

The Icebook



CONTENTS

The Icebook	3
Behind the Scenes	4
Technical Rider/Contact Details.....	7
Davy & Kristin McGuire	8

The Icebook

The Ice Book is a miniature theatre show made of paper and light. An exquisite experience of fragile paper cutouts and video projections that sweep you right into the heart of a fantasy world. It is an intimate and immersive experience of animation, book art and performance. The Ice Book trailer has been watched online over 300,000 times, been broadcast on international TV stations and received overwhelming global attention from magazine publishers, theatre producers and film-makers.



The Icebook is designed for an audience of up to 10 people. Each show lasts 17 min and can be performed at 30 min intervals for a maximum of 5 hours. The Icebook is suitable for ages 10 and above.

Watch the Icebook Trailer here: www.theicebook.com

Behind the Scenes

We always had the dream of creating a theatre performance that opened up like a pop-up book. A show that would mix video projections with live actors to create a totally immersive experience. We wanted to create a full scale, life-size theatre production.

The idea for the Icebook was to create a miniature maquette for this dream – a demonstration model to show to producers and other funders in the hope that they would give us some money to make the full scale show. (And we still hope that this will come true one day!) The Icebook has since however, grown its own legs and turned into a miniature show all by itself. An intimate performance for small audiences. We love the old pre-cinematic optical illusions, such as zeotropes and magic lanterns, and the magical way in which they can mesmerise audiences through basic mechanics. Rather than simply projecting images onto a screen, we wanted to create an object with a life of its own – a tangible and magical “thing” for an audience to experience.

When Kristin first held a pop-up in front of a lamp we were fascinated by the utterly beautiful effect of the light coming through the paper, creating shadows and silhouettes which we could then enhance and complement with back projected film-footage. In the Icebook, the 3D effect is achieved by back projecting onto the pop ups. Using this technique the projected characters appear as if they are moving behind the cut-outs and thus the illusion of perspective is created.



Aesthetically, we were also inspired by early 20th century Russian fairytales as well as the work of Jan Svankmajer, Flatworld, the Judder Man from the Metz advert, Georges Méliès and the genre of German expressionism.

So we applied for an Artist Residency at The Kuenstlerdorf Schoeppingen in Germany, which gave us four months, a small amount of money and a large room to work in.

Kristin bought an instruction book on how to make pop-ups, and we set about cutting and folding and trying things out. It was quite a steep learning curve...

While Kristin worked on the pop-ups, Davy created the projections in After Effects. Most of the scenes in the Icebook consist of us (as actors) standing in vast landscapes and huge buildings. We didn't have a big studio or the budget for proper film sets, so the background scenery is entirely made up of various photographs that were cut and pasted together and then animated in the 3D space of After Effects.

The actors (we only had ourselves) were superimposed onto this photomontage using a makeshift green screen cobbled together from some cheap fabric. We also used builders lights to illuminate our subjects because the light in the room we were using was so dim.



Almost everything was shot on a Canon 5D Mark II because of its super duper image quality. The extra stops that the 5D provided was a massive help in our badly lit studio. The problem however, was that all of the footage and all of the photos Davy took were actually too sharp and crisp, so he had to dirty everything up. At the time, the 5D would only shoot at 30 fps. The motion was over smooth for the aesthetic we were after. Davy added a posterize time effect to simulate a 15fps feel. Davy then added lots of dust and grain to give the footage an aged film look.

The engineering of the book needed massive thought, too. We decided early on to use back projections, but we needed a way to stop the light spill from the projector bleeding into the room. Kristin ingeniously bought a cardboard wardrobe from the internet and cut a “proscenium” hole out of the lid. Each page of the pop up book is also held up by a system of magnets and the book is bound in a very specific way to allow for the projections to shine through.



Kristin did all of the meticulous paper cutting and also drew many of the designs by hand. As the book is so fragile (but also used so much) we are now trying to reproduce a stronger version by using Adobe Illustrator, a laser cutter and a professional book binder.

Creating the pop-ups often took days of meticulous and accurate work, and making minute changes to the animation would also take several hours of rendering. We would constantly go back and forth between each other. Sometimes Kristin would come to Davy with an exquisite page, but when Davy turned the projection on the combination simply didn't work. We then had to start building the scene over again or sometimes even ditch the scene completely. It caused a lot of frustration, hundreds of re-writes of the story and many arguments.

Another problem we encountered was that we had to consider the dimensions of the book when shooting all green screen material, imagining ourselves as tiny little people in a miniature world made of paper... but to be honest, we had a lot of fun, too!



Technical Rider

Provided by Venue:

A TOTALLY blacked out room/studio or space that can accommodate a long table as well as 3 to 4 rows of 4 chairs (please see plan below for measurements). It is preferable to also supply some bar stools so that the audience at the back can see. The room has to be well insulated from external noise.

One long trestle table (or two trestle tables connected together) to make a platform of 150 cm length or slightly longer for the pop-up book and projection tube.

