

MERCURY

Teacher's
Resource
Pack



*Sleeping
Beauty*

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Synopsis

Once upon a time in Colchesteria, Princess Luna is turning 18 but all celebrations have been banned by her wicked Aunt Carabosse, who is determined to stop Luna from taking her rightful place as Queen.

Carabosse tricks her niece into pricking her finger on a spinning wheel needle, cursing her to everlasting sleep. Only true love's kiss can break the curse and wake the princess.

Now it's up to her friends, Fairy Fizz, Dame Maris Piper and Spud to find her Prince, defeat the evil Carabosse and save Luna!

Will the curse be lifted? Will true love conquer all?

Join us this Christmas on an unforgettable wintery adventure to find out!

Character List

Carabosse

The Wicked Queen. Aunt of Luna. Evil, vicious, acerbic, sharp. Exceptionally high status and enjoys asserting it. Jealous and bitter towards Luna. A master of disguise and transformation.

Fairy-Fizz

Aside from her awesome magical powers, Fizzy's just like one of us. Oh and she's super cool, super fun and a happiness super-spreader.

Luna

Born a Princess but doesn't know it. Grew up with Maris and Spud. Determined, independent, knows her own mind. Fights for the greater good, sometimes without considering the consequences. She's the people's best friend.

Maris Piper

Mother to Spud and surrogate mother to Luna. Has worked all her life to keep a roof over her head. She knows the true danger of Carabosse and avoids it at all costs. She is desperate to find love.

Spud Piper

Son of Maris. Not the brightest bulb on the tree, but never lacking in enthusiasm. Silly and charming.

Prince Istuna

Prince of the neighbouring Kingdom of Coggeshall. Charming but inexperienced at dating. Princely, yes, but kind of goofy too.

Polo

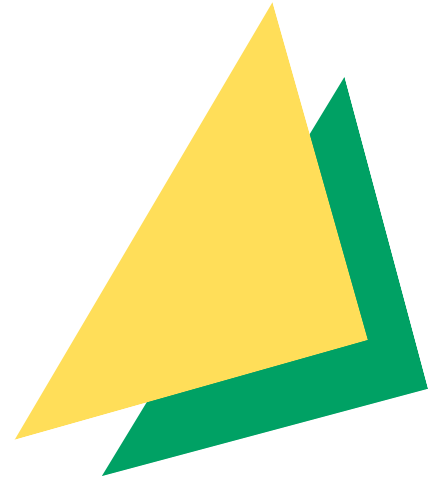
A Pet Penguin. Luna's best friend. Funny, cheeky, great at hugs.

Timothy

Prince Istuna's equerry and right hand man

An ensemble of townsfolk, fairies, demons, dragons and penguins

Key Themes



Good Versus Evil

This is a common theme in fairy tales. Princess Luna and her friends represent good, while Aunt Carabosse represents evil. In the traditional story, the evil fairy or witch is angry as being excluded from the christening and curses the princess as a baby in revenge against the king and queen. In our production, Aunt Carabosse is motivated by a desire for power.

Love Conquers All

In Sleeping Beauty, the curse is lifted by True Loves Kiss. It overcomes all of the evil in the Costa Del Colch and wakes the princess from her sleep. Again, this is a reoccurring theme within fairy tales. For example, in Beauty and the Beast, Belle's love cures the Beast from his curse.

Origins of Sleeping Beauty

French author Charles Perrault's *Sleeping Beauty* was first published in 1697 as "La Belle au bois dormant". However, his story was an adaptation of an earlier story Perrault's version itself was adapted from a much older story, written in the early 1300s, know Perceforest,

In the earliest versions, a princess named Zellandine falls in love with a man named Troylus. The King sends Troylus to perform a series of tasks to prove himself worthy and, while he is gone, Zellandine falls into an enchanted sleep after pricking her finger on some flax. Troylus finds her and rescues her after waking her up with a kiss.

Perrault's story, which is similar to the version we would recognise today, has a second part. After the prince wakes the nameless princess by falling to his knees before her (there is no kiss in this version), they then marry in secret because the Prince's mother, an ogress, would disapprove. The couple have two children, Aurore (Dawn) and Jour (Day). When the time comes for the Prince to take his throne, he finally introduces his family to the Queen Mother. The ogress secretly orders her cook to serve first Jour, the Aurore and finally Sleeping Beauty as successive meals. The clever cook tricks the ogress with a lamb, a goat and a deer. The evil plan is then discovered, the ogress is defeated, and the heroes live happily ever after.

The Brothers Grimm adapted Perrault's tale as "Little Briar Rose", published in 1812. Their version ends with the Prince waking the Princess (Briar Rose) with a kiss.

The story has been adapted multiple times, most notably as a ballet by Tchaikovsky, and as a film by Disney in 1959.

Mercury Theatre's 1982 production of *Sleeping Beauty*. Image by Chris Emmett.



Brief History of Panto

Pantomime originated in 'Commedia dell'Arte' - a 16th-century Italian entertainment which included dance, music, acrobatics and mischievous characters. The most important of these characters was the Harlequin, a clown. The Harlequin was a witty, trickster type character who wore a mask and dressed in a brightly coloured chequered costume.

Later in the 17th century, pantomimes took the form of improvised comic stories that involved singing and dancing, and toured across Europe. By the early 18th century, Pantomime characters began to appear on the London stage in performances based on classical stories, usually set to music but without characters' speaking dialogue.

With the rise in popularity of scenery, stage effects and fairy-tales, the pantomime developed into a more popular and spectacular style of performance. Characters now spoke using silly puns, word-play and audience participation, and included mime, chase scenes and spectacular costumes. Favourite fairy-tale characters, magical animals and pantomime dames all became part of the mix, with the pantomime now combining nonsense tales with social commentary.

By the late 19th century, it became customary for pantomimes to open on Boxing Day and this linked it with the festive season and family entertainment. Many of today's popular pantomime stories are based on surprising sources. For example, Dick Whittington was based on the life of a real mayor of London who died in 1423, whereas other stories have been inspired by European, Middle Eastern and Asian folk tales.

Mercury Theatre's 1981 production of Dick Whittington.





The Dame

Gender switching and roleplay was quickly established as a convention in Victorian pantomime, and this laid the groundwork for the archetype of the Pantomime Dame. The Dame was a larger-than-life matriarchal character who was performed by a male actor in female costume and make-up.

However, the convention of male actors performing as female characters on stage was not a new one by this time; in actual fact, boy players had become accustomed to playing women's roles for centuries in England, due to a longstanding ban on female stage performers that was eventually lifted by King Charles II after the Restoration in 1660.

Pantomime drew on this convention in order to create Dames that sparked humour through caricature and slapstick. While modern pantomimes often embrace the artistry of 'drag' to create richer and more sympathetic portrayals of Pantomime Dames, it was routine in the 18th-19th century to treat the Dame characters as the butt of cruel jokes or characterise them as overtly sinister and frightening.

