

Creative Manifesto and Paths Less Travelled

In 2015 Slingsby invested in a new development process which we call "*Paths Less Travelled*". This Research and Development laboratory was undertaken by Quincy Grant (Composer), Geoff Cobham (Set and Lighting Designer), Wendy Todd (Set and Costume Designer), Matt Crook (Actor) and Nicola Keene (Stage Manager) under the leadership of Andy Packer (Artistic Director).

The team adopted an [Open Space](#) process (informed by Improbable Theatre UK) to commence the R&D with the creative team responding to the provocation: *How can we make theatre the most desirable social act?* From this day-long process the creative team established the following list of 'conditions' for the type of theatre that we want to create together. This became our manifesto for the two-week R&D and exploration.

Manifesto

- Our audience is a group of strangers who become a brotherhood/sisterhood.
- Our audience leave a memory of themselves in the space.
- Every piece of theatre should be an island (where its unique culture and logic has evolved).
- We value the experience as much as the story.
- Making adults and children equal - finding humanness in us all.
- We should discover the story together (with the audience).
- Embrace unpredictability.
- Create a ceremonial journey of the experience.
- Remember that the contrived accidents keep it real.
- Every night is unique.
- Our audience should start and end the show at home.

The initial *Paths less Travelled* development led to the creation of the company's production of Oscar Wilde's *The Young King*, a production that ushered in a new phase of national and international touring success and received the International Performing Arts for Youth 'Victor Award' in Madison, Wisconsin in January 2017.

Building on the success of these processes (*Paths Less Travelled* and the *Open Space*) Slingsby ensures they are used as part of the first stage creative development of each new Slingsby production.

The intent of *Paths Less Travelled* is to experiment around the themes or resource text that has been selected to be the foundation of a new production, with the aim to find the most interesting and surprising way to bring the story to the stage. We purposefully take risks, seek to fail, learn from the failures, and discover the moments of gold and the way in which the audience can be welcomed into the world of the show.