

# WOMAD 2010

Date: July 2009  
 Location: WOMAD, Chippenham, UK  
 ASF Team: M. Kinnear & D. Hingorani  
 Partners: Fourth Door, Tangentfield  
 Donors: N/A  
 Project type: Exhibition & Event

## PROBLEM ADDRESSED



The workshop was inspired by Oliver Lowenstein from Fourth Door. He was interested in the 'overlap, in spirit at least, between the emerging grassroots architecture network driving community projects around the world and the relatively new passions for the many branches of the world music tree.' (Oliver Lowenstein). The World of Music Arts and Dance (WOMAD) festival was the perfect location for this workshop where world musicians congregate on a farm near Chippenham to participate in one of the most international music festivals in the UK. WOMAD was set up by Peter Gabriel in 1982 and continues to grow annually attracting world famous acts such as Salif Keita (Mali), Afro Celt, Imogen Heap and many more. There is very little opportunity for small bands or musicians to play, so the workshop brief was for four teams of architects and materials specialists to design and build a stage each to host a number of acts on Sunday night in an open mike style.



## GOAL ACHIEVED

Four stages were designed and built using locally sourced materials and bamboo. Each team had a specialism: ASF and Tyin Architects worked with reclaimed materials, Jack Everitt (Bamboo Jack) worked with bamboo and Charlie Brentnall worked with locally sourced poplar. The stages then became the backdrop to 16 acts on the Sunday night. The evening was a fantastic success with the various acts choosing their stage of preference and performing in a succession, one stage at a time. The final two songs became an impromptu duo with Raw Element, a beat boxer, and Lori Campbell.

## METHODOLOGY OF WORK

A team of volunteers, participants, experts and a host of organisers from Tangentfield congregated on Thursday afternoon to each design a stage after looking at the available materials on site. The designs were then grouped according to theme overnight, and each person was put into a team on Friday morning. The next few hours were spent consolidating the designs and then building began in each team by Friday lunchtime. The teams worked hard and fast with the assistance of the engineering team: Margaret Cooke and Gavin Knowles from Integral Design on hand to comment and develop ideas. The stages were completed by 4pm on Sunday for the engineers to finally load test each stage before the performances. Alongside the building programme around eighty auditions were being held on a small stage which had been built before we had all arrived. The successful bands were offered a performance slot on the Sunday night if they were available. After the load testing the remaining few hours were spent sorting out the event which was due to start at 9pm. A Spanish band tested the ASF stage at 7pm as they had another gig at 8pm. This worked out well and assisted with the sound and light testing that one of the volunteers was co-ordinating. The final event was fabulous and the whole team, although exhausted, were really invigorated by the amazing opportunity to design spaces for musicians to perform and create a place for alternative options of grass roots design and music to overlap.

## FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

This was the first year that this programme has been run by Roots Architecture. It was a great experience for the whole team and it is hoped that they will continue to run something similar every year.

