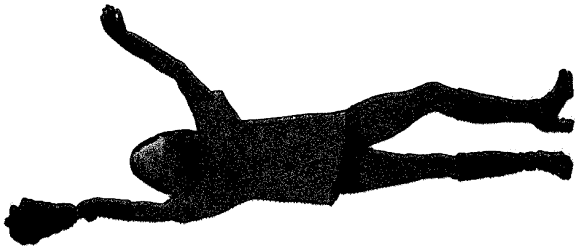
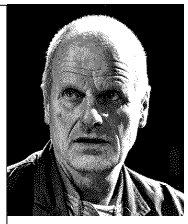
Created and curated by Mike Shepherd and Susie Ferguson



the kneehigh scrapbook

For all those passionate about theatre and all those not quite sure!

Introduction & welcome from Mike Shepherd & Susie Ferguson



Why do we do theatre? Because anything could happen and leaps in the dark are imperative.

Theatre's not for everyone but I believe it's still important. There's something fundamental, something elemental about a collective live experience.

On a good night, theatre can transport people, stir the senses, take you on a journey, and leave you in a place you never expected to be.

Theatre should be exciting and give people a good night out. Theatre should inspire and we can help make the world a better place by finding inspiration.

Nowadays we need to counter the all-pervasive screen use with collective live experiences.

When making theatre we purposely never had a formula. Our 'ingredients' for making a show varied. Story, dance, music, script, improvisation, puppetry, design etc.

Cook up the ingredients, generate ideas, take them for a hop, skip and a jump, then select, edit and craft those ideas towards performance.

It's not easy!

It's important to keep a sense of play and exploration. Try to keep fear at bay… fear and creativity don't mix well!

Mike Shepherd





This scrapbook has been compiled in cahoots with Mike, Kneehigh alumni, students, teachers and theatre fans. In it you'll find inspiration for your own theatre making - it's designed to look forwards as well as back at the legacy of Kneehigh.

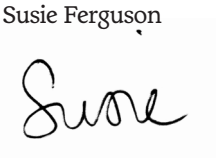
Like any scrapbook, it's eclectic and contains many voices: we invite you to use what you need now, and perhaps return to what you don't at a later date. Mike's voice is clear throughout and is indicated by this symbol . Teaching ideas and links to the curriculum can be found under the banner IN THE STUDIO. These are written with the needs of teachers and their students in mind, enabling you to put Kneehigh methods into practice.

The Kneehigh rehearsal room is inclusive, practical and playful. No one sits behind a table or a laptop. We encourage you to put away screens, phones and anything else that is likely to distract or hinder full participation. Be brave, go analogue!

Scrapbooks are designed to be tactile, played with and added to. They're a starting point for an exciting journey, and a way to record and celebrate the process.

We hope you love using this scrapbook as much as we've enjoyed making it.

Susie Ferguson





This Learning Guide has been made possible by an Arts Council England grant. It was commissioned by the Kneehigh Legacy Project, and written with contributions from Kyla Goodey, Carl Grose, Sue Hill, Giles King, Anna Maria Murphy, Emma Rice, Ian Ross, Mike Shepherd, Steve Tanner, Sarah Wright and Jemima Yong.

With thanks to Sarah Jane at Falmouth University, Sarah Parsons, Sarah Bennett and the teachers and educators who have contributed to the creation of this resource;

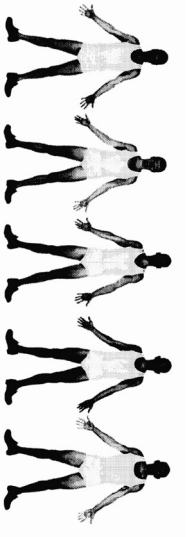
Steve Tanner and Brett Harvey, whose photographic and film documentation of Kneehigh over the years plays a vital role in keeping its spirit alive;

Anna Corfa Isehayek for designing this scrapbook;

Suzanna Hurst for building the website;

Jemima Yong, Creative Director of the Kneehigh Legacy Project.

We thank, too, all of the teachers past and present who have contributed to the legacy of Kneehigh in so many ways.



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LINKS & NOTES:

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND LOTTERY FUNDED

[▬] All photographs in this document have been taken by Steve Tanner.

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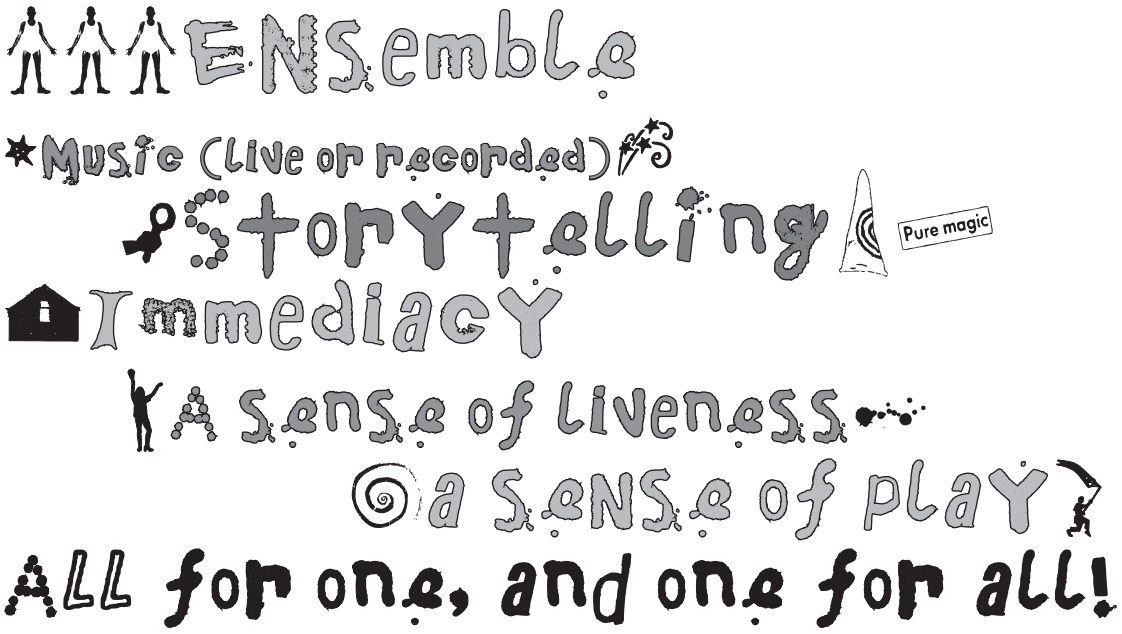
The Kneehigh Spirit: Inspiration, creativity and providing a great night out

Theatre should be like stepping onto a tightrope every night not plodding down a well trodden path.

Even when you're on your 300th performance there should still be a sense of spontaneity, a fizz of adrenaline and a feeling that the actors themselves don't quite know what's going to happen. It's easier to shake things up and find freshness with new and more devised work (we all know what happens at the end of *Romeo and Juliet* before it even starts). As a performer I never subvert the story or the focus but I often shake things up, change rhythms, find something new.

Mike Shepherd

The fundamental pillars of Kneehigh's work:



LINKS & NOTES:

You're absolutely in connection with your fellow colleagues and the audience. The storytelling takes people on a journey.

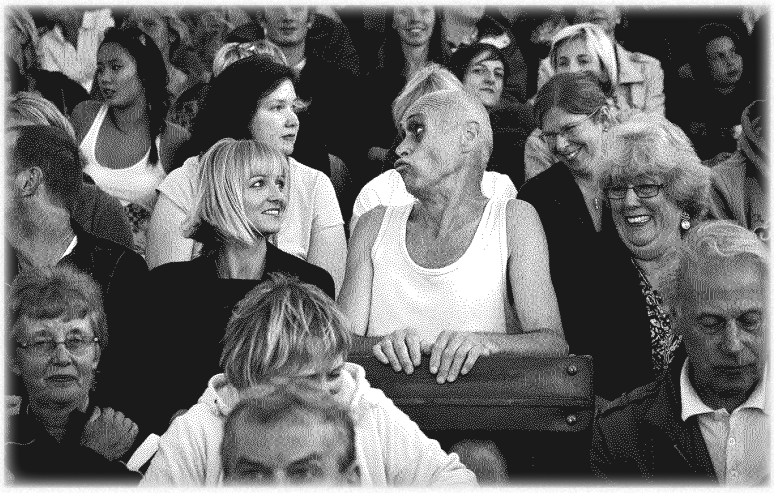
Mike Shepherd



↗ "All for one and one for all!", backstage at *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*, Lyric Hammersmith

In village halls, you can't pretend to be someone else. You have to talk directly to the audience, you have to engage with the tea urn, you have to engage with the children and the grannies and make it an event, a celebration.

Emma Rice (*The Guardian* 21st March 2005)



↗ Dave Mynne mingling with the audience pre-show in *The Red Shoes* at *The Asylum*

Kneehigh had almost three different sections - one of which was the touring shows, and there were the village hall touring shows, and there were the schools shows. Even though I trained as a teacher, I learned all my teaching skills through working for Kneehigh and doing workshops.

Anna Maria Murphy



↗ Anna facilitating a community banner making workshop for Golowan Festival

LINKS & NOTES:

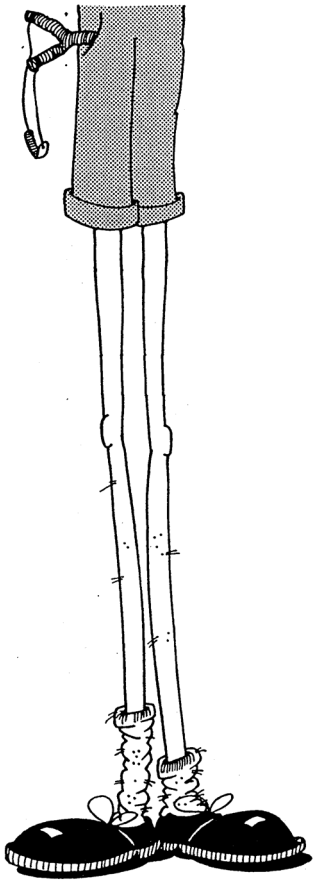


↗ *The Bank of Stories*, a project which transformed a disused bank into a beach

The Evolution of Kneehigh

There was a clear beginning but there was never a plan. You could say that Kneehigh was born out of adversity rather than any kind of nurturing grant-aided encouragement. Mike Shepherd had left his native Cornwall to seek the bright lights of the city. After a disparaging period of rejection by the theatre and TV world he returned to Cornwall, a place where you can 'make things happen'. He quickly forged a company to make theatre; a graphic artist, a punk guitarist and a farmer were among the itinerant individuals who started to 'cook up' shows. There were no trained actors but these first individuals quickly learnt to get their hands dirty, to turn on a sixpence and, most importantly, to tell stories to anyone, almost anywhere.

LINKS & NOTES:



Mike says

The first show was about the world's greatest but failed stunt man. It played to family audiences literally everywhere; in schools, village halls, quarries, fields and on harboursides but never in theatres. Stunts involving ridiculous and death-defying leaps in the dark preceded shows. The work was eclectic and anarchic, a non-theatre-going audience quickly spread and Kneehigh grew. Ambition grew too, Kneehigh remained fiercely independent but determined to reach a wider world. We adopted a quote from the artist Joan Miro for a while; 'to be truly universal you must be truly local'. This aspiration remained with us and one of our proudest times was when we were playing to sell out audiences in London's West End with *Brief Encounter*, in Bogota, Columbia with our version of *Cymbeline*, *Rapunzel* in New York and in Cornish village halls with *Blast!*… all at the same time. There was never a plan but new chapters continued to surprise us and our audience.

Naughtiness

The village hall 'crowd' in Cornwall arrives for a good night out and there is always mischief in the air. Over the years they have been a fantastic toe-tapping, responsive crowd who celebrate the 'fizz' of live performance and are willing to be taken on a journey and land where they least expect.

Whenever possible Kneehigh made shows at home in our barns on the coast. They are the opposite of the all-too-common 'black box', bleak and characterless rehearsal rooms of many theatres. The barns let in sunlight and the wind (in fact - most weather!), are filled with colour, music, food, warmth, oddities, eccentricities and delights - a Molotov cocktail of inspiration. The barns inspire a sense of glee; a word which mixes delight with naughtiness. This glee is the fuel of our village hall shows. We walk a tightrope between comedy and tragedy, and naughtiness is never far from the surface. We were pleased when we heard an audience member say after a show "well...that's not what I expected". We continue to be quietly proud that the press described us as 'irreverent' or 'maverick'. The work was full of passion but we steered clear of taking ourselves too seriously.

The company closed in 2021. As borders closed and the economy shrunk, it became harder and harder to tour. We were a theatre company, not a grand institution or building, and as such we were ephemeral. We wanted to draw a line under what we'd done and celebrate a blessed time.

Three cheers and bottoms up to naughtiness
and a good night out!

LINKS & NOTES:

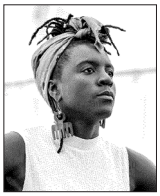
Kneehigh Alumni, Conspirators and Collaborators include:



Bec Applebee
Performer



Stu Barker
Musician and composer



Nandi Bhebhe
Performer



Jim Carey
Musician and composer



Paul Crewes
Producer



Steph Curtis
Production Stage Management



Tim Dalling
Musician and composer



Rina Fatania
Performer



Kyla Goodey
Performer



Carl Grose
Performer, writer



Charles Hazlewood
Composer



Sue Hill
Management team, artist



Craig Johnson
Performer



Giles King
Performer



Patrycja Kujawska
Performer



Dom Lawton
Composer, theatre maker



Robbi Luckay
Performer



Bill Mitchell
Designer



Anna Maria Murphy
Performer, writer, creator of the Rambles project



Dave Mynne
Performer



Katy Owen
Performer

LINKS & NOTES:

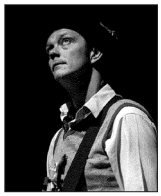




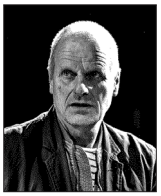
Emma Rice
Performer, director, artistic director



Malcolm Rippeth
Lighting designer



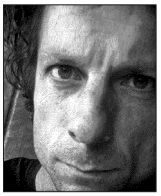
Ian Ross
Musician, composer



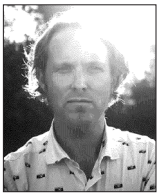
Mike Shepherd
Founder, performer, director



Tristan Sturrock
Performer



Steve Tanner
Photographer



Brett Harvey
Filmmaker



Simon Harvey
Performer and director



Kirsty Woodward
Performer



Mary Woodvine
Performer



Sarah Wright
Puppeteer, puppet director, prop and puppet designer

LINKS & NOTES:

Both Emma Rice and I absolutely believe in the collective imagination of the room. If you can create the conditions for that kind of creativity, the collective imagination is going to give you far more than you could come up with on your own.

