BOUFFANTS’ CRIB SHEET (CL2: Disrupting the Landscape)

[The following sheet was hastily drawn together early on Day 2 of CL2. I wanted to work with the group on an ensemble activity that might provide the ‘audience’ with continuity for the promenade around the site to various vignettes and fuller scenes. I wanted an echo of the disruption of the landscape that was the theme of CL2 and decided to experiment with bouffants work that I had experienced initially when working with John Wright. The characters were an excess of the individual – a disruption of themselves - and yet still recognisably themselves. (It was not ‘pure’ bouffants work but a variation.) This was the ‘crib’ sheet that I gave the participants.]

The bouffants – entertainers; did not conform to the given norm in medieval society; predated commedia; lived outside the towns – allowed in on high days and holidays to entertain. They were likely to have been physically different in some way. (We are not taking this aspect – but extending your own physicality). The best were sufficiently highly regarded to have pictures painted of them. (I saw two in the Prada Museum in Madrid, some years ago.)

On the edge    Quirky   Removed   Alienated   The other

Living in the moment – ‘present’
Naïve and eccentric
Hold together – security in each other’s presence

For us particularly:

• some might be worried and concerned about erasure and change; others may seek that. Gentle disagreements?
• Putting things back the way they were; tidying or disrupting
• Puzzled. Always trying to make sense of the place. Trying to piece it together.
• Arrivals and partings are important to them.
• Use popping up toasters – with toast in the shape of jigsaw pieces.
• They are aware of ‘erasure’ – parts of the site being erased, disappearing. They don’t understand. Constantly questioning and worried about the changes to the landscape. They disrupt accidentally and also worry about disruption.
• They all have a different interest in Caer Llan and have different needs of the place.
• Take things into the workshop to be changed, repaired, altered etc.
• Searching for meaning all the time.
• Commenting on all the vignettes, scenes, happenings around them; introducing stuff to the ‘audience’.

Because the bouffants have a strange vision themselves – slightly through a blurred or opaque lens – they may open up new ways of seeing to the audience. Their response to things will be tangential, off target etc. which may guide the audience into a distorted view.

The content of the bouffants’ scenes will be based on the scenes and vignettes. In addition, they may refer to the quirks around the place, in passing. The following language could be used from our earlier exercises:
NEOLOGISMS: WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

Histealthy         Uniquirky
Greenlife          Levelsheadache
Tarhostas          Viewwork
Muraloving         Grassclean
Abstractive        Oxylated
Brancheshonest     Quowl
Mustybin           Claddingpatchwork
Birdykite          Sunide
Changingsecret     Distivt
Evergreenship      Airuty
Menagical          Lightland
Calmnew            Unihealth
Commuzarre         Preservedliberty
Disjointedfaeries  Forestion
Forcesheep         Lushuzzle
Bedergrown         Brokenive
Fair               Traditionalazy
Roughfresh         Higgledypiggledyexperience
Motionmulticoloured Mapsky
Landscaplight      Freshdecay
Lifestorm          Stepleaf
Fragmars           Histygen
Bleaquil           Craggyvigst
Squirritage        Widlife
Welshscape         Poolopen
Earthtan           Naturural
Doorick            Dreamyful
Quietition         Decatranquil
Quaintful          Blealearings

[These neologisms were the result of an exercise in re-thinking the landscape by creating portmanteau words that, by their strangeness and yet familiarity, might jolt us (and an audience) into rethinking an accepted model of rurality.]