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**Theatre in Teaching: How Nottingham's Roundabout  
Theatre Company Presented Social Justice Issues to  
Children**

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## Introduction

The movement of Theatre in Education (TIE) is considered by Jackson as 'an identifiable movement in socially and educationally committed theatre' established in 1965, that is valued for its contribution to education through the performance practice. The movement was propelled by regional and independent theatre companies with diverse collective work, educational aims and funding, and is considered as 'one of the main precursors of what is now more widely termed "applied theatre"'. This work is evident in archives across Britain that have since acquired its material, with a notice that it is 'even more necessary to capture, promote and critically interrogate the qualities of TIE that have consistently been at the cutting edge of how the participatory arts contribute to the learning of young people – and, laterally, adults'.<sup>1</sup> The archiving of TIE materials provides a way of preserving, paying attention to and reaffirming the lasting educational influence of what can be regarded as an ephemeral art form in both the broader sense that the movement has waned in the last decade or so, and in that every production, performance and workshop is a momentary experience.

The development of Roundabout TIE, formed in 1971, is visible in the archives through an abundance of evaluative documentation that is reflective of productions' delivery. One document that exemplifies this ever-adapting nature of Roundabout's approach is an evaluation produced for *Stepping Stones*, written by Mike Kenny and toured in 2000, in which a strategy of a first performance, workshop, then second performance was adopted. It was identified that 'the standard pattern for many productions is to provide a single workshop that

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Jackson, *Learning through theatre*. (Manchester University Press, 1980), p.1.

gets adapted slightly to attempt to meet the needs of the group', whilst recognising that in this specific production 'one actor found some difficulty in delivering workshops in special schools, although took part and worked with the others'.<sup>2</sup> Later, for productions such as *The Island*, actors were not always part of the discussions, but the presence of actors during this time demonstrates that performers at Roundabout were given opportunities to not only provide education but learn to adapt and gain new skills themselves through the workshops. The accommodations made to workshops and performances were praised, being that 'schools in fact welcomed the experimental and exploratory nature of the work perhaps because it reminds staff of the importance of creativity in the classroom'.<sup>3</sup> In this way, with a focus on 'music and other sensory elements' and 'inclusion' in the productions, Roundabout's TIE approach was dynamic whilst also remaining focused on a core value of creative rich, inclusive and artistic learning environments.

The wealth of material situated at the University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections Department relating to Roundabout Theatre Company's TIE work is the result of 'reducing an entire classroom full of the company's archive material to about 10% of its volume' in 1991 by Kitty Parker, who left a digital archive with the Nottingham Playhouse, which now exists in two categories: 'projects delivered between 1971 and 1991, some of which contain little more than a script, and those relating to projects between 1991 and 2013, which are more comprehensive and consistent'.<sup>4</sup> Through the cataloguing of boxes 3-10 of ACC2468, it was evident that this particular collection is holistic and varied, with a combination

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<sup>2</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, ACC2468, Box 3, file /3, bundle /1, p.3.

<sup>3</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, ACC2468, Box 3, file /3, bundle /1, p.10.

<sup>4</sup> Antony Jackson, 'Mapping the archives: 8', *Routledge Research in Drama Education*, 21.4 (2016), p.585.

of production-specific materials, photographs, background information and admin-related materials over the period of 2001-2013. Whilst this can pose concerns for what should be kept, the procedure and the attention to detail required to archive these materials in a conscientious manner, materials were kept in the arrangement in which they arrived to the archive and the production-adjacent material was treated with as much significance as the production-specific material itself. The result is a collection which demonstrates an intricate and complex web of local connections that existed between Roundabout Theatre Company's respective members, artists, funders and schools to make productions possible. In the act of archiving, it becomes evident that the methodical process is partly driven by a human impulse to collect and save what is important, which is not always the work of the most prolific artists and workers, but of the everyday ones who provide valuable public services in ways that are immeasurable. Archiving this collection has perhaps been a way of reenforcing the significance of Roundabout Theatre Company's work and of TIE as a whole.

