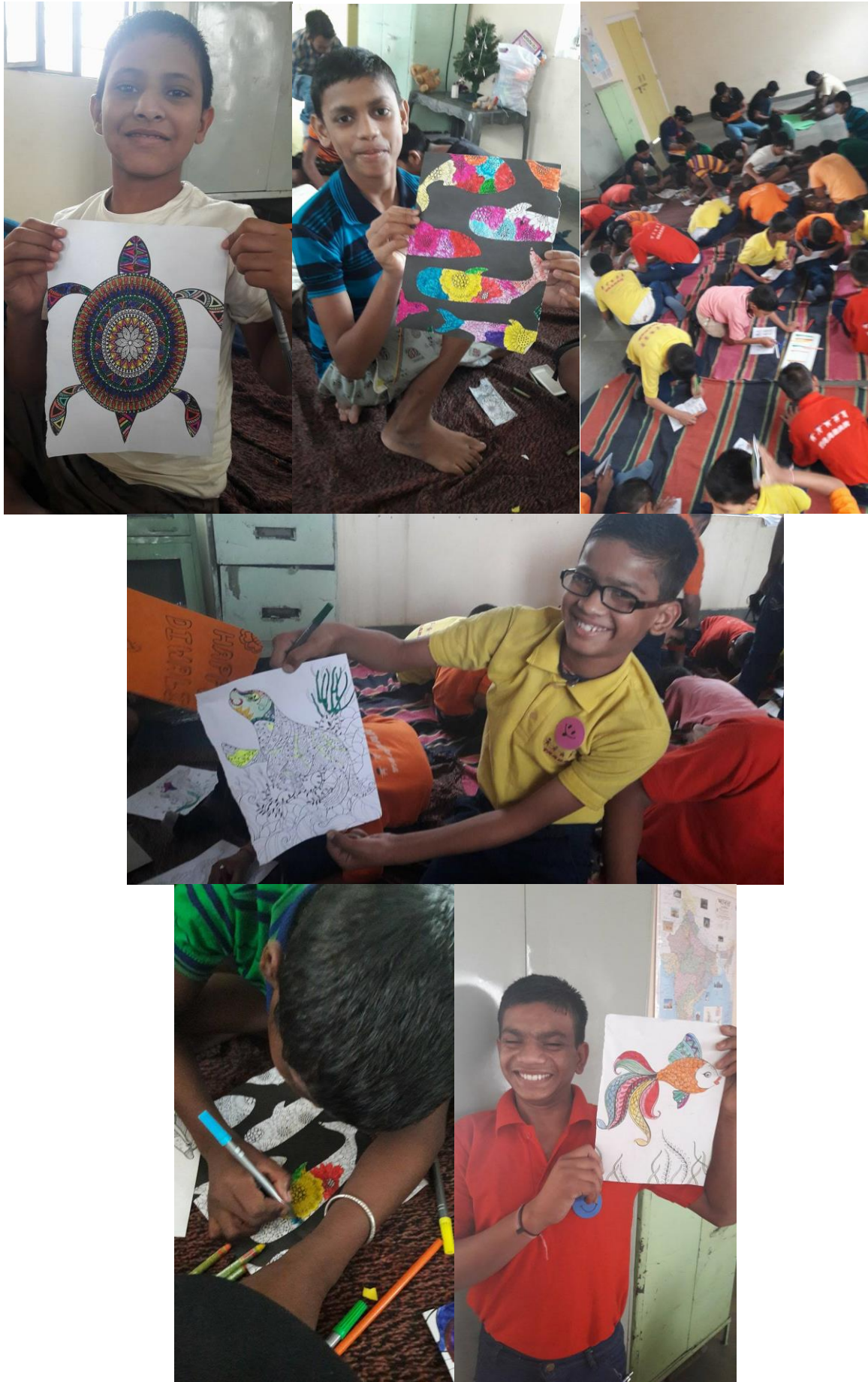
being explored. It was interesting to see that the pairs were very different from each other this time around. They were more confident in leading their partners and didn't feel the need to follow other pairs.



