

# INTIMACY IN PLAYS

*“I felt at ease each time I performed this scene and I knew my fellow actors felt the same. The scenes hit new levels due to the [intimacy] rehearsal.”*

*“It...made me feel safe and comfortable.”*

*“This is the first time in all the years I have been doing theatre that anyone has approached intimacy scenes in such a professional, sensitive way that **made everyone feel extremely comfortable** and I feel produced the best results for the play itself”*

*“I think it’s **a brilliant way to safeguard everyone and brings an important structure**...which is easily understandable and allows for safe collaborative working.”*

ELODIE FORAY

# Intimacy in Plays

# Elodie Foray

*(they/them)*

- ▶ Archway Theatre
- ▶ Work in theatre
- ▶ Intimacy Directing since 2021
  - ▶ 8 productions
- ▶ Training with IDC
- ▶ Bringing Intimacy Directing (ID) to amateur and regional theatre spaces



# Agenda

Aims

What is Intimacy and Intimacy Directing

Pillars of Intimacy

Consent-Forward Approach

Things You Can Do

Questions

# Workshop Guidelines

- ▶ Speak from I
- ▶ Be respectful with others
- ▶ Reserve judgement
- ▶ Leave the story; take the learning
- ▶ You're allowed to express unfinished thoughts
- ▶ Make space, take space
- ▶ De-sexualise your language

Aims

A word of  
caution.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT  
COUNT AS MOMENTS OF  
INTIMACY...

# Activity





# Intimacy

1. Simulated Sexual Acts
2. Nudity / Hyper-exposure
3. Intimate Physical Contact

# Roles of an Intimacy Director

## Advocate

Ensure performers can advocate for their boundaries and needs  
Ensure performers consent to action  
Facilitate conversations involving the performers and the creative team

## Liaise

Ensure that all parties have the information necessary to support vulnerable storytelling

## Choreograph

Collaboratively create and set movements that are consensual, dynamic, and repeatable to fulfil the director's vision and support the boundaries of the performers

WHAT THINGS MIGHT BE  
IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES  
TO APPROACHING SCENES  
WITH INTIMACY?

# Activity

# Pillars of Intimacy Directing

Context

Consent

# Consent

Consent is an agreement between two or more parties to participate in a specific predetermined action.

Consent can only exist when it is voluntary and **allows for all parties to change their mind.**

In a culture of consent, individuals can choose between "Yes" and "No", because **both are equally acceptable options.**

YES/NO GAME

REFLECT

# Activity

# CRISP

Elements of consent in the context of the entertainment industry

Considered

Revokable

Informed

Specific

Participatory

# Boundaries

## Baseline

- ▶ context-based boundaries established for a production, class, scene, or exercise.

## Individual

- ▶ context-based boundaries established by an individual performer regarding their own body and actions.

