

TURNED ON ITS HEAD present...



SPONGE

*“Children are like sponges.
They absorb all your
strength and leave you
limp, but give them a
squeeze and you get
everything back.”*

A performance for children aged 4 months to under 4s, and their grown-ups

Big Imaginations and Turned On Its Head present...



SPONGE

Roll, squeeze and pop yourself through the squishiest, squashiest show for babies, young children and their grown-ups!

Sponge is a soft, bouncy adventure through playtime and dreamtime set to a funky 1970s soundtrack, including disco favourites The Hustle and Car Wash. Follow a dad and daughter as they take you on a journey through springy environments, fascinating in shape, texture and touch. You also get to meet the leggy character Splegs, who needs a bit of help walking.

Dance company Turned On Its Head makes exciting participatory theatre for early years, taking children on a creative journey, engaging audiences throughout its performances and encouraging lots of family interaction. Everything in *Sponge* can be made with simple materials at home so there's plenty more fun to be had after leaving the theatre.

SPONGE

"Utterly charming, delightful and captivated the children and families. So deceptively simple and beautifully crafted!" Polka Theatre

"It is fun, joyful, and beautiful. I left the performance feeling stupidly happy, and my baby girl enjoyed it too!" Polka Theatre

Supported by The Spark Arts
With thanks to Attenborough Arts, Curve
All sponges provided by Sydney Heath & Son.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCqsLgfwWwA>

Full video of the show available on request

About Turned On Its Head

Formed in 2010 by Liz Clark and Oksana Tyminska, Turned On Its Head push the boundaries of participatory dance and theatre performance for children under 4 and their families. The company's work is characterised by research phases where they engage with their audiences in exploring ideas and concepts for each piece of work. All their work is part-choreographed, part-improvised with the children's reactions and participation.



Turned On Its Head believe that dance can be valued by and engage all ages and abilities. They are committed to creating high quality performances that embrace, celebrate and honour the diversity of communities. They believe that theatre is a shared experience where audiences, including the very young and the very old, make an important contribution that should always be both valued and showcased.

Shiny toured nationally from 2013-2016, which included runs as Dance Umbrella first orbital tour in Oct 2014. *Sponge* toured nationally between September and November 2016 before a nine-date run at the Barbican Centre, London.

Turned On Its Head are also working with a Developmental Psychologist to conduct research into the neuroscience of play and interaction. The project exists side by side with *Sponge* to inform and influence each other.

See R&D and rehearsal footage here:

SPONGE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5r7x2HFQbE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwYFXfNiRM>

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwxURt2DznA

“I’ve never seen a company making work for the very young that negotiates the relationships with children and parents so beautifully and it allows you to be far more daring and surprising with the kids than most companies can.”

Rosie Hunter, Executive Director, Peoples Palace Project

Artistic Director LIZ CLARK says: “We want to make theatre that places a child’s experience at the heart of it. For me, making this work was a response to the frustrations of taking my own non-hearing son to theatre performances and him not understanding that he couldn’t get on stage on touch the magical world that was being presented. Oksana and I wanted to create theatre that was close-up, personal and above all, inclusive. Why shouldn’t a child’s first experience of theatre be about being so close to the performer they can touch them?”



We also want to co-create our theatre with our audience. What you’ll find when you come to see our work is that the children become immersed in the theatrical experience and our performers give space for engaging and respecting each child’s response. We incorporate improvisation with the children and their families. The result is beautifully moving theatre which is about each child’s own journey.”

“The Company never fails to immerse children in a world that jumps and glides and inspires great moments of child-led choreography. It’s delightful and thoroughly engaging to watch and play”

Adel Al Salloum, Artistic Director, The Spark Arts, Leicester

SAONGE

Venues Sponge has visited

Just So Festival
Z-arts, Manchester
The Egg, Bath
Lincoln Drill Hall
Louth Playgoers - Riverhead Theatre
South Holland Centre, Spalding
Curve, Leicester
The Core at Corby Cube
Lakeside Arts, Nottingham
The Turnpike, Leigh Library
The Civic, Barnsley
The Boo, Rossendale
Lancaster Arts
ARC Stockton
Ropetackle Arts Centre
Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot
Gulbenkian Theatre, Kent
Little Angel Theatre
artsdepot

Blackwood Miners' Institute, Caerphilly
Spot On Lancashire
The North Wall, Oxford
Sunderland City Library and Arts Centre
The Atkinson, Southport
Waterside Arts Centre, Sale
St Mary's Creative Space, Chester
The Kirkgate, Cockermouth
Action Transport Theatre, Whitby Hall,
Ellesmere Port
Burnley Arts Centre
Citadel, St Helens
The Barbican Centre, London
Spark Arts Festival for Children
The Lowry, Salford
Theatr Clwyd
The Point, Eastleigh
Stratford Circus

Previous Shows: Shiny

A dazzling show for children aged 6 months – 4 years and their grown up.