While performing, we were joined by a class of fifteen (5-10 year olds) boys. These were children from another orphanage. These children spoke much clearer English. As soon as they sat down and saw what we were doing they wanted to get involved. They were very quick to pick up the exercise and thoroughly enjoyed it (some wanted to perform again!)

As there was now a bigger class I took the opportunity to play Zip, Zap, Boing and RAH! with them. Again, the younger ones were quick to understand the directions. I realised there was a clear difference in how educated the two classes were. The younger children had been in education for longer as they had been admitted to the centre younger. The elder group would have started education from when they were admitted to the centre, for some this was at age 18. I could see some of the older boys getting frustrated when seeing that the younger ones were able to pick up the games faster. I wondered if speaking a lack of English has an adverse effect on many people around India making it harder for them to get work.

Myself and the elder class spent the afternoon drawing and colouring in mandala books. We also made 'Happy Diwali' cards for the younger ones to sell at fates. For the younger children, I gave activity books which I had bought over from home. The head master was very impressed with these books and I have agreed to send some over to them. He liked that they had activities in them, rather than just colouring in.





Interview - During the lesson a group of reporters from Rajasthan Patrika News came in and started filming the children drawing and colouring. They were impressed with the work we were doing. They soon after asked me for an interview. I sat in the room in front of the children and the teachers while being interviewed for the documentary. The reporter sat next to me and asked questions about the programme. She asked what we had been doing and the what desired response was. She then asked me about child trafficking and what I thought/knew about it. I spoke about what drama therapy is and how important it is for children to be given the opportunity to play and explore themselves in a controlled environment. I said that I didn't know much about child trafficking except that there is a lot of it in India and that no child should be exposed to it. I felt it was inappropriate to be asking these questions in front of the children.

Day 5 – Second Rehearsal

To warm up this morning we started by walking around the room. In a neutral manner, we focused on how it felt to walk as ourselves. I asked them to think about what each body part felt like. How long their arms felt. Which part of their feet touched the ground when walking? How long their back felt. This meant the boys need to be fully aware of themselves. They also needed to be especially aware when walking through the space in order to avoid collision. I then asked them to imagine the floor turned to sand, water, ice and mud. We spent a few minutes walking through the different terrains then discussed how they felt their body changed. It is important for one to be fully aware of themselves not only on stage but in life.

To extend the warm up we played stuck in the mud. This is a great game for getting the heart going, waking up the class and generally warming up the body. The boys picked up the game very quickly and thoroughly enjoyed it. The boys learnt to help each other. They were able to distract the 'tagger' enabling more players to be set free. This was endearing to watch.

Compliment line - This was a great exercise to watch, the idea is to give and accept compliments. Although the boys were speaking Hindi, my translator said that they said 'I like your top', 'I like how you play', 'I like that you smile', 'I like that you want to play with me', 'I like that you are happy'. All very positive things. After the exercise, we sat down and spoke about how it felt to be complimented. They said it was quite embarrassing but nice. Some found it difficult to think of things to compliment but overall they enjoyed the exercise and all finished with a smile.

Today I was told that the children were still unsure of the plays storyline. I got them to lay on the floor close their eyes and imagine each scene, scene for scene. I talked about what we could see in each scene and what happens to goldilocks.

This evening I went to the Royal Albert Museum in Jaipur. There was a collection of historical objects from all over the world. Specifically, I was looking for puppets. Puppetry has played a big part in Rajasthani culture and tradition. Unfortunately, couldn't find any on display but was told to try the 'Jaipur's Dolls Museum'. I did however come across an array of masks which looked very similar to the costume and make up seen in Kathakali, a southwestern religious dance. This dance originates from Kerala which is where I will be going in a week. I am looking forward to seeing a Kathakali performance while I am there.

Day 6 – Third Rehearsal

Yes, Lets - This exercise is great for building confidence. In a circle one person says 'Lets... ride a horse' everyone must reply 'Yes! Let's!' then everyone must do as the person has asked. It can be quite nerve racking asking a lot of people to do something. Having a group of people agree to what you are asking them to do can feel very rewarding. For those submitting it is important to be actively listen to the person directing.