Male actors who took on the role of Pantomime Dames did not seek to disappear into the role and convincingly portray female characters. Despite their feminine disguise, the male actor sought to draw the audience's attention to their overbearingly masculine habits in order to generate laughter or land a gag.

Female impersonators from the world of Music Hall often appeared as dames. For example, one of the most legendary Dame's was played by Music Hall star Dan Leno, who took on the role of the wicked aunt in *Babes in the Wood* at Drury Lane in 1888, and he would continue to play the Christmas Pantomime season at Drury Lane Theatre for the next 15 years.

The Buffoon



Pantos often have a character who is a buffoon such as 'Wishee Washee' in Aladdin or 'Spud' in Sleeping Beauty. This character is usually the Dame's son and provides comic relief throughout the performance by combining jokes and physical slapstick routines. The origins of this character can also be traced back to 16th Century Italy in 'Commedia dell'Arte'.

There are three main stock roles in 'Commedia dell'Arte': servant, master, and innamorati (Lovers), and the servants or the clowns were referred to as the Zanni, which is where the word zany comes from. Like its namesake would suggest, Zanni's were outlandish characters with quirky appearances and an unusual sense of humour. There were two distinct types of Zanni: one was the silly servant and the other was the cunning servant.

In pantomime, the buffoon character is influenced by the silly servant character. They are often depicted as being foolish, clumsy and ridiculous. However, despite their absurd appearance and foolish manner, the purpose of the Zanni was that they were the most sympathetic characters and it was their responsibility to interact with the audience and ensure that they were following the plot.

In pantomime, the Buffoon character fulfils exactly the same role; they often encourage the audience to actively participate in the performance by shouting out phrases at key points in the pantomime. They adopt a "master-of-ceremonies" type role, in which they establish a call-and-response relationship with the live audience and reveal to us that they are also in on the joke.

PANTOMIME TRADITIONS

A Pantomime should be fun, involving and entertaining and should encourage lots of audience interaction

Some of the elements you can expect to see in the Pantomime are:

THE SLOSH SCENE

During the Pantomime, there is usually a very messy scene called the ‘Slosh’ scene. This is a scene where the Dame and the Comic character, and maybe one or two others, make a lot of mess on stage – usually making a cake, or decorating.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

The audience are encouraged to shout out responses to lines from the show. These can include “He’s behind you!” “Oh yes it is/Oh no it isn’t” and often shouting the name of the Comic Character to get their attention. The audience is also encouraged to boo the villain whenever they enter, exit or do something bad.

SING-ALONG SONG

At the end of the show, the Dame and the Comic Character will come out and sing a short section of one of the songs from the Pantomime. They will encourage the audience to sing along and join in with the actions.

THE WALK DOWN

When the Pantomime has finished, the actors will perform a walk down and take a bow to show that the show has reached its conclusion. The walk down is a more fun, vibrant version of a normal Curtain Call which happens at the end of a play and is usually set at the wedding of the Hero and Heroine, so expect lavish, colourful costumes and lots of smiles.

THE SPECTACLE SCENE

The Mercury’s Pantomimes have at least one show-stopping scene. In recent years, Aladdin flew on a flying guitar and Cinderella flew on a Giant Swan. You’ll have to wait and see what the ‘spectacle scene’ is in Sleeping Beauty.



Students at Pot Kiln Primary School Sudbury ask questions to cast members, Antony Stuart-Hicks (ASH) and Dale Superville



Madison - Have you ever thought of directing your own play?

ASH: I have, and I've directed quite a lot of my own work over the years. I'd love to direct a musical about Dale's life.

Dale: And I have thought about directing a book, which I really, really love, and I love the film, too, and it's called Rise of the Guardian.

Phoebe - When did you start acting?

Dale: Well, I started acting in 1994, that's quite a long time ago. I just graduated, and I did a little show in London, and it was called Song from the Sea.

ASH: My first acting job was when I was just under two years old, and I did an advert for Pampers Nappies.

Poppy - What is the worst costume you have ever worn?

Dale: I played Mowgli in Jungle Book and I had to wear a loincloth. It looked like a large Nappy. I got very cold. I didn't even have shoes on, so I was always aware of splinters.

ASH: The worst costume I've ever worn, funnily enough, was also in The Jungle Book. I played Kaa the snake in the Jungle Book. I had a very hot snake skin costume. It was like a suit and it was very hot. I was very uncomfortable. We should both never do The Jungle Book again.

Mia - What is your favourite costume that you have ever worn?

Dale: Puss in Boots, Polka Theatre in Wimbledon. I looked like a musketeer. It was fantastic. I had plumes in my hat, I had a little sword, Cuban heels. I had a black costume and a frilly white shirt, and, my boots were blood red, and they came up to my knees. Wonderful costume!

ASH: I've had so many of them, but I love some of the costumes that I'm wearing this year for Sleeping Beauty because they're really fun.

Rowena - How did you get your job as an actor?

ASH: I worked as a young child in theatre productions and onscreen. Then when I went to school, I did school plays. Then after I did I did sixth form and my a-levels, I went straight into a job down in the West End to a musical. I didn't go and train at drama school. I would have liked to have done, but I didn't. And then I've been working ever since. So 26 years on top of that

Dale: I went to drama college. And from drama college, I worked in a little job, and then I got a bigger job in Ipswich at the New Wolsey Theatre. I was acting as a five-and-a-half-year-old when in fact, I was 26 and we went and toured round schools.

Rio - How do you remember your lines?

ASH: A lot of repetition.

Dale: Like a parrot.

ASH: A lot of writing it down. I write it down to make sure I've remembered it. And also, I need to make the mistake. If I make the mistake in rehearsals and forget it, I'll then ask for a line, I get given a line generally I don't forget it again.

Dale: I mean, that's really handy when you're learning things, isn't it? Not just lines. If you make a mistake, you kind of get to remember it.

ASH: I think that's what you got to do when you're learning something. Because sometimes you've got to make a mistake to get it right.

Dale: I never remember my lines. I'm always getting them wrong. Always terrible for it. But let's move on.

Paige - Our class have been having a debate and want to know what you think... does pineapple belong on Pizza?

Dale: I like this question!

ASH: Pineapple on a pizza for me! Ham and pineapple on a pizza, oh yes!

Dale: No, pineapple should never be seen on a pizza. Pineapple needs to be either on top or on the bottom of a really lovely vanilla sponge with custard

Dale: Thank you very much for asking all those questions. They were lovely! Bye!



Say hello to the Director

Ryan McBryde

How did you get into directing?

My first directing job was a play called *On The Razzle* by Tom Stoppard. I was 17 years old and given the opportunity by the Bellingham Amateur Dramatic Society (or the BAD Society if you use its unfortunate acronym). Once I'd been bitten by the directing bug there was no looking back. I went to university in Liverpool to study a degree in performing arts, graduating in 1999, and I've been telling stories and creating theatre ever since.