One particular source of interest among researchers of TIE is its ability to amplify social justice issues in classroom environments to young people. In conjunction with the development of Roundabout's approach to TIE, the material at the archives has been recognised as a research opportunity to investigate 'how topics being addressed reflected and related to current events', in addition to 'the evolving approaches to issue-based theatre, and its flowering and eventual waning'.<sup>5</sup> The term 'social justice' within TIE-related research is recurrent, due to the radical approach to education many TIE companies adopted that may be

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<sup>5</sup> Jackson, 'Mapping the archives: 8', (2016), p.586.

considered one of the cornerstones of the movement. It has been identified that some of the dominant discourses and movements within social justice education 'include democratic education, critical pedagogy, multiculturalism, poststructuralism, feminism, queer theory, anti-oppressive education, cultural studies, postcolonialism, globalization, and critical race theory'.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that there are a variety of focuses that can be adopted to demonstrate a single area of this subject matter. Additionally, previous research into a regional TIE has been 'guided by an assumption that histories of radical TIE might usefully speak to the decolonial and anti-racist priorities of contemporary teaching and research'.<sup>7</sup> With the operations and approaches of TIE companies being isolated and distinct from one another, an examination of specific regional companies can reveal differing approaches, levels of engagement and subject matter in relation to social justice issues, gaining a greater sense of how each company contributed to the social justice education of young people at the time.

Over the years, Roundabout delivered plays relating to a diverse range of social justice issues in classroom environments, which required targeting appropriate age ranges for the subject matter. Productions can represent social justice messaging, such as the theme of prejudice explored in *Peacemaker* (1994) for 5-9 year old audiences which focuses on community and segregation, and later *Double Take* (2004) for 14+ year old audiences with a more narrow focus on the criminal justice system, young people and racism.<sup>8</sup> Productions have even implicated particularly monumental historical events in terms of social justice. In a

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<sup>6</sup> Kathy Hytten and Silvia C. Bettez, 'Understanding education for social justice', *Educational foundations* 25 (2011), p.8-9.

<sup>7</sup> Gemma Edwards and Jenny Hughes, 'Asymmetries at play: race, racism, and anti-racism in the archives of radical theatre-in-education', *Research in drama education*, 12 (2023), p.3.

<sup>8</sup> *List of Roundabout Productions*, Nottingham Manuscript and Special Collections.

unique TIE approach, a HIV/AIDs project (1995) for young people aged 14 and above involved a four day workshop and the production of a performance by the students, balancing the exchanges between the students and educators by both groups adopting the roles of creator and audience to produce work relating to a specific sociohistorical event with clear inequality of access to rights and healthcare.

Alternatively, social justice themes can be communicated implicitly, requiring more allegorical interpretation from an audience. Productions used fables to generate general moral messages for younger audiences, including *Aesop's Fables* (2005) for 3-8 year-olds and *Under The Story Tree* for 4-8 year-olds (2010), but also adapted stories that inferred social justice. *The Elves and the Shoemakers* (2008-9) for 4-8 years, adapted from a Brother's Grimm Story, depicted poverty and disparity whilst *Arabian Nights* (1997) for 7-14 years explored themes of hierarchy, status and obedience. Using existing narratives (fables, fairytales) means young children are able to draw upon their existing schemas and expectations. This expects a variation in the receptance of a play that is determined by more than just age and depending on the child's exploration of the production as fun and/or educational, given that 'instrumental viewers invest far more mindful mental effort than ritualistic viewers who tend to process information automatically (hence, "passively") by relying on past schemas of experiential knowledge'.<sup>9</sup> Giving audience members the choice to focus on the social justice messages being communicated implicitly, or solely the explicit narrative being presented means this approach to social justice TIE is particularly inclusive. In this way,

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<sup>9</sup> Jeanne Klein, 'From children's perspectives: A model of aesthetic processing in theatre', *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 39.4 (2005), p.45.

by portraying social justice issues to a wide age range of children, from 4 to 14+ years old in age-appropriate manners, Roundabout recognises the agency of young audiences and does not determine younger audiences of 4 years and upwards as too young to garner the implicit symbolic messages within narratives in theatre.