Today we also spent half an hour on this next exercise, Emotional statues. Everyone walked around the room neutrally. I then called out an emotion or state and the players create a statue to express it. It doesn't have to be a human response It could be abstract. Each state we shook off and went back to walking in neutral. We used the following emotions - Happy, sad, cold, annoyed, hot, amused, excited, impatient, anxious, lonely and angry. The boys thoroughly enjoyed this exercise. So, I thought it would be good idea to show each other our responses. we took it in turns to showcase an emotional state. The rest of the class observed and had to guess which emotion was being represented. This was the first time the boys had been on stage alone. Some found it a little embarrassing but everyone had a go. I wish I knew more about the psychological side to drama therapy as I believe there could be a lot learnt from watching the boys perform these emotions. From what emotion, they chose to how they decide to represent it.





After this exercise, I got up and performed a monologue to the class. This is something I should have done on the first day of teaching. This meant that the children could see me in action, not just as a teacher, but as an actor. Although they could not understand what I was saying they found it very funny. They picked up on my change in tone and facial expression which reinforced the importance of these fundamental skills that must be mastered to be a successful and impactful actor.

Rehearsal - Today we got to the end of the play. We blocked every scene. The rehearsal went well. The children were much faster in the scene transitions. They were more confident with their lines and were speaking more clearly. As the story sunk in the kids started to use their initiative when moving in character. I worked with the child playing Goldilocks, Vijay. we worked on the scene where Goldilocks sits in the bears chairs. It was important for him to understand how each of the three chairs were different. We began to think about how one would react to sitting in them. We practiced in a real chair first. We thought about how it feels to sit in a chair that is too big. Due to the nature of the play we talked about over exaggerating each movement in order to get a comic response. He took the advice very well and when we moved on to rehearsing on the 'human chairs' he was paying much more attention to his body and facial expressions.

One of the children, Mo.sdam, had to sit out due to having a bad back. He sat next to me throughout helping me to direct. Although he couldn't take part, I thought it would be a good idea for him to also have a part in the performance by introducing the play. I asked the other teacher to translate this to him and the teacher replied 'he cannot speak well enough' followed by 'He is not a good image for the play' The shock of this dismissal urged me to convince him to let him try. The boy recited the line very timidly, this was the first time I'd heard him speak, the other teacher said 'see, not good' I said that all he needs is practice. I asked the child to recite the line again, and he did, again very shyly. The teacher said ' he has no energy' How is this child expected to progress if he isn't given the chance to do so. So, we tried again with a smile. This was a lot better. I then asked him to be louder. Which he did perfectly. We practiced walking him on stage a few times then showed the other teacher. The difference from when I first asked him to five minutes later was as if he was different child. He just needed the encouragement and support to do so. I have become very aware that the centre is very strict with these boys. They teachers scowl at them for long periods of time until the children feel uncomfortable, and occasionally the boys get a light slap to the face if they act

out of line. It is not done in an aggressive way but the teachers definitely want to feel as if they are in control. Generally, I have noticed that the Indian culture is very 'in your face' and 'pushy'. This is just the culture and it would have been wrong for me to intervene unless I thought there was excessive harm behind it. I feel that a lot of what goes on in India is for show, they do not seem to care much for the process, as long as the end product looks good. I have also noticed that the children aren't supported in things that are not academically related. They believe that education in Maths and English is much more important than the arts, which are only meant for 'play time'. In my time spent here so far, I have met many boys who are talented in acting, dancing, singing and drawing. Unfortunately, in these circumstances these boys won't be given the chance to express these talents as they are not seen as important as academic subjects. I believe that these talents should be recognised and supported rather than dismissed. Key fundamental and life skills are learnt from the arts.

