



# Properties and Costumes

## Properties and Costumes for Shine

Allow creativity to reign supreme as youth create the costumes and properties for their production of *Shine*. Here's an easy list of properties and costumes you will likely want for your production along with some useful suggestions for how you could make them. For many of these artistic projects, the lessons are integrated into the physical making of these items. The artistic projects intended for youth are labeled as such. The physical engagement with the materials and the choices made during the artistic process are designed to increase retention of the lessons learned and to promote discovery on the part of the student. There are also a few items needed that are not tied to youth learning that the teacher or leader can create. Whenever possible, try to use repurposed materials to support the theme of sustainability throughout. When using new materials to support the student creations, remember that some use of fossil fuel-based products is necessary for the transition to a clean energy future. This can be a useful discussion to share with youth in the creation of the production. For them to participate in the negotiation of this is an integrated learning opportunity. This production is designed to portray the highest level of spectacle and beauty possible with minimal material items.

## For Youth to Create:

**Ancient Plants and Animals Capes:** Create body “capens” of ancient plants and animals—a piece of Tyvek that can reach from the student’s shoulders to the floor in length and that extends in width approximately from one elbow to the other (about 36”/45”), cut the corners of the rectangle to round the four corners. Cut arm holes a few inches from the top so the student can put their arms through and wear the cape on their back. Have students decorate the backs with the design of an ancient plant or animal that they research and chose to be in the performance. In the accompanying video (<http://www.insidethegreenhouse.org/shine/>), green full-body Lycra suits were worn by the plants and only the animals wore the capes.

### Materials Needed:

- Pieces of Tyvek (about 36”/45”) for each student to make a “cape” of their ancient plant or animal (Tyvek is better than paper since it is less likely to rip when the students move in their capes)
- Longer pieces of Tyvek to cut out and design dinosaur (optional, can represent a dinosaur in any other way too)
- Multiple wide-tip colored water-based markers
- Scissors

\*Note: Also see below for optional green Lycra suits for the ancient plants.



A youth-drawn Trilobite cape (left) and an ancient Horsetail plant cape (right), painted onto green vinyl (photo Conner Callahan)



Dragon Fly cape drawn by professional artist (photo Melisande Osnes)



Lizard and Trilobite capes drawn by professional artist (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Snake cape being drawn by University of East London students on black Tyvek (photo Melisande Osnes)

**Dinosaur Costume or Sculpture** (optional, can be physically represented by performers just using their bodies), can be represented using a paper maché head of a Tyrannosaurus Rex dinosaur and have matching gloves to represent the tiny arms, or by making a paper sculpture of a dinosaur, or simply with just youth bodies to represent a dinosaur.



Dinosaur head made by art students out of paper maché (photo Melisande Osnes)



Performing the rounded back and plates of a Stegosaurus dinosaur (photo Melisande Osnes)



Side view of Stegosaurus dinosaur (photo Melisande Osnes)



Two types of dinosaurs being enacted by youth with only their bodies (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Humorous dinosaur being enacted by youth with only their bodies (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)

## Humanity's First Fire

**Sticks for humans** can be represented by using actual sticks.

**Red cloth for fire** Any piece of red/orange/yellow fabric, can be cut into the shape of flames

**Black Carbon** Cut black tissue paper into small pieces (to serve as the black carbon released from humanity's first fire, and this is needed for Foss to wear in his black bag during *Progress*).



Actual sticks, red cloth for the fire, and black tissue paper carbon (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Imaginary sticks, red cloth as fire and black tissue as carbon (photo Melisande Osnes)

**Newspaper Plants for Harvesters** can be created out of newspaper by rolling four half pieces of a full-sized newspaper. Begin rolling one piece from the

narrow end. When half way done rolling the first piece of newspaper, slip the end of another piece into the roll and include it. Then when half way done rolling the second, slip in the end of a third piece into the roll and include it. Repeat for the fourth piece in the same way. Once completed, gently place a rubber band around one end of the rolled-up papers, careful not to make it so tight that it crumbles the paper. Take a strong pair of scissors and cut about three or four vertical slits into the other end, extending the cuts to about half the length of the roll. In performance when the Harvesters want to represent having the plant grow, they can reach into the center of the roll and pull out a center strip, which should result in an upward flowering of the plant. Take care not to pull too far so that the entire structure falls apart. Rehearse making these and pulling them out. If more color is desired, a colorful piece of tissue paper can be added over the second, third, and fourth piece of newspaper and rolled in.

