



Autism Friendly Theatre Performances at The Ark Synopsis Pack for Zoe's Play

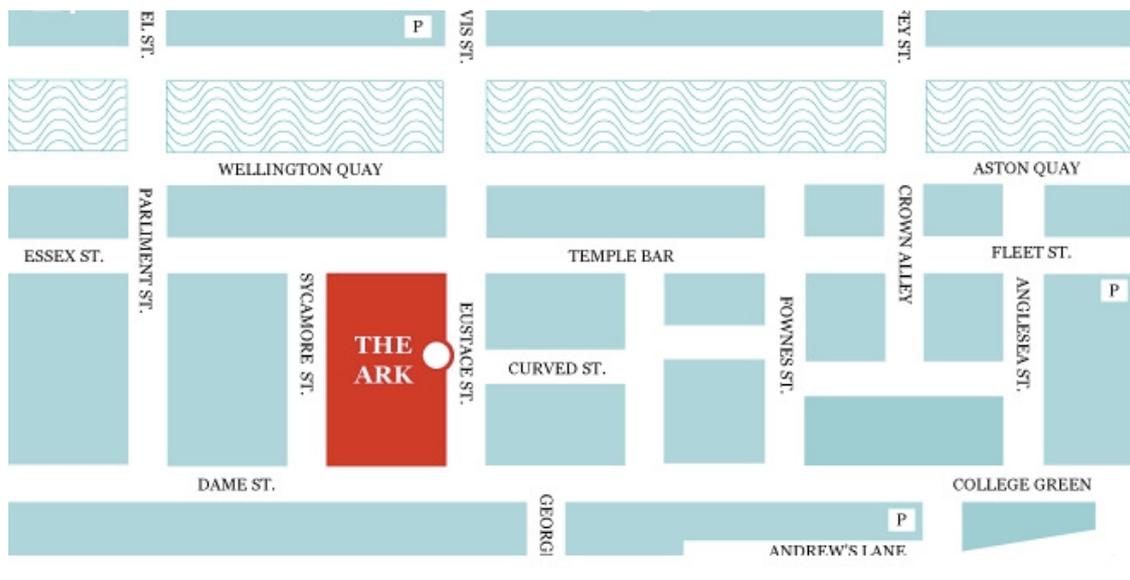
Your Visit to the Ark

Welcome to the Ark! You are about to embark on a splendid theatrical journey! You will see many new things and meet some interesting characters.

This pack will help you prepare for your visit to the Ark. We have put together some pictures to help you understand where you are going and what you will see, as well as a synopsis of the play so you can know what to expect during the performance.

Here is some of what you will see on your visit to The Ark.

Firstly here is a map so you know how to get here!



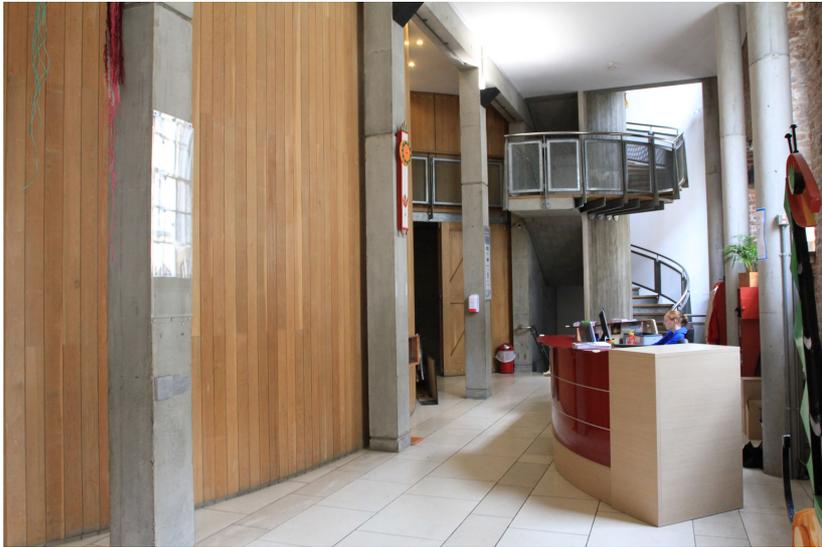
And here is The Ark...Well the outside of it! This will be the first thing you see.



Here is an image of the entrance to the Ark.



This is a picture of the reception area. This is where you will come to collect your tickets for the theatre performance.



This is where you will come to collect your tickets for the theatre performance. Al is the person sitting behind the desk. He will give you your tickets



From the reception you will see the entrance into the theatre. Here is a picture of it.