Last night I spoke to someone who worked at the hostel I am staying at. I asked him to fill out one of my questionnaires. As he struggled to write in English he asked me to run through the questions with him as if it were an interview. I was shocked to find out the extent of child trafficking in Jaipur alone. He explained that many children on their way to school are lured in by gangs. They are offered food, drink, drugs, cigarettes and alcohol. They will then kidnap them and make them work for them. These children can be seen at chai stores, railway stations and on the streets and in the red-light district. They will beg, steal, sell and perform to make money. This made me wonder if the little girl on the tight rope was a product of this awful system. I wondered why people entertained it. The interviewee also told me that the gangs that own these children regularly pay off the police to not charge them with kidnap and child trafficking. I was surprised at how casually and openly the interviewee was talking about this issue. It is clearly something that needs to be made more aware in order for it to be addressed.

Day 7 – Fourth Rehearsal

Today, we started with a little dance to warm up to some Punjabi music, every time I put the radio on the children got very excited. I found this was a great way to heighten the energy levels in the room. The boys taught me some classic Punjabi dance moves which they had learnt from famous Bollywood films.

Ek, Do, Teen - We went straight from dancing to walking in the space. Calling out the direction was difficult at first as they were not concentrating due to the excitement from. Once we did a few times they began to listen and respond on cue. They were much sharper than the last time had played. This just reinforces my belief in the importance of process and practice. Once we were warmed up, the boys taught me two famous Indian games, Kabdo and Kho Kho B. These both involved running and catching. They were very excited that myself and another teacher were playing.

After playing, we went straight into rehearsal as there was only four teaching days left until show day. We spent time going over the order of the story to ensure everyone knew what they were doing in each scene. When running the piece, I edited a few lines in order for the storyline to make more sense. I also spread the lines out amongst the boys so everyone has something to say. I really felt it was important for everyone to be given the opportunity to speak as it is rare for the centre to put on a show.

I worked with Mo.sdam again today, we went over his line as he was very quiet so far in class. I filmed him and showed him how great he was doing and we talked about the improvement from yesterday. He was so ecstatic when he saw himself. He gave me a high five and ran off in excitement to tell his friends. This was a very moving moment for me. I felt proud. It was a great feeling knowing

that I had been a part of his development. For the rest of the lesson he was engaged, talkative and completely involved in what we were doing. The boys showed me that they had been watching a few Bollywood movies to help with their acting. One by one they stood up and recited a line from the films. I was so impressed with the level of confidence that I could see and the clarity in the delivery. Mo.sdam willingly got up twice which was wonderful to see.

Day 8 – Sightseeing and Research

Dolls museum - I decided I wanted to go to the Dolls Museum as I couldn't find any puppets at the Albert Museum. On our way to Dolls Museum there were a lot of colourful people on the streets. This was the time of the Teej festival so the locals were out with their families dancing in the streets. Every one hundred meters I could see a ray of colours bobbing up and down to a sound system attached to the back of a truck. There were women and drag queens dancing on stages. The joy of the people was very moving. There was a feel of unity and love in the air. The Dolls Museum was very interesting. It was on the grounds of a deaf and mute school. As we entered the grounds I was astounded by the mass of children in the school. It was very quiet and everyone was happy to see us rolling up in the Tuk Tuk. I exchanged many waves and smiles with the children. As I entered the museum the maintenance man turned all the lights and AC on, there was no one else here. As the lights rose in each glass cabinet I began to see the dolls. Each with holding their own personality, character, intention and status. They were beautiful. There was a collection of dolls from all over the world. I first came across an information board based on the 'History of Dolls'. It talked about the origin of dolls, the different forms of dolls, and the amazing connection that humans have with dolls. At the bottom of the board it read 'Research shows that playing with dolls effects children in incredible ways 1) Doll playing develops cognitive and motor skills. 2) Doll play develops language skills. 3) Doll play develops caring and nurturing skills. 4) Doll play makes the world more manageable for children. 5) Doll play lets children work through strong emotions.' I found it endearing that this museum was on the grounds of the deaf and mute school. The five above points are all things that these children will have found harder than most growing up deaf or mute. This reiterated the importance of play for a child and how it teaches one to communicate with the world and people around them. Finally, I came across an array of puppets, mainly English stringed puppets. I asked the gentleman who worked there whether there were any Indian puppets around. He took me to a cabinet of colourfully detailed wooden and cloth puppets. They were just dolls as they weren't stringed.