**Materials Needed:**

- Newspaper
- Colored tissue paper (optional)
- Rubber bands
- scissors



Adding in a piece of newspaper and tissue paper into a rolled newspaper (photo by JP Osnes)

Cutting leaves into the paper roll (photo by JP Osnes)



Pulling out the center strip of cut paper to extend the stalk (photo by JP Osnes)



Newspaper plant with colored tissue rolled within to reveal green leaves at the bottom and harvestable grains at the top (photo Conner Callahan)

**Foss Follower Sashes** to wear across their chests that identify themselves as being aligned with Foss. Youth participants can be encouraged to design sashes in whatever way they envision to communicate their allegiance with a fossil fuel-based lifestyle. Once designed, these can be fitted to each participant by stapling the sash so it hangs securely across the chest. Foss follows can don sunglasses to accentuate their look.

**Materials Needed**

- Scissors
- 4”/40” strip of Tyvek or fabric for each “Foss follower sashes”
- Stapler



Foss Follower wearing a sash to represent fossil fuels (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)

**Weaving** Youth will decorate long pieces of paper with images that represent their city, making up the “fabric of their communities” when woven together. Decorations can include monuments, schools, nationalities, religions, sports, bodies of water, businesses, popular pastimes, favorite foods, types of transportation, flags, etc.

**Materials Needed:**

- Set of 8 20 foot/1 foot strips of paper in various colors
- Multiple wide-tip colored water-based markers (avoid tempura paint as it will make the paper strips difficult to roll again after being decorated)

**Note:** it is useful to make a second set of paper strips to use in rehearsal as it can take a long time to decorate the paper strips that will be used in performance.



Multiple strips being decorated at the same time (photo Conner Callahan)



Youth decorate the strips of paper, a large piece of paper is under the strips to keep the markers from bleeding through onto the floor (photo by Conner Callahan)



Photo of the decorated paper strips woven into the fabric of community (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Rehearsing the weaving scene using blank paper strips intended only for rehearsal (photo Conner Callahan)



The fabric of community revealed to the audience (photo Conner Callahan)



This can be performed with as few as three strips of paper going each direction (photo Melisande Osnes)



With five strips of paper (photo Conner Callahan) Even with six strips (photo Conner Callahan)

**Fossil Fuel flags** are decorated large banners used as flags that represent the many ways in which their city uses fossil fuels (example: heating homes and businesses, power plants, transportation, street lights, buses). Both sides of the flags will be decorated and taped to 5' wooden poles.

**Materials Needed**

- 4-9 pieces of black Tyvek cut in rectangles 36"/45"
- Multiple wide-tip colored water-based markers
- 4-9 5-foot wooden poles (can be old broom handles or other used items)
- Black duct tape (for affixing banners to poles)



Decorating a fossil fuel flag (photo by Conner Callahan)



A group decorating many fossil fuel flags  
(photo by Corrina Tulk)



Fossil fuel flags in performance  
(photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)

## Geological Timeline for the Periods Covered through this

**Performance: (optional)** If time allows, youth can create a backdrop for their performance that illustrates the time periods explored throughout. This can be displayed as an audience arrives for a performance or as a backdrop for the action.



Portion of the timeline created for a performance  
(photo Meredith Richter)



Youth performers posed with the timeline  
they created (photo Meredith Richter)

## For Teachers or Leaders to Create:

**Brown Cloth Along Back of the Stage** used to represent the mud and dirt and sand that covers the dead ancient plants and animals. This can be made of any fabric sewn together into a rectangle approximately 20/24 feet. The ideal color is brown, but many earth-tone colors could be effective.

**Materials Needed:**

Could be made from four flat sheets all the same size and similar colors, a huge paint drop cloth, or even from used military parachute fabric.



Huge cloth being pulled over the ancient plants and animals after their death (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Foss talks with Sol after emerging from beneath the cloth (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)

**Green Suits** In my experience, putting on the green suits and performing as a plant has been the highlight for many of the participants and provides visual delight for the audience. These can be purchased online for about \$20-30 USD each. Ensure you have green suits large and small enough for each participant to avoid any potential embarrassment for youth of non-normative sizes.

If you would like to further justify the cost of these costumes (financially and in terms of their carbon footprint), consider participating in the Green Suits Your City photography project. Take a photo of youth outside in front of your school or center and submit it to <http://www.insidethegreenhouse.org/student-projects/greencities>

**Black Cloth Bag with Black Tissue-paper Carbon** Since Foss is releasing massive amounts of carbon into the atmosphere during the Industrial Revolution, it is important for him to be tossing lots of black-tissue carbon into the air during the song *Progress*. Here black carbon is represented by cut pieces of black tissue. It can be much easier for him to do this if he is wearing an open black bag into which he can reach his hand to grab carbon. It is convenient for Foss to simply wear this black bag through the entire production.



