



Environmental Arts and Action

Sinking Ark 1991-2025

‘Let children’s voices be heard.’

Sinking Ark is a theatrical/musical project that puts children at the centre of our fight against climate change.

At this moment in history we have recently fought off a global pandemic which made life terrible for many all over the world. But at the same time the frightening reality of climate change is becoming increasingly real, and we are now calling it for what it is: *A Climate Emergency*. With threats such as raging wildfires and rising sea levels, Covid is but a drop in the ocean compared to the tsunami that is coming our way.

The children of today are the inheritors of our future. We believe their voices can be a catalyst to raise awareness and inspire action.

Some Background

From Environmental Arts and Action, (formally Environmental Arts Theatre Company) Sinking Ark is a narrative production performed by children. With eleven original songs, it combines music, drama and dance and is based around a dialogue between children, adults and animals on specific elements of climate change and animal extinction.

- In May 1991 it was staged at the *Festival of the Environment* in Edinburgh, the first event of its kind in the UK.
- It was subsequently performed at the Green Exhibition in Birmingham (July '91); the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (August '91) and The Biodiversity Festival in Glasgow (Sept. '91)
- Reviews: "...the show is performed by children which adds to the credibility. [...] it boasts colourful characters and costumes and eleven infuriatingly catchy songs." Michael Balfour, The List
"...ingenious dance routines with extra special musical numbers and real spirit from the cast of 8-15 year olds who have been very well directed." Bonnie Lee, The Scotsman, Aug. 24th 1991
- In 1992, other schools in the UK staged their own productions. From the cast of a school in Ramsbottom, Lancashire: "I think that Sinking Ark had a very strong environmental message, which got through to the little children as well as the parents." Paul, St Andrews Primary
"Before the play I didn't think much of the world, the play changed my mind." Anna, St. Andrews



- The songs from the show were studio recorded and the theme song was chosen for the 1992 Rio Earth Summit in Brazil, along with another song about the Lost Forests of Scotland, also from Environmental Arts.
- The botanist and environmental campaigner David Bellamy was a strong supporter and patron who called Sinking Ark '*...the best bit of environmental theatre I have ever seen...*'.
- The project was supported and sponsored by *WWF*, the *Post Office*, and *Edinburgh City Council*.

Why do we think this is important now?

Thirty-four years later the themes and message of the play resonate as much as they did then - except now they are even more relevant and powerful.

We believe the Arts have a unique ability to make sense of subjects that can be too hard to grasp when presented through statistics or dystopian imagery. Musical events like *Live Aid* and campaigns such as *Artists for the Earth* can attach people emotionally to an issue and in turn galvanise them into action.

We have recently seen what the youth climate movement can achieve. When children are directly involved in arts and activism their message has a unique impact.

What do we want to do? (in no particular order)

concert or theatrical productions of the full updated show. (Some of the original cast have expressed an interest in getting involved, some of whom now have their own children.)

- Choirs, both live and virtual, featuring children from around the world singing the Sinking Ark Song - in English or their native language - and uploading the footage to an online platform.
- Song, rap and spoken word performances about the issues that are effecting the young activist, artist or community at a local level.
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- Maximum media and online presence

Who do we need?

- Patrons, supporters and sponsors.
- The endorsement of various individuals including: Climate heroes, celebrities, scientists and naturalists.
- People with a range of skills including: Organisational, social media, marketing, film, performance and music.
- Children across the world for choir productions and stage performances.



- Funding

Links to 3 songs with lyrics recorded in 1992 by the original cast. They are taken from a cassette so sound quality is not perfect. ;

The Sinking Ark theme, Turn the Tide and Slash and Burn on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQyS4ATUm6M&t=108s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxHZyyME1To>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fhu45VwLo4>

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