We quite often task people. Fairly quickly people respond to the provocation and come up with something interesting. Both Emma and myself are reluctant to tell people what to do. If there's one thing I'd like people to do within the arts it is to be instinctive and to make offers.

Mike Shepherd



LINKS & NOTES:

Timeline of Productions

1980 *Awful Knawful*

1981 *The Stunt (Mevagissey Feast Week)*
Skungpoomery

1982 *Around the World in 80 Days*

1983 *Rubbish (for schools)*

1984 *The Jungle Book*
Tregeagle (for schools)

1985 *The Three Musketeers*

1986 *Fool's Paradise*

1987 *Cyborg*

1988 *Sun and Shadow*

1990 *Ting Tang Mine*
The Tinderbox
The Last Voyage of Long John Silver

1991 *Peer Gynt*

1992 *Ship of Fools*
Scrooge

1993 *Danger My Ally*
Windfall

1994 *The Ashmaid*
The Bogus
Ravenheart

1995 *The Women Who Threw the Day Away*
Wild Walks
Telling Tales
The Lost Stories of Don Quixote

1997 *The Arabian Nights*
The King of Prussia

1998 *Nightcrows*
Strange Cargo

1999 *Ghost Nets*
The Riot
Mannel's Mango
The Itch

2000 *The Red Shoes*
Hell's Mouth
Cry Wolf

2001 *Roger Salmon: Cornish Detective*
(The Case of the Uncertain Woman)
Fish Boy

2002 *Pandora's Box*
Wild Jam
The Wild Bride
Quicksilver

2003 *The Wooden Frock*
Tristan & Yseult
A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings

2004 *The Bacchae*
Wagstaffe the Wind-up Boy

2005 *Nights at the Circus*

2006 *Cymbeline*
Rapunzel
Journey to the Centre of the Earth

2007 *Brief Encounter*
A Matter of Life & Death
Blast!

2008 *Don John*

2009 *Hansel & Gretel*

2011 *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*
Midnight's Pumpkin

2012 *Steptoe and Son*
Wah! Wah! Girls

2014 *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*
(and other love songs)

2015 *Rebecca*

2016 *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*
946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips
Run For Your Life

2017 *The Tin Drum*

2018 *FUP: A Modern Fable*

2019 *The Dancing Frog*
Ubu!

2020 *Random Acts of Art*
The Neon Shadow (film)

The Importance of Place

Kneehigh's outdoor performances[↗] had a significant impact on the style and techniques used to tell stories. Performing outside requires less reliance on text, more on visual storytelling, and the use of music and sound. Sue Hill describes the style as "almost operatic in scale".



↗ Production image of the site specific *A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings* at Hayle in Cornwall

Performing in outdoor spaces alters the relationship between actor and audience. Actors can move in amongst the audience, directing their attention to something, or away from something else and characters encourage the audience to be as mischievous and curious as they are.

Kneehigh performances have taken place in diverse locations: where the red river meets the sea at Godrevy, the old gunpowder works at Kennal Vale, wild walks in woods and on clifftops in the company's vast Asylum tent, in the turbine halls of Johannesburg.

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Kneehigh Outdoors video (6:05): https://youtu.be/lNmcHrfI5ZM

Kneehigh's early work combined entertaining shows for local communities in the evening with daytime theatre-in-education shows. The company rehearsed late at night in old halls, cramped rooms, or outside spaces generating playfulness, anarchy and inspiration.

Whether performing at the National Theatre on the Olivier stage, at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall, in London's West End, or in Aleppo, Syria, Kneehigh engaged with audiences exchanging energy, stories, excitement and culture.



↗ *Dead Dog In A Suitcase* at The Asylum

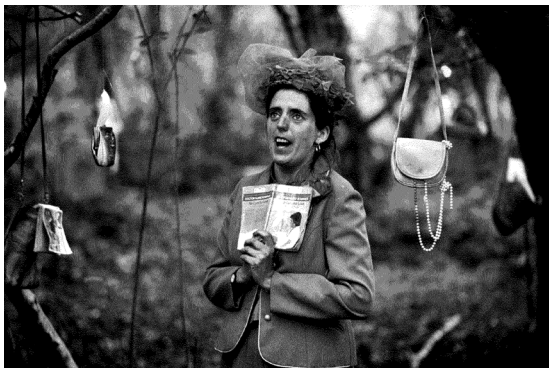


↗ *The Bacchae* at Bristol Old Vic



↗ *Tristan & Yseult* at The Minack Theatre in Lands End

↗ *A Matter of Life & Death* at The National's Olivier Theatre.



↗ *Wild Walks* at Kennel Vale



↗ *Ghost Nets* performed where the Red River meets the sea at Godrevy

LINKS & NOTES:

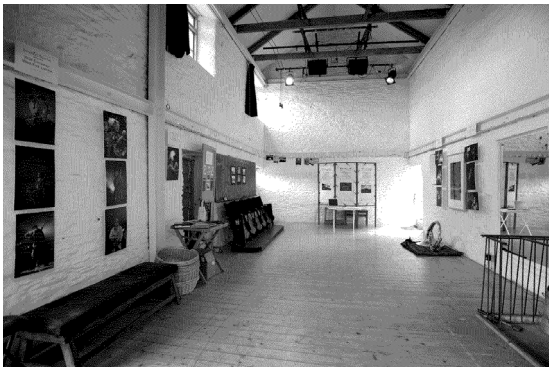
In the Studio 1: The Importance of Place

Find focused and unusual spaces to rehearse and perform. Notice how different spaces and places impact your voice, your use of space and your relationship with the others in your ensemble. What opportunities do different places give you to surprise your audience? How will it keep them on the edge of their seat? Do they even need a seat?

You can see the roots of Kneehigh in this **video**[↗] which shows the company's strong roots in Cornwall and the creation of The Asylum.

Going to **the Barns**[↗] for the first time was mind-blowing. It changed everything for me as an artist and as a person, that there was this world of creativity, of storytelling right by the sea.

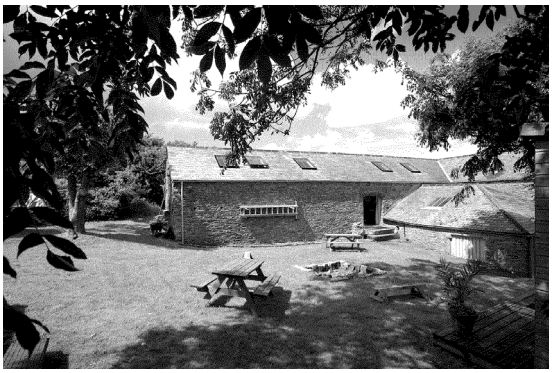
Ian Ross



↗ The inside of the Kneehigh Barns



↗ Rehearsals for *The Tin Drum* at the Kneehigh Barns



↗ The outside of the Kneehigh Barns



↗ The view of Vault Beach from Lamledra Hill, Kneehigh's home in Gorran Haven

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LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] What We Do: Interview with Mike Shepherd, Emma Rice and Paul Crewes video (4:07): https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/items/what-we-do-cultural-tourism/
[↗] The Kneehigh Barns video (8:20): https://youtu.be/PqeOkqpeGbk

Rehearsing
The creative space – ensemble and the process of collaboration

There's any number of ways to describe what an ensemble is, but for me, it's a group of people who are on a journey with the work, who have some shared beliefs and, ideally, some shared language. They are going to be brave and are going to step into the unknown, which is what devising is as well.

Mike Shepherd

Key words:



↗ The company of *Don John* warming up above Vault Beach

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 2: Creating an Ensemble

Creating an ensemble takes time and energy. Kneehigh's rehearsals rely on collaboration and generosity, a shared language, and a common goal.

Ensemble challenge:
To embrace a sense of play, set a challenge for your ensemble which doesn't involve a specific skill or level of experience. You could:

- Make a 'shrine' or environment for a specific character or archetype. Perhaps it's a superhero or villain, a character from a popular book, or a public figure.
- Solve a problem such as how to build the tallest tower possible using only dried spaghetti, balloons and Blu-Tac™.
- Organise a picnic (or design a hypothetical one), with the challenge of having food items beginning with every letter of the alphabet. Kneehigh would eat together after rehearsals in the barns, telling stories, playing games and music: recreating that atmosphere of collaboration and connection is a great way to build the foundations of ensemble.

Ultimately, the focus isn't the end result of the shrine or the spaghetti tower, or the content of the picnic: instead it's the process of thinking playfully and creatively, without censorship and without needing to achieve perfection. It's that spirit, which embraces uncertainty and chaos, that you're trying to emulate in the rehearsal room!

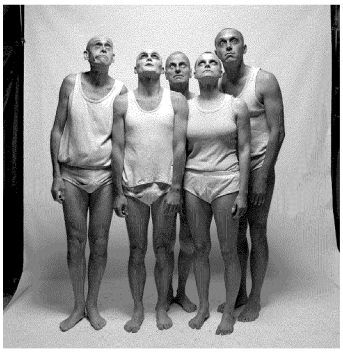
We always started with playfulness. There was always a sense of returning to your childhood sense of mischief.

Sue Hill

Kneehigh has always been an ensemble company. This has been a practical necessity with small multi-tasking casts playing multi-roles at the drop of a hat (or the putting on of a hat!) But more than that we've always wanted a chorus onstage, charging the space, focussing the action and telling the story.

I never liked a shoaling chorus all doing the same thing at the same time. Everyone might be doing the same thing but I like to see the individuals within that chorus.

Mike Shepherd



↗ Chorus in *The Red Shoes*

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 3: Build a Heightened State of Alertness

Here are a few starting points for creating ensemble:

Build a heightened state of alertness

With your whole group, all of whom should be hungry to give and hungry to receive, move around the space, eyes wide and alive. One person clicks their fingers purposefully and intentionally at someone. They should make eye contact and use clear, purposeful movement to 'pass' that click physically as well as through the sound it makes. Pass the click from one person to another. (One person clicks with intent at someone else. That person then passes it on to someone else, and so on. Make sure you receive the click as physically as it is given. 'Catch it' between your hands, or use your eye level as if you're following it in the air.

If the passing of the click becomes casual, up the stakes by replacing the click with a physical item: a stick, a potato, a boot, an egg (!)

Add more layers to this game. If you're using one stick to pass around, you could then add multiple sticks. Everyone should always know where the stick (or the click, or the object) is: that's the focus.

Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 4: Working with Canes

Companies such as Kneehigh and Complicité often use bamboo canes (like those found in garden centres) during rehearsal and Research & Development (R&D) - working in pairs, balancing the two ends of the canes in the palm of hands, between finger tips. There are a lot of variations to working with canes or sticks. They bring a sense of focus and awareness, and a strong sense of working with your fellow performers. Try these exercises to enhance focus, explore movement and levels, and develop spatial awareness.

Each pair has one cane between them. Place the ends of the cane against the palm of one hand each (one person on each end of the cane) and explore the pressure that is needed to keep the cane aloft. Once that has been established, the pair should then start to slowly move around the room, keeping the cane aloft, but moving it in various directions. Care should be taken to maneuver around other pairs who are working in the same space, and this can create interesting interactions as people move under or over others.

As confidence grows, suspend the cane using one fingertip each, rather than the palm of the hand. This requires greater skill and focus. Challenge participants to sustain eye contact with each other as much as possible as they continue to move around the room, keeping the cane moving and suspended.

Create more opportunities for the pairs to interact with each other. Perhaps they can create a sense of a wave, a shoal of fish, a train - whatever comes to mind!



One of the ways to get people to care is if there's a sense of shared ownership. That's why we always worked collectively while , at the same time, giving writers, designers, musicians the autonomy to work independently when they needed to.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 5: States of Tension



One of the challenges of making theatre is how to keep a tension, an urgency that keeps an audience on the edge of their seats. Mike learnt the following exercise from the great Marcello Magni (Lecoq and Complicité).

States of tension *(possibly inspired by Hitchcock movies)*

In a group of about 5, set the following scenario:

5 people are all painting a wall several storeys up in a block of flats - encourage individual painting styles and vocal sound effects.

There's a threat (individuals decide what the threat is) and decide in which direction it's coming from. The threat is represented by a clap which the task leader will deliver.

1st clap: No reaction, painting action continues in individual rhythms. The audience/viewer becomes aware of something the protagonists aren't.

2nd clap: Continue the painting action but acknowledge the threat.

3rd clap: Stop the action, acknowledge the threat, tune into the group, eventually find the rhythm of the action...phew...relief!

4th clap: Immediate stop, hiatus, group find the moment to all return to action but at double speed

5th clap: Freeze: maybe just eyes flick

6th clap: The THREAT is upon you!!

Practise this exercise then play with it. Escape from the block of flats, down the emergency stairs - repeat the claps - run down the street - repeat the claps.

Try the exercise in different scenarios/scenes. You might edit some of the sequence and polish it.

LINKS & NOTES:

Working with script

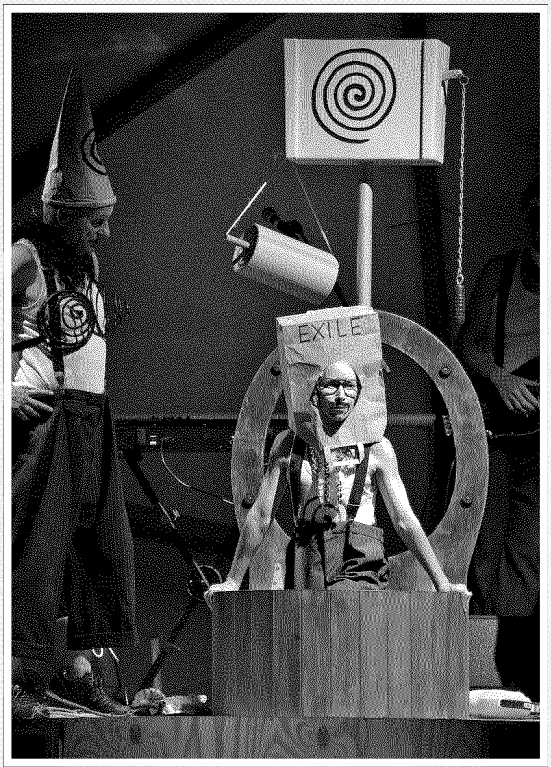
Some of Kneehigh's plays were commissioned from writers such as Nick Darke and Carl Grose. At other points, the company used existing scripts - for example the scripts for the TV comedy, *Steptoe and Son*. However, Kneehigh would never simply recreate or attempt to replicate previous tellings of the play. Mike Shepherd talks of finding the gaps in the story, the spaces where other narratives and voices might be found and amplified.