If you weren't a director, what would you be?

A storm chaser! Reporting tornados, storms, hurricanes and other high-impact weather conditions to weather bureaus.

What are you looking forward to most when starting rehearsals?

Seeing a show I've been planning for 11 months take shape. I'm particularly excited about the first day of technical rehearsals when the actors appear in their costumes for the first time, on a set that I think will be breath-taking.

Why do you think pantomime is important?

Sitting in a packed auditorium with everyone from the youngest children to the oldest grandparents all having an absolute ball of a time, is one of the most rewarding experiences a creative director can have. Theatres create shared experiences upon which our communities and commonalities are built. Pantomime is a child's first introduction to the transformative and life enhancing power of arts and culture.

Who is your favourite character?

Our heroine, Luna. *Sleeping Beauty* is one of the trickier fairy tales to adapt for pantomime because, well, our heroine falls asleep and has to wait for a passing Prince to wake her up with true love's kiss. She's not the most progressive female protagonist. So, we decided we needed to limit the amount of time our heroine, here named Luna, spent napping. You snooze, you lose, you might say. In our version of the story Luna is a spirited young woman vying for her independence. She can't wait to turn eighteen and see the world. She's funny and feisty and not afraid of a fight. Our princess chats up the Prince and when it comes to battling the evil villainess, Carabosse, Luna doesn't take a back seat.

What is your favourite thing about working in theatre?

Telling stories that entertain, move, empower, surprise and transfix!

What advice would you give to a student wanting to work in theatre?

Get as much experience as possible. Take part in school plays, college shows, join your local drama company. The more you practice your craft, the better you will become. Read, study, see as much theatre as possible. Work out what excites you and what bores you to tears. And why. Look at the artists you admire and read about their journeys; how did they get to where they are. Learn from them. It's not an easy profession to break into: there's a lot of competition and very few opportunities. But with the right combination of hard graft, staying power, thick skin and creativity, anything is possible! Stick at it, you'll get there!

When Do You Start Working On Pantomime?

Believe it or not, I've been working on this show since January, when I started developing the script with the über talented writer, Guy Unsworth. We spent a great deal of time talking about the story beats and how to make it an exciting rollercoaster ride for our audiences.

Once the script is ready, I begin to work on the set and costume design with the brilliant Jasmine Swan, who won an award for last year's Beauty And The Beast design. This year we've taken inspiration from the world of Doctor Seuss and Disney's Frozen to create a world that I think is utterly magical. In May, we start the casting process and I'm delighted to say we've assembled an incredibly talented team with several familiar faces joining us again this Christmas and some brand-new ones. In June, we audition over 100 local young people for roles in our pantomime chorus, from which we pick 16 super talented teenagers. In July, I meet with the musical director, Paul Herbert, to pick the songs for the show. The mission is to find absolute bangers that help move the story along and make people want to sing-a-long. No mean feat but I hope you like our choices. In August, our amazing production team start work on building the set and making the costume and props. They are miracle workers, and each year I find myself in absolute awe of what they're capable of. In October I meet with our top-notch choreographer, Rosie Mather, to talk about the staging of the show, and then suddenly it's November, and rehearsals have begun! We have three weeks(!) to put the show together before heading into tech where we add the lights (Matt Ladkin) and sound effects (Domenico Menghini).

And finally.... What is your favourite pantomime APART from Sleeping Beauty?

Robin Hood is a really good yarn and naturally lends itself to the double entendre of pantomime with characters like Little John and Friar Tuck.

