



Fool POWER

CLOWNING, STREET THEATRE,
POLITICS & PLAY

14-17TH SEPTEMBER 2023
LIVERPOOL



THE INVITATION

This is a call out for rebellious clowns, amped-up activists, floundering fools, brazen buffoons and mischief makers of every flavour.

Join Activist Clown Robyn Hambrook and the Liverpool Arts Lab for a 4-day residency exploring creative methodologies and the transformative possibilities of clowning, street theatre, politics and play.



AT A GLANCE

Residency in Liverpool (4 days - 10am - 6pm)

Sliding Scale: £270 - £330

Earlybird £260 for first 6 sign ups

Optional Accommodation - can be booked at an extra cost. Scroll below for info.



THE INVITATION



THE WORKSHOP

A playful, deep dive into the creative, transformative possibilities of clowning and street theatre.

This four-day residency connects clowning, street theatre and working in the public space. We will embrace the ridiculous, the moving and the maddening aspects of life. Taking inspiration from ourselves, our collective and the world around us; we will create playful commentaries & political interventions to take out into public space.

Collectively we'll be exploring the big issues; asking what moves us and calls to be expressed in the world right now.

Our responses will be served by diverse practices; clowning, physical theatre, dance, choreography, butoh, ritual theatre, street performance and creative activism.

Through the process participants will develop skills in ensemble working, movement training and collective devising leading to research and experimentation in public space.

KEY ELEMENTS WE'LL EXPLORE

- Clowning & Street Theatre basics
- Activist Clown Tools & Techniques
- Ensemble Movement & Choreography
- Politics & Play in Public Space
- Ritual Theatre & Performance
- Devising & making processes
- Working, living & creating collectively

WHO IS IT FOR?

Clowns, theatre practitioners, circus and physical performers, dancers, musicians, visual artists, street performers, activists, enthusiasts and the curious!

Anyone interested in exploring new forms of creative activism or expanding their understanding of clowning as a form of political expression.

Those wishing to expand their toolkit of a socially engaged and embodied practices.

And anyone who wants to use humour and laughter to change the world then this is the workshop you have been waiting for.

WHAT? WHY? HOW? & WHO?



THE LOCATION & RESIDENCY SPACE

We will be in residence at the incredible Bidston Observatory. Built in 1866, this grade II listed building sits on a hill overlooking Liverpool's famous waterfront. The observatory is owned, and run by, the Bidston Observatory Artistic Research Community (BOARC). It serves the community year-round as a space for retreat and developing creative projects.



There are two telescopic domes and a variety of large spaces to work in. We can fling open the doors and play in the outdoor spaces around the Observatory and in local woodlands. Plus we will have easy access to the seaside resort of New Brighton, with sandy beaches and the UK's longest promenade.



BOARC can be reached by public transport. And there is ample free parking onsite.

Further information about BOARC can be found at <https://bidstonobservatory.org/>



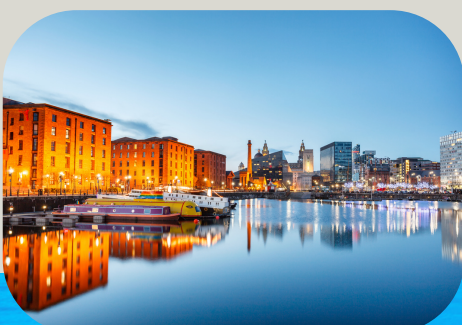
WHY LIVERPOOL?

Liverpool also has a long history of political protest. During the national transport workers' strike of 1911 Winston Churchill sent 3500 troops and 24,000 policemen into the city. Hundreds of men and women were injured when the police baton-charged a peaceful 85,000-strong rally at St George's Hall. Days later soldiers fired on another gathering killing two local men. But the working people of Liverpool would not back down. It was the government who eventually gave in and pressured wealthy business owners to improve pay and conditions for workers across the country.



Like all port cities, Liverpool is a melting pot of people and ideas. It has produced a prestigious roll call of musicians, writers, performers and fools, including former President of the World Clown Association, Arthur Vercoe Pedlar and Sir Ken Dodd. Humour is an important aspect of the Scouse identity and is used to great effect to challenge authority and bring about change.

The spirit of clown is alive in the city and has called this workshop into being.





ACCOMMODATION AT BOARC

There are TWO options to participate in this event:

1. Join for the Workshop Only
2. Stay at the Observatory and turn the workshop into a Retreat for an extra cost, accommodation pricing below.

The retreat is self-catered. The large kitchen at BOARC is well equipped and basic supplies are provided. We will buy supplies and then prepare communal meals together; breakfast, lunch and dinner. You will also be encouraged to bring whatever you would like to find.

There are several double rooms plus a couple of individual, accessible rooms downstairs. There is a 12 bed dorm, with groovy platform beds. And a couple of rooms with 3 or 4 single beds. Bathrooms are shared.