The analysis of specific Roundabout Theatre Company productions as case studies will aid in this investigation of how theatre was used by Roundabout to teach social justice issues to children. The gathering of this evidence was somewhat dictated by the disproportionate lack or abundance of material available for each respective production in ACC2468 boxes 3-10, which made the process of establishing which of Roundabout's copious social-justice-related productions to analyse in depth substantially easier. Fortunately, three of the most prominent productions within this collection exhibit important variations in approach to social justice TIE in relation to audience, message and subject matter. *1001 Nights Now* (2005) tells ten different stories based on the real experiences of asylum seekers related to challenging past experiences, delivered by migrants working in a British factory. These stories contain inherent themes of oppression and experiences of violence, allowing the audience to recognise a distinct set of challenges for a group within society. *Stepping Stones* (2000) emphasises the intentionality of inclusion of SEN pupils within a theatre audience with a focus on the topic of change through a sensory-focused production. *The Island* (2011), an adaptation of a picture book about the encounter of a secluded island and community by an outsider, reveals themes such as language barriers, ostracisation and prejudice to a 9-11 year-old audience. The examination of these plays will help develop an understanding of the ways in which social justice messages can be transmitted both explicitly and implicitly through theatre

to present child audiences with education, in addition to a greater understanding of their social environments and themselves.

### 1001 Nights Now

*1001 Nights Now* (2005) explicitly performed a social justice issue to secondary school student groups and was 'a co-production between Nottingham Playhouse, Northern Stage, London's Albany Theatre and the Betty Nansen Theatre in Copenhagen',<sup>10</sup> in reference to the fairytale *1001 Nights*' collective storytelling. The focus of its social justice message is present in a preliminary script outline within ACC2468 that describes the characters as 'eight immigrant workers from the Middle East' in the setting of 'a Christmas decorations factory',<sup>11</sup> reflecting a theme of cross-cultural integration and labour. The frame outline describes that 'the workers tell each other stories at break-times, in between busy shifts. The stories range from being about contemporary life in the Middle East, sex, drugs and suicide bombing, to emigration and life in exile', with the storytelling being a 'means of survival', foregrounding the importance of art forms as a method of educating and exploring differing points of view. The variety of themes convey a complexity and intersectionality between social justice issues and traumatic experiences. The benefit of performing social power dynamics in theatre is that 'students will be better predisposed to identifying how power and privilege are manifested in school

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<sup>10</sup> Steve Orme, *1001 Nights Now* (2005), British Theatre Guide.

<sup>11</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, ACC2468 Box 3, file /7, bundle /2



contexts',<sup>12</sup> and *1001 Nights Now* is a play that amplifies the voices of disempowered members of society to older school ages.

The approach Roundabout took in representing the stories of immigrant worker characters was through the commission of original stories from authors with personal experience of emigration, violence and trauma. This includes work such as *Imaginary Return* [entitled *The Ninth Night* in the archive] by Atiq Rahimi that utilises the themes of night and silence to represent the obscurity and confusion of being trafficked across a border, such as 'the trafficker had said: The ninth night will be the last night you spend in your homeland. In silence, we walked furtively towards the border'.<sup>13</sup> Part of the education work involved the production itself was through workshops in the Ustinov rooms at Nottingham Playhouse before school groups saw the play, setting prospective expectations for a production so focused on difficult social justice themes. Groups of students were encouraged to think about the performance critically in ways that enhance its educational message, such as that from two schools in year 10 and 11 being tasked with producing a ten minute performance 'relating to the themes, ideas or styles' of *1001 Nights Now*.<sup>14</sup> The collective involvement of both teachers and learners in performance during these events in facilitating judgement-free learning, given 'the dramatic medium invokes children's trust partly by its non-threatening stance and partly because the adult joins in the activities, thereby temporarily dissolving boundaries',<sup>15</sup> and also gives students the opportunity to amplify their own stories and experiences.