In the Studio 6: Combining Different Performance Elements (design, puppetry, music, improvisation)

Designers are involved in the process of making a show from the very beginning. Staging choices and design ideas are completely integrated - rather than an add-on. **If you're working in the style of Kneehigh, a designer is a key decision-maker from the start!**



↗ Production image from *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*



↗ Production image from Ubu!

LINKS & NOTES:



↗ Production image from *Pandora's Box*



↗ Production image from Wild Jam

When you're working with a script that already exists (rather than devising your own), think about how you can introduce playfulness into your rehearsal and your creative decisions.

- **Playing with costume:**

  Dress each other up. Don't discuss it or overthink it!

- **Building a playground:**

  Take the idea that Bill Mitchell would 'create a playground' and create a set for your piece that allows you and your characters to play

- **Creating a sense of place:**

  Think about music and lighting, as well as set. Refer to the ideas about archetype that are explored in the section on Devising.

- **Multi-roling:**

  Play as many characters as you can, and see what connections there are between them! You might not play all of those characters in your actual performance, but see what happens when you try to portray opposing/similar characters!

- **Use of puppetry:**

  Animate anything - it doesn't need to be your traditional idea of a puppet! Find the naughtiness, the archetype or the function of a puppet in how they can swell your cast or represent an idea or theme.

- **Live musicians:**

  Each of you can bring a song that makes you want to dance, or makes you cry, or laugh. Identify a song that might be your character's favourite, or one that sets the mood or period of your play. Sing live, play instruments or, even better, invent them!

  You might also consider creating a playlist for the script: or simply play some music in the background and see what happens!

LINKS & NOTES:

Devising
Taking ideas for a hop, skip and a jump

Devising is hard, it needs improvisation skills which take time to develop, it needs a generosity and, somehow, a joy of creation. It seems to be increasingly hard to keep fear and anxiety at bay but I believe that we have to strive to do so, as fear and anxiety thwart creativity.

Mike Shepherd



↗ Pre-show publicity image for *The Red Shoes* featuring the Chorus in Lamledra near the Kneehigh Barns (Luis Santiago, Bec Applebee, Mike Shepherd, Giles King and John Surman)

In this section, Mike Shepherd explores devising - a process which he calls taking ideas for a hop, skip and a jump.

LINKS & NOTES:

Devised theatre? Is there a definition? A collaborative process where a theatrical work is created from scratch by a group of artists rather than relying on a pre-existing script, often involving improvisation and collective exploration of ideas.

Devised theatre emphasises team work and collaboration, with all members contributing to the creation of performance.

Both of these definitions are allied to the ways Kneehigh often worked but it's not the whole story!



↗ Publicity image for *Blast!*

We always respected the individual artist within the collective and there were times where actors, artists, creative team worked collaboratively but then the specific skills of writers, designers, composers, directors were given autonomy to develop collective ideas without everyone "chipping in".

More often than not we would arrive at a script as we developed ideas in rehearsal but not always! Galton and Simpson's scripts for *Steptoe and Son* were a starting point alongside Emma Rice's adaptation of the sitcom into a piece of theatre. Shakespeare's script of *Cymbeline* was a starting point for Carl Grose's adaptation alongside Michael Vale and Emma Rice's design concepts. Design can lead the process - as can music, visual imagery and even lighting design. When creating *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* and *The Tin Drum*, lighting designer Malcolm Rippeth, who is part of the creative process from day one, was a vital part of the process as we discovered the form and the way of staging the action and storytelling. In other words…

There is no formula, no set method but there are a strong set of shared beliefs which inform and fuel activity.

What do I do ?

I like to take ideas for a hop, skip and a jump. Ideas are everywhere, I don't judge these ideas as good, bad or indifferent. I don't analyse these ideas...I explore them.

There seems to be an increased pressure to have a 'good' idea which will then translate into a successful product. Don't let having to have a good idea hamper your creative freedom.

Be inspired, find inspiration in people, places, simple interaction, the horizon, your online activity, your latest playlist (dance to it regularly) bookshelves, exhibitions, gigs, events etc.etc. Inspiration is everywhere, ideas are everywhere.

I can devise completely from scratch, discovering themes, characters and

LINKS & NOTES:

opportunity but have rarely developed this into a show.

I suppose *Blast!* (2007) is one of the closest examples of devised theatre I've done. My starting point for this show was the realisation that, as someone who had been brought up in Cornwall, I had been taught the English version of Cornish history and that the Cornish version of events was very different. I never knew, for example, that Cornwall had been the richest kingdom in the world, tin was more valuable than gold and Cornwall was at the centre of world trade routes. I never knew it had its own Parliament and the first university in the UK, the first steam-powered locomotive,wireless and satellite communications.I never knew about the raids on Cornwall ordered by Henry VII which destroyed the Parliament and University, the crack squads murdering rebellious Cornish and demanding the end of the Cornish language.

Cornwall has both led and changed the world with its resources and invention - not just a tourist destination with disgruntled "locals" who can no longer afford a roof over their heads.

I wanted to tell this story of Cornish history.

I wanted it to be angry and funny, I wanted it to be both informative and entertaining. Devising this show for village halls came at a time when it was expected that shows should be gentle and delightful. It was also a time where there was a significant increase in terrorism. I wanted it to be about the past and about now: the show we devised was daring, provocative and a bit outrageous but not gentle or particularly delightful! It became very popular but I wonder if we could make it now?!



↗ Production image from *Blast!*! at Polytechnic Arts Falmouth

Blast! featured Carl Grose and Kirsty Woodward as a kind of Sid and Nancy, or Romeo and Juliet. The pair are homeless and travelling when they arrive at the village hall where Colin Pickering, an incomer recently arrived in Cornwall with his wife Janet, is delivering a talk on the history of Cornish hedges. They kidnap him and announce to everyone that they're going to blow themselves up in protest at what Cornwall has become. It's a homemade explosive device which, when triggered, is mistakenly set to explode in 60 minutes rather than the planned 60 seconds. They lock the doors to the village hall while they tell the "true" history of Cornwall in 60 minutes.

In devising *Blast!* we had a starting point which the skills of the performers took for a hop, skip and a jump through improvisation to develop a kind of map that could be crafted. We arrived at a flexible script through Carl's brilliance.

Devised theatre needs strong directing where the director is also "writing" through structuring and developing the form.

In summary - the devised theatre definition above is only a part of the process we used to create theatre shows. Work with the collective imagination and work collaboratively but then let the individuals in the creative team fly with their individual brilliance. You also really need a director to pull together and craft the beast you're likely to create!

LINKS & NOTES:



Devising from Scratch

Devising from "nothing" needs you to find starting points to begin with!

Mike describes the process, inspired by **Dorothy Heathcote** and developed in Kneehigh's own style.

I liken it to swimming in a wild, scary river. To dive, flip over backwards, practice all your favourite strokes, invent new ones. You need a series of stepping stones to return to, to find your way across the river.

Exercises I use:

I went on a workshop with Dorothy Heathcote once... She rolled out, on the floor, a sheet of lining paper and everyone gathered around it. We were given crayons and told to draw "what's important". Don't ask any questions, don't concern yourself with the quality of your drawing: just make a mark on the paper. She then asked us to talk about what we had drawn while she pulled out themes and scenarios, decisions were made without too much discussion. In this instance the group had agreed that a hospital was the most important, suddenly Dorothy picked up an imaginary phone and answered a call from the emergency services, there had been a fire... We had to prepare for the survivors' arrival, we became doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and patients with Dorothy running the hospital in simple role play. I remember it as a remarkable session which generated a wealth of individual stories.

I use the roll of lining paper and crayons to generate starting points. I ask people to draw what "floats their boat" or "gets their goat" There is a limited time, work fast, you have 8 minutes to make marks on that paper!

We then talk about the drawings, taking care not to analyse, instead following hunches, making single word notes. I look to find themes, collect them all, put them into 'families', or categories, and then select and edit, finally deciding on three themes.

They might be Corruption-Love-Loneliness or Nature-War-Tenderness or The Wild-Domestic-Longing or whatever else floating your boat or getting your goat might reveal! These are your starting points to find character, situation, story through improvisation.

The accessibility of music via our phones is a brilliant resource. I make playlists, sometimes chosen, sometimes random, sometimes themed i.e melancholic, furious, joyful, etc. I use music a lot to lift improvisation and to take the pressure off talking. It will also suggest dance and simple choreography or inspire song writing or poetry.

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 7: Making Spontaneous Offers

Our rehearsals will include working on physical articulation, holding a moment, creating 'full stops' and points of focus for the audience. The following exercise then produces ideas that move the devised work on. I like to do this exercise in a space that's been marked out on the floor (i.e. by masking tape) so that there's something tangible, a space to be charged and the presence of perimeter for showing when you're on stage and when you're off!

Standing in a circle, mark three beats (not necessarily saying them out loud - the group can feel it). On the 4th beat, everyone jumps into the circle and makes a physical offer: a pose or a position. Hold that position for 3 more beats, and whilst doing so, tune into and adjust to the other people in the circle.

In the space of 3 more beats, everyone find a common focus: a point or person to look at. It might initially take more than 3 beats, depending on the experience and cohesion of the group.

Everyone in this circle is actively involved in this 'moment' that has been created. What do they see? What might be happening? Who might each person be? At this point, you might want to have some people observing this circle to make suggestions, or you could take a photograph to record that moment.

This offers the opportunity to then harvest all the ideas - the participants can come out of their positions. I am wary of encouraging discussion so use big sheets of paper and write when possible, single words. Once harvested, look to select and edit these ideas. I find grouping ideas in families or categories effective.

Once the selecting and editing has happened, your stepping stones are revealed which can then be developed and crafted into expanding the scene(s).

It's important to make decisions in devised work to counter the risk of endless possibilities going nowhere. Make decisions, initially accept them and find ways of making those ideas better. You can always decide later to cut them!



LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 8 & 9: Starting with the Story & Bag Sculpture

Starting with the story: Storytelling

Choosing the story is just the first step. Once the decision has been made, you can start to play!

Return to the story, and retell it to each other. Tell it from different points of view, relate it to your own experience. If you're retelling the story of Red Riding Hood, for example, link it to examples of when you've gone against good advice. Scribble thoughts on large pieces of paper with a felt tip or crayon (neatness is not your priority!) but don't spend too much time sitting down.

Instead, improvise scenes from the basic story. Where can you subvert the characters, and introduce a more playful approach to the narrative? Which characters need more of a voice than the story usually allows? What happens if you allow them to lead the scene?



You need a strong theme to then take it somewhere. We never just took a play off a shelf and performed it as it was written. We have done plays like *Cymbeline*, and *Steptoe and Son* , we honoured them and didn't wilfully subvert the text but we opened everything up to a world of possibilities viewed with fresh eyes.

Bag sculpture

Take the contents of your own bag and make a sculpture. You're working on your own, this whole space is becoming an art gallery. Take your time. Play music in the background. Make decisions, work spatially, look at your sculpture from different angles.

Is there anything extraneous? Get rid of it.

Give your sculpture a title.

All visit the 'art gallery', invite the artist to talk about their work and the title. Imagine the sculpture has the clues to a life - who would this person be? What would the chapter heading be if it were part of a book? Encourage chapter headings. Again harvest and collect: be detectives. There is a story that exists, and these are the clues. Find the story.



When you're devising, you are going to create a fair bit of chaos.

LINKS & NOTES:

Exploring Archetypes

We talked a lot about archetypes, which is where mask work would come in: through masks you could distill an archetype. Then the real detail of that work was to do contra-archetype, so you could show a victim and a bully at the same time, for example.

Emma Rice

Archetypes are a typical example of a person. Rather than just being a standard stock character, however, archetypes are considered universal versions of the people we might meet throughout life. Exploring and playing with those archetypes, and their opposites, can generate fantastic drama and storytelling.

Character archetypes:

1. The Innocent
2. The Everyman
3. The Hero
4. The Outlaw
5. The Explorer
6. The Creator
7. The Ruler
8. The Magician
9. The Lover
10. The Caregiver
11. The Jester
12. The Sage (or Mentor)
13. The Hermit



These archetypes are present across cultures, genres and time periods.

As well as character archetypes, we also see archetypal plots throughout folktales, drama and literature.

These include:

1. Reversal of fortune (or rags to riches)
2. The hero's quest or journey
3. Coming of age and rites of passage
4. Victory of the underdog
5. Revenge
6. Forbidden love

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 10: Exploring Archetypes and Archetypal Symbols

You'll need two six-sided dice. Firstly, each person rolls both dice to be allocated a character archetype. For example, if you roll an 8 you are a magician. If you already have a character with that number, roll again to avoid doubling up characters.

Then, one person in the group rolls ONE die, to select an archetypal plot. Rolling a 5, for example, would create a revenge-based plot.

Improvise that plot line - perhaps select some appropriate music to accompany your improvisation to create some atmosphere!

During this improvisation, you are not aiming for a perfect story or performance. Instead, you are looking for moments of wonder where there are opportunities for magical storytelling. You're likely to find those moments where the archetypes are in opposition with each other, perhaps in a struggle for power or status.

As you explore the story, take care to create the setting for your audience through your physicality. If it's a journey you're creating, make the physical struggle real! In fact, you could even take your audience with you on the quest!

Once you've achieved as much as possible from the improvisation, choose moments to expand and develop. You might like to give your character a theme song that suits them, create a physical sequence in which they show off their strength for example. The key word in this task is **PLAY**.

Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

Added design challenge: Archetypal symbols

Archetypes also include symbols. For example, Spring can be an image of rebirth and regeneration. Water often represents redemption or rebirth. If you're working with designers, ask them to watch your improvisation and provide some rough sketches of symbols that might support the narrative.

Puppets can communicate archetypes very effectively. In *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*, puppets were used to represent a range of themes and characters:

1. The dog = innocence
2. Babies = consequences of careless love
3. Glove puppets = political parody, politicians as being puppets of other masters
4. Giant dog = destruction.



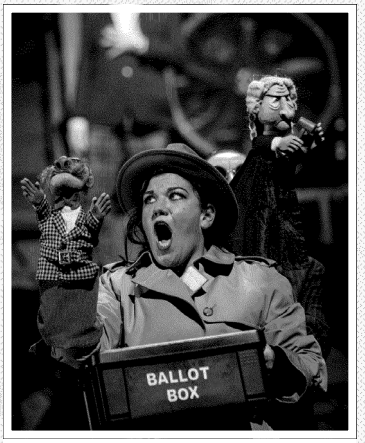
↗ Production image from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* featuring Sarah Wright puppeteering the Giant Dog and Patrycja Kujawaska on violin.