Indian puppets (Kathputli) is a stringed puppet which originated in Rajasthan, which is where I am staying. Like the British stringed puppet, it is controlled by one piece of string by a puppeteer. Kath means wood and Pulti means doll. In history, they are found in Rajasthani folk songs, tales and ballads. Rajasthan tribes would have used this art making it one of the country's oldest traditions. Scholars believe that folktales reflect the Rajasthani lifestyle of ancient people. It is believed that Kings and Royals and well off people were patrons of the art and the puppeteers. They would pay the puppeteers to praise their ancestors through the art. They also did this for potters, weavers, painters and other craftsmen. Today they one of the most popular performing arts and can be found at religious festivals, tourist attractions, village festivals and gatherings. I have also seen videos of the Kathputli being used to promote cleanliness and the awareness of harassment on the Rajasthani railway. It is good to see that these puppets are still being used for its original use - to provide moral and social education. Shows today also tackle the issues of women's empowerment, literacy,

poverty, cleanliness and unemployment. Later this evening, I told the hostel manager about my interests in Indian performance culture. He organised a puppet show to come to the hostel in a few days so I could have a first-hand experience.




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Indian Railways: Promote cleanliness | Open Elective 2016, NID

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 **Manuj Tewari**
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The video conveys the social message of keeping your trains clean through Puppetry which uses Kathputli(Puppet) and the local folk art form of Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

Day 9 – Sightseeing and the Lady at the Hostel

Today I went to an art centre which holds Jaipur's grandest amphitheatre, The Jawahar Kala Kendra. The centre was split into three buildings, a library, outside amphitheatre and art galleries. One gallery celebrated famous Bollywood films. The room was filled with dated film posters highlighting the Bollywood history. Another gallery held the only photography competition for women in India. It was wonderful to finally see somewhere in India that celebrated the art culture of today, especially in women. There were many posters around the centre advertising drama and acting courses for children and adults. It would have been great to attend one of these courses had I had more time. The amphitheatre itself has been used to stage many performances including Hindi translated Shakespeare.





This evening I spoke to an Indian lady staying in my dorm. She was very interested in what I was doing at the orphanage. We exchanged views on the difference in our society's and the social pressures that we all face. She explained the cast system to me said it holds great pressure to many. In India, you represent where you come from, your parents background the amount of money your family are worth. There is also a lot of pressure on a child to succeed in academic subjects in order to bring money into the home and carry on the family tradition. I believe this means from a young age a child's creativity can be stumped as it is not seen as worthy of. I asked her about the arts in India and what impact it has on the people. We discussed traditional dance, song and films. I then asked about it being used as a therapy. I was very excited to hear that a lot of Indian NGO's (charity's) use street theatre to promote social change within a community. A group will take an issue, create a story around the issue then perform it to the public. This way the positive message can be sent out in a fun, interactive, and relatable way. A theatre company came to my secondary school with a similar intention revolved around the issue of contraception. They gave us two scenarios with very different outcomes. This mean we could analyse the actor's choices and consequences in a safe

environment. The conversation flowed as we discussed the many issues India has. We talked about gender power struggles, education, class, the cast system, low confidence in people who cannot speak good English and negotiating place within power struggles. All these issues are ones that need to be addressed in a certain way in order to see the desired outcome. This conversation made me think about how I would have planned the project had I had the chance to do it again. It made me excited for the future and has started me on a positive path towards the planning of my dissertation. It was wonderful to hear that performance art is being used to promote the awareness of major moral and social issues in the country.