<sup>12</sup>Logamurthie Athimoolam, 'An exploration of pre-service student teachers' understanding of social justice issues through theatre-in-education', *Educational Research for Social Change* 10.2 (2021), p.162.

<sup>13</sup> Atiq Rahimi, *Imaginary Return*, Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, ACC2468 Box 3, file /7, bundle /2

<sup>14</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, ACC2468 box 3, file /7, bundle /1

<sup>15</sup> Asha Singh, 'Humanising education: Theatre in pedagogy', *Contemporary Education Dialogue* 2.1 (2004), p.60.

In social justice theatre, two questions have been identified as important to address: 'for whom specifically are we creating this theatrical work?' and 'exactly what do we want to happen as a result of performing this piece?'.<sup>16</sup> *1001 Nights Now* engaged with audiences outside of the community that its stories represented, but also with communities more directly affected by the social justice issues represented. Roundabout was involved in Refugee / Asylum Seeker Youth Provision Day on 18th May 2005 for young people in the AS/R community in city schools, and *1001 Nights Now* was performed at Refugee Festival Day on Saturday 8th Oct at Nottingham Playhouse in conjunction with artistic performances by refugees from the East Midlands (poetry, drumming, etc.). The inclusion of a community in the portrayal of similar issues that individuals may have direct or indirect experience with can create a sense of unity and empowerment. This representation of focussed and specific social justice issues requires the inclusion of personal experience from real people to accurately reflect systems of power and social disempowerment in an educational environment. Additionally, representation of social justice issues to the communities affected by them and the education of those with differing experiences can help assign a significance and importance to these stories.

### Stepping Stones

The integration of social justice into Roundabout TIE productions extended beyond the portrayal of these issues in performance practice to a focused and intentional inclusion of

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<sup>16</sup> Bowles et al., David Kaye, 'Moving Beyond the Comfort Zone: The Quest for Theatre for Social Justice Impact' in *Staging Social Justice: Collaborating to Create Activist Theatre*, 1st ed, (Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), p.59.

groups previously excluded from theatre experiences. Brigg identifies that in this exclusion 'it is theatre as it currently functions (as a cultural structure) which disables people and denies access, not their impairments', and that often those with learning disabilities have been presented with theatre that is inaccessible to them, being for example 'age-inappropriate (created for chronologically younger children), or over-stimulating for audience members with sensory impairments'.<sup>17</sup> *Stepping Stones* (2000) was created for children and young people with learning disabilities 11 years old and up, focusing on the theme of change. Research has suggested that children in this group benefit from the enactment of new themes, claiming that 'as an instructional technique theatre can provide an engaging way for students with learning disabilities to interact with new concepts, while concurrently aiding in retention of this information',<sup>18</sup> and a focus on change as an expected aspect of life can be said to encourage acceptance and relieve stress towards new experiences. Roundabout's repetition of the initial performance after the workshop likely contributed to this consolidation of new teachings, giving learners the opportunity to re-enter the themes of the first performance with a new familiarity and understanding.

The approach to *Stepping Stones* is visible in ACC2468 predominantly through the evaluation document produced to assess the effectiveness of the production. This included music within the performance space, and it has been recognised that music in performance practice for this audience 'helps to keep a focus upon bodily and emotional response, create

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<sup>17</sup> Gillian Brigg, 'Theatre for audiences labelled as having profound, multiple and complex learning disabilities: assessing and addressing access to performance', Diss. University of Nottingham, (2013), p.6.