↗ Production image from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* featuring the dog puppet and Ian Ross as Mayor Goodman



↗ Production image from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* featuring baby puppets made by Lyndie Wright



↗ Production image from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* featuring Bev Rudd animating glove puppets made by Lyndie Wright

LINKS & NOTES:

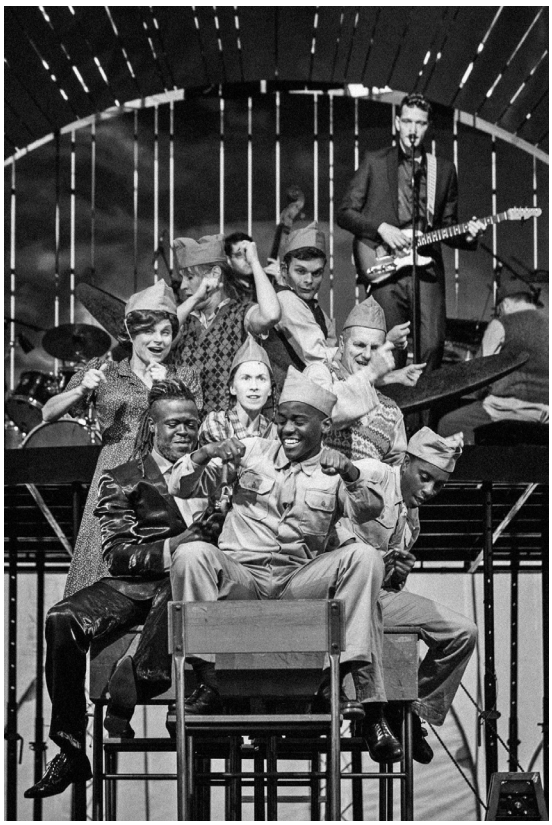
Stories, Myths and Texts

Whatever story is your source text, remember it's a starting point! Any story can be told from different perspectives. All texts silence some characters who might need a chance to tell their side of the story!

Kneehigh's playfulness means that no text is revered or put on a pedestal: whether it's a fairy story or a play by Shakespeare, there's always room for naughtiness and playfulness.

With the writer or writers, we talk and dream, we map out the structure and the overall shape of the piece. They go away and write collections of poems or lyrics or ideas. Each writer works in a different way but what none of them do is to write a script or a scene in isolation.

Emma Rice



↗ Production image from *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* at The Asylum, featuring Ncuti Gatwa, Adebayo Bolaji, Patrycja Kujawska, Kyla Goodey, Andrew Durrant, Mike Shepherd, Nandi Bhebhe, Katy Owen and Ian Ross.

I find Ladybird books quite useful! Simple books which give you the structure and the story, but they also give you lots of opportunity to open the story up without being consumed by 125 pages of script.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 11: Stories and Images

Anna Maria Murphy wrote a number of plays with and for Kneehigh. In this video by Brett Harvey **The Secret Writer**, you can hear about some of her inspiration and methods.

Anna provides a number of starting points for writing in the tasks below:
Stories and Images

- What story are you burning to tell?
- Make a list of subjects and stories that have been on your mind for a while.
- Then make a list of images (Think filmically) that go with those ideas.
- Invent titles. Sometimes I don't know what the full story is, but still invent a title, e.g: '*Roger Salmon, A Cornish Detective*'. That title gave me a starting point for the disparate stories that I wanted to tell, and I then knew that the structure would be Roger Salmon investigating them.

Emma commissioned both me and Carl (Grose) for *Tristan & Yseult*, writing a series of poems and dialogues, rather than a full script. She said, "Anna, I want you to write the voice of the unloved and the tragic lovers and Carl the voice of the court", which was in iambic pentameter. I wrote for the Love Spotters and Whitehands and Brangian, and Carl wrote King Mark and Frocin. Sometimes we overlapped. My references for that included a lot of film references that Emma had, but there was also the scandal about Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton happening, so I wrote about the corridors of power.

Anna Maria Murphy



↗ Production image from the site specific production of *Roger Salmon: Cornish Detective* at Geevor Mine in West Penwith, Cornwall

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Anna Maria Murphy, The Secret Writer video (3:16): **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ritTYVebTFQ**

In the Studio 12 & 13: Making a Scrapbook & The Miss Hibbs Method

Making a Scrapbook

Make a scrapbook of images, words, music, colours, scrawled ideas around your spark of an idea/theme. They are great ways to start a process and then share visually with others.

You could make individual ones, or as a group of collaborators, make a few pages each and make one great almighty scrapbook!

Anna Maria Murphy suggests more ideas to help you, inspired by Cornwall teacher, Miss Hibbs, whose technique of breaking down stories to basic headlines underpins much of the devising process for Kneehigh's work.

The Miss Hibbs method

Miss Hibbs used to break stories down with her young people into a number of chapter headings or headlines. She would encourage you to tell the story in as few headlines as possible i.e 5 or 7 or maybe 9. (she would like it to be an odd number!) Then Miss Hibbs would get her class to choose one headline or story point and just write about that. It is an excellent way of understanding structure and keeping things simple and energised.

Practise Task

Take a well known fairy or folk tale, e.g.: *Red Riding Hood* or *The Three Little Pigs*. In a group decide among you the main points of the story, then tell the whole story is 5 tabloid headlines.

These are your "scenes" if you like. Once you have these, you can play around with the order. In *Tristan & Yseult* we started the play at the end, went full circle, then back to the end again. Be playful with your structure and storytelling.

Then write the themes of the story, as many as you can: i.e. adventure, hunger, danger etc. However many you have generated, then reduce them to just three. Write these three in large letters somewhere, as they will be the beating heart of your story, and keep returning to them. From this, make your own storyboard, both useful for film, theatre, dance, design, music etc.

We would do this at the start of any Kneehigh creative process.

LINKS & NOTES:



At the risk of seeming over-simplistic I always remember Miss Hibbs even when approaching something as dense as Gunther Grass's *The Tin Drum* or Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. It helps me understand narrative structure.

Mike Shepherd

Task

Write a 50 word story of your idea/story or practice with a well known story, or a story that you particularly love, It can be anything from *Romeo and Juliet*, *Noughts and Crosses*, *Little Women*, etc. The process helps to get to the very meat of the story.

Suggestions for a writing task:



I try to write the bits that come easily first, like the best bits: the bits that feel like they're already almost there. I'll tackle the bits that I can already see. That's quite a good way of playing around with what the story is. You think, "let's try this bit in the middle, and let's try the ending, and then let's try this other idea". Then you have five minutes of material to start you off.

Carl Grose



In discussions and workshops, we end up with bits of paper taped, like big PostIt Notes™. Each bit of paper might be particular images that we like, or a key moment of the show or story. For example, there's going to be a butterfly that lands on a flower, because that symbolises how lost she's feeling. You've got all those things, and then you're placing them in different orders. So that kind of level of detail and just sitting at the laptop isn't from the beginning. The point where you're sitting at the laptop is when you've got your bits of paper. You're asking "What is the journey of the characters? What are the scenes that might happen?"

Sarah Wright

LINKS & NOTES:

Games and Warm Ups

When rehearsing at the Barns, members of Kneehigh would often use a run across the cliffs as a physical warm up! Physical exercise elevates the collective energy of the group and increases stamina. Find a variety of different ways to incorporate playfulness to your warm-ups, and take collective responsibility for leading them.

In the Studio 14: Finding the Wonder: Keepy Uppy

Place one A3-sized piece of paper at one end of the rehearsal space. This is your 'goal'. Next, take another piece of A3 paper and scrunch it into a ball. Divide your ensemble into groups. This could be anything from pairs upwards but the smaller the group, the harder the task!

One by one, each team stands at the other end of the room to the goal. A referee throws the paperball upwards, and between them, the team must keep the ball airborne until it hits the goal. Each player can only touch the ball once before someone else must take their turn, using similar moves to volleyball. If the ball lands on the floor at any other place than the goal, they must begin again from the start.

The teams who are not in active play should watch the game unfold, looking for moments of wonder - those moments that inspire awe and excitement in an audience. They can be moments of tension, moments of frustration and humour, interesting groupings as people work out the best tactic for the game and even ideas for characters. It's also a great source of ideas for choreography for chase sequences, escapees or lovers running to or from something!

A simple game of 'keepy uppy' can really help alertness, awareness of the group, sharpen antennae, focus and build ensemble. A good theatre show needs a good team actively practicing these qualities. Know where your teammates are, know where the focus is and always know what the story is otherwise the ball will run into touch.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 15: The Game with no Rules

Mark out a playing area. Divide into two teams, with everyone else acting as the spectators. Imagine this is the final of a huge championship - the stakes couldn't be higher!

Each team has a set of objects to play with. Use whatever is available: chairs, beanbags, perhaps even a wildcard object like a potato.

Your challenge is to invent a game as you play it. There are no spoken rules. Instead, communicate through your actions. As the game unfolds, the rules will gradually emerge.

Keep playing until the spectators begin to understand the game. They'll let you know when someone makes a brilliant move, breaks an unspoken rule, or does something unexpected.

Eventually, discover the move that wins the game. You'll know the exercise is over when everyone agrees that someone has won!

In the Studio 16: What Are You Doing?

Ask your ensemble to stand in a circle. One person in the middle starts an action. The next person comes in and asks “what are you doing?” The original player can answer anything they like as long as it’s not what they are actually doing. The person coming in then does that action and the first person leaves... repeat.

Spectators actively watch improvisations, and ask “what did we like?”

Write down actions/scenes on big pieces of paper, randomly combine scenes, identify what’s missing, find the missing scene, find the ending. Generate these scenes quickly: see **Keith Johnstone**’s ‘Scenes in a Minute’, ‘Gifts’ and ‘Hat Game’ in his book *Impro for Storytellers*.

Write down scenes on individual postcards, shuffle the pack, look at the card and link scenes together. Find ways to incorporate scenes and create an ending.

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 17: Games and Tasks for When You Get Stuck!

Many of Kneehigh's most imaginative and theatrical moments have stemmed from task-based activities during rehearsals. You could, for example, set one or more of the following tasks:

- Create a costume for a character using random clothing in a dressing up box. Two people select and dress a third person who becomes the character
- Write a haiku to describe a character's thoughts or emotions
- Improvise a journey through a landscape, using mime
- Invent a new game that can be played in your specific rehearsal space
- Go outside or to the props store or cupboard and find five things that represent the place in which your story is set or where the character inhabits.Bring them back and tell the story of each item.
- Choose an unfamiliar piece of music and dance to it
- Sketch a picture as if you were a character in your story

The outcome of each of these tasks is not fixed. Instead they are designed to free up the imagination. You may not use these ideas in your final piece, you might choose to discard them now or later, but their influence will be there somewhere!



I find that my brain works really well if I butterfly around an idea, and then I tend to land on something which isn't the thing itself, but it gives me a different map. It's what gives you a fresh view, and that personal map is what will make the piece unique.

Emma Rice

LINKS & NOTES:

Holding Your nerve:

I think about it a lot in my work, which is that we're all scared all the time. Performing is a really scary thing to do, because you're not just scared, as we all are, but you're doing it in front of an audience that may or may not think you're any good, and have lots of ways of showing you that, whether it's reviews or clapping or leaving at the interval. So it's really, really scary. And then what happens when we're scared is, we hold on to what we think is our safe place. Of course, that safe place is useless to us as theatre makers, so you have to do a deal with yourself, which is, be scared. It's unavoidable, no amount of controlling or asking questions or buying time is going to get you out of that scary place so you might as well jump into it. We'd ask ourselves 'What's the worst that can happen?' And if the answer wasn't 'death', we'd have a go at anything.

Emma Rice



↗ Emma Rice directing the company of *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* in rehearsal



LINKS & NOTES:

Performing
Acting

A good way of storytelling is getting an audience on the edge of their seat going, “Oh my God, what's going on? What's going to happen next?”

Mike Shepherd



↗ Production image from *A Matter of Life and Death* on the Olivier stage at The National Theatre

You can’t rest on what you know, and you can't relax into research. You're sort of dancing at the edge of a precipice all the time, which is what Kneehigh felt like. Kneehigh do no research. There is no psychology. There is no discussion about why, or attempts to piece together any dots of a character’s background. As Nick Darke and Mike (Shepherd) always used to say, everybody's capable of everything.

Emma Rice

I remember Mike Shepherd telling me that when you’re working outside, an actor is like a light. If all of the actors are looking at one actor who's in focus at a given moment, that's about the ensemble understanding the story they're telling, beat by beat. An audience will learn from the company where the focus is just as in an indoor theatre, you put a light on someone and the audience will look at them: but it's a much more interesting kind of light, if it's about the attention of the ensemble connecting with the attention of the audience. I've used that in every piece of work I've ever made.

Tom Morris, Theatre director and writer

LINKS & NOTES:

Dance and Movement

In the Studio 18: Music to Encourage Dance!

Use music, create playlists and encourage dance!

For those reticent to dance... Hoodwink them eg: everyone have a paper plate, be a waiter, keep holding the plate as if it has food on it, can you turn it around your own arm, can you have two plates? Use different levels, incorporate music. Have a skip, try mirroring, specific dance moves i.e a sand dance (show them Wilson Keppel and Betty!) Falling off a log, hip hop, skating, ballet, northern soul, Bollywood, jitterbug, floss, capoeira etc!

In a circle, everyone has a satsuma or a potato. Play the music you want to dance to. Where's the point to start the moves? Throw the satsuma from the right to left hand and back again, add other moves i.e under each leg, spin around then pass to the person on your left... Keep going to the music... A dance routine emerges.

I believe that once the body is energised and the blood is oxygenated then creativity comes to the fore.

Mike Shepherd



↗ Production image from *Tristan & Yseult* at the National

LINKS & NOTES:

Puppetry

Puppeteer and puppetry director Sarah Wright has worked on numerous Kneehigh shows. Here she gives some guidelines for directing puppetry in a piece of theatre:

- Puppets can create pictures on stage. Think about creating a graphic novel where each still image tells a story. You can position puppets on the stage with actors to tell visual stories before a word is said...
- Direct the puppet as you would an actor - so everyone on stage can see that the puppet is part of the play as they are.
- Puppeteers should be looking at their puppet at all times, not at the other actors! We want the audience's gaze to be deflected from puppeteer to the puppet.

Puppets can perform different functions:

The depiction of a character that is difficult for an actor to play, for example: The forest birds in *Tristan & Yseult*; Tips the cat in *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*; the babies in *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*.

They can also be a powerful imaginary or mythical character, such as the Narrator rabbits in *Hansel and Gretel*; a child that can never grow up like Oskar in *Tin Drum*, and Punch, bringer of chaos, in *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*.



↗ Production image from *The Tin Drum* featuring the main character Oskar who is puppeteered by Sarah Wright and made by Lyndie Wright



↗ Production image from *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* featuring Tips the cat made by Lyndie Wright and the character Lily Tregenza played by Katy Owen

LINKS & NOTES:

If you're making a piece of theatre, you're asking the audience to engage their imagination anyway. A puppet is part of the imagined world created by the performance. A puppet guides our imagination and lets us into that world. We're storytellers. A puppet is play and a puppet is make-believe. It's a vital part of creating an imaginary space, and what can happen in that imaginary space. We're not trying to replicate real life. We're telling stories.

