

Oceans of Stories - final (no. 6 – end of day Tuesday)

Play opens....

Fish enters frustrated....

Fish Not Nor ... Never ... Neither....

No one ever asked me. What does it all mean? I don't understand? Do I stay or do I leave? Do I have to go, now? Can't it wait? Am I really ready for this? Who will tell me what to do? Who is going to listen to me, hear me, speak to me? Is this the only choice? How will I know what to do? I'm always asking you questions Mum, I still search for you Mum in so many ways and faces. These tell me the loss is real. I've an ocean of stories to tell you and don't know where to begin.....

Fish monologue

Fish tells us of who she is – casts her net – but catches nothing....

Fish does something else

Fish When the storms come and it rains: water is everywhere... then I go fishing – it's as if the water's edge and the shore's edge merge into one: fish jump out of the water onto the earth.....I call out: fish to eat everyone, and roll and jump and shout: and when I have no breath left to laugh, I take my net and walk back to my father's house...my bright, white eyes peering out from my dirt smeared face. At that moment, I know that fish tastes the best when you catch it yourself..... and give it to your Mum to cook.....

She casts her net

She pulls in her net – there is nothing

Fish Nothing..... try again..... still nothing – the net is empty

She casts the net into the sea again: but again nothing is in it. She repeats this, with a growing concern, this becomes ritualistic and starts to conjure the world of the play's journey...

Fish my net is empty

[Music]

...which conjures up the other women (Pear, Flower and Rice) who act out their life's/Fish's relationship with them as women/higher beings.... in a general physical ritual is created which each woman takes into their own scenes that follow.....

Pear and Flower leave: Rice remains in the space....

Fish goes on a journey monologue

... following her encounter with the women, she feels inspired and able to leave – she leaves ...conjuring up a magical journey.....

Rice takes the action forward from her sitting position into non-verbal monologue

...her world – setting scene, taking aspects of the ritual taken from the establishing world of the journey scene

Rice meets Fish

Fish enters....

Rice ... a look of hunger, dust on her feet, a belly empty: follow your nose child, smell the broth, the fresh bread on my table...There is always enough to feed my family. Food: yes take some: it is fresh..... Not so fast, slow down...enjoy the taste.... rice, peas and roots. Remember, too quickly and you taste nothing ... savour the moment.

Movement (passing of time)

Rice Food: yes take some: it is fresh..... Not so fast, slow down...enjoy the taste.... rice, peas and roots. Remember, too quickly and you taste nothing ... savour the moment.

Movement (passing of time)

Fish ... enjoy the taste.... rice, peas and roots. Remember, too quickly and you taste nothing

Rice savour the moment.

Fish I am really hungry

Rice ... I can see that. My, you are hungry. Is there room inside for anything more?

Fish I'm full....

Rice Only in your stomach... Take more....

Fish ... but your cupboards are bare

Rice ... are they, look: things are not always what they seem...

Movement (passing of time)

Rice Mix and bake, wash and iron, look and smile, stand and dream, cry and laugh, sigh and..... clean and scrub, patch and darn

Fish sew, and stitch and mend

Rice sew, and stitch and mend ... Sometimes it takes two to create a new recipe.... Mixing spices, and flavours.. and.... cloves and...

Fish ... and cinnamon.

Rice Mix slowly, now.... I made a home. I have two sons: one dark, arms thick with strength, a back of iron, and another with hands so nimble that ... he can shake rice – husk from grain – like...

Fish ... a woman...

Rice Like a son, a man.... not like a woman

Rice wipes Fishes face

Rice Come let me wipe your face. It doesn't take much to share a gift.... give me your gift, share your gift with me...

Fish I would like to stay, but I must move on

Rice What are you looking for? How to eat and think and smile: share things with others? How far would you have to travel to find an answer? Remember, you could travel your whole life but never find the answer.

Movement passing of time

Rice ... and so she's gone.....

Exit Fish

Rice ... and so she's gone.....