Meet the Cast

Sleeping Beauty



Alexandra Barredo
Princess Luna



Antony Stuart-Hicks
Dame Maris Piper



Dale Superville
Spud



Philip Catchpole
Prince Istuna



Nick Brittain
Ensemble



Matt Forbes
Polo the Penguin



Sasha Latoya
Fairy Fizz



Jaimie Pruden
Carabosse



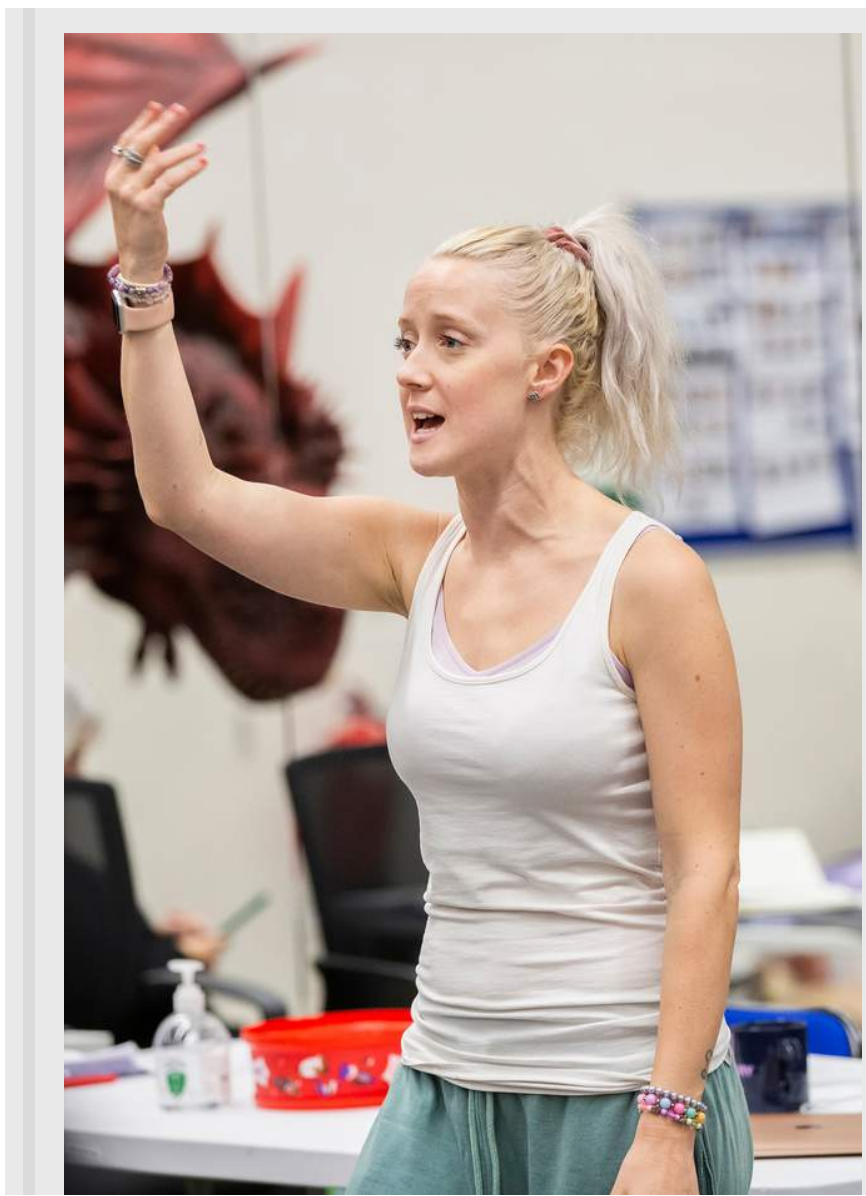
Shelby Speed
Ensemble

MERCURY

**Sat 25 Nov 2023
- Sun 14 Jan 2024**

Meet the creative team

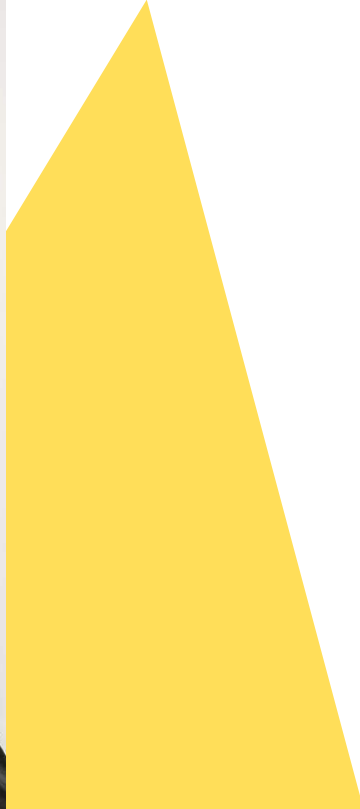
Writer: Guy Unsworth
Director: Ryan McBryde
Designer: Jasmine Swan
Musical Director: Paul Herbert
Choreographer: Rosie Heath
Lighting Design: Matt Ladkin
Sound Design: Nico Menghini
Assistant Director: Chani Merrell



In rehearsals

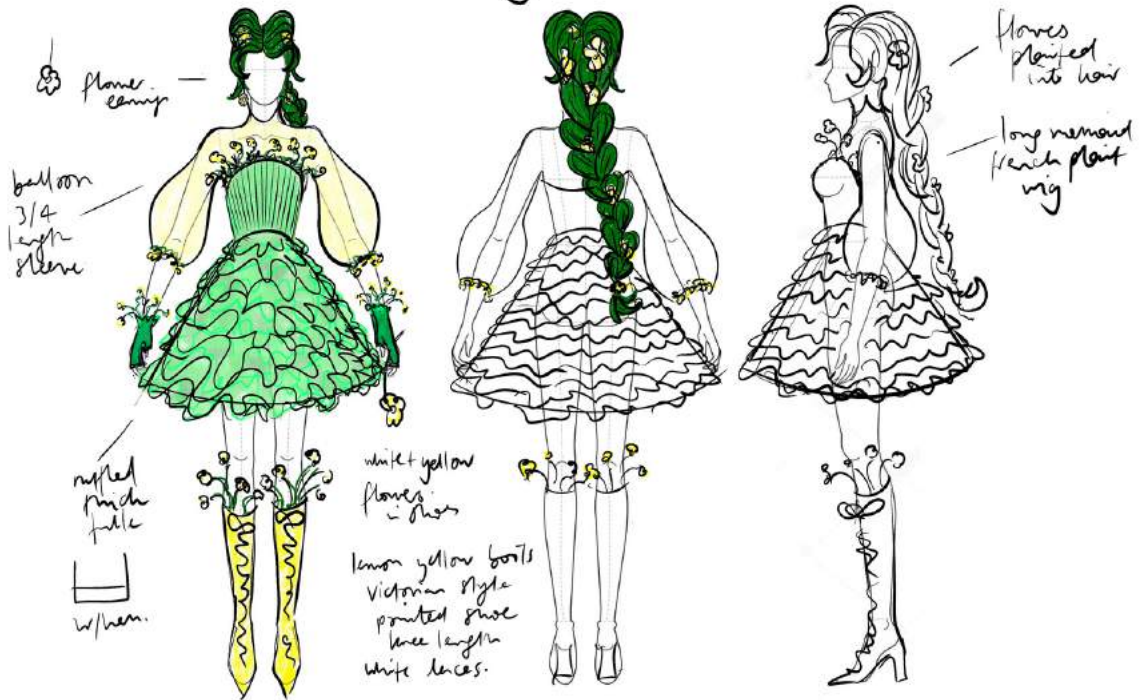


Photo credit: Pamela Raith



Costume Designs

LUNA. @ star before birthday



PRINCE ISTUNA.



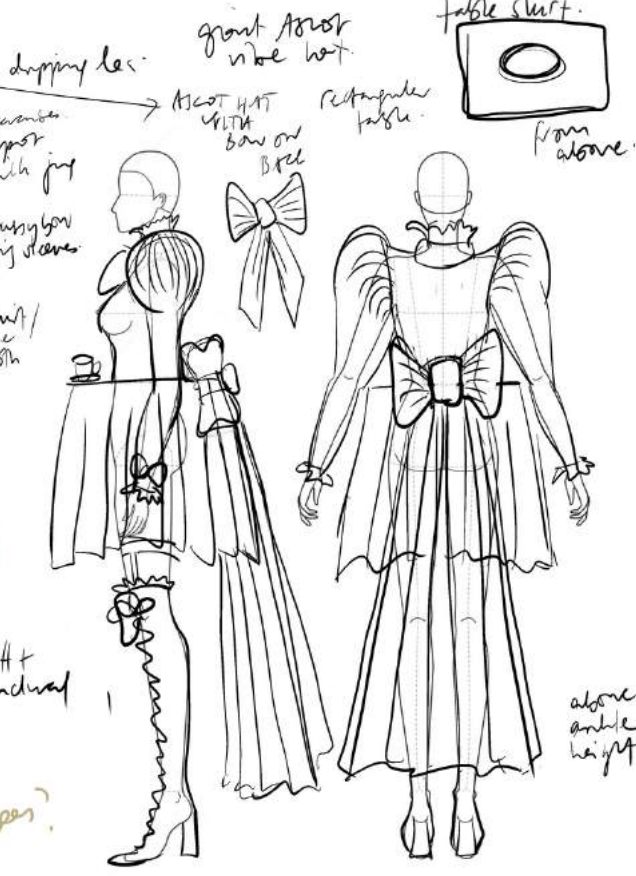
5. MARYS
AFTERNOON
TEA.

(see 2.5 →) wears for breaking into castle so needs to be agile (ish)

postals saddle? (what dish??) one empty pocket

fully bagged out / suspender.

PVC tablecloth favor on both sides.



POLO THE PENGUIN.

facepaint (actor in polo for whole show)
Beak attached to mini G-O Specs.