<sup>18</sup> Sandra D. Beyda, 'The use of theatre as an instructional strategy in the content areas for students with reading and learning disabilities', *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 12.2 (2003), p.65.

atmosphere and sustain engagement from all present in the room',<sup>19</sup> making it clear that the production was particularly focused on sensory experience creation. The resources given to prospective schools included application forms and workshop options, teacher's inset session and an information pack with objects relating to the performance, such as an apple and some polished stones, and evaluation booklets that facilitated Roundabout's dynamic approach to improving performance practice.<sup>20</sup> In the construction of a play for SEN children, 'the practitioner is responsible for setting up the correct climate in which this challenge can take place, by modelling behaviour which is joyful, expectant, engaged, safe, positive, free from fear and anger, exciting and loving',<sup>21</sup> which can be seen in the evaluation of Roundabout's involved company members. The document reports members 'learned to notice body language and the 'not said/nearly said'', gauged 'sensitivity regarding personal space and tolerance of stimuli', 'learned to wait / not force a response' and exhibited 'use of clear and concise language' (p.12). This evidence further exemplifies the impact of theatre in teaching on teachers themselves and the existence of a symbiotic relationship of learning facilitation between performers and audience.

The evaluation also includes valuable details of the successes and newly acquired lessons as a result of the production. The adaptability of the production worked successfully, as 'schools in fact welcomed the experimental and exploratory nature of the work perhaps because it reminds staff of the importance of creativity in the classroom' (p.10), a byproduct of

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<sup>19</sup> Jo Trowsdale and Richard Hayhow, 'Psycho-physical theatre practice as embodied learning for young people with learning disabilities', *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 19.10 (2015), p.1025.

<sup>20</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, Box 3, file /3, Evaluation Document p.15.

<sup>21</sup> Jo Trowsdale and Richard Hayhow, 'Can mimetics, a theatre-based practice, open possibilities for young people with learning disabilities? A capability approach', *British Journal of Special Education* 40.2 (2013), p.75.

this approach to performance and teaching being the perpetuation and enrichment of an artistic experimentation in everyday education. Roundabout has been recognised for its implementation of a 'relational authenticating mechanism in which the goal is to convince a (usually relatively disempowered) audience that the artists reflecting their community back at them will treat their stories with care because they have commonalities with that audience'.<sup>22</sup> This mechanism is particularly present within *Stepping Stones*, as the evaluation claims 'it is clear that music and other sensory elements lay at the heart of the production and the workshops. The success of the production was also about its inclusion. The story, the values and the fact that schools were invited to be part of the whole planning cycle', suggesting that the production hinged on an inclusion of SEN pupils that requires an increased collaboration with their everyday educators. One of the evaluative statements provided by a witness of the production, that there is a necessity to 'acquaint the group with actual special needs schools so that they are aware of specific areas of need rather than putting a bit of everything into one production' (p.5), is reflected one of the main lessons garnered from the production that the company needed 'more experience working with SEN pupils and schools in and outside mainstream education' which represents a commitment to building experience of inclusion beyond 2000.

In terms of social justice, Roundabout's approach to inclusive TIE reflects an important engagement with communities affected directly by injustice by ways of inaccessibility and prejudice to promote empowerment through the creation of inclusive learning experiences.

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<sup>22</sup> Tom Nicholas, 'Re-Placing British Theatre: Class and Regionality on the Contemporary Stage', Diss. University of Exeter (2020), p.184.

Research into the social and cultural construction of disability as an identity affirms the necessity of understanding it as a 'shared and positive identity, while challenging the use of disability as something that can be used to disqualify or stigmatize'.<sup>23</sup> It should be acknowledged that inclusion in deliberately created and accessible spaces encourages this outlook of pride in a collective identity. Additionally, Roundabout's dedication to improving the quality of their social justice TIE can be seen to be enacted through experimental performance practices that are adaptable to the audience's needs.

