

Our techniques

Dead Earnest is a theatre, training and facilitation company that uses performance techniques to investigate the potential for positive change in all of our lives. We believe that drama both in performance and reception offers vital tools to allow people to see the world as it is, and imagine how it could be. Using theatre and drama techniques to allow people to rehearse positive change may sound hopeful, or even naive. But we believe that the techniques we have refined and practice are able to create safe, authentic spaces where people can broaden their experience, call forward their strength and experience challenges and emotions that make them better able to live effectively and productively in the future.

We use our creative skills to devise training, experiences and performances. The range of techniques we use is curtailed only by our imagination and our audiences' and partners' ambitions.

Forum Theatre:

Forum Theatre is one of the techniques we use most regularly to help individuals and organisations meet their learning and training needs.

Forum Theatre is a technique which sees an audience actively encouraged to change what they see on stage. Any behaviour exhibited by the characters that is thought to be unhelpful can be challenged and changed. Unlike in traditional theatre in which the audience is forbidden to break the invisible barrier between them and the performers, in forum theatre they are encouraged to do so.

Forum Theatre was developed by the theatre practitioner Augusto Boal. The model of Forum Theatre that we have developed utilises many of the techniques expounded by Boal, but builds on these, to create a version suitable for a variety of audiences and settings.

Our approach to Forum is to devise and write highly bespoke scripts. We perform a short play and the audience are invited to observe. In the play the characters make mistakes or behave in unhelpful ways. Having seen the performance once, it is then replayed and on this occasion the audience is encouraged to stop the action whenever they think a character could have behaved differently or they have an observation to make. A facilitator encourages responses and recognises and values every comment. As the session progresses, the facilitator will ask for general comments, ask for suggestions as to how the characters might change, get the audience to speak directly to the characters and encourage audience members onto the stage to try out their possible solutions.

We spend time researching the organisation, community, individuals and settings that we are being asked to reflect. The narrative of the script creates an extended roleplay, and the story we have created sets a definite challenge to the audience to find ways to improve the outcome for the characters and by doing so come to understand how to meet and overcome their own challenges.

Fees:

Because our work is so bespoke our fees do vary. However, they are always fixed at the start of a project. We never charge for initial meetings and our proposal documents lay out clearly what you can expect from us.

Other techniques:

Dead Earnest specialises in writing and performing bespoke forum theatre productions to help render complex problems and debates, and create safe arenas for discussion, debate and learning. However, we are also skilled at applying a vast array of other techniques, tools and skills to create imaginative projects with tangible and positive outcomes for participants and partners. These include:

- Patient Simulation and Roleplay
- Multi-disciplinary arts projects
- Variation on traditional Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed techniques
- Facilitation
- Digital media production including video and audio production and distribution
- Bespoke and off-the-shelf workshops
- Multi-disciplinary workshops including various art forms
- New media projects

We also pursue our personal research interests to combine the expertise of practitioners and academics to devise the next generation of tools to help people improve their lives.

Research & Development, especially action research is central to what we do - we relish the chance to find innovative ways of helping people change their behaviour, and their lives, for the better.

We use our creativity to devise effective ways to unlock people's potential to learn and improve their lives, and the lives of those around them.