Rice monologue and exit

Rice ... I came here 20 years ago. I went back first, to bring my Mum here. Dad's parents, we used to visit them in the holidays – I remember the huge tree in their garden and the little boat – a rowing boat....I took my children back to see my childhood, the tree and the boat: they are still there. So ...peaceful. It is hard to find any peace around here. I got married when the moon was full, I was 17 years old. My man and I, we were together as children, play mates, then best mates, then married: the decision was mine. The wedding, that was nice, bright colours - red, green, blue – 2 rings, mine and his, all flower and fruits – roses and ripe peaches. It took moments to conceive, and then time just passed me by... the children, responsibilities. It made me.... complete. I felt, feel this.... feeling even now. Euphoria. Back then, we used to grow and cut all our own rice: the men, they would collect the rice from the fields, and bring it to us, to sort – my sisters, my Mum; all together, chattering, being... being us, us young ones would blush when the men came in the truck to take it the rice away – rough, knarled hands: sweet, gentle eyes....the stuff from the shops here is nothing like it. I'm not sure I know how to make the recipe now, I keep thinking about her: just getting up, moving on... I wish I'd had that courage, I did think about it, but I had my two boys.... Maybe when they have grown up, moved on... I will have space to think. My life is quite busy really, but I will think about it later..... my life falls under an influence of distractions. How easy it is to exhaust yourself just performing meaningless tasks.....

Rice song/poem (shared with Flower)

Woman:

Unfinished being

Not the remote angelical rose sung by poets of old

Nor the sinister witch burned at the stake

Nor the lauded and desired prostitute

Nor the blessed mother

Neither the withering, taunted old maid

Nor she who is obliged to be beautiful

Nor she who is obliged to be bad

Nor she who lives because they let her

Not she who must always say yes

Woman, a being who begins to know who she is and so starts to live...

Flower enters into non-verbal monologue

Her world – setting scene, taking aspects of the ritual taken from the establishing world of the journey scene

Flower meets Fish

Fish enters...

Flower I've been waiting for you – welcome, to my garden.... you saw an open door. Come in. Welcome

Movement passing of time

Flower That's a lion's head: don't worry, he's quite dead. Don't forget to dodge the bullets.... I had to get someone to hang it – you see, I'm quite short you see.

It's a replica of the Mother Theresa's hand cast in marble: I shock her hand once.... A nice lady.

Just some treasures from my travels, here and there: a shoe box full of trinkets: postcards, ribbons (in tartans from my favourite clans), beads from North Africa, a tiara or two or three....pressed petals, try something on – opps, a broken necklace, oh dear... just try, that pendant – the one with deep blue gems.... or the scarf: moths have been having a feast I see, oh well... and even the knife and fork from the BA flight to Dakar.

Flower Take a pair of comfortable shoes.... Take steps to different lands and places. Smell, touch and dream.

Fish Smell.....

Flower ... incense, oils and the perfumes of the Bazaar

Fish Touch

Flower Hand, heart – the warm sand between your toes

Fish Dream

A silence...

Flower Let's try something else.... shrubs, flowers, bulbs and seeds. Everything has a story. The garden, these books hold stories and secrets. Tell a story; we all have a story to tell. Let's find an answer to your question....

Fish But I haven't told you the question.

Flower I know you.

Movement passing of time

Fish starts to laugh

Flower Why are you laughing? Take a deep breath, and in and out. Try it, in and out try anything once or twice in my case. Take a breath, it helps, everything becomes clear.... because you have chosen the path, so it must be right. You do not have to be held down by the constraints, the expectations of others, there is another way.... plant your own seed, tend and water your thoughts and aspirations and be prepared and surprised by whatever grows Even weeds have beautiful blossoms.

Fish I was following a straight road – then the road offered different paths, directions – I turned back, it looked different....which way should I go

Flower Take the path that is the right one, butthings seem different – different paths mean different things to different people....

Fish which path?

Flower Take the path that is the right one.....

Fish Which one....

Flower Look around and see

Exit Fish – she leaves without Flower realising

Flower So.... she's gone....

Flower enters into monologue

Flower I was switched at birth – with another baby – a Catalan. My Mum was about to feed the other baby when they came to swap me back, so I began with Spanish milk. Maybe I have Spanish milk brothers and sisters from across the sea, who I could never marry..... To Spain, through the Pyrenees, passengers in the back of the car. We went every year and travelled around. I would go with mum and dad and a brother. When we stopped the car and looked at the mountains: it was so....Took photos, but never developed the pictures. Sometimes we would drive above pink and purple clouds and imagine gods on them. We spent so much time in the car; never stayed in one place: always different people. I liked the feeling of being with my family, together. Later as an adult I travelled with friends, they spoke the language: I asked the questions, and they translated I was not sure if they were asking my questions, or whether the answer they gave me was the right one to my question: had I missed the meaning of the reply, had they missed the meaning of my question – but the smiles we all gave each other reassured me that the words were not always the most important thing.....I planted seeds in those mountains. I must go... move on... Let me pack up my bag: look at this: I haven't seen this for a long while; aah, oh yes, (she giggles), and (she laughs out load)....maybe another time; not now – how long, maybe, one day.... I took a cart up a hill... How we laughed....

