

Moon Experiences

Welcome to this audio introduction to Moon Experiences, commissioned as part of Unboxed – creativity in the UK.

The following introduction will take about 10 minutes to listen to and includes information about Moon Experiences; including descriptions the spaces and the different events. All VocalEyes introductions are available as a text document section on the event page at VocalEyes.co.uk/whats-on.

This immersive experience platforms the work of young, underrepresented and marginalised people, merging magic realism, thrill and folk horror, where the political and social consequences of human existence on this planet are confronted.

Audiences are guided by stewards wearing green jumpsuits, through a series of interactive exhibitions, including: small theatre sets where local actors present 5min plays written by local writers; a video ceiling showing animated and real life footage of animals, and a meditative soundbath.

The themes of responsibility and accountability runs throughout the experience. Cameras are dotted around, capturing ways in

which the audience is complicit in the actions on display. At the end of the experience visitors will be given a video memory of their journey - highlighting the fact that, when watching, they are also being watched.

To begin, on the facade of the event site, there's a large mural that sets the visual tone. It presents a bombastic and colourful, marble-effect image, with green, red, purple and yellow swirls intersecting with each other.

Inside, the audience gathers in a 3-sided, booth-like space, with 2 outer green-coloured walls, or flats, each about 2 and a half metres high and 1 and a half wide. The back wall echoes the design on the façade – the colourful marble effect. It also displays a QR code, which provides access to information on the event.

Beyond this point, a multi-sensory experience awaits, providing a high level of sensory exposure, designed to convey dystopian speculative scenarios of humanity on the moon whilst also posing questions about our past on earth. It's built over 3 areas, with each area based on a different theme: **Celebration**; **Communication** and **Arrival**.

Celebration presents 6 separate, 5-minute plays involving young writers and actors, all taking inspiration from the way we celebrate here on earth and the way in which the character of the Moon itself would celebrate. The scenes are played out on sets that slowly become magical, surreal and horrific, as though walking into multiple dreams. Each is presented in its own pod, with one or two characters performing intense emotional content.

Though each is different, the pods share a design concept – which could be best described as kitsch folk horror. Each pod is approximately 4 metres wide and 3 metres deep, with a black and white, checker-board back wall and floor. Each has multi-coloured inflatable sculptures arranged around it, creating a strange and alien landscape – there are large, boulder-like shapes, alongside abstract blobs that could be enlarged bacterial forms, or alien life-forms. There are recognisable earthly forms that are set alongside the more weird and wonderful alien shapes.

Pod 1, named “Birthday” has a tall, 3-tiered birthday cake, pink with yellow icing, set against the back wall, with party balloons floating either side. There’s a multi-coloured bench on the left and a large, green -plastic teddy on the right. An alien-like humanoid figure stands in the centre, with round pink head, blue golf ball-like body and purple legs.

Pod 2 named “Moontrimony” has several purple and white plastic sculptures attached to its back wall, some garlic bulb-shaped, others in the shape of frilly skirts. On the right is a purple step ladder and a large photo of a happy couple, a man and a woman, in a gold frame. On the left is a small yellow platform, on which stands a mauve alien blob, with several tentacles poking out of its body. It stands on a strip of green carpet, which stretches down from the platform and along the checker board floor.

Pod 3 is named “Birth”. It has a mound of bright pink-coloured entrails, on which sits a green blob. Other odd shaped, multi-coloured blobs are arranged all around.

Pod 4, “Funeral”, has the word “graveyard” spelled out across a central arch. Around it are several green and purple gravestones and crosses, with a coffin lid leaning against the back wall.

Pod 5, “Carnival” is populated with a couple of giant high-heeled shoes, one green, one purple. They are surrounded by giant multicoloured fruit – pineapple, apple and grapes and banana. A large, golf ball-shaped green and purple blob stands in the centre. Across the front is a curtain rail, with a set of dark red curtains pulled to the sides.

Pod 6, “Ritual/Moon Worship” has a red and yellow, flame-shaped sculpture set against its back wall, in front of

which is a pink horse-shaped figure, standing with 3 blue dots stuck to the side of its body – at head, front and hind legs, in between darker pink external entrails. Large grey boulders are arranged around the figure.

The 2nd stage of the experience is entitled **Communication**. It investigates how communication between each other, earth and the moon might reflect issues within our society but also develop new radical forms of communications making use of white noise for example.

It's presented beneath a long, flat, High- Definition video ceiling, with green drapes hanging down either side. The ceiling is 10 metres long and 2 and a half metres wide. The video ceiling presents animated footage of an underwater scene, where all types of animals, people and strange objects float down through the screen, as though viewed in a goldfish bowl. The imagery, along with a soundtrack created by Sigur Ros, creates a slow and meditative mood, and a world in which animals respond to the sound of white noise and develop their own communication with the universe.

Emerging out from under the video ceiling, the next experience is a surround-sound bath, created within a small, warm and cosy spatial/audio environment, including a 360-degree light

show. It offers an experience of healing through sound, while communicating through white noise.

The 3rd experience is entitled “**Arrival**”, which considers whether the moon will be our next colonised space, and whether we’ll we continue to make the mistakes of our past.

It presents a brightly coloured alien, rocky and slimey moonscape, with odd objects sticking out of the rocks, like the bonnet of a car. Hazy dry ice floats all around. You will be driven around the landscape in an electric golf buggy, itself ensconced in a rubberized skin reflecting an ultra violet light.

After this journey you arrive in a space filled with sound, projections, landscapes and the imagery and audio of moon music, where you will be offered your video memory, your reminder that you have been under surveillance throughout.

The exit to the experience is via a space similar to the entrance. This leads to a final area where 11, 27-inch screens show a total of 16 short films. Each screen is set in its own peep-show like booth. Many of the films are embedded with audio description.

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