Sarah Wright

One technique used by Kneehigh, and by Emma Rice in her subsequent work, is what they call the 'Miniature Worlds' technique. Smaller versions of setting, such as houses, a boat, a sun, are manipulated and animated on stage to introduce the audience to the world of the play: like a wide shot in a film that then eventually focuses in on more detail. Once that's established, the actors, and other puppets if appropriate, will take over the storytelling.



↗ Production photograph featuring Angela Hardie in *The Tin Drum* at Liverpool Everyman

In *Ubu!*, Ma and Pa Ubu sail away in a boat. The boat is one of my favourite props ever. It's two flat bits of cardboard on two poles that are folded around Ma and Pa and it just looks like the flat side of a boat. There's then a moment where Ubu breaks out of the boat, and the sides of the boat become wings. She's suddenly got two massive cardboard wings. The wings are created from the boat. So there's no puppet, but the puppetry in that moment is absolutely brilliant. One minute you've got a very simple, cut out cardboard boat, and the next minute, there are wings and that boat has taken you to the clouds.

Sarah Wright

LINKS & NOTES:



↗ Production image from *Ubu!* at The Asylum, featuring the boat that Ma and Pa Ubu sail away in



↗ Production image from *Ubu!* at The Asylum, featuring the transformation of the boat into wings

Puppetry can help the devising process even when you won't necessarily have puppets in your piece of theatre.

In terms of a process for the baby puppets in *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* was that Sarah and Lyndie (Wright) whipped up some prototypes which were brilliant, and we just spent an afternoon playing with them. That informed so much of the actual writing and what the babies did and how they spoke and how they sang. That's always a really fun thing to do, before rehearsals even begin: just have some prototypes and play.

Carl Grose

If you're testing a story out, you might make a shadow play of it. This is a great thing for teachers and for students, because a shadow play is a play without words. You're making a storyboard, but you're using a shadow play to do it. If you can tell the story through shadow puppets, you know you can turn it out in the outdoor landscape: it doesn't need explaining. In a classic shadow play, you don't have any text. You can use music and sound, but you don't tell the story, you show it.

Sue Hill

LINKS & NOTES:

Music

I prefer to give music its place and to play it loud rather than have underscoring.

Composer Charles Hazlewood who worked with us on *Dead dog in a Suitcase*, *The Tin Drum* and *Ubu!* always wanted the music to drive the action.

We have always used music to tell the story as well as support the story.

Composers Jim Carey, Stu Barker and Ian Ross were brilliant, not just for the songs and music they wrote but for their engagement and understanding of the rehearsal and writing process which made the music integral to the action.

Mike Shepherd



↗ A staged image for *Tristan & Yseult*, featuring The Club of the Unloved, a chorus played by James Traherne, Mike Shepherd, Ian Ross, Craig Johnson, Simon Harvey

Don't labour your ideas. Ideas come easy and Emma always said that bad ones (ideas) usually take care of themselves (by dropping away). Be brave. Be present and respond. Be intellectual when you need to be but don't overdo it, silliness can be the most poignant heartbreaker.

Ian Ross

LINKS & NOTES:

Designing Set

> Bill (Mitchell) was a really great visual director, and his work was so visual. His designs weren't just making sets for people to act in front of. They were playgrounds.
>
> Sue Hill

In the Studio 19: Inside / Outside

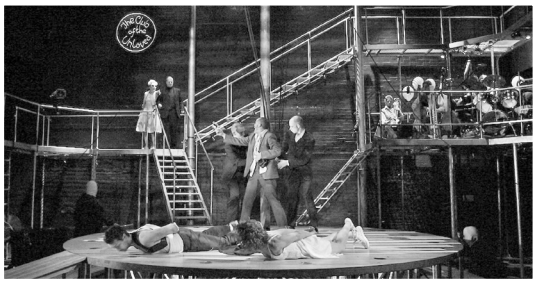
Watch this **video** of Bill Mitchell talking about the differences between designing and directing for outdoor and indoor spaces. Notice the way in which the company adapted *Tristan & Yseult* design for the Cottesloe Theatre (now the Dorfman, at the National Theatre) after their success performing the play outside.

It might be tempting to sit down and design a set before trying out ideas as the performers start to put the story on its feet. However, for Kneehigh, the design process is integral from the beginning of rehearsals. As you rehearse, try out ideas and have items of set around you to play and experiment with.

> We would try not to rehearse indoors too much, because if you stay indoors, you start talking your ideas out rather than doing them. Try and make the work on your feet.
>
> Sue Hill



↗ Production image of *Tristan & Yseult* outdoors at Restormel Castle



↗ Production image of *Tristan & Yseult* indoors at the National's Cottesloe Theatre

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Inside/Outside, interview with Bill Mitchell video (10:59): **https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/items/tristan-and-yseult-inside-outside-interview-with-bill-mitchell/**

As Sue Hill states, it's important that you take an active approach to creating a piece of theatre rather than spending too much time chatting!

By taking your rehearsals to a different rehearsal space (either indoor or outdoors), you'll quickly identify what items of the set are vital, which can be temporary and which ones need to be on stage for the entire performance. Ensure that the lighting design is also taken into consideration when designing the set. Does your set allow for puppetry? Where will the performers be when they're not acting? Quite often, all of the Kneehigh performers would remain on stage for the entire performance and so you'll need somewhere for them to be that doesn't pull focus away from the action.



Audiences are different outside. They become closer to you. You're sharing the same space. You're sharing the same view.

Bill Mitchell

Kneehigh productions involve audience participation but it's a very different style of interaction than you might see with styles such as pantomime. Instead, observe how characters break the fourth wall with monologues (*The Red Shoes*), enter through the auditorium (*Tristan & Yseult*'s Love Spotters) or sit amongst the audience (*Brief Encounter*). If you're using a non-traditional performance space (either indoors or outdoors), how might you encourage your audience to move with you? In the outdoor show *Ghost Nets*, the Kneehigh performers found that the audience moved with them, ran after them and even ended up getting wet on the beach! A key question to ask is **"how will we bring the audience with us?"** With outdoor performance, dusk and night play a strong role. As darkness falls, emotion deepens and the relationship with the audience changes.



↗ Performer Kyla Goodey amongst the audience in *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*

LINKS & NOTES:

Costume

In the Studio 20: Costume

Task

Costume ideas and decisions can come from playful tasks and activities. Find a range of different clothing items. Your challenge is to create a character using those clothes, BUT at least two of those items must be worn differently to the way in which they were originally designed to be worn. What happens when you wear trousers as sleeves, or you put your legs through the sleeves of a jumper?

Months before rehearsals begin, I start work with the creative team. We gaze at books and films, sketch and begin to form a concept; an environment in which the story can live, in which the actors can play. The physical world holds meaning and narrative, it is as much a storytelling tool as the written word.

Emma Rice

One way to gain an overview of design styles for Kneehigh production is to look at the trailers and videos associated with some of the productions across the years. For example:

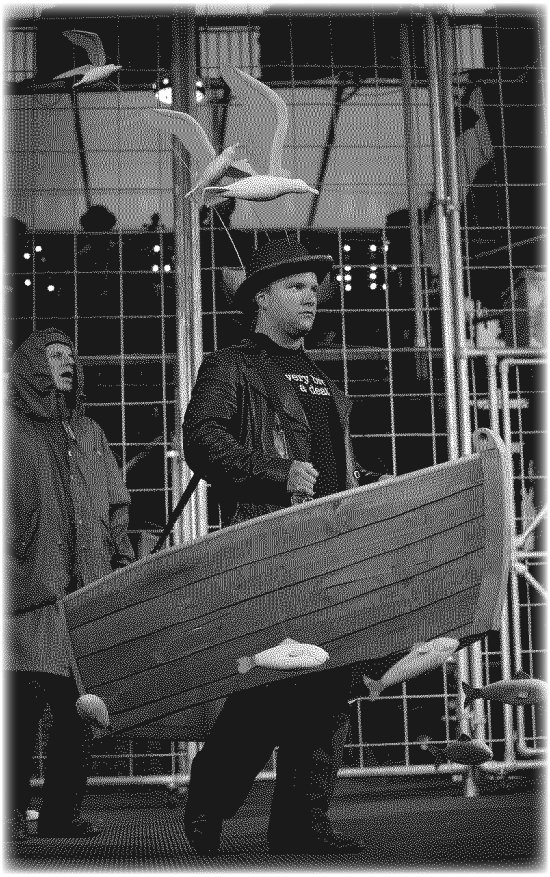
- *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*
- *The Tin Drum*
- *Rebecca*



↗ Production image of *Rapunzel* featuring Mike Shepherd, set and costume designed by Michael Vale

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* UK Tour Trailer (1:48): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwZCQOzsugw
[↗] *The Tin Drum* trailer (1:31): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D1KXcmFrJW4
[↗] *Rebecca* trailer (1:19): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiM3whG9Oxs





↗ Production images from an outdoor performance of *Cymbeline* at Restormel Castle, designed by Michael Vale

Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

Lighting

Malcom Rippeth would paint with light.

Mike Shepherd



↗ Production image from *Midnight's Pumpkin* featuring actor Audrey Brisson with lighting design by Malcolm Rippeth



↗ Production image from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* featuring actor Beverly Rudd with lighting design by Malcolm Rippeth

In *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*, the lighting design had to be really dynamic in order to tell us where to look, to describe locations theatrically without naturalism, really defining situations on stage, whilst having an overall aesthetic that was more like a rock gig than most theatre shows.

Malcolm Rippeth

LINKS & NOTES:

Like all of the other design elements, lighting would be considered right from the very beginning of the rehearsal process. Factors influencing the design would include:

- **Venue.** In the Asylum tent which was used in the summer, performances would start at 7.45pm but it wouldn't be completely dark yet and so Malcolm Rippeth would need to use light differently to a theatre with the facility to create a complete blackout.
- **Setting:** In some Kneehigh productions, the set would not change throughout the entire play: it would be the lighting that created the different locations. For example, in *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*, the dirty backstreets would need to contrast with the Peachum boudoir, which used orange and blue light, and again with pink-toned nightclub style lights of the Slammerkin Club. Colour was fundamental in creating those different locations. Additional effects such as the use of haze can also be very effective in suggesting setting.
- **Time.** Lighting suggests not only the time of day, but the time of the year. Moonlight, sunset, light glinting from snow, the reflective quality of the sea in mid-summer all create a very different mood and atmosphere. There is no need to attempt naturalism in these lighting states but instead we can be mindful of achieving very emotive storytelling.
- **Light sources:** It is worth experimenting with different light sources beyond relying on traditional theatre lights in a rig. In *The Wild Bride*, light bulbs were a source of light and imagery which held the audience's focus at key moments. Consider using torches, battery-operated candles, lanterns and stage-safe paraffin-style lamps to create what Malcolm Rippeth calls "a magic toy shop world".



↗ Production image from *The Wild Bride* featuring actor Stuart McLoughlin in the tree of light bulbs with lighting design by Malcolm Rippeth

In *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*, light created magic.

Malcolm Rippeth

- **Focus:** Light (or lack of it) focuses the audience's attention on a particular person or object on stage. If you're performing in a fairly traditional performance venue, this can be straightforward but Kneehigh's work outdoors means that lighting can't always do all of the heavy lifting in ensuring that this happens. Make sure that your lighting designer, director and performers are all working towards the same point of focus in any given moment.
- **Shadow:** Use of shadow (and shadow puppetry) is an excellent storytelling technique, particularly when creating effects that are difficult to achieve convincingly (for example, the maiming of limbs in *The Red Shoes* or the witch being thrown into the oven in *Hansel and Gretel*. You'll need to make sure that you have an appropriate surface through which to achieve that shadow imagery, and the space required to create it, so working closely with the set designer is crucial.

LINKS & NOTES:

I like to see the workings of theatre. I like there to be magic as well, where you don't know how that's happened, but I like to see the workings of it too.

Mike Shepherd



↗ Production image from *Hansel and Gretel* featuring Carl Grose as the Witch



↗ Production image from *The Flying Lovers of Vitesbsk* featuring Marc Antolin and Audrey Brisson in shadow, with lighting design by Malcolm Rippeth

LINKS & NOTES:

Sound and Music

You can find a Kneehigh playlist on Spotify: it's called **Kneehigh Legacy Project**.

When we started thinking about the musical landscape of *Steptoe and Son* we knew we wanted to use music to not just locate us in time but also connect us in memory.

Stu Barker

The influence of Kneehigh's outdoor work can be seen in the sound design of their productions. Songs and instrumental music conveyed narrative, mood and atmosphere. Live musicians create a sense of community and celebration. You'll see in a lot of the published Kneehigh scripts, the amount of text seems a lot less than other plays of a similar time length. However, when you consider the inclusion of music in the performances, it's clear how powerful and important music is to Kneehigh's style of performance.



↗ Production image from *Rapunzel* at the Battersea Arts Centre, featuring Paul Hunter, Mike Shepherd, Edith Tankus, Pieter Lawman

Live musicians bring an immediacy. It's important to place the music and give it its full impact. I'm not keen on underscoring. A live band adds real power to the live storytelling. Much of Kneehigh's work has been in epic spaces where dense dialogue is not appropriate. In a way we often work filmically where soundtrack leads the action and text is more minimal.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Kneehigh Legacy Project playlist:
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5qj9X2bAeWgAUQ6a5rvOnp?si=bc00bf0724814449

What's unique about the Kneehigh process is that it's about investment, ownership and generosity. The Barns was the thing for me, how isolated it was, how focused the work was and how the bubble of it came with you on tour around the world.

Ian Ross



↗ Rehearsals for *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* in the music room at the Kneehigh Barns

Kneehigh already had a kind of a template, which was like a way of telling stories with their bodies. It became even more important when you took that work outside, we found we could tell stories physically and with music: you still used words, but they weren't carrying the story. They weren't telling people things. You were showing people things, and the music became really important. And of course, Jim Carey was the kind of musician who would write these absolutely divine threads of music, which scored the shows. Quite quickly this kind of physical theatre form developed, which was taking the audience on an emotional journey through their eyes as much as through their ears. Then it became even more important. We started to do wild walks and take people on journeys.

Sue Hill

LINKS & NOTES:

Looking forward, looking back: Kneehigh's influences and legacy

> I'm a little bit sceptical of original ideas and of theatre makers "owning" ideas. Invariably, when I think I've come up with an original idea I find that someone else has already had that idea! Whilst it's important to invent and find surprises I don't find it useful to worry about originality!
>
> Mike Shepherd

Looking back:

Footsbarn were an inspiration for Kneehigh. They were a robust international troupe who were more than a theatre company. They were a whole community, often on the road, they performed in magnificent tents, they had a school bus and a way of life free from convention. Their shows were funny, physical, musical and visual. They are now resident in France.