### The Island

*The Island* (2011), based on Armin Greder's picture book of the same name, toured as a play written by Laura Lomas and a workshop. This play can be seen as an example of the ways in which more general, open-ended moral lessons were taught to children through theatre performance. Call sheets note that pre-show context and post-show discussions were conducted, with an expected performance time of 50-60 minutes and school workshops for 9-11 year olds.<sup>24</sup> A resource document for teachers gives the synopsis of 'lonely stranger' being 'washed up on the beach of an isolated island community', where 'neither understands the other's language, and all are suspicious of what he brings to their island'. The production's focus on the absence of language communication between characters is indicative of drama's ability to highlight 'those elements inherent in communication that are often neglected in classroom practice and textbook dialogues, namely paralinguistic features such as gestures,

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<sup>23</sup> Jay T. Dolmage, *Academic ableism: Disability and higher education*, (University of Michigan Press, 2017), pp.10-11.

<sup>24</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections, ACC2468, Box 4, file /2, bundle /1

facial expression, pauses, fillers or interruptions'.<sup>25</sup> This experimentation with and deconstruction of communicative features and their importance can present children with a greater understanding of the diversity of communication, perhaps paving the way for greater tolerance and social inclusion of those they can't immediately communicate with through language.

The production was a part of the European Theatre Convention's *Young Europe Convention* in 2010, performed in English and Norwegian (as *Mannen Frå Havet*, produced by a Norwegian theatre company). Some significance of the social justice messages in the play are visible in the framing of the production by the convention, which introduces the island in accordance with the themes of 'immigration, suspicion, fear, racism, attack, exclusion, misunderstanding and, overall, miscommunication. We found the idea of miscommunication inspiring as a starting point for an international theatre piece'. This suggests that a general exploration of the themes of otherness (that begets fear) and a lack of communication through language can be interpreted to relate to several contemporary social justice issues such as the effects of discriminatory behaviour, but also fits the convention's exploration of a necessity for cultural collaboration in the promotion of valuing differences. Feedback for an international performance takes the form of personal letters to actors from students in Strasbourg with gratitude and individual responses regarding the performance's message, suggesting that *The Island* proved a powerful stimulant of discourses surrounding the topics it discussed.

Theatre offers the chance to 'vitalise teaching, especially through its potential to offer participatory processes for both teacher and taught, and to create a space for social

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<sup>25</sup> Cristina Pérez Valverde, 'Theatre in education (TIE) in the context of educational drama', (2003), p.15.

interactions that are supportive of the development of a social self',<sup>26</sup> which is highly evident in the employment of post-production discussion and prompted work. Themes can be extricated from performance spaces and transformed into new creative output from the audience themselves, and the output of children inspired by their viewing of *The Island* is present in the ACC2468 archive in a variety of forms. Work was produced under the prompt 'what happened next?' in 2009, that encouraged children to consider what might have happened to the Stranger afterwards in extension to the events of the performance, under the learning objectives 'to be able to write in the style of a playscript' and 'I can write an autobiography in character' that encouraged children to think from the perspective of a friend of an island-based character upon discovering the stranger.<sup>27</sup> These prompts encourage child audience members to translate a story from theatrical form into a piece of original work that considers additional perspectives that can result in a combination of projection of self and assumption of a viewpoint external to themselves. These prompts devised by educators suggests a significance in the foregrounding of compassion and empathy in a production that deals implicitly with social justice issues.

The evaluations for *The Island* were collected using scale ratings, but some unprompted additional comments provided by educators, such as that 'the children and I found this to be an inspiring performance and the workshop afterwards allowed them to explore complex issues and gain real insight into them'.<sup>28</sup> This suggests that the portrayal of social

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<sup>26</sup> Singh, Asha. "Humanising education: Theatre in pedagogy." Contemporary Education Dialogue 2.1 (2004), p.54.

