

ROSEMARY LEE & SIMON WHITEHEAD

CALLING TREE



PHOTO CREDIT: TONY FANNING

Co-directed by Rosemary Lee and Simon Whitehead

Produced by Artsadmin
Nicky Childs Senior Artists' Producer nicky@artsadmin.co.uk

t +44 (0)20 7247 5102
f +44 (0)20 7247 5103

artsadmin.co.uk artsadmin.co.uk/projects/calling-tree

ARTS ADMIN.



PHOTO CREDIT: TONY FANNING

CALLING TREE

Located in and around a large tree, Calling Tree is a durational performance cycle of songs, movement and messages. Bird-like calls and songs echo out from the canopy of the tree as performers continually appear and disappear, fluctuating between restful perching to passionate vocal and physical activity.

A gentle yet powerful act of reclamation and activism, the performance entices both the knowing audience and the unwitting passer-by as they come and go throughout the day to stop, look up and to contemplate.

Originally commissioned by Migrations and developed with support from the Jerwood Choreographic Research Project Calling Tree was co-directed by Rosemary and Simon with a team of aerialists, singers and performers and premiered in Betws-y-Coed, North Wales over two days in Summer 2014.

This on-going project will now focus on the animation of further trees particularly in urban spaces. Adapting the existing structure and adding in new commissioned songs and material the artists will create a bespoke performance and event for the specific habitat and social sphere of each tree.

ROSEMARY LEE - BIOGRAPHY

Known for working in a variety of contexts and media, Rosemary has created large-scale site-specific works with cross-generational casts, solos for herself and other performers as well as video installations and short films.

Regardless of the scale, these projects have a unique intimate quality capturing moving portraits of the performers and exploring our relationship with our environment.

Rosemary's recent series site-specific live performances have involved large casts of professional and untrained dancers of all ages: Common Dance (Dance Umbrella 2009) paid tribute to the now lost public 'common' land; Square Dances (Dance Umbrella, 2011) used what 'common' green spaces we have left in London to gather in a different way and Under the Vaulted Sky (IF:Milton Keynes International Festival 2015) revealed the ethereal quality of the Cathedral of Trees, a magical arboretum planted in the footprint of Norwich Cathedral.

These live works have inspired several associated projects: A DVD and symposium (co-curated with Martin Welton, Queen Mary's University of London) entitled On Taking Care (2012) that drew on the process of making Common Dance. Melt Down, one of the quartet of works that combined to make up Square Dances has subsequently been remade with local casts across the world - from London & Hastings to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Heilbronn, Germany.

Rosemary's screen-based works include a series of short dance films - boy, greenman, Infanta (made with Peter Anderson) and Snow (made with David Hinton) for the BBC, and the interactive installations Apart from the Road and Remote Dancing (made with Nic Sandiland). During 2012-13 she collaborated with Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company in Derry-Londonderry resulting in the creation of the acclaimed seven-screen video installation Without.

Her three-screen video installation, Liquid Gold is the Air (2015) made with dance filmmaker Roswitha Chesher draws inspiration from the tree cathedral and performance of Under the Vaulted Sky, is currently touring to cathedrals, churches and galleries.

Working with movement-artist Simon Whitehead, they have together developed Calling Tree, a durational performance cycle of songs, movement and messages which take place in a mature tree. First presented in North Wales by Migrations in 2014, they now plan to recreate it in trees in urban contexts starting in Tottenham, London in 2016 as part of LIFT. Rosemary also writes, guest teaches and lectures internationally. Recipient of both a Bonnie Bird Award and a Jerwood Choreographic Research Project Award in 2013, she is currently a Work Place artist, an Artsadmin Artist, a DanceEast Artist Associate 2015, a ResCen Research Associate Artist (Middlesex University) and holds an honorary doctorate from Roehampton University.



PHOTO CREDIT: RAY JACOBS

FURTHER INFORMATION

QUOTES FROM ONLOOKERS

"Had me completely enraptured, wish we could do this in London"

"This piece touched deeply on our need to connect with nature, in a simple, gentle way. It was never preachy, but left me with a sense of hope. I had the feeling of being washed through, and at the end was on the brink of tears, not of sadness, but of joy & delight."

"...completely inspiring for an old man like me"

TOUR DATES

Bloomsbury Festival, London	October 2016
LIFT festival, London	June 2016
Betws-y-Coed, North Wales	August 2014

SIMON WHITEHEAD

Movement artist Simon Whitehead works from both his base in rural west Wales and internationally. Since 2000 he has developed a body of work from pedestrian practices; his works are place-sensitive and he often invites members of the public to collaborate in a process of ritual construction through the body and mediums of live performance, dance, sound and film.

He completed LOUPHOLE in March 2010, an off-site performance commission at Oriel Davies Newtown, which involved the first public howl in the UK and collaboration with the town's silver band. This project was partnered with a gallery-based retrospective of screen-based and performance artefacts, titled Afield.

Over the last 16 years Simon has collaborated closely with Melbourne-based sound artist Barnaby Oliver. They are currently working on Pings, an online performance project.



PHOTO CREDIT: TOBY FANNING

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Travelling Company	6 people with possibility of additional local performers
Site to Provide	Ladders, shelter and a place to leave equipment nearby
Team will provide	Rigging equipment

SAMPLE TIMETABLE

NB: A smaller/scaled down version can be drawn up

Phase 1: Feasibility

- Visit from Rigger/ risk assessment for each tree & location
- Discussions with local Council: Parks & Leisure/arts /health & safety officers etc. • All relevant Permissions sought

Phase 2:

2-3 weeks on site + on-going development work. Rosemary & Simon with members of team for part of this period

- Rigging/exploring original material in tree
- Explore links with local groups/organisations/schools
- Explore the natural habitat of the area with Ben Stammers, Wildlife Educator
- Develop template for the performance
- Devise potential local participant involvement and outreach programme
- Recruit participation assistant and additional professional performer

Phase 3:

- Confirm wrap around programme of talks/walks/events
- Studio based rehearsals
- Outreach work begins

Phase 4:

- 3 weeks of devising/rehearsing on site.
- 1 week of performance and events: schedule TBC