Keith Johnstone's book *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre* (1979) is an invaluable source of information and inspiration and it's one that Kneehigh would return to again and again.

Welfare State International is a significant influence on Mike Shepherd and Kneehigh, with some members of WIS also performing with Kneehigh over the years.

Complicité was founded in 1983 and the combination of comedy, tragedy and dark humour can also be seen in Kneehigh's style. The nuanced combination of light and shade, at one moment focussing on the bleakness of life and the next being a joyful, chaotic dance or physical sequence is integral to Kneehigh's storytelling style.

Several members of Complicité trained at **L'ecole Internationale de Theatre Jacques Lecoq**. The Lecoq style utilises mask and places an emphasis on an actor's physicality, often working without script.

Mike Shepherd also cites **Pina Bausch** and her dance company **Tanztheater Wuppertal** as an influence, in particular, the dancers' awareness of the audience at all times.

Improbable is another theatre company whose work has influenced Kneehigh. They use improvisation as a cornerstone of their work, and perform in both indoor and outdoor spaces.

Silent films were a major influence on Kneehigh. In particular, the work of **Buster Keaton** inspired the company's use of physical storytelling, visual comedy and action. Like Keaton, Kneehigh often trusted movement, rhythm and image to tell the story, allowing audiences to understand and connect through what they saw as much as through what they heard.

LINKS & NOTES:

Looking forward:

For me, there's an interesting feedback loop with Kneehigh. I watched Kneehigh and was influenced by Kneehigh and then wrote my own stuff. Then there's quite possibly my writing influence on Kneehigh. Working with Mike on *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*, we didn't really discuss the show on a deeper level very often. We spoke more about *Breaking Bad*, and other things we were watching, reading, stumbling across, everyday inspirations. I'm writing for people I know, we've explored stuff together before so there's a sort of shorthand.

Carl Grose

Kneehigh's influence can be seen across the theatrical landscape. The **Emma Rice Company** is just one example of a company that has continued the legacy of Kneehigh in its playfulness, choice of story, and theatrical style.

WildWorks is a company founded by Bill Mitchell and Sue Hill. They collaborated with Kneehigh on *A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings* in 2005 and you can find out more about that production **here**.

In its 40 years as a company, Kneehigh's influence and inspiration has spread far and wide, inspiring alumni who have created their own companies and continue to make exciting work.

I just don't think I would have been able to make any of the vaguely interesting work that I've been able to make without what I learned from working with Kneehigh.

Tom Morris



LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] https://wildworks.org.uk/projects/a-very-old-man-with-enormous-wings/



Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

Case Studies

We've chosen a handful of productions that reflect the diverse range of stories that Kneehigh created in its four decades of performance. Several of them have had more than one iteration, with Kneehigh returning to them time and time again. You can find a range of archive items relating to the productions via **www.thisiskneehigh.co.uk**, including programmes, posters and interviews with members of the casts and creative teams.

In each example, Mike explains the main facts about each show and we've included extracts from interviews with Kneehigh alumni to support the information.

LINKS & NOTES:

LINKS & NOTES:

Tregeagle – A Cornish Faust: 1985

- Originally devised by Mike Shepherd as a schools and village hall show
- Reimagined and directed by Jon Oram

Archive Items:

Film Clip
Tregeagle extended Trailer

Music
Tango for Tregeagle by Jim Carey
Tregeagle's Waltz by Jim Carey

Justice Jon Tregeagle was a landowner and lawyer in Cornwall in the early 17th century. His harsh pronouncements propelled him into the land of myth and it is said that he swore an oath with the devil. This show was originally written and directed for schools.

Jon Oram introduced us to masks and Theatre Sports and this, in turn, developed our improvisational skills and devising processes.

Tregeagle was our first show using masks with music and song as narrative. It also took us out of Cornwall for the first time… to places like Tiverton! It also took on the notion and practicality of performing outside as well as inside. This was a key show for Kneehigh's development and launched the company nationally.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] *Tregeagle* extended Trailer (7:27): https://youtu.be/z3nEqd9ZU6g
[↗] *Tango for Tregeagle* by Jim Carey: https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=A6Btn-R--mw&si=y0xd0CL650GaiUCm
[↗] *Tregeagle's Waltz by Jim Carey*: https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=0DufUKAm5RA&si=KEZcVUhrwEBp2mbD





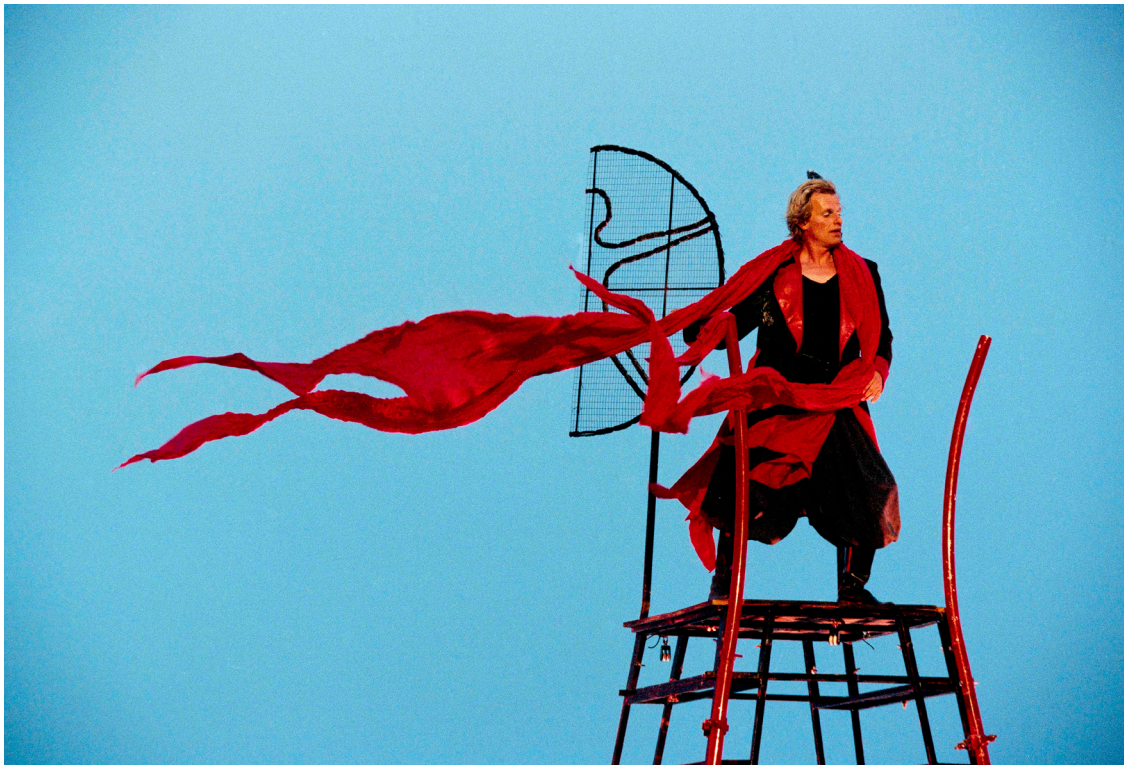




TREGEAGLE

LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Tregeagle* at the Minack Theatre





LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Tregeagle* at the Minack Theatre



The King of Prussia: 1995

- Writer: Nick Darke
- Designer: Bill Mitchell
- Director: Mike Shepherd
- Music: Jim Carey

Archive Items:

Film Clip
***The King of Prussia* clip**

***The King of Prussia* programme**

The show followed the story of John Carter and his brothers from Porthlea Cove (Prussia Cove) - a smuggling family. It was very successful, and included a re-tour with Mike Shepherd replacing Tristan Sturrock as John Carter.

It was our first time in London, playing at Donmar Warehouse. Sam Mendes was Artistic Director of the Donmar Warehouse. After an initial awful review in the Evening Standard, the show received universal good reviews. It sold out, and caused a stir. Richard Eyre (then Artistic Director of the National Theatre) was interested in commissioning Nick Darke and the company for the National. Trevor Nunn took over from Richard Eyre at the National, he flew to Cornwall to watch a performance and then commissioned the company and Nick Darke to make and perform a new play for the National. *The Riot* performed at the National in 1999.

Mike Shepherd



King of Prussia was essentially brandy smuggling back in the 1800s and it felt very relevant to Kneehigh, because there was a lot of political intrigue, as it were, within the writing of the show, which is Nick Darke in a nutshell. It's not just a Poldark-style show about brandy smuggling. There's a lot more to it with references to modern politics and that side of it. It felt very poignant for us to do it.

Giles King

LINKS & NOTES:

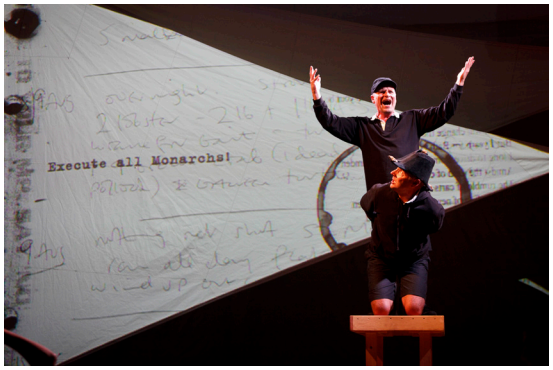
[↗] *King of Prussia* Film Clip (2:12): **https://youtu.be/66-W-4Fb9t4**
[↗] *King of Prussia* Programme: **https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/content/uploads/2023/06/FCP12-A-29-3-3-The-King-of-Prussia-1997.pdf**















LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from an 'unplugged' version of *The King of Prussia* for The Asylum's inaugural season in 2010.

A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings

A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings is based on an original short story by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Archive Items:

More resources on This is Kneehigh

A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings - Cyprus Programme
A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings - Hayle Programme

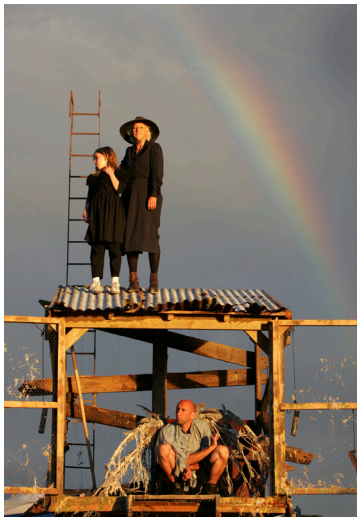
Mike first made a version of this story for schools in the early 1980's. Over a decade later Bill Mitchell made an outdoor version of the same story called '*Windfall*'.

Then Bill created a site generic spectacular show *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* which played on harboursides in Malta, Cyprus and Hayle, Cornwall. This version launched Wild Works.

Another decade passed and Kneehigh were asked to celebrate 50 years of the Little Angel Theatre in Islington and Mike made a puppet version with the Wright family.

In 2024 Mike created a suitcase version which played in an old harbourside building in Hvaamstangi on the North West coast of Iceland. This strange and evocative story has become part of Kneehigh's DNA!

LINKS & NOTES:
[↗] More resources: https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/items/?s=very+old+man+with+enormous+wings
[↗] Cyprus Programme: https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/content/uploads/2023/06/FCP12-D-7-16-1-6-2-A-Very-Old-Man-With-Enormous-Wings-Cyprus-2004.pdf
[↗] Hayle Programme: https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/content/uploads/2023/06/FCP12-D-7-16-1-7-3-A-Very-Old-Man-With-Enormous-Wings-Hayle-2003.pdf









LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings*, *The Three Islands Project* (Cornwall, Malta and Cyprus)

The Red Shoes: 2000

- Adapted from Hans Christian Andersen by Emma Rice
- Designer: Bill Mitchell
- Director: Emma Rice
- Music: Stu Barker
- Writer: Anna Maria Murphy
- Outdoor and indoor touring, small and large-scale venues

Archive Items:

Film Clip
The Red Shoes - Extended trailer
The Red Shoes - Full show documentation

At the time, I was really inspired by Bruno Bettelheim's book, *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976). He was a Holocaust survivor, and he had a thesis - which has now been discredited - that fairy stories are therapeutic: we tell them, and they come to us at times when we need them. I was interested in the trauma that Bruno Bettelheim had felt in the camps, and the thought that stories might actually be plugging into something really dark. I felt that *The Red Shoes* was really dark, and my process and my mind was much less formed than it is now, but in many ways, it was all the richer for it. But I knew that I wanted all the storytellers to have shaved heads, and I knew that I wanted them in underwear, and I knew that I wanted them in clogs, and I knew that I wanted my storyteller to be this amazing drag queen, Lady Lydia…. and that underneath she was the same: that the wig would come off and there'd be a shaved head underneath.

Emma Rice

This show was created in the early days of Emma and Stu Barker's working relationship and was mainly soundtracked: Wagner, Offenbach, Jurassic Five etc. The production was managed by the uber-efficient Alex Wardle at the start of his five-year stay with Kneehigh. It was an extraordinary, brave and distinctive show which was coolly reviewed by Kneehigh faithful, but subsequently really took off and heralded the brilliant new era of Emma Rice's directing.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] *The Red Shoes* extended trailer (7:33): https://youtu.be/hmUgrJrTh5Q
[↗] *The Red Shoes* full show documentation (1:35:23): https://youtu.be/zCfR-P5oRcA

The Red Shoes









The chorus in *The Red Shoes* were a chorus who'd seen things we should never have seen and done things we should never have done. We mingled with the audience. Before we started, we were barefoot, and we were just in underwear, and the first thing that we did when we went on stage was to very carefully wash and dry our feet.

Mike Shepherd



LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *The Red Shoes* at The Asylum.



Tristan & Yseult: 2003

- Director: Emma Rice
- Writers: Anna Maria Murphy and Carl Grose
- Musical director: Stu Barker
- Designer: Bill Mitchell
- Lighting Designers: Alex Wardle and Malcolm Rippeth
- Sound designer: Gregory Clarke

Archive Items:

Film Clip
***Tristan & Yseult* - Extended trailer**
***Tristan & Yseult* - Full show documentation**
Designing *Tristan & Yseult* with Bill Mitchell

"Outward! Outward lies the way!
Inland there's little to talk about and much less to say!"



I just thought, I wonder what happens if the Chorus are like bird watchers but they're looking at love? I remember suggesting everybody put on a funny balaclava and anoraks and start looking for signs of love, and I swear by that point, there was only three weeks of rehearsals left to go and I've never seen a room take off like that: those Kneehigh clowns, their love spotters were a thing of absolutely, unstoppable, instinctive wonder and that never, ever changed.