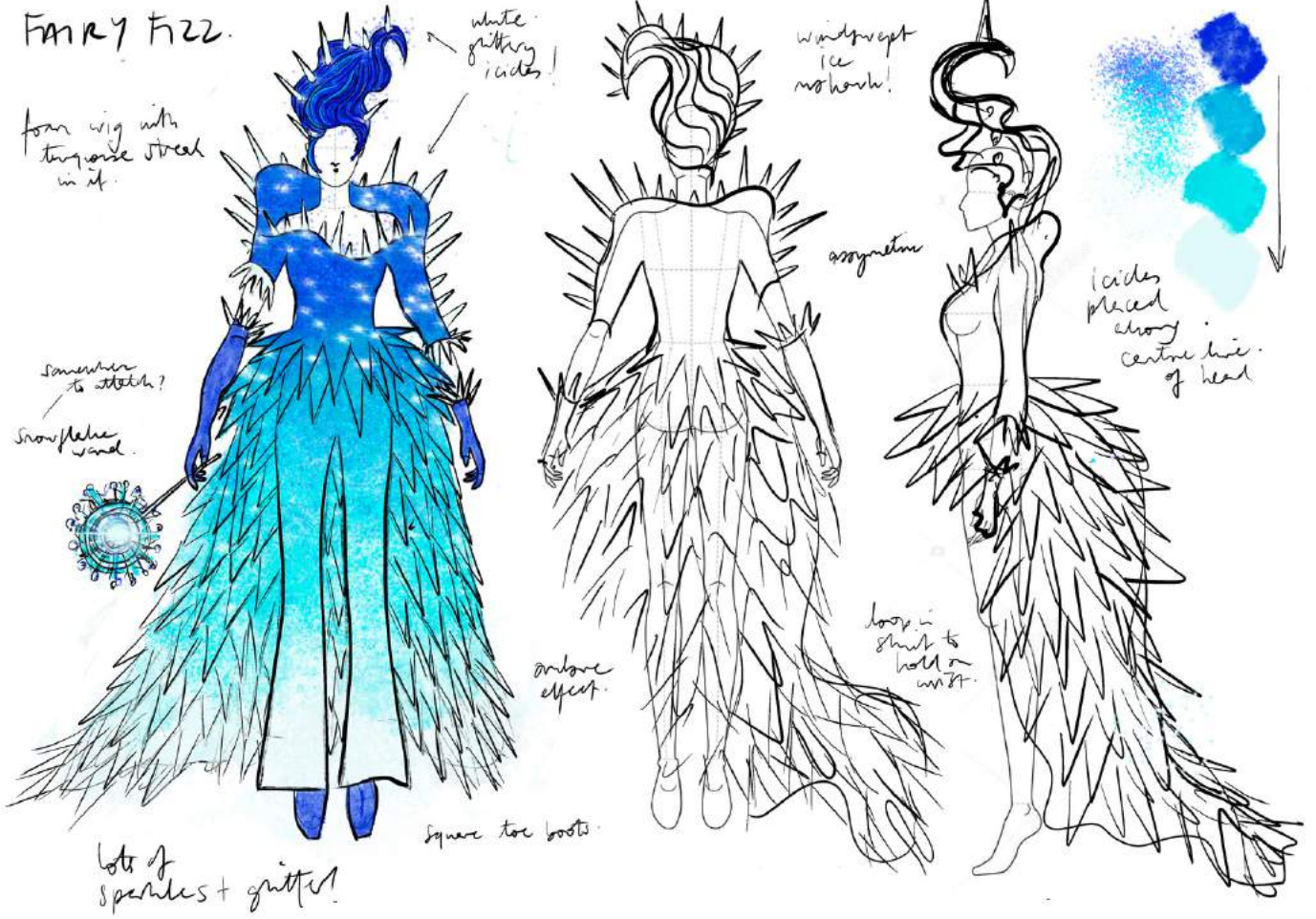
beak attached to glasses?



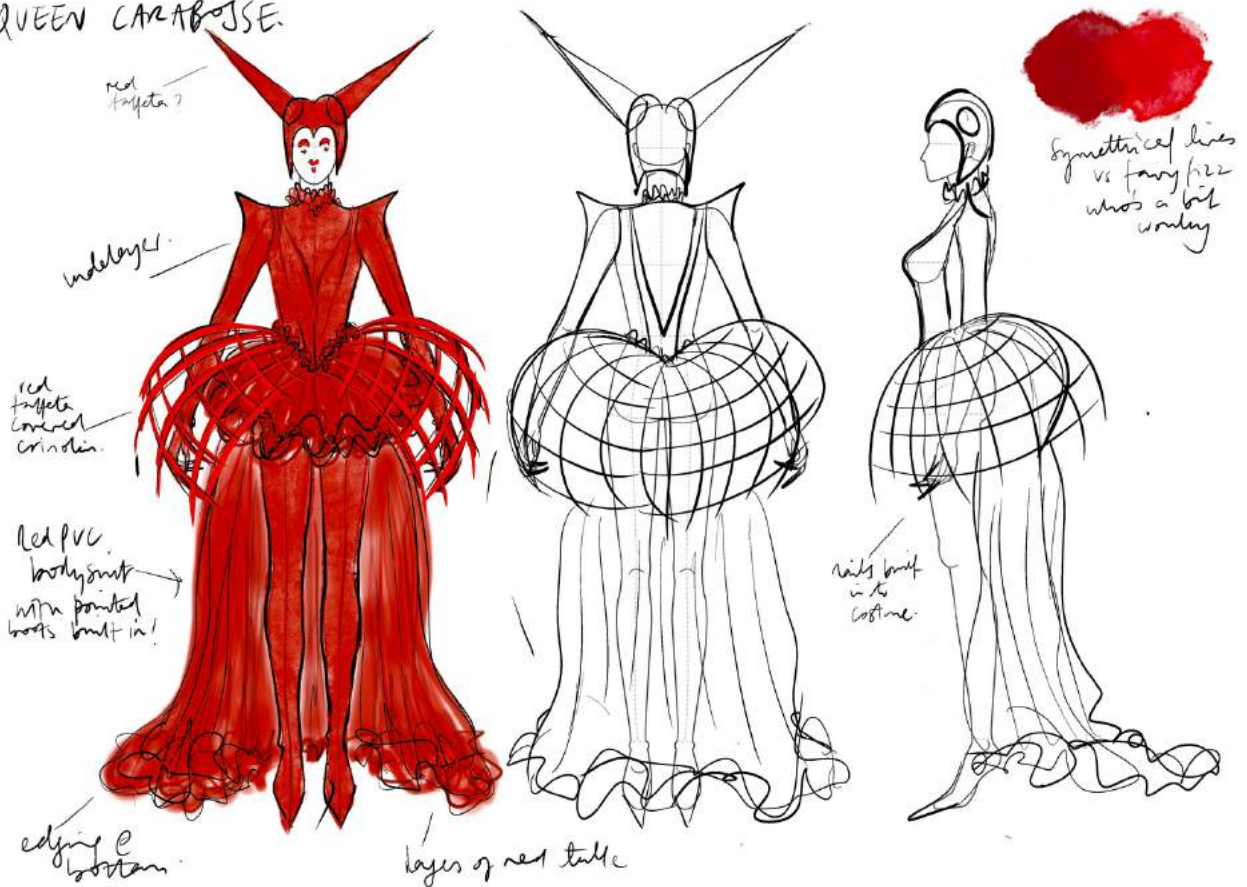
front-

back.