If you need the toilet the doorway leading to it is just opposite the theatre entrance, here are some pictures to help you find it. We have numbered them in the order you will see them.

1.



2.



3. This the inside of the toilets



The performance will be adapted slightly to make it a more comfortable experience for you. Instead of the theatre being in darkness the lights will be left on, just slightly dimmed during the performance, and the sound levels will be lowered. There will be no bright flashing lights. Once you enter the theatre please feel free to make yourself comfortable in which ever way you like, you may sit anywhere within the theatre. Also the doors of the theatre will always be left open at all times, so you can come in and out as you please.

During this play there are noisy moments. Sometimes children don't like loud noises. If you read the synopsis you will be prepared for the performance as we have used a cartoon image at times when there will be a loud noise so you can cover your ears, or we will also have ear plugs available.

(This is the image used to indicate loud noises)



There also may be more noise when people clap at the end of the performance. This is a way of thanking the actors for doing a great performance. People may also clap during the performance if they like very much what the actors are doing on stage.



We will have fidget toys available as you enter the theatre, something you can play with during the performance. These will be yours to keep and take home.

Of course you're welcome to bring your own favourite toy from home as well!

If during the performance if you feel you need a break, and want to leave the theatre that's no problem. We have designed a 'chill out' area with bean bags where you can relax away from the busy theatre. You can use this at any time throughout the performance.

**Read on to find out everything you need to know about the wonderful play you are going to see!
We hope you enjoy your visit to The Ark!**

Synopsis of 'Zoe's Play'

Once you have been brought into the theatre and seated the performance will begin. Here are some photos of the set.





The following photos are of the actors you will see perform in the play



Dada



Zoe



Mama

As the show begins the theatre is quiet dark but it will gradually get brighter. A mist hangs over the stage. This is created using a dry ice machine. It's not smoke, and isn't harmful. Music starts to play and gradually grow louder, while onto the set sneak the three actors each wearing a wolf mask and acting just as wolves would.



The largest wolf gives a long high howl.



The three wolves leave the stage.



The next thing we see are shadow puppets behind the large white sheet. These are done by the actors moving their hands in different ways to look like wolf shadow puppets. The Mother wolf is trying to get her wolf cub into bed.

The character of Zoe who is played by the actress Aine appears from behind the sheet and begins playing with her wolf puppets, which she has made with gloves. She has given each of her puppets a name and a personality. Their names are Rasa, Rufus, Ragg and Ruff. Rasa is a girl wolf and Rufus is a boy wolf and they are young wolf puppets and Ruff is the mother wolf while Ragg is the father wolf. She changes her voice depending on which puppet she is playing with, this way she can pretend the puppet is speaking.

Zoe plays out a pretend story with her wolf puppets.



The young wolfs are suppose to be in bed but they are too hungry and decide to creep outside and try and catch a sheep without the farmer shooting them. As Rufus gets close to the sheep the lighting changes getting slightly darker. There is a loud bang of a shot gun as the wolf puppets get too close to the farmers sheep.



The spotlight shines on the white sheet and we see the wolf shadow puppets of Ragg the father wolf and a wolf cub. Ragg has comes home with a nice tasty chicken for his hungry little wolf cubs. The wolf cubs fight over the chicken.

The lighting changes and Zoe comes up from behind the sheet and sits up on her bed. Zoe's playing with her puppets is stopped by her mother returning home. Zoe and her mother (Mama) have a conversation about wolf names, and Zoe talks about her dreams she has had recently about wolves. Her mother doesn't like her dreaming about wolves and doesn't want to hear about it though Zoe is eager to tell her.

They then go on to talk about Zoe's father Dada. Zoe believes her father is poisoning the rabbits so the wolves in the forest will starve and die. Her mother does not want to talk about this. Zoe returns to her puppet game. The wolf puppet Rufus has become sick with hunger and is dying.

Zoe stops her game as she hears her father enter the house. Dada shouts her name, Zoe ignores him until he calls out twice. He accuses her of sulking which she denies. Zoe begins to ask her Dada questions about nature and the life cycles of the forest. Things her Nana has talked to her about. Dada tells her Nana is foolish and not to be listening to her. Zoe mentions the poisoned rabbits and the starving wolves. Dada tries to tell her wolves don't eat rabbits they eat deer and wild boar. But

Zoe knows as does Dada that the wolves have now been reduced to eating rabbits because the deer and wild boar have been cleared out (mostly likely due to people hunting them and because the farmers have cut down the forest where they live)

If you poison the rabbits you take away the wolves food and they in turn die of starvation, or they try and attack sheep and even humans.