Emma Rice



At the time of making the show in the early 2000s, Emma and I were really into Tarantino and films like *Pulp Fiction*: bloody good storytelling and great music. This *Tristan & Yseult* is a Tarantino version of a medieval story.

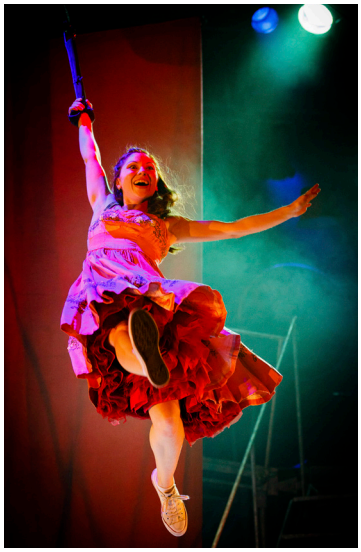
This show was made to be outdoors. The structure is invented for the outside: the storytelling, dance, action and music are outward facing - the direct, honest acting exemplified by Craig Johnson (as Brangian) in this show is to do with being in daylight and being able to see the audience and then, as darkness falls, letting the fourth wall in and deepening the emotion and sense of tragedy.

Mike Shepherd

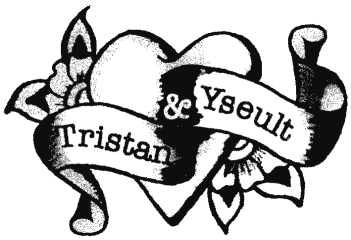
LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Extended trailer (8:08): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMOZYNxemkM
[↗] Full show documentation (1:54:01): https://youtu.be/ELHgQ2-U3Q0
[↗] Bill Mitchell on the design of *Tristan & Yseult* (8:10): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZMAreY7N_c

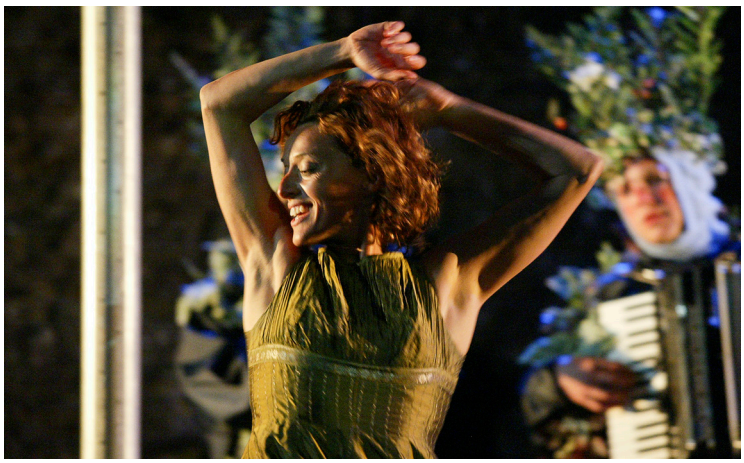












LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Tristan & Yseult* in various locations.

Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs): 2014

- Writer: Carl Grose
- Music: Charles Hazlewood
- Director: Mike Shepherd
- Lighting designer: Malcolm Rippeth
- Sound designer: Ian Davies
- Designer: Michael Vale
- Choreography: Etta Murfitt
- Puppets: Lyndie Wright
- *Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)* was made with the Liverpool Everyman in 2014.

Archive Items:

Film Clip
Dead Dog in a Suitcase - Extended trailer
Dead Dog in a Suitcase - Full show documentation
Mike Shepherd on adapting *The Beggar's Opera*

Potential co-producers and venues were nervous saying that their audiences wouldn't come to a show with that title. We believed that a new audience would come: a *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* audience. A big thank you to Gemma Bodinetz and Deborah Aydon at the Liverpool Everyman for having faith and giving us such wonderful support.

The play was based on John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* of 1725 which railed against the ruling classes and the disparity between the rich and the poor, and Bertolt Brecht's *Threepenny Opera* of 1929/30. This was a brand new version written by Carl Grose, and composed by Charles Hazlewood. This was our 'shout' against the corruption and inequality of the world. To quote Brecht "the world is poor and man's a shit".

Our version reflected this desire. *Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)* toured extensively to new audiences nationally and internationally.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Extended trailer (10:27): https://youtu.be/AiKszdH3FkI
[↗] Full show documentation (2:16:41): https://youtu.be/YEYkAIbDkzA
[↗] Mike Shepherd on the production (2:51): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1sjv4mdywQ

The music of John Gay took opera music, the serious opera, and whilst not mocking it, used it as fuel to comment on the wealthy and to show another side of life. That's what *Punch and Judy* did: they literally played outside opera houses. That's why it was seen by Pepys outside Covent Garden. It was at Bartholomew Fair, and it was outside Covent Garden. Punch was Italian. He was more Italian than many of the operas probably were and he was taking the mickey out of the opera and making money out of opera-goers. There was this parallel between what Punch had been doing and what John Gay was doing that felt very historically apt in our use of puppets in *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*.

Sarah Wright







LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* in various locations.











LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* in various locations.

Ubu!: 2019

- Co-directors: Carl Grose and Mike Shepherd
- Music: Charles Hazlewood
- Designer: Michael Vale

Archive items:

Film Clip
***Ubu!* - Extended Trailer**

Ubu! fully embraced the Kneehigh spirit of giving people a good night out. In this show, the audience response drove the action. Members of the audience took part in an Olympics-style competition, they sang and they even went to war! Music formed an integral part of the show. *Ubu!* was originally performed in non-traditional spaces, for example at Bristol's Marble Factory, and it was a show that came out of a determination to make theatre even when budgets were tight. The *Tristan & Yseult* set was reused and repurposed, and the cardboard aesthetic matched the original style of Alfred Jarry (who wrote *Ubu Roi*).

Ubu! was Kneehigh's final show.

Mike Shepherd

One of the things I'm most pleased about with our show is that I think we've done the original play really well. Alfred Jarry was our spiritual guide. His ground-breaking and highly controversial notions of theatre in his lifetime are absolutely how we think about making theatre with Kneehigh. He hated "realistic" painted backdrops - tropes of the naturalistic style at the time. When he wrote that Ubu enters riding a horse, he says either come in on a REAL horse or, even better, a cardboard one. Cardboard became our lead aesthetic for this show. Throwaway. Hand-made. Cheap. Punky. So on a level, I feel we've collaborated well with him and hopefully done his work justice.

I hope there's something therapeutic about seeing this show. Singing together in protest. Laughing at the buffoon. Weeping for the world. The play is also mad. Absurd. Characters burst into Britney Spears songs. They have strange dreams. There's a bear!

Carl Grose

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Extended Trailer: **https://youtu.be/kH3Goz-sY-s**











WAR



LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Ubu!* in various locations



Brief Encounter: 2007

- Director & Adaptor: Emma Rice
- Designer: Neil Murray
- Lighting Designer: Malcolm Rippeth
- Projection Designers: Jon Driscoll & Gemma Carrington
- Original Music: Stu Barker
- Sound Designer: Simon Baker
- Puppets: Lyndie Wright

Archive Items:

Film Clip
***Brief Encounter* - Trailer**
***Brief Encounter* - Interval adverts**

Brief Encounter is an adaptation of Noel Coward's play *Still Life* which was made into a now-iconic film in 1945. It is synonymous with romance, forbidden love and repression. Emma Rice adapted the screenplay for the stage in 2008, performed at The Cinema Haymarket - a former West End cinema.



I always work *around* an idea. If you know you love it, that's in the bank. Think round it. What does it make you think of? What were the things that were swirling around in your mind? With *Brief Encounter* I spent the first weeks reading Noel Coward's poetry. I was finding out about these bawdy songs that he was writing, getting my brain completely spinning with this amazing material and that was when I thought, 'I'm going to put these songs into it'.

Much of my work and life had been inspired and informed by folk tales. I realised really early on that I felt Laura was like a Selkie and in one of the Selkie stories that she was like the seal woman. She absolutely loved her husband, but actually was not in her natural environment which, of course, is such an amazing feminist, ancient trope to explore. So again, I did what I often do - I just laid the Selkie story across the top. That's where a lot of the film images came in such as the film of her underwater: that was where she was at her happiest and most natural. She finds herself in this seemingly happy world, but can barely breathe in it. I loved that it told me which poems to use.

Emma Rice

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Trailer (1:20): https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/items/brief-encounter-trailer/
[↗] Interval adverts (5:47): https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/items/brief-encounter-adverts/









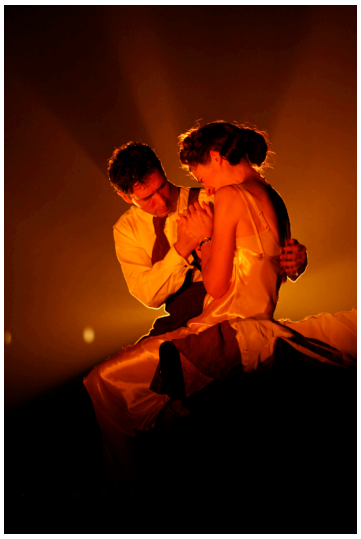
LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Brief Encounter* in various locations.



Around the Kneehigh Universe









LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *Brief Encounter* in various locations.



The Wild Bride: 2002

- A retelling of *The Girl Without Hands* from the fairytales by the Brothers Grimm.
- Director & Adaptor: Emma Rice
- Assistant Director: Simon Harvey
- Writer: Carl Grose
- Music: Stu Barker
- Choreographer: Etta Murfitt
- Designer: Bill Mitchell
- Costume Designer: Myriddin Wannell
- Sound Designer: Simon Baker
- Associate Sound Designer: Andy Graham

Archive Items:

Film Clip
The Wild Bride - Extended trailer
The Wild Bride - Rehearsing at the Kneehigh Barns

Music
The Wild Bride CD, Recorded Live at The Asylum

In a stunning elemental world of dust, clay and fire, here is a red hot story with a brutal edge and a beating heart...The story of what happens when your father accidentally sells you to the Devil.

Betrayed by her father, our heroine has those 'cross-road blues'. She chooses to walk into the wilderness, rejecting not only the Devil, but her home as well. In the wild she meets a Prince and becomes pregnant, but when he is called to war, her heart breaks. She finds herself at those pesky crossroads again.

In the cool green of the forest, she brings up her child and, wonder of wonders, her broken heart grows back. Perhaps this is 'happily ever after'. Perhaps there is even more joy to come.

This epic and poetic wonder tale is classic Kneehigh stuff, charting a life from child to adult. You can expect instinctive storytelling and a heady mix of live Blues music and devilish humour.

The Wild Bride is a grown-up Spring bud, dustball of a romance, for adults and brave children alike.

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Extended trailer (7:39): https://youtu.be/F3fHVpuD9m4
[↗] Rehearsing at the Kneehigh Barns (1:50): https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/items/wild-bride-rehearsing-kneehigh-barns/
[↗] *The Wild Bride* CD, Recorded Live at The Asylum: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTTDKUTf3As



Influences and inspirations included:

- *Women Who Run With Wolves* by Clarissa Pinkol Estes
- The Great Depression
- Victims of African Landmines
- Robert Johnson













LINKS & NOTES:

[▬] Production images from *The Wild Bride* in various locations.

Production photographs for annotation



↗ Production image from *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* featuring Fay Powell-Thomas and Simon Harvey



↗ Production image from *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* featuring Ian Ross, Audrey Brisson, James Gow and Mark Antolin

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LINKS & NOTES:



↗ Production image from *The Wooden Frock* featuring Amanda Lawrence



↗ Production image from *Rebecca* featuring the ensemble



↗ Production image from *Pandora's Box* featuring the ensemble



↗ *Wild Walks* at Kennal Vale gunpowder works, the tribe who discovered the wheel

LINKS & NOTES:



↗ Production image from *Hansel and Gretel* featuring Giles King, Craig Johnson, Joey Holden and Carl Grose



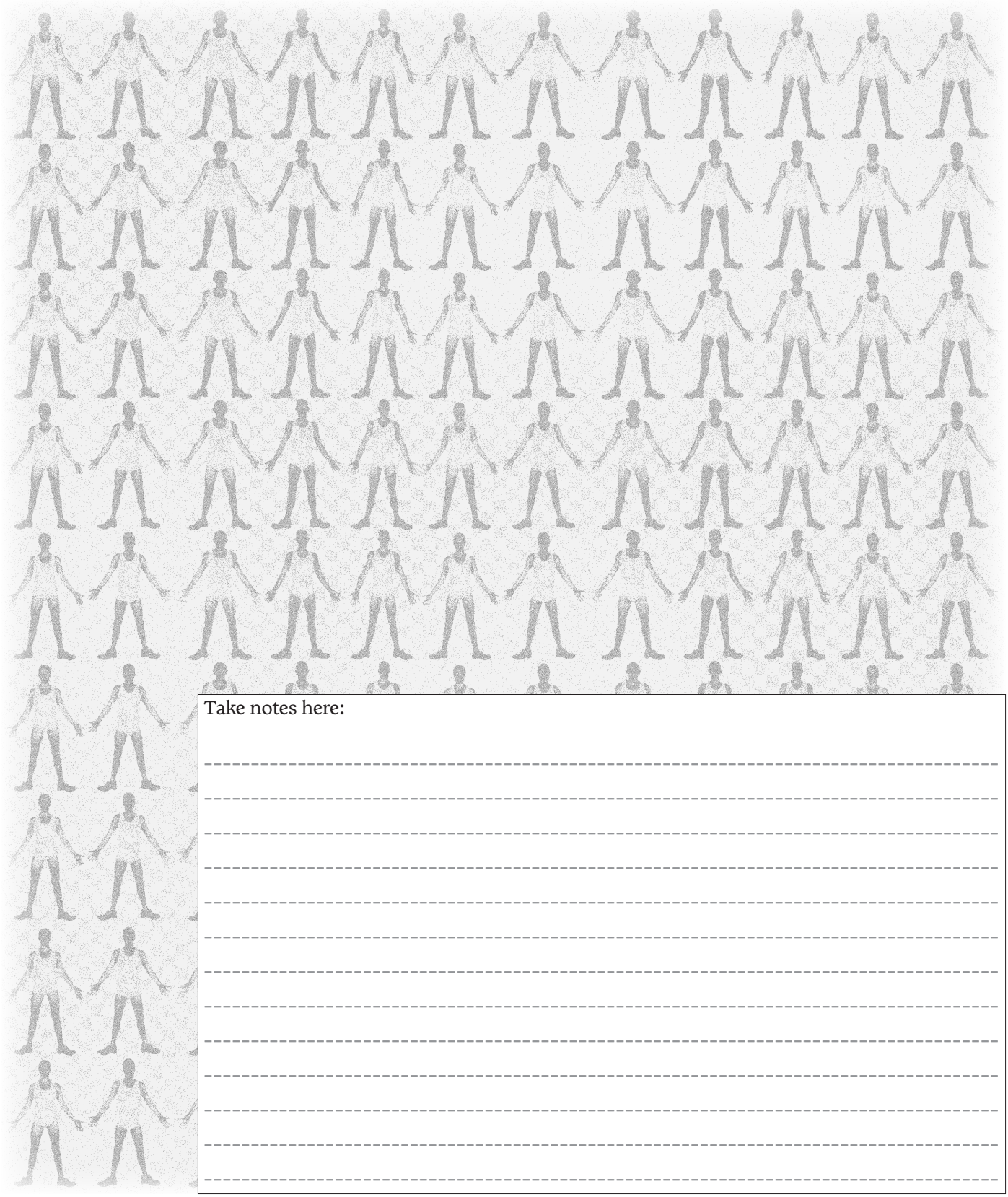
↗ Production image from *Don John* featuring Dave Mynne, Gísli örn Gardarsson and C-Scape Dance Company



↗ Production image from *Steptoe and Son* featuring Mike Shepherd and Dean Nolan

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LINKS & NOTES:



Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

Provocations and Inspirations

> Ideas are everywhere.
>
> Mike Shepherd

Kneehigh's inspirations are eclectic, ever-changing and growing.