Fairy Fizz.



QUEEN CARABOSE.



Set Design



Props

WNA'S BIRTHDAY
CAKE!

Nam Nam
....

Whole
Candle
to
Picher
LX

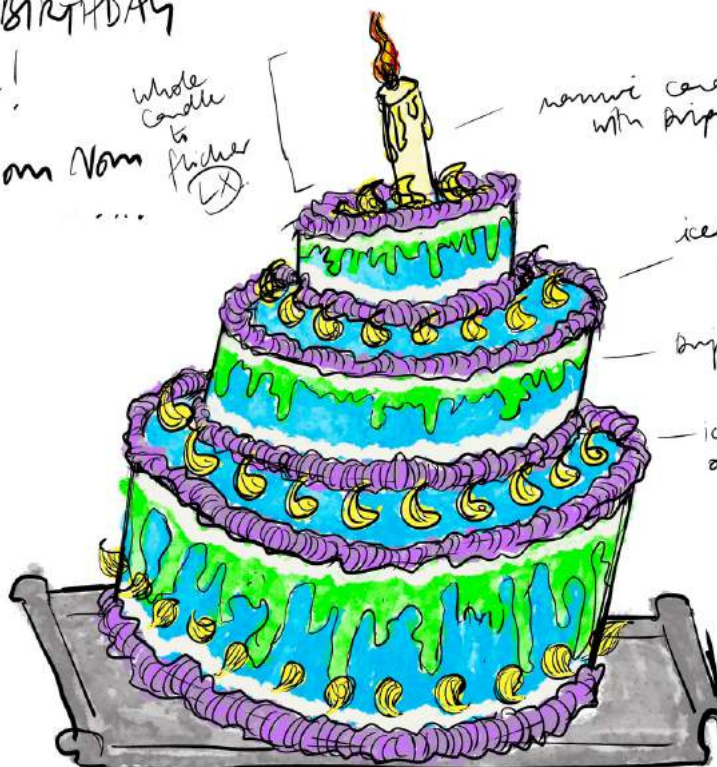
nammi candle
with dripping wax

iced frosting
see ref

drips icing

iced gems great
on each layer

Came out of
over a
great
baking
thing?
green or grey?



Primary Activities



**Exercise #1:
Pantomime
Tug-o-War**



Objective:

To explore the conventions of mime, failure, slapstick and physical comedy through group performances.

In Pantomime, the audience who watch the performance are asked to suspend their disbelief and believe in actions or events that would seem ridiculous or unbelievable in the real world.

Much of the joy that we experience when watching pantomimes stems from the fact we're being asked to imagine silly and absurd situations to be happening, and the humour comes from the spectacle of watching actors try - and often fail - to perform these actions in front of us.

In this exercise, two groups will "mime" a Tug-O-War and one group will lose the struggle in spectacular fashion.

The idea is that the "losing" group can glory in their failure by making a spectacular display when the game finishes. Both sides should illustrate the enormity of the struggle by deliberately exaggerating their physical, vocal and facial characterisations as the Tug-O-War progresses.

Steps:

- Divide the group into 2 smaller groups and have them mime a Tug-O-War fight.
- Have each group choose heads or tails and then flip a coin. Decide based on the coin flip which group will eventually "win" and which group will "lose" the Tug-O-War.
- Create a dividing line in the middle of the two groups using tape. When the losing group is eventually dragged past this line, the winning group emerges victorious from the Tug-o-War.
- There should be no physical rope for the group members to hold; the focus in this exercise is on recreating the illusion of a physical struggle through "mime" and make-believe.
- It's important that the "miming" does not stretch or shrink the imaginary rope too much; both groups need to try and convince the audience that the rope is really there and the struggle is real.
- Set a timer of 3 minutes and choose some music to underscore the struggle.

Exercise #2 Emotional Charades



Objective: To explore the conventions of physical characterisation, emotional caricature and farce in Pantomime through tableau.

In Pantomime, the actors always embrace caricature and farce when performing as their characters. Acting in pantomime is not about creating realistic characters; instead, it is about creating heightened versions of these characters that seem larger-than-life to the audience who are watching.

Caricature means to exaggerate by distorting some of a characters' mannerisms and characteristics. It is meant to provoke laughter.

In this exercise, two groups will adopt various characters in tableau while the other group watches as the audience, with each tableau being inspired by an 'emotional charade' that is called out by the teacher.

Steps:

- Divide the groups into 2 groups - one as the audience and the other as the actors on stage.
- Have the performing group walk around the space in front of the audience. They are not performing or trying to be funny at this point - they are simply walking.
- Randomly choose one of the 'Emotional Charade' instructions from the list and read it out aloud to the group.
- Each person in the performing group must then freeze, adopt a characterisation inspired by that charade in tableau ("frozen picture") and present it to the seated group who are watching.
- Each person creating a tableau in the performing group should seek to create an exaggerated and highly caricatured version of that character and emotion, using their physicality and facial expressions.
- You can prepare a list of your own 'Emotional Charades' in advance of the exercise, and these can be linked to the story or Pantomime you are studying. For example, with Aladdin, some of these could include instructions like:
 - Genie escapes from the Lamp Aladdin discovers the Magic Carpet.
 - Prince Jasmine flees the Palace Sorcerer gets trapped inside the Lamp.
- Each of the 'Emotional Charades' should describe a playable action that enables the young actor to create a heightened emotional state for that character that they can then present in tableau form.
- Finally, swap the groups over and repeat.

Curriculum Links: Drama, English Literature

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Paper, Pens, art supplies



**Exercise #3:
Design your
own costume**

Objective: To encourage pupils to create their own character designs inspired by the visually spectacular elements of Pantomime and the emphasis on stock character types.

In pantomime, the actors are often dressed in very bright, colourful and spectacular costumes that make a strong visual impact on the audience. The characters are designed in a very extravagant manner in order to quickly and clearly communicate who they are (principal boy, buffoon, dame), their status in the overall story (e.g. royalty or street-urchin) and the stock role that they're playing (e.g. hero, villain, sidekick).

Pantomime's emphasis on spectacle and bold visual display is meant to astonish, entertain and tickle the audience. However, the choice of costume design also tells the audience how they ought to feel about the character they're watching. In other words, the costume design tells us whether they are being treated as a figure of ridicule or someone to be feared.

In this design exercise, pupils will create their own costumes inspired by a particular character from the pantomime that you are studying, in this case, Aladdin.

Steps:

- Divide the group into pairs and supply them with coloured pens, pencils and A3 paper.
- Give each pair a 'brief' for their character design. A 'brief' is a simple outline of who the character is and what they represent in the story. It should be straightforward and easy to understand. You can either use the same brief for each pair or a different brief for each pair.
- Here is an example brief for Carabosse, The Wicked Queen: Aunt of Luna. Evil, vicious, acerbic, sharp. Exceptionally high status and enjoys asserting it. Jealous and bitter towards Luna. A master of disguise and transformation.