To keep costs low BOARC asks guests to donate some cleaning time at the end of their stay. So on the final day we will have an hour-long clown cleaning party to leave BOARC in good shape.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

"I am taking away new games, shared leadership, the feminist approach and anti-patriarchal pedagogy and your trust in us. I have a strengthened feeling that it is possible to do political things in the street and feeling of 'just do it!'"
Participant, 'Nomadic Rebel Clown Academy'

"Thank you so much Robyn. Your clown coaching is very helpful because it is honest and direct. I thought the weekend was great and I am inspired to wear a red nose again"
Participant 'The Activist Clown Weekend'

"Robyn, you are amazing. The work you do is so powerful and important and brings together so many fantastic people. It is always wonderful and inspiring to work with you."
Participant, 'Bouffon Intensive, Potsdam'

"This has been a beginner's buffet of very prompting information regarding how to use one of the world's least understood art forms to help bring attention (and hopefully bring change) to any issue we face as a community, as a world, as a people."
Participant 'Activist Clown Toolkit'

PRICING OPTIONS

The course will be limited to 16 places.

INVESTMENT:

Daytime workshop Attendees: 10am - 6pm

Sliding Scale: £270 - £330

Transparency of the fees:

Facilitation £50/day

Producing £10/day

Venue £10/day

Lunch £5/day

Total £75 x 4 = £300

What you pay:

'pay it forward' £330

'a spot for you' £300

'a supported place' £270

Earlybird: £260 for first 6 sign ups

Bursary & supported options are also available. Please just get in touch.

Accommodation at BOARC including breakfast & dinner
£30/night

3 nights = £90

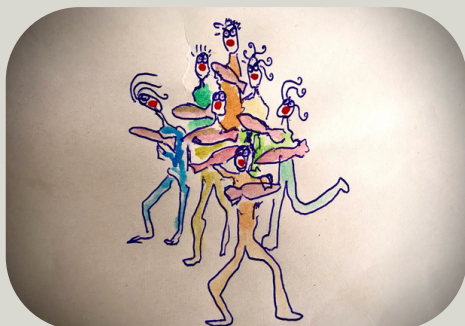
(If you would like to arrive on Wednesday and/ or stay over on Sunday you are very welcome. It's £30 per extra night, payable directly to BOARC (bring cash). On Wednesday you'll need to sort out your own food. On Sunday there'll be food left over from our retreat)

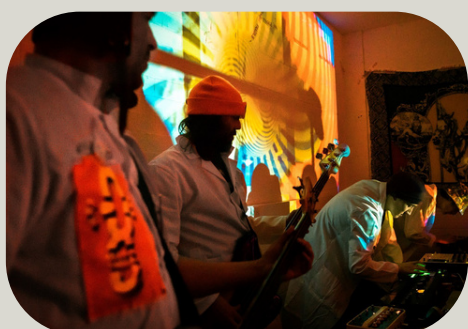
REFUND POLICY:

Earlybird places will be needed to be paid in full to lock in the great price. Other places can be booked with an initial non-refundable £75 deposit. The full amount will be due 2 weeks before the residency after which time there is a no cancellation policy (similar to any airbnb or hotel you would book). You may transfer your place to another person or sell it on to a friend in your network if you are unable to attend.

REGISTRATION

Contact Jen Allenson of Liverpool Arts Lab to register
liverpoolartslab@gmail.com





ABOUT ROBYN HAMBROOK

Robyn is a Bristol-based director, teacher and performer. With over 20 years experience she is a passionate practitioner of clowning, physical theatre, circus and street arts. She has a MA in Circus Directing, a Diploma of Physical Theatre Practice and trained with a long line of inspiring teachers including Holly Stoppit, Peta Lily, Bim Mason, Giovanni Fusetti, Jon Davison, Lucy Hopkins and John Wright.

Over the past five years she has been exploring the meeting point of clowning and a deep desire to address the injustices in the world. This specialism has developed through her Masters Research 'Small Circus Acts of Resistance', on the streets and in protests with the Bristol Rebel Clowns and in research residencies with The Trickster Laboratory.

Robyn's Activist Clown research has led to collaborations with Jay Jordan (Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination, France), Clown Me In (Beirut), LM Bogad (US), Hilary Ramsden (Greece) and international Tricksters; 'The Yes Men' (US). Keen to explore the intersection of clowning and politics, Robyn is driven to create collaborative, research spaces, testing and pushing the limits of the artform to create new knowledge and methodologies for her industry and strengthen partnerships for future work.

Some of her most recent collaborations and teaching projects have included the Nomadic Rebel Clown Academy (5-day Activist Clown Training), The Laboratory of the Un-beautiful (Feminist Grotesque Bouffon Training for Womxn Theatre Makers) and the Clown Congress (annual gathering of clowns, activists & academics collectively exploring what it means to be a clown in this current era)

ABOUT LIVERPOOL ARTS LAB

Liverpool Arts Lab formed in the summer of 2017 in the aftermath of the 14 Hour Super Weird Happening at The Florence Institute on April Fool's Day. The Lab's first action was a ritual cleansing of Mathew Street, an important energy centre in the city. This was followed by an event to welcome the water goddess Bellisama into the city.

In 2018 & 2019 we supported K2 Plant Hire's People's Pyramid project by organising and leading a ritual Beating of the Bounds of Liverpool 8. Since then we have circumnavigated the 10 mile boundary of the Royal and Ancient Hunting Park of Toxteth twice, once in the form of a golden acorn being passed from spoon to spoon, and once dressed as creatures from the lost park. We've run events to honour the spirit of the white stag that was shot and killed by police in Bootle in 2021. And we are currently in a 3-year cycle of events following ancient water courses through the city and out to the sea.

All of these on-street, participative public interventions are rich with poetry, song, ritual and story-telling. Arts Lab actions are driven by a desire to strengthen our connections with the land and to re-enchant the city.

FACILITATORS & ORGANISERS