Day 10 – Food Poisoning

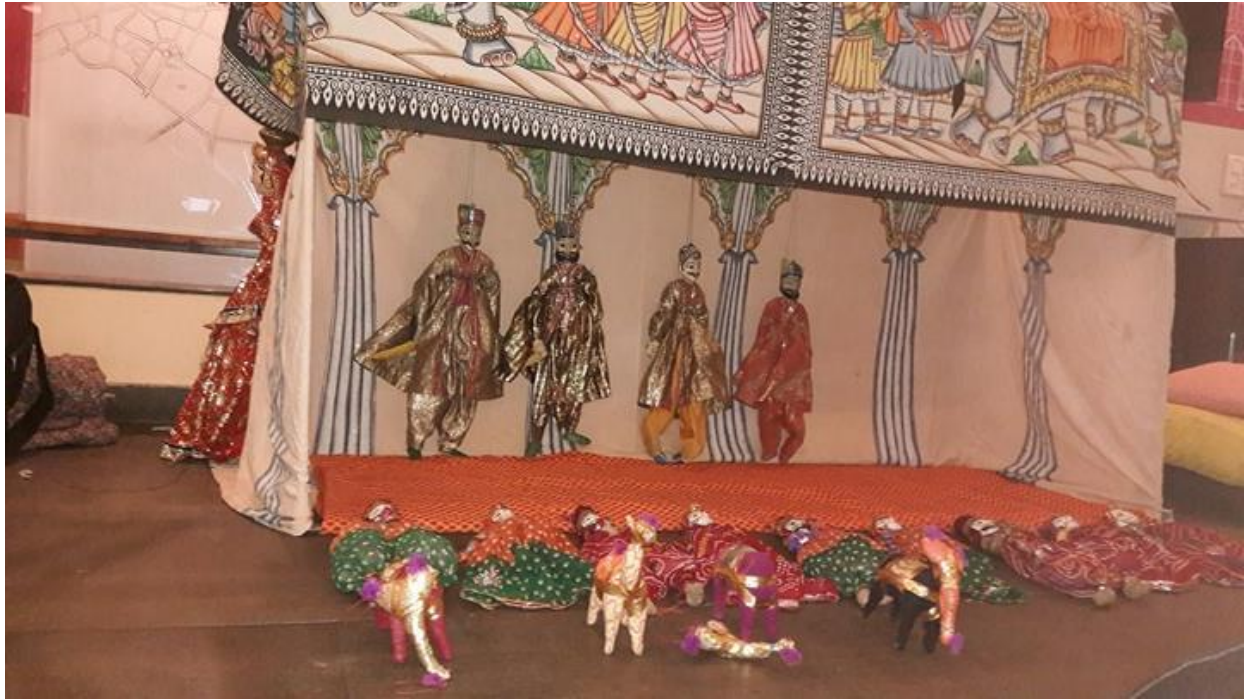
Last night I fell ill with food poisoning so had to take the day off to see the doctor and rest. I was informed that the children did well in their rehearsal and have been working on the delivery of their lines.

Day 11 – Last Rehearsal

Today we had our last rehearsal. It went very well. The children were quick with their lines and transitions. I was very impressed with the amount of energy that was on stage. This was the first time we were able to get through the whole play without stopping or talking. We spent the afternoon making props and discussing costume.



The Puppet Show - Tonight the puppet show came to the hostel. It was full of energy colour and movement. A man sat alongside the stage playing a Dholak drum and chanting. There were four main characters which came together to tell stories of the gods. They did not speak, the puppeteer used a pipe to accompany the puppets movements. The show took me back to being a child watching Punch and Judy shows at the fair.



Day 12 - Show Day and Farewells

Today was show day! The kids were definitely a lot quieter today when I got in. Everyone was a little apprehensive. We got everyone into costume and began our warm up. First we did a body scan and then started by shaking different parts of the body until we were shaking our whole bodies. The children found it very funny. From this we went into Ek, Do, Teen for the final time.



After the warm up we started the dress run. The children were very quiet in delivery. I realised we needed to spend more time warming up so we played a game of Zip, Zap, Boing. If someone wasn't loud enough we would stop and send the energy ball around the circle around again. This meant the children were concentrating more on what they were saying and when they were saying it in order to keep the game flowing. Once I was satisfied with the level of energy in the room we proceeded with the dress run. This was much better! I felt a strong performance energy in the room and they were much clearer in their delivery.