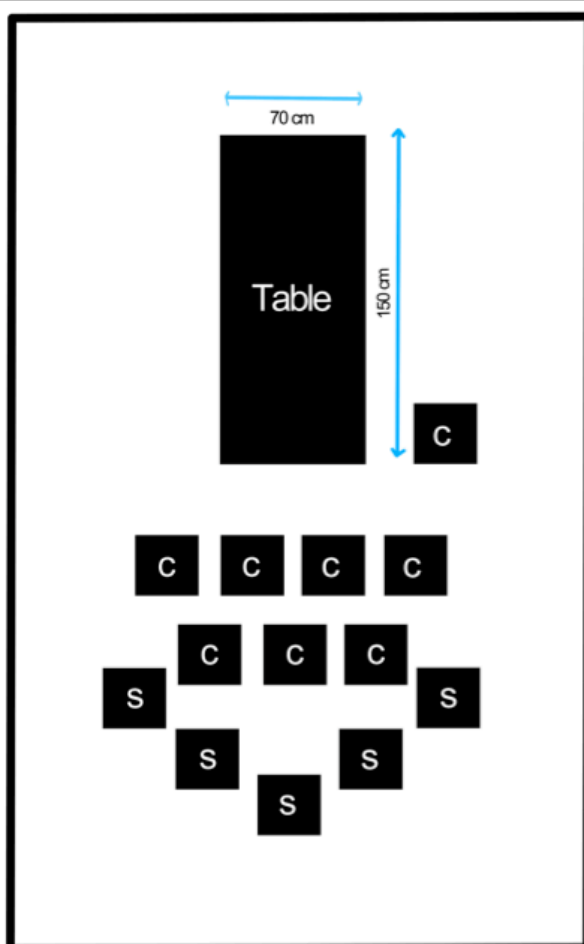
A standing lamp.

A power socket and one extension lead.

Provided by The Icebook Team:

The Icebook, including all peripherals needed to make it work.

For further information please contact Davy & Kristin McGuire info@theicebook.com, tel: 0044 7584 901 491

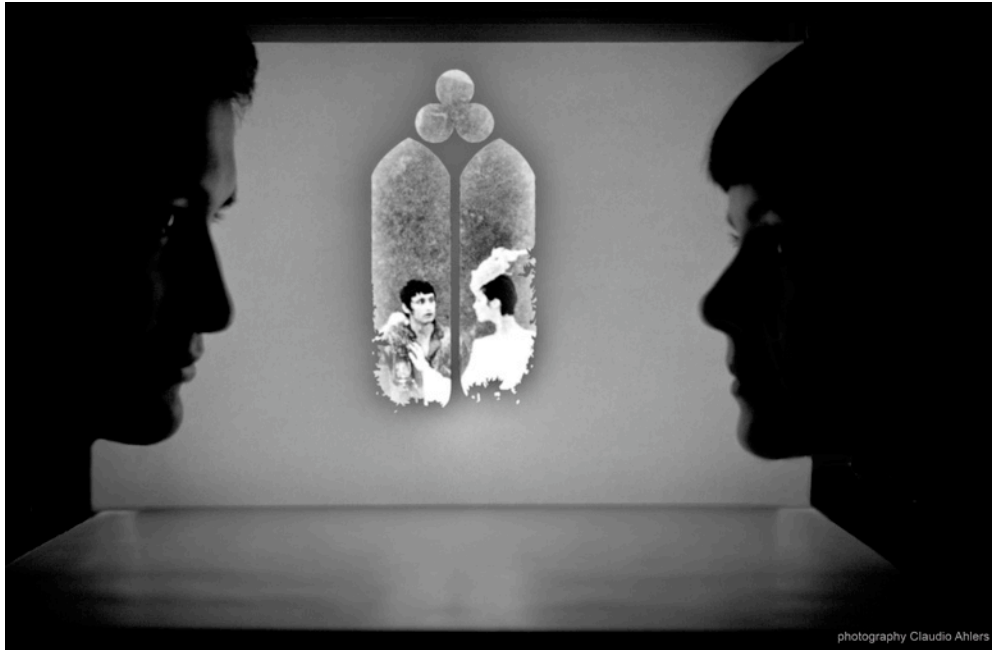


KEY

- c = Chair
- s = Stool



Davy & Kristin McGuire



Davy & Kristin are an award winning director/designer couple whose projects range from music videos, animation films and installations to live theatre shows, dance performances, video projections and everything in between.

Their clients' list includes Cirque du Soleil, Canal+, The Guillemots, Partizan and Aardman and their Vimeo films have been viewed over 300,000 times this year. Their productions have also featured on TV in Japan, on Canal+ in France as well as being publicized in Kerrang, Digital Arts, Contageous Magazine, Time Out and Elle Girl Korea.

This year they will have traveled to Istanbul, India, Holland, Denmark, Portugal and Northern Ireland with their show The Icebook, and will also have completed a theatrical adaptation of Howl's Moving Castle which will open at Southwark Playhouse in London this Christmas.

For more information please visit:

www.davyandkristinmcguire.com

www.vimeo.com/davyandkristinmcguire

www.kristinmcguire.com