**THEATRE, POVERTY AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE – A FREE ONLINE RESOURCE**

The mapping part of the Poor Theatres research involves documenting the work of contemporary theatre practitioners and organisations working in sites effected by poverty and/or on economic justice projects. The aim is to create a free online resource that will be a useful port of call for artists, researchers and students, and that will also support an international conversation about the impact of economic crisis on theatre-making and participation. The resource provides an opportunity to learn how artists from around the world describe their work, to hear from communities engaged in theatre projects in economically deprived sites, extend awareness of a network of practice, and to gather ideas for new approaches and future research.

**Collaborations with five theatre projects across Greater Manchester** (UK), and a number of theatre practitioners working on economic justice projects elsewhere in the world, supported this part of the research. The local projects are all sited within areas of Greater Manchester described by Friedrich Engels in The Condition of the Working Class in England in the 1840s. The idea here was to revise Engels’ accounts of deprivation by **documenting the ways in which artists and communities draw on theatre activity to critique and celebrate their localities**. International theatre practitioners have been invited to participate in **online reflective conversations** about their work and these are in the process of being completed, edited and uploaded.

To date, more than 150 items have been added, including audio and film clips of interviews with artists, performers, participants and theatre managers, images and documents.

There are two ways to search the resource – via a map and database:

**http://map.poortheatres.manchester.ac.uk/Public/Map/Index**

**http://map.poortheatres.manchester.ac.uk/Public/Search/Index**

We have created **a playlist (entitled ‘Theatre and Austerity’) on the Poor Theatres Tube channel, which includes short ‘teaser trailers’ (2 – 7 minutes long) of the audio-visual material** available on the resource. The playlist offers a ‘quick and easy’ way into the broader range of material. To view the playlist go to **http://tinyurl.com/n9a47kx**

**‘Theatre and austerity’ playlist contents:**

1. Paul Cree & Conrad Murray, artists and performers – Beats and Elements
2. Roddy Gauld, Chief Executive – Octagon Theatre Bolton
3. Dawn Yates-Obe, Percent for Art Officer – Bolton at Home
4. Kelly – Melodramatics, Octagon Theatre & Bolton at Home partnership
5. Steve Vickers and Reece Williams – The Agency/Contact Theatre
6. Muvi – The Edge Arts Centre/Booth Centre
7. Chris Wright – Men’s Room Board member
8. ‘I’m still changing’ track from ‘A day in the life …’ album - Men’s Room
9. Annecy Hays – ice and fire
10. Sarah Thornton – Collective Encounters
11. Dave Bradwell, performer – *Everyday Heroes* (Royal Exchange, Chol Theatre and New Charter)

**www.manchester.ac.uk/poortheatres/mapping**

**Overview of contents**

**Local projects – documentation related to the following projects is now available:**

* New Charter Housing/Royal Exchange Theatre partnership – focusing on Everyday Heroes (2014) –an outdoor performance directed by Evie Manning (Common Wealth Theatre) and Clare Collet and Sam McKay from Chol Theatre; produced by Chol Theatre
* Contact Theatre – The Agency in Moston and Harpurhey (2014/15)
* Bolton at Home and Octagon Theatre partnership – Melodramatics (women’s theatre group, New Bury) and Calder Campbell Resident’s Association cultural activities, and reflections on the partnership and the Bolton at Home’s renowned Percent for Art scheme from key advocates past and present
* Men’s Room Manchester – A history of the Men’s Room, with documentation and interviews with key artists and support staff involved in the project past and present
* Booth Centre theatre company, facilitated by The Edge – focusing on their show, The Imaginarium of Dr Booth (2015)

**Interviews with national and international artists/arts organisations now available:**

* Paul Cree & Conrad Murray - Beats and Elements (London - UK)
* Marcus Faustini – The Agency (Brazil and UK)
* Annecy Hayes – iceandfire (London)
* Evie Manning – Common Wealth (Bradford, Cardiff, London – UK)
* Sarah Thornton – Collective Encounters (Liverpool - UK)

**Interviews with national and international artists available soon, with more to be added by January 2016:**

* Art Against Poverty (Kenya)
* Dakxin Chhara – Budhan Theatre (India)
* Big hART (Australia)
* Michael John Garces - Cornerstone Theatre Company (US)
* Vijay Kumar – theatre activism in the Kathputli colony (India)
* John Malpede - Los Angeles Poverty Department (US)
* small world theatre/ theatr byd bychan (Wales, international)
* Maria Schejbal - Teatr Grodski (Poland)
* Carran Waterfield – Triangle Theatre (UK)

A long list of theatre and economic justice organisations can also be found on the resources section of our website, and a bibliography of relevant published literature will be available soon – www.manchester.ac.uk/poortheatre/resources

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