Flower/poem (shared with Pear as she enters)

Woman:

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Nor the remote angelical rose sung by poets of old

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Nor the blessed mother

Neither the withering, taunted old maid

Nor she who is obliged to be beautiful

Nor she who is obliged to be bad

Nor she who lives because they let her

Not she who must always say yes

Woman, a being who begins to know who she is and so starts to live...

Pear into physical monologue

Drawing on essences from the establishing world of the journey scene

Pear meets Fish

Fish enters as if in the pear tree...

Pear Mind out. Take care. Look out ... So you want to talk to pears. Watch out: that one is ready to drop. She's ripe that one.....

Fish has got down from the tree

Pear If you don't eat them when they are ripe, they will spoil. I've seen loads in my time really ripe, juicy and.... this tree is laden with... with

Fishwhat....

Pear Pears, of course..... You can't really climb a pear tree: because their branches are so.... fragile.....

Fish Its amazing, I've never seen anything so beautiful

Pear 'cause you've never looked

Movement passing of time

Pear (sung) You just can't dump in the river, as the river will dump on you...
You just can't dump in the river, as the river will dump on you...
You just can't dump in the river, as the river will dump on you...
You just can't dump in the river, as the river will dump on you...
(repeated as necessary)

Movement passing of time – sitting beneath the tree

Pear I sit and watch them; the leaves bud, the blossom bursts, the bees buzz, and do their thing, and the petals fall and the fruits fill.... Enjoy your time in the shade child and the smell of fresh fruit....

They share a pear

Pear Nice?

Fish It is amazing: I can't believe. Its full of

Pear (she stops Fish speaking) – ssh.....Have another bite, bite and taste and smell... . Quickly – another one is going to drop.

Fish I'll get it....

Pear ... too late, catch the next one...

Pause

Pear Sit beneath the tree: Climb the tree, and reach up high into the sky, fill a basket.... peel it, pickle, drink it, make it into jam. Girl, I might not have chosen to go on a journey, I might not be able to run and skip like you, or turn heads with a pretty smile, but I can sure peel a pear quicker than you... But remember, there is nothing worse..there is nothing worse, they say, than a rotten pear....

Fish stirs

Pear Shush girl, you know, my mother beat me with a stick. I stayed. I beat my daughter with the same stick – she ran. It woke me up. I snapped that stick and buried it deep into the earth. A pear tree grew in its place. Nurturing that tree, I've learnt about.... Love, responsibility. Because, I could have run too, but I didn't.... sleep, child, sleep..

Fish has fallen asleep as she has eaten so many pears into Pear Monologue

Pear enters into monologue

Pear Today's my daughter's wedding day: but I'm not there. When I was young I used to love watching pears growing. We could not go out. We had to stay in and cook and clean. We would sit on the roof or gaze through the window and watch the pears grow. We'd take the pears and eat them secretly. One day I drew a picture of the pear, and put it in a picture frame. Even now, I hide it away in my house, and only bring it out when I am alone.

I am nothing special, one of twins: the other died along with my mother on the day I was born. I married my husband when I was 16. I felt so young. From that day I stopped talking: I heard the sound of my heart breaking but refusing to be broken. I didn't know what to do. I started to notice that the neighbours didn't talk – their doors were shut, the windows were shut, how come the neighbours don't come round, when my door is open. Today is my daughter's wedding day: and I've not been invited... I've decided to go, and take a gift.

Into ritual

[music]

Pear starts poem,

Woman:

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Woman, a being who begins to know who she is and so starts to live...

...and Flower and Rice join Pear bringing on their gifts (Fish is still asleep – and is suddenly awoken by the words) in the style to parallel the opening sequence, but this time having grown, moved on by their experiences/encounters with each other and Fish

Fish final scene

Fish wakes up and acknowledges the gifts.... and exits, uplifted.....

End.