Exercise #3: Design your own costume cont'd

- Tell each pair to design a fantastic outfit for their character. Encourage them to think about their character's personality when they are designing them on the page. Here are some questions you can prompt them with to get them thinking imaginatively about their options:
 - Are they happy or sad?
 - Young or old?
 - Brave or shy?
 - Serious or silly?
 - Good or evil?
 - Weak or strong?
 - Rich or poor?
- Asking these sorts of questions can help each pair decide on colours and types of clothing a character might wear.
- After 10-minutes, have each pair share their design with the rest of the class and explain their choices.

Share your great work with us!

We would love to see your designs and share them on social media to celebrate your pupils imaginations!

Please feel free to send photo's of the costume designs to taking.part@mercurytheatre.co.uk or tag us on



@mercurytheatre



@MercuryTheatre



@mercurytheatrecolchester

Secondary Activities



**Curriculum Links: Drama, English Literature,
Critical Thinking**
Time: 1 hour
Materials: Printed script

Exercise #1: Be an Actor



Objective: Exploring script work

Actors must be good at remembering their lines and moves on the stage. They also must be able to change the way they act to play different roles. Actors must be good at speaking clearly so that the audience can always hear what they are saying; otherwise they won't be able to follow the story.

Practise being an actor, by acting out the scene on the next page in a group of 4.

Think about how your character might talk and how they might move. Try out lots of ideas to see what works. See if you can take it in turns to perform the scene to your class.

- Remember; everyone will have different ideas, so you will need to work together.

Did you know: In Pantomime tradition, the Good Fairy will always enter from Stage Right

(the left as the audience look at it) and the Villain will always enter from Stage Left.

Plenary: After each group have performed the scenes to one another, groups should discuss two things that they really enjoyed in their performance (was it voice, characterisation, staging etc) and also one thing that they can work on.

ACTIVITY 1 - Acting out a scene: SCRIPT

SCENE THREE

THE FOREST

Carabosse enters, brandishing the royal sceptre.

CARABOSSE

Boo boo boo. Go on, get it out of your system, let's have one big 'hiss' at me: 1,2,3 (Hiss). Haha you've all got spit on you. Look at you. You're all so ugly, if you went to a Haunted house they'd give you job application forms. So. Baby Luna, back from the dead. Who does she think she is?! Coming back to haunt me after eighteen years of ultimate power. But as controller of the Royal Sceptre, I set the rules around here, and nobody will get in my way.

Flash. Musical flourish. FAIRY-FIZZ enters.

FAIRY-FIZZ

F to the I to the Zed Zed why? She's Fizzy! (Whoop! Whoop!)

She's Fizzy! Oh yeah.

Ya killing it folks, that's mega. Not so fast Queen Carabosse. You may have had eighteen unchallenged years on the throne but things are about to change. Luna has grown up to be generous, kind-hearted, and more populizzle than you'll ever be.

CARABOSSE

I'll soon put an end to that mangy toe-rag. I've got a secret idea brewing (miming touching a spinning wheel) which I can't quite 'put my finger' on at the moment, and if any of you lot try to stop me, I'll poison your interval ice creams.

Music. She exits.

FAIRY-FIZZ

Carabosse is never gettin' past us lot. She may have found out about Luna being alive, but as long as we keep her out of harms way, she'll be fine. But now it's time to shake things up...

PRINCE ISTUNA appears through the gauze.

...This is Istuna, the Prince of Coggeshall. Remember, Luna's on her way to pick up some eggs. I think she might find more than she was expecting - ya get me?

FAIRY-FIZZ exits.

PRINCE ISTUNA is joined by his advisor TIMOTHY.

TIMOTHY

Your royal highness, there you are! The bunting's up, the tents are pitched, and the archery is ready to go.

PAGE THIRTY

PRINCE

Isn't all this a bit excessive for a first date?

TIMOTHY

Excessive? No, sire. Your father, the King, insists you marry into royalty, so your chances of finding someone he approves of are very slim. Hence why I created a profile for you on the royal dating app, Sovereign Soulmates.

PRINCE

Oh I hate this royal dating stuff, I've been on so many dates and I always get tongue tied. Maybe I'm not cut for all this prince stuff. Why can't I marry whoever I want to?

TIMOTHY

(handing him a card) I really think this is the one, sir.

PRINCE

(reading) 5 ft 8, Fingringhoe.

TIMOTHY

Her location.

PRINCE

Of course. Beautiful, kind, generous, fun-loving, likes a spot of archery, allergic to peanut butter. GSOH.

TIMOTHY

Good sense of humour.

PRINCE

NMNK

TIMOTHY

Never married, no kids.

PRINCE No ONS.

TIMOTHY

No one night- She's looking for a soul mate sire.

PRINCE

When is she arriving?

TIMOTHY

Imminently sire.

PRINCE

Right, you better teach me how to shoot an arrow then.

TIMOTHY

Very good sire.

They exit as Luna and Polo enter.

LUNA

Well here we are, Polo: Coggeshall. we can get the posh eggs from the M&S, I heard theirs is still in the town centre. I wonder if Prince Istuna is around.

POLO

Dloo Lluuur dim. ('You lurrrrve him')

LUNA

Polo, I do not love the Prince, I've only ever seen pictures of him. I'd like to meet him IRL and... and talk to him, and... and

POLO

('Kiss him and squeeze him and dance together.')

LUNA

No I do not want to do that. Polo stop it, that's ridiculous. Alright that's enough!

Polo stops.

Okay maybe I do like him a little, but if he was here now I'd be as cool as a cucumber -

PRINCE ISTUNA enters.

PRINCE

That's that sorted.

LUNA

(Privately to Polo) Holy Mackrel that's him!

PRINCE

(Privately to Timothy) Sheesh kebabs that's her!

POLO

(Privately to Luna) Dleet dlarm!

TIMOTHY

(Privately to the Prince) Keep calm!

POLO

An Lleelemba -

TIMOTHY

And remember -

PAGE THIRTY TWO

POLO
Dairs Lludding d' dloooo.

TIMOTHY
(Identical) Dairs Lludding d' dloooo.

PRINCE
What?

TIMOTHY
There's nothing to looose.

Simultaneously, Timothy and Polo turn the Prince and Luna respectively and push them towards each other. Polo and Timothy pretend to be busy.

PRINCE
Hello.

LUNA
Hello.

PRINCE
I'm very well thank you, how are you?

LUNA
Erm, I'm very well thank you.

PRINCE
(Miming a bow and arrow) Do you do Archery often?

LUNA
I'm sorry?

PRINCE
(Miming a bow and arrow) Do you, does one, do Archery often?

LUNA

Erm -

PRINCE
Don't worry we've hidden the Peanut Butter!

LUNA
Excuse me?