Half an hour before the show I was shocked when the translator said we needed something else in the show as it wasn't long enough. This last half an hour was crucial for the kids to prepare themselves for the performance, they didn't need something else to think about. He didn't think it was good enough to show. I was very offended. We had all put so much hard work into the last two weeks. I stood my ground and politely told the translator that this was not a good idea and that we

should spend the last half an hour perfecting what we have. We then carried on with the preparation. Since being in India I have noticed that a lot of effort goes into making things look good to other without really thinking about behind the scenes. The shops are beautifully coloured with elegant clothing, although most is made in poor condition sweat shops by women and children. They temples are highly respected and spoken of by the Indians, although they are in poor condition and littered with tourists and rubbish. They do not care much for the process. This project needed its process for it to be successful. We need to spend time observing, analysing and progressing in order for the kids to understand what we're doing and for it to have a positive impact on them. To me the process was much more important than the final performance. It was a shame that the other teachers didn't understand this.

I was very proud when watching the show. The children were very professional. The children watching found it very funny. To think that at the beginning of the project some of the participants were barely able to communicate with one another it was very rewarding to see the progress.



After the show the head master clapped and smiled. He asked the children about their time spent with me over the last two weeks and the impact it may have had. He told me that the children said they really enjoyed it and they felt that it has brought them closer together. We talked about using the games and exercises in the future to teach other people and children. He reiterated the importance of being confident in themselves and believing that they can do whatever they put their mind to. The head then thanked me for being a part of the Taabar centre. He said that together we have brought the shy ones out of their shells, helped the naughty ones have become more focused and ultimately brought the boys closer together. I couldn't have asked for more of a positive response.

After the show the project leader took me to the women's empowerment centre. I was amazed at how peaceful it was there. When walking in I saw two rooms which held two groups of women. In one room, they were learning how to sew a blouse, and in the other they were learning how to thread eyebrows. I joined in the eyebrow threading class. The centre runs beauty courses (henna, make up, eyebrow threading, hair dressing) and sewing classes. Each programme last 3 months with an and exam at the end for only 10 Rupee. (12pence). The women get a certificate at the end of the programme which they can take to employers to help find them work. This was a wonderfully peaceful centre full of laugh, positivity and a sense of unity. These are all things that I have noticed have been oppressed for women in the Indian culture. They must follow strict rules and tradition,

from their role in the family to education and future relationships. Here the woman had times to focus on themselves and what they want without the external pressures. This was a wonderful way to end my time with the Taabar community.



Reflecting on the Experience

I started the project with the intention of understanding further the benefits of Drama Therapy within another culture. It soon became apparent that I was most interested in the social aspect of the Indian culture, the lives of the people I met, and the problems they face. If I were to do this project again, I would have spent time talking with the children about their lives (positives and negatives), the things that they like, the things that need to change, and the challenges they have to face. From this information, we would then pick a prominent issue and create a piece of theatre that explores this issue. We would explore positive and negative outcomes revolved around the issue.

I would love to be able to run programmes in other developing countries. I have learnt a lot from being in India. Unfortunately, there are many desperate issues that needs to be addressed. Now I have a background on these issues I believe it would be a great idea to create a programme that explores prominent issues such as pollution, gender power struggles, arranged marriage, religion, poverty and child trafficking in a safe environment. It would be great to then take what we learn in the programme to the public to share and promote social change.

The part I found most difficult was the language barrier. Although I had someone translating what I was saying, I could tell by the children's reactions that the meaning was sometimes lost. This meant the exercises weren't fully received as I would have liked them to be. To tackle this, I would love to set up a teaching zone in the UK where these projects can be taught to English speaking teachers/volunteers from developing countries who can then translate the projects in their home countries in the correct way.

This project has taught me a lot about the vast difference of cultures and the importance of being open and accepting of them. It has reinforced my understanding of the real, major social and political problems that desperately need to be addressed in India. I believe that this incredible opportunity has given me a head start into making a change.

My journey wouldn't have been possible without the support of The GANE Trust and the inspiration and encouragement throughout from my tutors, friends and family. I truly look forward to hearing about future students who are given the same opportunity.

Thank you and Namaste.