Shiny is a highly successful and critically acclaimed, unique participatory performance, inclusive and accessible for families. Shiny invites the audience into a long forgotten room, where two people find friendship, joy and treasures that turn from ordinary to extraordinary. Audiences are invited to watch and play as all that glitters unfolds before their very eyes.

"Shiny is a rare show that reveals itself slowly, cleverly and warmly. Well choreographed and inviting, it's structure reveals the artists clear understanding of their audience, not least through it's well paced and inclusive playfulness"

Emma Gladstone, Artistic Director, Dance Umbrella.

SPONGE

Touring & Tech Information

Sponge will be our third show as a company. The R&D has been commissioned by The Spark Arts.

The full production is being commissioned by *Big Imaginations*.

The show previewed at *Just So Festival, 20 – 21 August 2016*.

The show premiered at *Z-arts, 29th September 2016*.

The Sponge creative team:

Artistic Director: Liz Clark

Associate Choreographer: Oksana Tyminska

Composer: Tayo Akinbode

Dramaturg: Pete Shenton (New Art Club)

Lighting Design: Daniel Ellis

Theatre Design: Sophia Lovell-Smith

TOUR

Availability: Wednesday 15th – Sunday 26th February 2017
Thursday 18th May – Sunday 11th June 2017

Audience: Babies aged 4 months – children aged under 4 and their grown-ups.

Photography: Performance shots & studio shots available.

Evaluation: Our iPad apps collect data at the end of performances which can then be shared with each venue.

Publicity:

- * Full copy and images available.
- * Film trailer
- * A5 flyers and A3 posters

TECH

General:

- * **Audience Capacity** – 75 of which 35 can be children
- * **Running Time** – 45-50 minutes, no interval
- * **Get In** – 3 hours before house opens if lighting is available. 2 hours without lighting.
- * **Get Out** – 1 hour

The logo for 'Sponge' is written in a large, bubbly, orange font. The letters are rounded and have a slight 3D effect, with the 'S' and 'G' being particularly prominent.

- * **Additional Assistance** – 1 person for get in and get out. 2 FOH staff during the performance.

Stage and Set:

- * **Dimensions of performance space;** Ideally a 9m x 9m playing area with 4m height. If the playing area is any smaller then please let the company know as we can often adapt to different spaces. The show can be performed in a smaller space at a reduced capacity, please contact the company for details. **The floor MUST be splinter free wooden or lino/synthetic floor. The performers are bare-foot throughout the show.** If a carpeted space is available a dance floor can be toured by prior arrangement with the company.
- * The audience will sit within the 9mx9m playing area.

Set:

- * The set consists of 2 book flats that are self-supportive.
- * Props consist of sponges and plastic tubs.
- * The audience are required to sit on the floor. Unless a medical condition prevents, adults are required to sit on the floor with their child. Venue to supply chairs for adults that can't sit on the floor.
- * Venue to provide two chairs for behind the book flats for quick changes.

Lighting:

- * In general we require a warm wash, this is to be made up from FOH, Side and Back light. (company will bring colour)
- * 8 Parcans with colour (colour provided by company)
- * 3 specials. One for corridor effect and 2 focused on a Mirror ball. (company to bring mirror ball, 1 non dim channel needed central to the acting space)
- * Audience are lit throughout the show.
- * All Lanterns to be provided by venue.
- * Please use lanterns that are suitable for your venue.

If a pre-rig can be provided at no extra cost to the company we can provide an LX plan to the venue in advance. If not, then we can rig during the get-in.

Transport:

- * We will be touring in a SWB van and will require on-site parking for the duration of the get in. It would be great if we can park the van for the duration of our stay. If on-site parking is unavailable, please advise of nearby parking.

Sound:

- * All sound is played from a toured Mac. We will require a mini jack input into the venue's sound desk. If the venue does not have a sound system, we also tour our own.
- * There is no specific requirement for the placement of PA assuming it is of a good quality to fill the performance area.

The logo for 'SAONGE' is displayed in a bold, orange, bubbly font. The letters are thick and rounded, with a slight shadow effect, giving it a 3D appearance. The 'S' and 'A' are connected, as are the 'O's and 'N's.

Operation:

- * Our technician operates all sound and LX, so both sound and LX need to be at the same operating point, preferably next to the performance space.

Additional:

- * 2x Lockable Dressing rooms.
- * Drinking water

Summary:

- * Playing area 9mx9m. Audience included within this space
- * Floor **MUST** be safe for bare feet and children to crawl.
- * 1 technician for the duration of our stay.
- * Venue to supply 2 chairs for actor quick changes.



For all enquiries please contact:

Big Imaginations

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