PRINCE
You're welcome - lovely to meet you.

Prince laughs.

LUNA
You too.

The PRINCE and LUNA turn to their respective advisors...

PRINCE
This is going terribly.

LUNA
He's - kind of goofy.

TIMOTHY & POLO
You can do this!/Lloo Llan Llo Lis!

...and turn back.

PRINCE
Sorry I should introduce myself. I am Prince Istuna of Coggeshall.

LUNA
Oh I know I've been watching you.

PRINCE
Watching me?

LUNA
I mean I've been looking at pictures of you.

PRINCE
Pictures of me?

LUNA
Pictures of your face - FLAGS! Your flags. I love your flags!

PRINCE
My flags.

LUNA
You're welcome - lovely to meet you.

PRINCE
You too.

The PRINCE and LUNA turn to their respective advisors...

LUNA
This is going terribly.

PAGE THIRTY FOUR

PRINCE

I like her. She's - kind of weird.

TIMOTHY/POLO

Keep going!/Leep lolling!

...and turn back.

LUNA

Sorry I should introduce myself. I'm Luna, I live in a small cottage in Costa del Colch.

PRINCE

Oh. You're not the err -

LUNA

The what?

PRINCE

5ft 8, Fingringhoe...

LUNA

Excuse me?

PRINCE

From Sovereign Soulmates.

LUNA

Nope

PRINCE

“Beautiful, kind, generous, fun-loving, likes a spot of archery, allergic to peanut butter.”

LUNA

Definitely not me.

PRINCE

Oh.

LUNA

I love peanut butter.

Prince laughs.

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Exercise #2: Be a Designer

The set (or scenery) is what we put onstage to help create the world of the play. The set designer would make a model box of the set to show the production department, director and actors what they want the set to look like.

1) RESEARCH 18 months before rehearsals start

The design process begins with the designer, in this case 'Jasmine Swan', researching an idea for the show. Designers often collect pictures to give them inspiration. They might create a scrap book or Pinterest board of ideas including, materials, styles, textures and shapes. The designer will look at the size of the stage and work with the director to make sure that their design fits with the Director's overall vision.

2) WHITE CARD 4 months before rehearsals start

Once the designer has an idea, they make a 'white card' model box. This gives a clear idea of what the final design will look like, but without being painted. The white card design is presented to the production team who check that the design will work in the space and is possible with the money that is in the budget.

3) FINAL MODEL BOX 3 months before rehearsals start

The designer creates a model box. The model box is a 1:25 scale model, exactly twenty-five times smaller, of the final set.

The production team use the model to see what the set is going to look like and to help them build the final set. The designer also draws a ground plan of the model box to the same scale. This gives the set builders the exact size of the set so they can start building it.

4) BUILDING THE SET 8 weeks before the show starts

The workshop team then starts to make the set. At Mercury Theatre, the set is built by our on site workshop and then taken through to the stage to piece together before the technical rehearsals.

5) THE FINAL SET 1 week before the show starts

The set is fitted into the theatre. During this time the designer will work with the production team to make sure that all the final details are perfected before the show

DRAW THE SET See if you can design & draw your own set for Sleeping Beauty.

Curriculum Links: Drama, Maths

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Open Space, Calculator, Paper and Pens.



**Exercise #3:
Be a Producer**

Staging a pantomime is an expensive business!

The amount of money available in the budget determines what a Creative Team can and can't afford.

Use the table below to work out the budget for your own show. You will need to choose either the Basic, Standard or Best option for each heading, and put the cost for the chosen level in the Budget Choice column. Having the different amounts will force learners to make critical decisions about what their production will prioritise to make it come within budget. It is important to note that none of these options create a 'Bad' show, but the more expensive options will be the most reliable, most crowd-pleasing options.

Exercise #3: Be a Producer BUDGET

ITEM/ROLE	"STANDARD"	"GOOD"	"BEST"	YOUR BUDGET CHOICE
Writer	£6,000	£8,000	£15,000	£
Director	£7,000	£10,000	£15,000	£
Musical Director	£7,000	£10,000	£15,000	£
Musicians	£10,000	£15,000	£20,000	£
Choreographer	£7,000	£10,000	£15,000	£
Designer (Set & Costume)	£7,000	£10,000	£15,000	
Principal Characters (Actors)	£25,000	£30,000	£40,000	£
Ensemble Actors/Dancers	£7,000	£9,000	£15,000	£
Technical Team	£10,000	£15,000	£20,000	£
Stage Set	£55,000	£63,000	£75,000	£
Costumes	£10,000	£15,000	£25,000	£
Props	£10,000	£12,000	£15,000	£
Special Effects	£25,000	£50,000	£100,000	£
Lighting Equipment	£8,000	£10,000	£25,000	£
Sound Equipment	£4,000	£8,000	£12,000	£
Marketing	£10,000	£15,000	£25,000	£
Miscellaneous (auditions / chaperones / livestreaming etc)	£16,000	£16,000	£16,000	£
TOTAL	£224,000	£306,000	£463,000	

Exercise #3: Be a Producer

CALCULATOR NEEDED:

Now you know how much your pantomime will cost, how many tickets do you need to sell to make it happen?

Total expenditure (outgoings/ things that cost money) = £?

Average ticket price - £22

Number of tickets needed - ?

(Total expenditure ÷ Average ticket price = Number of tickets needed)

“You must make profit!”

The Chief Executive has just come into your office explaining that they expect this year’s pantomime to make at least £200,000 in profit - to help support the theatre for the year.

HOW MUCH PROFIT DO YOU HAVE?

Ticket Income Show Cost Total:

Ticket Income – Show Cost = Profit

Do you have enough money to afford your pantomime? If not, what compromises can you make?

- Don’t forget; you want to make the best possible show, so the audience come back next year!

Did you know:

The maximum number of seats at The Mercury Theatre is 510 per show, this means the most tickets we could sell across our panto season (70 shows) is 35,700

On average we sell around 30,000 tickets across our Panto season (this is high!)

- If you have worked out you need to sell more than 30,000, we would recommend looking at what you can compromise on.

Extension –

Where are you going to market the show? What tools would you use?

You received a grant to give away 200 seats to community groups in the local area. Which groups would you choose and why? (For example to local young carers and their families or refugees)



MERCURY

Sleeping Beauty

Once Upon A Time...

Workshop

Sleeping Beauty Panto Workshop

£150 + VAT

Location: In school or at the Theatre

Timings: Lesson length

Classroom size up to 30

suitable for Key Stage 1-5

Make your schools visit to the pantomime even more enriching with our fun workshop exploring character archetypes, fairy tales and conventional storylines.

This practical storytelling workshop is the perfect Christmas treat for a group before or after they've seen the show.

This package includes:

- A workshop with a Drama Facilitator (delivered at your school or at the Mercury Theatre)
- A section of the pantomime script
- Pantomime Education & Enrichment pack

To book contact: taking.part@mercurytheatre.co.uk