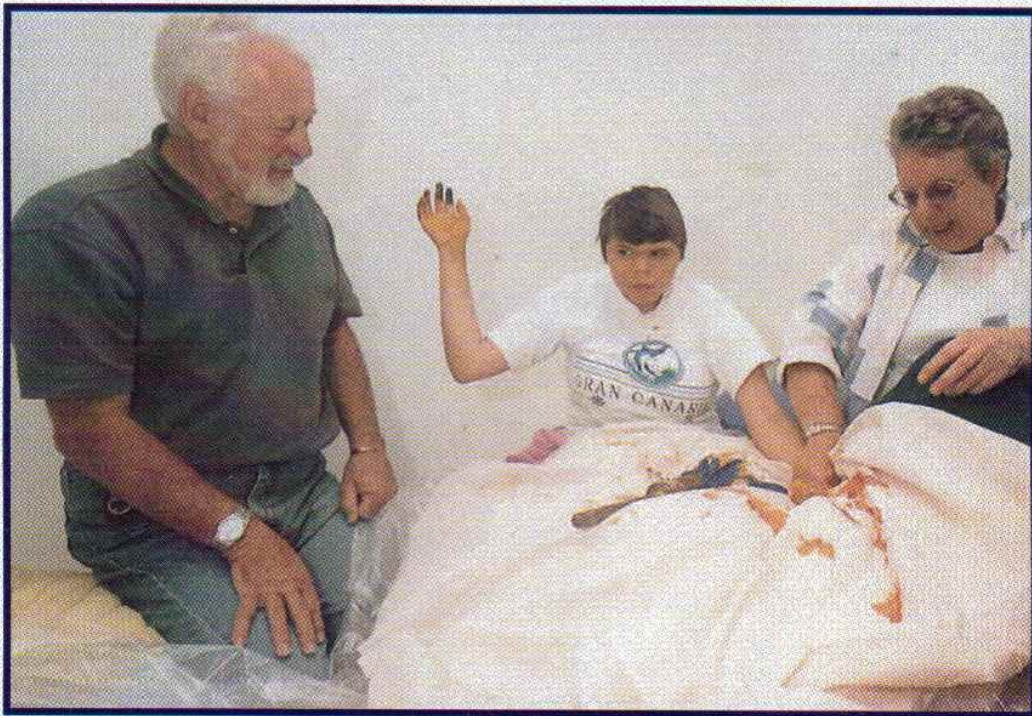




True Stories

Part One



NAOMI PERKINS

Choreographer and Musician

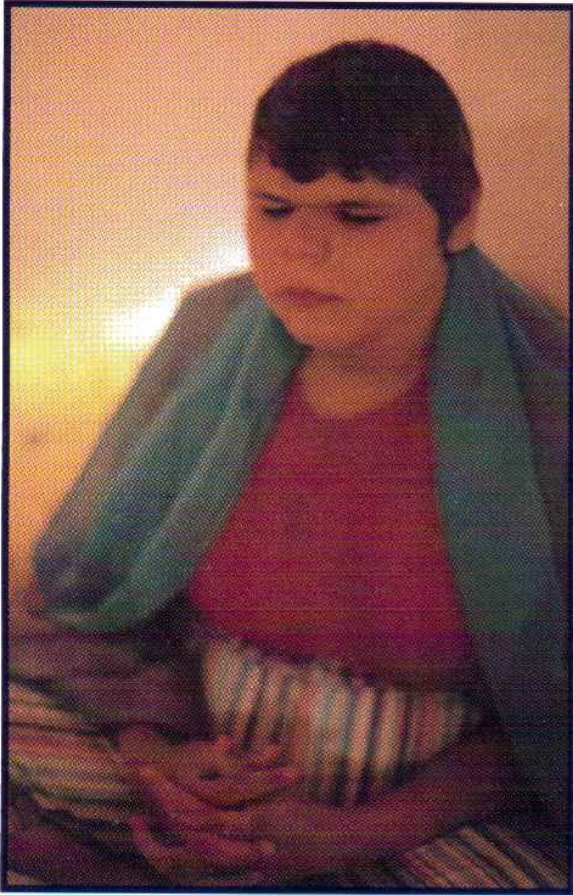
When Naomi first started coming to Touch Trust she was extremely introverted and appeared to be unaware of the world around her. In the early days she would often lie curled up with her head in her hands for the whole session. She did not tolerate touch at all and particularly disliked the percussion instruments and loud sounds.

One day after several months Naomi began to move her fingers gently in time to the music. I began to mirror these gentle movements, Naomi then offered me her hands and we did a very delicate finger dance together. As we danced together with our fingers Naomi gradually began to uncurl her body and she lifted her head. The expression on her face was one of pure innocence and awe of the space around her, like a new born baby opening her eyes for the first time.

Naomi has made huge progress over the last year, and has developed this gentle finger dance into a whole body dance, she has become the choreographer. Naomi is now able to listen to a piece of music and choreograph movement phrases and motifs with appropriate dynamic qualities to compliment or contrast the musical accompaniment. She is now also able to recognise the phrasing in the music. If the melody is repeated several times in the accompaniment Naomi is aware of this and uses repetition of movement phrases and motifs each time the melody reoccurs. If there is a slight musical variation she repeats her motif or phrase of movement and develops it in relation to the music variation.