Foss reaching for some carbon in his black cloth shoulder-strap bag (photo Conner Callahan)

Foss releasing carbon into the atmosphere (photo Conner Callahan)

### **Black Carbon for Foss (in shoulder strap bag or his pockets)**

Cut black tissue paper into small bits or any used black paper of any kind. Alternately, black tissue paper confetti circles can be purchased online at Etsy.com.

### **Sash with Seeds for Seed Sower**

A pocket/sash for the Seed Sower can be easily created by cutting a long narrow strip of fabric that fits across the shoulder of the Seed Sower and comes together at the opposite hip. Simply sew together a few inches of each side and the bottom of the ends where the two ends of the fabric come together. Cut pieces of colored tissue paper to represent seeds to put in the pocket created. This way, the Seed Sower can easily reach into this pocket for seeds.



Close up photo of the Seed Sower wearing the pocket sash (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



The Seed Sower poses with Sol and Foss after just having thrown some seeds into the air (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Alternately, the Seed Sower can carry her seeds in a wooden bowl (photo by Melisande Osnes)

## Waist Sash/skirts and Head Wraps for Harvesters

Harvesters can be encouraged to create their own costumes using various pieces of cloth in strips and squares. This idea works well with performers wearing black shirts and pants.



Harvesters in costumes they assembled using various squares and strips of cloth (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)



Alternately, Harvesters can wear cloth ponchos to identify them as group (photo by Corrina Tulk)

**Sunglasses for Foss Folks** Youth can be invited to bring their own sunglasses. Teachers or leaders may want to bring extras to ensure each performer of the Foss Followers (and Foss) has a pair.



Foss and the Foss followers all wearing sunglasses (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)

**Big Balloons for Ending (optional)** Giant 36 inch balloons can be order via the internet for about \$5 each, once inflated, these can be decorated with wide-tip colored water-based markers to represent the solutions authored for Act 2. The intended metaphor is that the balloons be designed to represent the youth-authored solutions. By launching them out into the crowd at the end of the production, it represents the entire community participating in keeping youth solutions afloat. Having the colors of the balloons match the colors of the strips of paper used in the weaving of the fabric of community is also intended to convey the notion that the community is in the process of healing after the calamity of the *Progress* storm, but in a new form—one that is capable of change, is resilient and completely transformed. The balloons work as a dramatic metaphor for “bounce forward, rebound, that’s my resilient town.”

**Note: Huge balloons can get out of hand with large groups of youth!**

The combination of dancing at the end of the performance and the release of huge balloons might just be too dangerous with large groups of kids. The huge balloons are a hit and have the potential for engaging the entire audience in physical delight, but with large groups, they can create a frenzy that could end in injury.



Giant balloons decorated with the solutions authored by performers, center balloon decorated with the 100 Resilient Cities logo (photo by Melisande Osnes)



Youth performers play with giant balloons at the conclusion of a performance of *Shine* (photo Steve Sutton DUOMO)

# Optional Warm Up Exercise or as Part of the Conclusion:

Using wound up Spandex cloth, the adults wove together the fabric to create flexible, stronger fabric of community that literally allowed performers to “bounce forward” from a fall. This exercise was a fun way for the adult participants to literally support youth and help them rebound their balance (and catch a bit of air in the process). It took us a bit of practice to make this exercise safe and effective. We also used these same pieces of cloth as properties for people making skits for the performance at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. Although the Spandex cloth is made primarily out of fossil fuels, the fabric is also very resilient and has been used for many performances since. Again, this can be a useful discussion to share with youth participants—if the use of this fossil fuel-based fabric is justified to communicate this aspect of resilience.



Young woman falls backwards into the woven fabric (photo by Conner Callahan)



And she is sprung forward again (photo by Conner Callahan)



A young man falls backwards (photo by Conner Callahan)



And he catches some air (photo by Conner Callahan)



This young man prepares to fall back  
(photo by Conner Callahan)



Falls back (photo by Conner Callahan)



And flies! (photo by Conner Callahan)



Use of Spandex cloth in the performance of the solution skits by youth (photos by Conner Callahan)

**Costumes for Sol and Foss** can be easily constructed out of a large rectangle of fabric with a hole for the head cut into the center middle. This raw inner edge can be finished by sewing a matching trim to it. For Foss, a lightning bolt can be sewn onto his chest area to help communicate his character. A simple sun crown can be made for Sol.

### **Apply to Inside the Greenhouse for Costume and Property**

**Borrowing:** Please feel free to contact Beth Osnes with Inside the Greenhouse to discuss the possibility of borrowing a set of costumes and properties used on the tour of *Shine* that are represented in these photos above. We request a deposit and the cost of shipping. Schools and organizations with limited resources can apply for coverage of shipping costs and negotiation of deposit. [Beth.osnes@colorado.edu](mailto:Beth.osnes@colorado.edu)



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