Dad talks about chopping down the forest to make it into fields so he can build a farm. Zoe doesn't like this idea. She doesn't want it.

Dada has a gun and he mentions that if he sees a wolf near his sheep or on his farm he'll shoot it. Zoe pleads with her father not to kill the wolves. Dada won't tonight but makes no promises about the future.

The conversation ends leaving Zoe unhappy and angry. Zoe leaves her Dada to go to her room.

Mama and Dada talk about Zoe and about the fact that she is not interested in having the farm when she grows up. Dada doesn't understand it.

Zoe is on her own; she starts thinking about her Nana and begins to sing to herself. Zoe starts remembering all the things her Nana said about the forest and all the things she showed Zoe in the forest. Zoe begins to dream about this.

Music plays and we hear forest sounds. The stage lights up. As Zoe dreams Nana appears to her in the tree, and blows confetti down onto Zoe. Nana begins to talk to Zoe and teach her about the forest and how nature works. Zoe begins to see the forest around her full of lovely bluebells. Paper leaves begin to fall from above onto the set.

Nana also tells her about her father when he was young and how he loved the forest the way Zoe does, but that he changed when he grew up and his Uncle Jack died. The spotlight shine on the sheet and we see the shadow of Uncle Jack. Dada as a young boy appears on stage and he talks to Nana about the how the forest provides them with everything. Dada as a boy is played by the same actor that plays Dada. They talk about the life cycles of the forest.

The set grows darker and an actor pretending to be a real wolf comes on the stage. A spotlight shines on the sheet and we see a cradle rocking. The wolf reaches into the cradle. Here the wolf is again played by an actor in costume.



The lighting gets brighter and we see Zoe playing with her puppets again. Zoe overhears a conversation between her Mama and Dada in which Dada talks about the wolf he saw that day. It was wolf that he shot last year. He talks about setting a trap to catch it.

Zoe interrupts their conversation again and argues for the case of the wolf. Dada and Mama disagree, telling her stories about the dangers of living so close to wolves and that they must be killed.

Zoe is sympathetic towards the wolves as she sees the argument from the wolves perspective. She feels that if the farmers didn't destroy the forest which is the wolves home, the wolves would have no need to bother humans and there would be no danger. Zoe tries to explain to them the vivid dreams she keeps having about the wolves, and the feeling that her Nana is in danger. Zoe and Dada argue and Dada gets very angry and shouts at Zoe.



Zoe goes to her room starts to hear her Nana voice talking to her. Zoe begins to fall asleep and starts dreaming. In the dream her Dada becomes Ragg and her Mama becomes Ruff and they begin to take on the personalities of the wolves, (in this scene the actors who play Dada, Mama and Zoe wear wolf masks and act out Zoe's dream).



In Zoe's dream her family become the wolf family, with Zoe being the wolf cub Rasa. The actors transform into real wolves using wolf masks. The wolf family are in the forest. The lighting grows darker stars light up in the background and blue light shines up from under the stage. Zoe/Rasa runs and wants to play, while Dada/Ragg is weak and tired.

Ragg/Dada shouts very loudly at this point for Zoe to watch out! A gun shoot fires, and Zoe/Rasa narrowly escapes being killed.



Next Rufus the other wolf cub dies due to starvation and sickness. This is a very sad moment. The wolves howl. Mama wolf Ruff is angry at the farmer for destroying the forest and all their food. She wants to go to the farmer's mother house for revenge!

Zoe awakens from her dream with a fright; she is worried for Nana's safety in her house all alone on the other side of the woods.

Zoe try's to tell Mama and Dada about her dream but they won't listen to anything she has to say.

Zoe is angry and Dada is frustrated. No on will listen to Zoe. She asks her father why he doesn't listen to her. He stopped listening to what she has to say and she wants to know why.

Dada explains why: that things changed the day Uncle Jack died, that the ghost of Uncle Jack came to him and said something that made him change his way of thinking and treating Zoe. Uncle Jack told Dada that the forest needs to be controlled and turned into a farm if he wants to survive and have a safe place for Zoe.

Zoe seems to understand her father and why he acts the way he does.

Zoe wishes her parents goodnight and goes to her bedroom.

She is still determined to go into the forest to check on Nana to make sure she is safe. She explains her plans to do this to her puppet wolves.

Zoe slips out her bedroom, climbing over the tree into the dark while her parents talk in the kitchen and believe she's in bed asleep. The spotlight shines onto the sheet and we Zoe put on her shawl. She then makes her way through the dark forest.

The End

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