Naomi is the leader in the session, as she choreographs the movement the group follow her lead and she is the composer of a group composition selecting and refining movements. Naomi has really enjoyed choreographing on a group and gets a huge amount of satisfaction when we mirror her movements back to her. She now fills the room with laughter and beautiful sounds with her voice.

When Naomi first started with Touch Trust she found it difficult to tolerate loud sounds, especially the percussive sounds. She is now beginning to explore these sounds with confidence. As part of her choreography she is beginning to introduce sound. As she is dancing if the dynamics become quicker and more powerful she uses the drum and beats it strongly and also uses



her voice and sings low strong alto tones. The group mirror these sounds back in a question and answer response, Naomi often gets louder and more powerful as the musical accompaniment builds to a crescendo and climax.

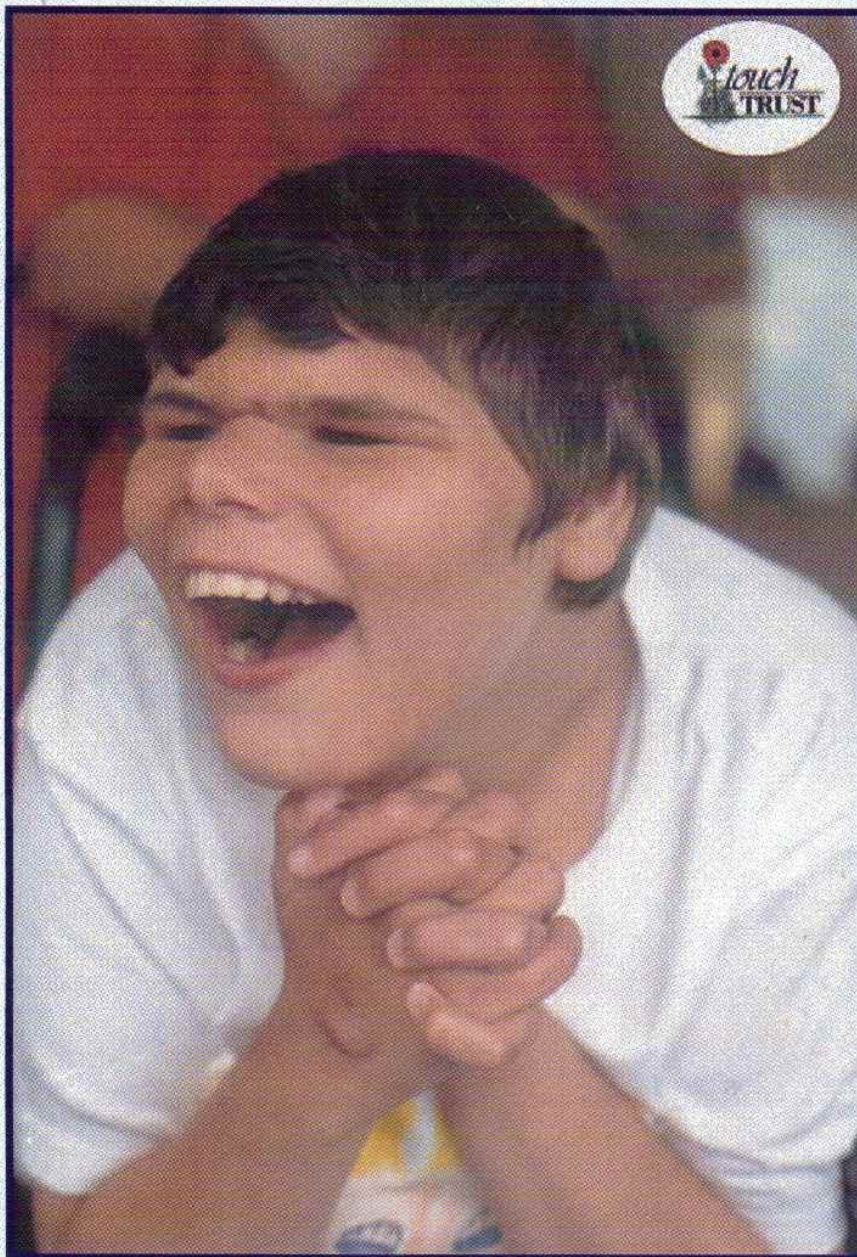
In August 2006 Naomi attended the Touch Trust summer school which was a project that was led by the Welsh National Opera and several independent artists. The project was based on the Greek myth The Odyssey and the central themes were explored through the art of movement. During this week Naomi was able to work with several professional musicians and this

enabled her to grow in confidence. She really explored sounds she could make with her voice. Beautiful low alto sounds which she sustained until they trailed off into the distance and sweet soft melodic sounds.

During the project Naomi sang as Emma Trend played the violin, it became apparent that Naomi was able to change the tone of her voice to compliment the tones of the violin. Naomi is building in confidence and becoming so aware of movement and sound, selecting and refining to create beautiful compositions and choreographies.

At Touch Trust Naomi has been given the opportunity to explore sound and movement in a positive environment. With encouragement, praise and a feeling of self worth Naomi has blossomed. This is reflected in her personality. She is now more comfortable with herself and able to interact positively in a social environment. Naomi's smile lights up the room and her beautiful sounds enliven us all.

– *Charlotte Aubrey, Creative Projects Co-ordinator, September 2006*



Touch Trust is committed to research, development, education, training and implementation of creative, touch-based art of movement and dance programmes for the benefit of people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities in Wales.

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