

Gobbledegook Theatre present

# CLOUDSCAPES

An immersive performance of words and clouds





**CLOUDSCAPES** is an intimate installation combining clouds and script, set in an outdoor auditorium — a cloud-gazing area. Audiences are encouraged to look up and contemplate the mutability of clouds, as well as the mutability of humanity, guided by the soothing voice of performer and creator Lorna Rees.

Audiences lie back on giant beanbags for the 25-minute show, while Rees talks to them, through headphones, about cloud formation, interspersed with stories of her own relationship with the troposphere and of the journey of a lifetime with her father.

Cloudscapes is a pre-recorded piece of sound art experienced via headphones. The piece can be enjoyed by up to 60 people at a time, with audience members self-selecting the start time using their headset. This allows for a high audience turnover, and enables festivals to play the installation for a period of up to 5 hours. Cloud experts will be on hand throughout the duration of the installation to help ensure that the audience is comfortable while gazing, and to engage in conversations in the Cloud museum.

Cloudscapes is a very personal, human-scale work about clouds, with a focus on the role of clouds in climate change.

Even the most seemingly featureless skies provide plentiful material. The dreamy commentary gives audiences ‘permission to stop’ in order to observe the ‘temporary galleries’ above them.

After the audio has finished, audience members are invited to visit the Cloud Museum housed in a vintage horse trailer and speak with the artists about the work.

Gobbledegook Theatre are renowned for creating innovative, cross-artform work for unusual places. Cloudscapes was made in collaboration with artist Heidi Steller ([heidisteller.co.uk](http://heidisteller.co.uk)) with audio production by sound artist and producer Jo Tyler (BBC Radio 4, Radio 6). Dramaturgical support from author John Grindrod (writer of *Concretopia* and *Outskirts*) and Dr Zöe Svendsen. Several leading meteorologists and scientists involved in the study of climate change were consulted about the piece.

Cloudscapes premiered at Inside Out Dorset Festival in September 2016 on the dramatic coastal site of Hengistbury Head. In 2018 Cloudscapes was performed for international festival programmers at Brighton Festival’s biennial Caravan – a showcase of some of England’s brightest performance companies.

Cloudscapes is supported by Arts Council England.



## WHAT AUDIENCES SAY

*“A wonderful, calming, contemplative experience...thank you for making the first Festival of the Sky so special!”*

FESTIVAL OF THE SKY, CLEETHORPES 2019

*“What a lovely 25 minutes of calm clouds and contentment!”*

LAKES ALIVE FESTIVAL

*“A lovely time spent within a cloud – a great father’s day adventure.”*

HARDY MONUMENT, SOUTH DORSET RIDGEWAY

*“Mindful moments of being in the clouds; close your eyes and open them and it’s all changed! Restful and beautiful and nourishing.”*

BRIGHTON FESTIVAL

*“I drifted away just like the clouds and realised it’s all going to change and you really never know what’s literally round the corner.”*

THE POINT EASTLEIGH

*“I’m blown away by your cloudscapes. Touching, honest and thought provoking. Thank you.”*

INSIDE OUT DORSET

*“So I had a little sleep and a little cry, and a sense of thankfulness. Brilliant openhearted 45 minutes.”*

INSIDE OUT DORSET

*“Thanks for bringing my sky-obsessed father so close today. It was so beautiful and he would have loved it.”*

LAKES ALIVE FESTIVAL

## WHERE CAN CLOUDSCAPES BE PERFORMED?

Cloudscapes can be performed on grass, sand dunes or an area of hard standing, provided that there is a relatively level area to pitch up on. It works very well in a coastal location or park, but due to its versatility, it could even be presented in a car park or on a roundabout!

The ideal site is a place of relative quiet, away from the busiest part of the festival or amplified sound sources (although the piece has been successfully installed in urban environments such as the Bullring in Birmingham, Bethesda Park in Stoke and in Crewe Town Centre). Alternative rope and pin will be required if it is being installed on hard standing.

### ACCESS

Visually impaired audience members can request a touch tour of the set and Cloud Museum, which would take place half an hour before the installation opens. Although Cloudscapes is about gazing at the sky, the text is very descriptive of cloud forms and types, which makes it suitable for performance without the need for additional audio description.

Large print copies of the full text are available for hearing impaired audience members. We tour with a set of five folding chairs for audience members who find it hard to reach floor level in order to lay down on beanbags.

Gobbledegook are committed to being flexible and accommodating to those with additional needs.

### INTERNATIONAL INSTALLATIONS

We are extremely happy to present the work in countries that are not accessible from the UK by van. There are several possible options, including the purchase of beanbags by presenting festivals / venues, and the air freight of a small number of props and headphones.

It is feasible to translate the English text into any language and we would welcome the opportunity to explore this further with hosting festivals.



## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

### WHAT WE BRING

- 32 giant beanbags
- Blankets and sunglasses for the audiences' comfort
- Rope and pin for grass or hard standing areas (if required)
- A vintage horse trailer (260cm high, 230cm wide and 475cm long)
- A medium wheel base high-top transit van (to tow the trailer)

Both vehicles must be able to access the site, although we can park the van elsewhere during performances. High-clearance in car parks is necessary for the horse trailer.

### SETTING UP

Cloudscapes tours with two people on the road. Both members of the team act as technicians and set the space. Set up, and get out, takes approximately one hour.

We lay out a circle (with rope and pin) with a circumference of 50 square metres (around 16m in diameter). This will need to incorporate the horse trailer. Both audience and performance fit within this circle.

### WHAT WE REQUIRE FROM A PRESENTING FESTIVAL / VENUE

The company aim to be technically self-sufficient. However, we ask for support getting into the performance space (including help manoeuvring the horse trailer at less accessible sites).

We don't need dressing rooms or power or water, but a safe place to park the trailer and van overnight is required. The trailer can remain in situ if security is provided.

A festival steward will be required at the site entrance — under the direction of the Cloudscapes team — to manage audience capacity.



# GOBBLEDEGOOK THEATRE

Gobbledegook make innovative, cross-artform work for unusual places. With theatre at its core, our live performance, music and installation work is frequently inspired by Earth Sciences, and almost always takes place outdoors.

We are Associate Artists for Inside Out Dorset and Lighthouse Poole.

Lorna Rees is Artistic Director of Gobbledegook. [www.gobbledegooktheatre.com](http://www.gobbledegooktheatre.com)

## CONTACT

For booking  
enquiries contact

**Adam Coshan** (Producer)  
07817 984861  
[adamcoshan@gmail.com](mailto:adamcoshan@gmail.com)

For press or media  
enquiries contact

**Lorna Rees** (Artistic Director)  
07815 756946  
[lornarees@gmail.com](mailto:lornarees@gmail.com)

 @thegobbledegook

 @gobbledegooktheatre

[www.gobbledegooktheatre.com](http://www.gobbledegooktheatre.com)

[gobbledegooktheatre.blogspot.com](http://gobbledegooktheatre.blogspot.com)

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