

Buddhist Monk

The monks arrive early, ready to receive their daily rice. Today it is poured out of a swinging container, spilling down onto the bowls and drums underneath. The temple bells summon everyone to meet the head monk for ceremonial music making, followed by meditation with lavender water.

Environment

In one area, place black cloth on the floor with a variety of bowls, chimes and drums laid out in a line. Above this hang a 'rice swinger' – a large tube filled with rice but plugged at the end, ready for release. Surround the space with:

- Tambours
- Drums
- Chimes
- Variety of wooden bowls
- Red/orange cloths
- Ornamental umbrellas add to the them

In the other side of the space, build a shrine using boxes, shelves or chests and decorate with:

- Buddha statues
- Candles,
- Bowls of beans, beads, shells and stones.
- Incense
- Gongs, bells and Tibetan bells.
- Lavender water in bowls and jugs with petals, towels.
- Straw mats on the floor
- Monk puppet and star projector positioned for use

Costume - saffron robes and giant cowbell

Music - Drone music is prevalent the world over but maybe we associate it with Tibet monasteries more than anywhere else. If using recordings, choose ones using the voice alone as this is what gives the atmosphere to this music. A microphone going through an effects unit with a long delay will also allow you to create drone music of your own during the session. A Mongolian musician, Bukhu, plays the horse head fiddle and is an amazing throat singer.

Activities

Rice - Monks settle and wait for rice. The tube swings across instruments and the plug is removed. The rice sprinkles down creating sounds, rhythm and movement. Catch rice in bowls, tambours and on instruments. Explore the tactile qualities with feet and fingers, pour rice from one container to another, sprinkle over chimes, make the rice jump, flicking and patting tambours. Make patterns on the black cloth and gather in piles.

Bells and Gongs - The bells call you to the shrine, where you meet the head monk (puppet). Play gongs and bells and chant together.

Lavender water - Hear the sounds of water pouring into bowls, smell the lavender, feel the warm water as you massage hands and feet - relaxing, meditative, calm. As night falls, light the candles and chill as you watch the stars moving across the night sky (projection).

Links

Massage (Activity)

Rice, Puppets (Prop)

Video

Buddhist Monk