<sup>27</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections ACC2468 Box 4, file /2, bundle /3

<sup>28</sup> Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections ACC2468 box 4, file /2, bundle /2



issues contributed to a nuanced understanding of them by the children and that the consolidation offered by a workshop is useful. Whilst there was request for ‘further link to National Curriculum’, relaying an attitude that TIE should exhibit more direct connections to formal learning topics, another educator commented that ‘*The Island* stimulated so much talk and complimented our anti-bullying week perfectly’ which exemplifies the ability of TIE to contribute to the development of healthy social dynamics in children. Another remarks that ‘it was very powerful for them to see their classroom transformed into the island’, indicating that the classroom performance space becomes a new and immersive environment that is unique from the everyday learning of students. Moreover, Roundabout TIE’s performance of *The Island* provided children with a focused learning experience from which other learning opportunities and talking points relating to social themes were scaffolded.

The depiction of issues such as miscommunication and prejudicial attitudes within *The Island* highlights the ways in which social justice issues can be indirectly and covertly addressed within TIE performance practice, suggesting a Roundabout’s commitment to enacting social change in educational environments. The reception of theatre performances by children has been understood through a lens of ‘catharsis’ as a way of conceptualising ‘the private and public behavior of children watching a play’, given that ‘it provides an opportunity to share one’s feelings within a protected environment at an artistic event and among peers’.<sup>29</sup> This can be said to be particularly relevant in a play such as *The Island* that explores broad themes of adversity that any child may find their experiences represented in, which can lead

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<sup>29</sup> Shifra Schonmann, ‘Theatre as a medium for children and young people: Images and observations’, *Springer Science & Business Media* 4(2006), p.69.

to meaningful self-expression, as present in the creative output produced by the children post-performance, and private reformation in understanding of social differences. Additionally, the reconstruction and reimagination of children's ordinary learning environment created meaningful and unique experiences in which children could reconsider their relation to the classroom space.

## Conclusion

Overall, viewing individual case studies of Roundabout's TIE productions allows for the consideration of the different ways in which social justice can be presented to a child audience. Whilst *1001 Nights Now* represented the specific social justice issues affecting asylum seekers and refugees at the time, its vast array and style of subject matter presents the audience with diversity of perspective and experience within one named community. Conversely, *Stepping Stones*' social justice sentiments are less so derived by its subject matter given that it deals with the theme of internal responses to change, instead lying in its construction to intentionally include a disenfranchised social group that is not always considered in performance practices. In the portrayal of more general themes of acceptance to both regional and international audiences, *The Island*'s inclusion results from its vastness of social implications depending on the experiences of the child audience as individuals. In turn, these variations show a diversity in the portrayal of personal and collective experiences that may be internal or external to a given audience.

The archived material of Roundabout Theatre Company's TIE at the Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections Department documents a powerful impact of social

justice TIE on the local area during its time. It can be said that this collection of plays, whilst varying in target audience and portrayal of social justice issues, hold similar overarching and general themes of social inclusion, acknowledgement of others' challenges and acceptance of differences. In the exploration of a diversity of productions, it is possible to see evolution in Roundabout's approaches and adaptations with the inclusion of SEN and international audiences over time. The company's receptivity to feedback and evaluation meant Roundabout TIE were an example of the experimental way that the performing arts can be a powerful enactor of change, by being a provider of social education that spotlights a need for tolerance and the dismantling of prejudice. Whilst it is impossible to quantify the impact of a movement such as TIE on the social and cultural education of children, the existence of audience-produced work and educator evaluations in the archive as a creative by-product from the performances and workshops help to provide evidence of the ways children engaged with differing perspectives than their own.

Further investigation would prove useful to explore the differences in a variety of TIE companies' approach to social justice, and the extent to which this impacted audience reception. It has been recognised that 'TIE's progressive work was not a harmonious endeavour, but arose from often difficult debate across the movement at the time, with rigorous critique of each others' work, including challenges on political orientation and aesthetic principles',<sup>30</sup> the exploration of which would allow for a bigger representation of the collective identity of TIE as it functions within its respective political climate.

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<sup>30</sup> Gemma Edwards and Jenny Hughes, 'Asymmetries at play: race, racism, and anti-racism in the archives of radical theatre-in-education', *Research in drama education*, 12 (2023), p.5.

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