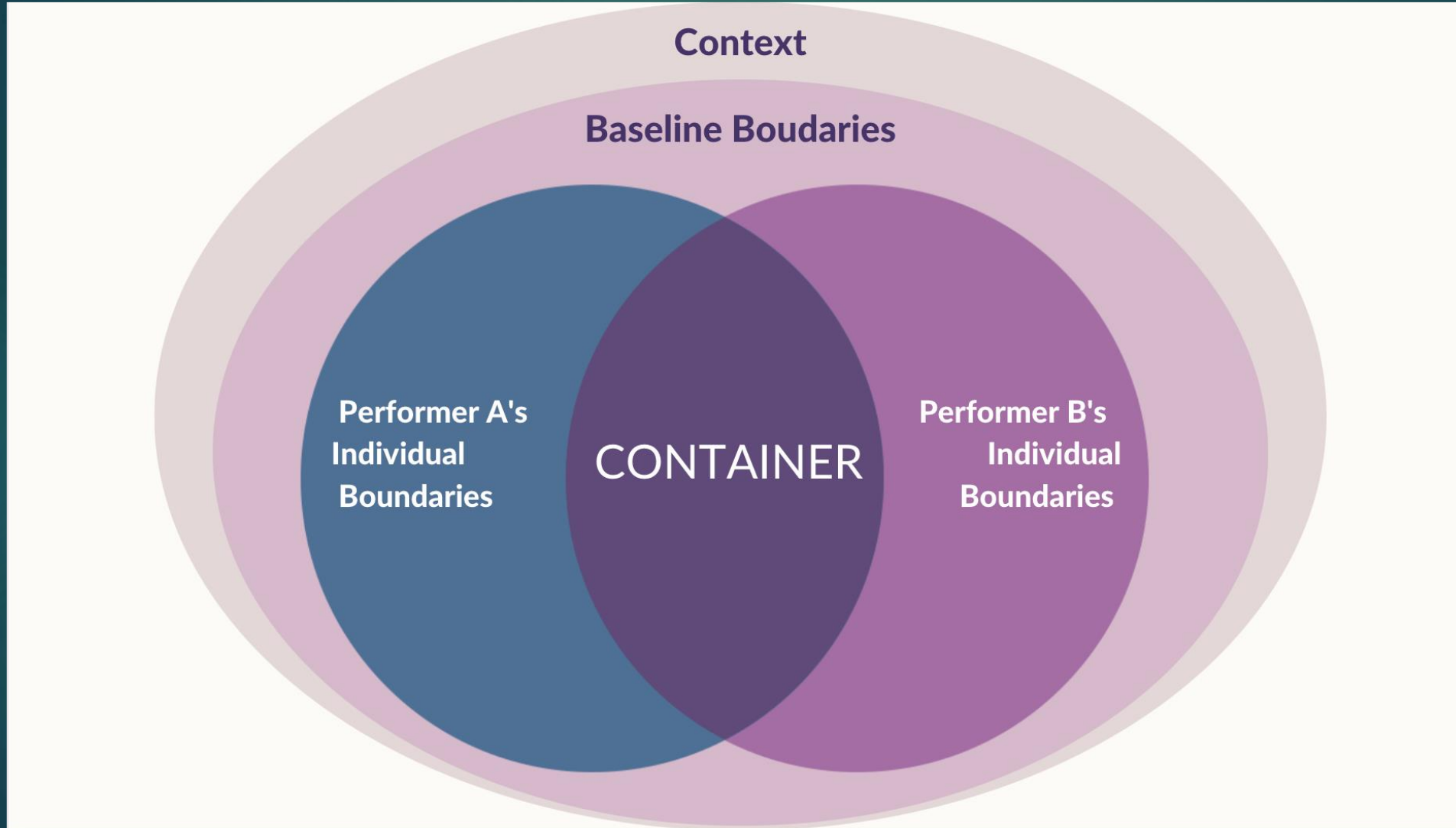
## Containers

- ▶ Context + Baseline Boundaries + Individual Boundaries of each performer involved



Consent

# Boundaries



# Power Dynamics – Individual Power

- ▶ Title Power
- ▶ Expert Power
- ▶ Informational Power
- ▶ Referent Power
- ▶ Decision Making Power
  - ▶ Reward Power
  - ▶ Punitive Power

THINK ABOUT YOUR ROLE AT  
YOUR THEATRE – WHAT KINDS  
OF POWER DO YOU HOLD?

