



SHADOW PHOTO BOOTH

TEACHER'S KIT

*Activities originally created and produced by and for
Junction Arts Festival 2015, written by Nora Jackson*



Photo: Jen Murnaghan

A NOTE FROM THE CREATOR, SAM ROUTLEDGE

We are all familiar the family photo. When it succeeds and we gain a wonderful snapshot of our loved ones, and when it fails with the children crying and the dog running out of shot. The Shadow Photo Booth came out of desire to create a fun experience for families that took away the anxiety of the posed family shot and instead lead them through a fun experience which resulted in a lovely memento to remember it by. When we see ourselves as a silhouette, in shadow, we are released of all the normal concerns that come with having our photo taken. Am I blinking? does my hair look funny? have I got something in my teeth? Because the silhouette, the shadow, is being *created* by us, rather than *being* us so we feel more liberated and creative, and less self conscious, but we still retain the essential elements of who we are (even if it maybe under a top hat and scuba diving flippers).

The Booth also provokes questions from enquiring student minds: why do we have family portraits? How does the way we prepare for the photo affect our outlook on others? How does our appearance affect the way others see us? We hope that the fun experience in the Shadow Photo Booth, and the activities in this kit, help teachers to open up interesting conversations with students about our place in the world.

OVERVIEW

The Shadow Photo Booth is an innovative take on the family photo, inviting people to pose behind a rear projection screen. A light is focused on the students, creating a crisp silhouette on the screen, with an artist assisting them in the composition. Costumes and props are provided to alter the natural silhouette of the students, transforming them into such things as a group of rabbits or strange animals from under the sea, with the work able to respond to a theme of a festival or event. The silhouette is then photographed using the participant's or teacher's own phone or camera, or with an optional polaroid camera, so they can take the image home.



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ABOUT TERRAPIN

Established for over 35 years, Terrapin is the centre of excellence for contemporary puppetry in Australia creating puppetry-based performances for all ages.

Telling sophisticated stories of humour and pathos, the company embraces new technologies whilst remaining true to the wonder and illusion resident in the age-old craft of puppetry. In its productions, the company aims to inspire families by encouraging them to express the power of their collective imagination through inventive play with the objects and devices that surround them.

Terrapin injects skills and programs into the Tasmanian community, supporting and developing artists and touring nationally and internationally.

Terrapin has created over 70 productions that have premiered in Tasmania. The company has toured across Australia, and internationally to Canada, China, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Malaysia, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the USA.

In 2012, Terrapin's production Boats won the Helpmann Award for Best Presentation for Children.

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Terrapin is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and through Arts Tasmania by the Minister for the Arts. Terrapin acknowledges the support of Salamanca Arts Centre.



ACTIVITIES

Grades K-2

Before the event

- In Australia and around the world there are certain rules that govern behaviour in families.
 - Think of your family portrait and brainstorm what rules do you follow in your family?
 - Do some of your family members have different rules and expectations than others?
 - Do you agree with all rules that you have to follow?
- Imagine you are a different person. How would you live, walk, talk and think?
- Read a book about a family such as “The Runaway Hug” by Nick Bland and Freya Blackwood and “Where the Wild Things Are” by Maurice Sendak. After reading the book, discuss how authors create characters using language and images. Choose one character as your focus and create a short imaginative text.
- In a group, develop freeze frames depicting family portraits of the family members in the book. Divide students into groups, assign one student per group to be the directors and the rest to be actors. Every actor should be representing a character showing how they feel about their family members. The directors can suggest ideas to the actors for striking even more powerful poses.

After the event

- Write a characterisation of your character from Shadow Photo Booth and add details that describe what makes them unique. Consider their profession, appearance, relationships to others in the photo.
- Produce an imaginative art piece making use of or relating to the photograph taken in the Shadow Photo Booth. Use any materials available to you for art and craft. When planning your art piece, consider what may have happened before and after the photograph was taken.

Grades 3-6

Before the event

- Considering different family portraits, in Australia and around the world there are certain rules that govern behaviour in families.
 - Brainstorm what rules do you follow in your family.
 - Do some of your family members have different rules and expectations than others?
 - Do you agree with all rules that you have to follow?
- Considering different family portraits, in Australia and around the world there are certain rules or laws that govern behaviour in families for example the Australian Constitution and the Declaration of Human Rights. Research which ones there are.
 - Can you identify situations where it becomes difficult to meet these?
 - Think of some controversial family issues currently discussed in the media.
 - Write a persuasive text on why you agree or disagree with a rule/law that exists in your family or in society at the moment.
- Over time family rules and laws change. Using the Internet, see if you can find at least two laws that were once enforced that might seem comical today. Consider current laws from different countries also.
- People living in different countries live by different rules. In groups of three or four, imagine you have been hired to draft the basis of a new country's family laws. Come up with 5 laws you think will be guiding principles. You might like to think about things like parents' and children's responsibilities, who is allowed to get married and have children...what is permitted, what is guaranteed and what is outlawed.
- Imagine you are a different person. How would you live, walk, talk and think?
- In a group, engage in the drama activity Space Jump (everyone stands in a circle, one actor starts acting out an improvised scene based on an everyday activity inside the circle, when the teacher says "Space Jump" the first actor freezes and another actor joins in and builds another scene incorporating some of the movements of the previous scene and the first actor. Another two actors enter the scenes in the same way, one after the other. The game then goes on backwards, reducing the actors until the last actor has been dismissed. During the game have a couple of students take photographs and write down observations of remarkable poses struck by the actors. Discuss the expressiveness of the poses taken based on the photographs and observations. Encourage everyone in the class to practise these and other extraordinary poses that highlight the characters depicted.

After the event

- Research the instructions of other improvisation activities such as the Growing and Shrinking Machine, Fast Forward and Emotional Family. Then experiment with the concept of a family portrait as depicted in the photos that were taken of you at Junction's Shadow Photo Booth within these games.

- Write a characterisation of your character from Shadow Photo Booth add detailed descriptions about what makes them unique. Consider their profession, appearance, relationships to others in the photo. Draw on the characterisation you wrote and the photograph taken in the Shadow Photo Booth to create a piece of literature such as a newspaper article, film script or persuasive text.



Grades 7-12

Before the event

- Considering different family portraits, in Australia and around the world there are certain rules that govern behaviour in families. Brainstorm what rules do you follow in your family.
 - Do some of your family members have different rules and expectations than others?
 - Do you agree with all rules that you have to follow?
- Considering different family portraits, in Australia and around the world there are certain rules or laws that govern behaviour in families for example the Australian Constitution and the Declaration of Human Rights. Research which ones there are.
 - Can you identify situations where it becomes difficult to meet these?
 - Think of some controversial family issues currently discussed in the media.
 - Write a persuasive text on why you agree or disagree with a rule/law that exists in your family or in society at the moment.
- Over time family rules and laws change. Using the Internet, see if you can find at least two laws that were once enforced that might seem comical today. Consider current laws from different countries also.
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The Shadow Photo Booth was first presented at MONA Markets as part of MoMa Minors.