# Activity

# Pillars of Intimacy Directing

Context

Consent

Communication

Choreography

Points of Contact

Pressure Level of Co

Choreography  
Flow

PLACEHOLDER

Tempo

Pathways

Proximity

# Pillars of Intimacy Directing

Context

Consent

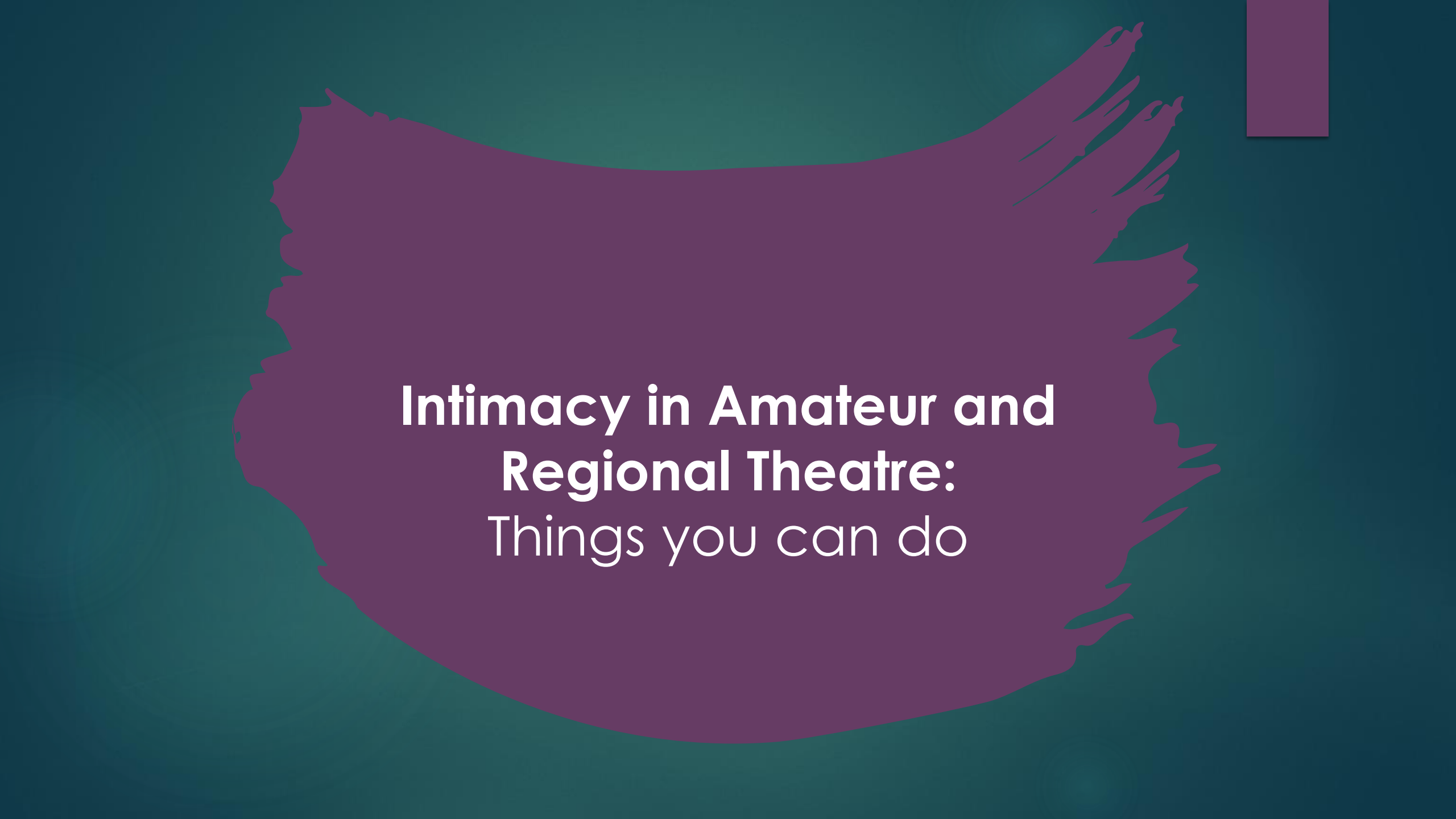
Communication

Choreography

Closure

# Consent Forward Approach

- ▶ strong understanding of individual agency
- ▶ clear and open communication
- ▶ “human first” approach
  
- ▶ can be producers, costume designers, stage managers, actors, dancers, administrators, directors, and assistant directors
- ▶ understand how power dynamics can affect consent
- ▶ have tools that can help mitigate the negative impact of those dynamics in the entertainment industry





**Intimacy in Amateur and  
Regional Theatre:**  
Things you can do



# Step 1: Play Selection

- Do ask: Is the play necessary?
- Do ask: Is the intimacy necessary?
- Do ask: Do you have the means?
  - Do consider further reading or training
  - Do consider allocating someone as an intimacy advocate



## Step 2: Before Audition

- Do have a clear idea of intimacy within the play
- Do include in audition notice

## Step 3: Before Rehearsals

- Do send guidelines to cast and crew
- Do be clear and specific about when intimacy is expected
  - within play
  - within rehearsal period
- Do consider alternatives
- Do meet with director and/or SM
  - (Do schedule Intimacy Advocate meeting)
- Do have Structures of Support in place

## Step 4: Rehearsal Process

- Do set placeholder
- Do state what's off the table (Baseline)
- Do be prepared for a variety of responses
- Do set rehearsal guidelines
- Do be open to 'no'

## Step 5: In The Room

- Do avoid sexual language and jokes
- Don't put yourself in the action
- Do put in exit strategy
- Do put in breaks
- Do acknowledge mistakes and apologise
- Do be aware of marginalised people in the room

Recap

**Questions?**

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**Intimacy Organisations**

BECTU

ISS

IDD

Intimacy on Set