They have included:

- Silent movies, particularly Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin
- Laurel and Hardy and Harold Lloyd
- David Lynch
- Nina Simone
- Circus Archaos
- Quentin Tarantino
- Footsbarn
- Akram Khan
- Frida Kahlo
- Talking Heads and David Byrne
- Nick Cave
- Kae Tempest
- Wes Anderson
- William Kentridge
- Paula Rego
- Italo Calvino
- Jan Švankmajer



LINKS & NOTES:

Resourcing your drama department



↗ Production image from *The Bacchae* at The Leeds Playhouse (then known as the West Yorkshire Playhouse), featuring the chorus Charlie Barnecut, Craig Johnson, Dan Canham, Mike Shepherd and Andy Brodie

I'm a massive believer in dressing up. Always have been. I think everybody changes the minute they dress up, but you have to make sure that the clothes fit. Teachers need to find things that make people less body conscious. You need big, funny clothes because if you're asking people to lose their inhibitions, the last thing you want them to do is to try and squeeze into trousers that don't fit.

I always think trying to have a way of making a space dark is good because I think acting, creating and improvising is very exposing. If you can black out the windows and just have torches, that's great. If you haven't got a lighting rig, you don't need it. You can have electric candles, you can have torches. You can have your iPhones on, you know, whatever you might have to see if you can take the edge off so that people don't feel exposed. I think that's 90% of what I do with actors.

I take the pressure off actors by playing music underneath what they're doing, which is encouraging them not to use words all the time, to work physically, to take it out of the face and into the body. Think about all the things that make you feel exposed: being yourself, being strongly lit, feeling like you have to fill a silence. Take all those fears away, and people will surprise you. And then once they're discovering things, then you can take away the crutches.

I think normally people build the other way round: rehearse in raw daylight, and then put the lights down. Do it the other way around, rehearse in the dark, and then bring the lights up when people know what they're doing.

Emma Rice

LINKS & NOTES:

Scrapbooks and boxes

Many of the Kneehigh creative teams kept scrapbooks - for specific productions or as sources of inspiration. Keeping a 'live' scrapbook into which goes postcards, note about snippets of overheard conversations, photos from magazines or newspapers, Polaroid photos, images found online, extracts from text: there's no wrong way to make a scrapbook. They become a handy tool for finding ideas, provoking thought and making connections between ideas.

Drama teachers might choose to create a generic box of 'stuff' - again, there's no prescribed way to do this. It could be a paper based box file, it could be a larger box into which goes unusual items found, discarded or donated: anything which inspires a sense of play.

Both the scrapbook and the 'stuff box' don't need to be costly - aim to avoid buying anything new.

Books, films, stories and music

- Italo Calvino: *Italian Folktales*. Penguin, 2000
- Brothers Grimm: *The Complete Fairy Tales*, Vintage, 2007
- Gabriel Garcia Marquez's short stories
- Ladybird books
- The novels of Louis de Bermiers
- The films of Quentin Tarintino, David Lynch, Emir Kusterica, Roy Anderson, Yorgos Lanthimos, Jacques Tati, Monsieur Hulot and Jour de Fete
- Films and silent movies starring Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Laurel & Hardy, and the Marx Brothers
- Playlists curated by you and your students
- Stories for children and/or adults that you find in charity shops, or on explorations of bookshops
- The work of John Berger
- Plays by Brecht that have a political message that you can relate to
- Percussion instruments
- Old hymn books or books of songs sung in primary school
- Traditional folk tales from different areas in the UK
- Books and poems by Charles Causeley
- *Tales from Shakespeare* by Charles and Mary Lamb
- *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre* and *Impro for Storytellers* by Keith Johnstone

LINKS & NOTES:

Other resources available online:

- Emma Rice's Essay for BBC Radio 3 on theatre directing (2011)
- Interview about *The Tin Drum* with Carl Grose, Mike Shepherd and Charles Hazlewood
- Mike Shepherd talks through his scrapbook for *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*
- Mike Shepherd describes his **rehearsal process** and talks about **games** and how to use them in rehearsal.
- Anna Maria Murphy describes writing *Tristan & Yseult*
- Bill Mitchell talks about his work with Kneehigh, and his work in theatre
- A **sneak peak** at *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*, adapted from the book by Michael Morpurgo.

Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] Emma Rice's Essay (15:00): https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b00zt72v
[↗] Interview about *The Tin Drum* (2:42): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q00zlhKGLus
[↗] Mike's scrapbook for *Dead Dog in a Suitcase* (3:11): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ml6SpJEFmSo
[↗] Mike's rehearsal process (2:04): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqGliGLrOdc
[↗] Games (1:32): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EINGMl__r4
[↗] Writing *Tristan & Yseult* (3:24): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=duh-N3Bu7Tc
[↗] Bill Mitchell (7:29): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEic2Vl0TYg
[↗] Sneak peak (1:26): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7lWTG0Um8Q

Where can we find examples of different storytelling elements in Kneehigh's work?

👁 Device

Where you've seen Kneehigh do this?

👁 Cross gender casting

Lydia in *The Red Shoes* is scripted as transvestite

Storytellers in *The Wild Bride*, androgynous, shaved heads, vest and underpants

Removal men in *Midnight's Pumpkin* dressed in brown caretaker coats and flat caps

👁 Staging and Set

Used in rehearsal from the very beginning, set is integral to the performance. Devil in *The Wild Bride* observed from the top of the tree – like a storytelling 'zone' from which to narrate. Similar to the observing storytellers in *The Red Shoes* as they watched the action.

👁 Time period

Often set in the past to create a full world that the audience can escape to.

Elements of European fairy tale settings also help remove us from the real world.

👁 Casting

Not necessarily 'traditionally' trained actors: performers, classically trained musicians, gymnasts/acrobats, storytellers etc. Mike and Emma looked for the right 'fit' of people for the ensemble, look for their naughtiness.

A key element to Kneehigh's work is the nature of the ensemble, of which the audience should also become a part.

👁 Choice of music

Eclectic. Much of it is written for the company by Stu Barker.

Cultural references enhance the sense of nostalgia.

Whatever music is chosen, it must provoke an emotional and physical response for the audience.

👁 Creation of effects such as blood

Use of red socks for mutilated feet in *Midnight's Pumpkin*

Red ribbon and paint for mutilated feet in *The Wild Bride*

👁 Puppetry

A wood and willow puppet in *The Wild Bride*

👁 Character function/interpretation

Many are archetypal and fulfil the usual function as seen in stock characters of fairytale etc.

👁 Dance and live/recorded music

Folk dance-style choreography in *The Wild Bride*

Aerial ballet in *Midnight's Pumpkin*, and the audience was also taught a dance for the two balls that took place. The Prince and ensemble sang live.

LINKS & NOTES:

Live band in *Don John*

Recorded music to create nostalgia and emotional responses in *Steptoe and Son*.

House music is also very important to create a particular atmosphere. In *Brief Encounter*, 'ushers' sang and played instruments

Use of classical music is also key.

Use of props and costume

Non-naturalistic, and often surprising.

Mice in *Midnight's Pumpkin*, reminded us of community theatre (white dressing gown, cardboard teeth, socks)

Umbrellas as geese (in *The Wooden Frock*)

Storytelling/community theatre/ poor theatre influence – evidence of the view of looking for opportunities with props rather than having the actual item. It's much more interesting!

Larger than life characters (the Vicar in *The Red Shoes*) – almost cartoon/caricature. Colour is important, and slightly vintage/retro look to a lot of characters, e.g. thick rimmed glasses, socks and sandals etc.

Strong visual imagery

Red paint for the cut off hands in *The Wild Bride*

Moon in *Steptoe and Son*

Pear tree in *The Wild Bride* – magicians's lightbulbs which had been adapted slightly

Letter writing scene in *The Wild Bride*: 3 characters standing at 3 points of triangle, one holds a letter in their hand. By sleight of hand they hide it behind their back. The character to whom they are sending it then brings one out from behind their back (much easier to demonstrate practically!) with a whoosh noise. Done very quickly, very effective

Storytellers as observers

The Red Shoes and *Tristan & Yseult*. The Love Spotters in T&Y spoke to the audience, often in unison "We are the unloved, we are the Love Spotters", with a short physical routine. The 2nd act starts with exactly the same routine, "we are still the unloved..."

Breaking the 4th wall

Many Kneehigh pieces start with interaction between audience and actors: removal men in *Midnight's Pumpkin*, ushers (who also sang) in *Brief Encounter*, birdwatchers in *Tristan & Yseult*. Two main characters in *Brief Encounter* sat in the front row of cinema as audience entered auditorium

Narration, talking to the audience, ad lib etc

Creation and use of performance space

Many touring venues are traditional proscenium arch but use of auditorium space is important. The Devil in *The Wild Bride* walked through the auditorium and then back on to stage – it's important to find a way to connect.

Naughtiness/tongue in cheek

'Yoga' scene between prince and bride in *The Wild Bride*

Prince's bath scene in *Midnight's Pumpkin*, dropping of the towel at the end

Phallic balloon modelling in *Brief Encounter*!

LINKS & NOTES:

Workshop ideas for teachers

The workshop ideas below are not prescriptive but instead are a guide to encouraging playfulness and theatricality in both scripted and devised work. We place an emphasis on playing, on silliness and chaos, which can remove premature concerns about getting things 'right' or 'perfect'. The information below is designed for teachers to deliver to students in workshop form. We encourage you to:

- Lead the session(s) in spaces other than your usual teaching space, in order to experience different indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Prepare a kit of 'stuff' - props, costumes, instruments, colourful cloth, toys. Anything that will encourage play and improvisation



As soon as you start getting your group to have fun with what they're doing and play to their strengths, you're on to a winner because they love what they're doing. What they're doing becomes really funny or engaging and so on. As a director, you can always tailor it into whatever you want. You can dial it down, dial it up…Students often ask "what's the right way of doing this?" and of course, the answer to give is that "YOU are the right way of doing this. Just engage with it and I'll give you some stepping stones to help you do what you do best".

Giles King

In the Studio 21: Imaginary landscapes

Mark a starting point in the performance space. The first person enters and makes a physical offer, i.e open a gate, jump over a ravine, crawl down a tunnel then come back out. The next person repeats the first action then adds something then comes back out, the next person goes etc...The landscape builds, but make sure its mimed parameters stay accurate.

Once the landscape is established two or three adventurers can inhabit it. What are they looking for? What happens? Find an ending. Those watching can make suggestions and begin to find a story.



Improvisation is really important for storytelling.

Mike Shepherd

LINKS & NOTES:

In the Studio 22: Character traits

Emma Rice worked with Tom Morris on the adaptation of Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus*. This task is one that Tom describes in the programme for the play.

Once the shape of the story that you're telling has been defined, tested and refined, compile a list of words to describe each of the characters in your piece. From those lists, choose just three for each character. Then, choose one and ask a member of your ensemble to dress and improvise as that character, informed by those three attributes. For example, Tom Morris describes the task when rehearsing *Nights at the Circus*:

"Lizzie, the adoptive mother of the winged woman in our show, is for our purposes, 'protective', 'volatile' and 'ferret-like". Actor Carl Grose is dressed up in an impromptu costume and required to improvise in character. He draws freely on everyone's work and the result is an utterly implausible and strangely moving female impersonation." (Tom Morris, *Nights at the Circus* programme, 2006)

In the Studio 23: *The Red Shoes* Teaching Plan

This is an outline of how you might introduce students to a Kneehigh, or Kneehigh-style text. Using *The Red Shoes* as an example, we've suggested some activities to support your students in their own exploration. Remember that Kneehigh uses a palette of techniques, devices and styles, rather than approaching every play in exactly the same way.

Each rehearsal or workshop should begin with a warm-up. This could be games, a run, a dance: whatever your group finds helpful in losing inhibition and developing a strong sense of ensemble.

- Everyone reads the play independently
- In a workshop session, ask the ensemble to retell the story, in as few words as possible, from different characters' points of view. Combine this with Kneehigh style physical games,chorus exercises, hot seating and clowning. Identification of key themes and characters who represent them, having brainstormed words. For example. the soldier in *The Red Shoes*, whose face is perhaps never seen, or always be in part-shadow: a hint of the what-might-have-been.
- Other themes of *The Red Shoes* include loss, destruction, a sense of propriety: Can the ensemble think of a time period where those elements were key? In Emma Rice's version of the play, it was decided that the characters were all people who had seen things they wished they'd never seen. Ask the group to dress the Chorus in costumes from the resources in your drama studio. How can

LINKS & NOTES:

you create a sense of cohesion between the Chorus?

- Set a task to each create a playlist to research music of the era in which they wish to set the play. This will create very good source material for impro and choreography...
- Movement workshop: Students can be seated around the room, on a chair or near different levels and/or surfaces. Each person should come up with 5 basic movements associated with trying on a much desired pair of new shoes. Talk them through the process – "they're patent, look at how they catch the light, what happens when you stand on tip toe?" etc. The group can then each teach their 5 moves to each other, which will create a 25 move sequence. Use music from the playlists students have created to experiment with tempo, style, mood etc. Jurassic 5's *Swing Set* is a great starting point for musical exploration of this kind. Ask the group to perform this dance, as if in different conditions: dancing in their bedroom, in a talent contest, as if embarrassed, as if everything amplified 500%, as if trying to cast off their shoes etc.
- This sequence can then be broken down into smaller motifs, which are evident throughout the piece, particularly from the girl. You can also consider how the play ends, and the way in which this dance can be incorporated.
- Cultural references also help students get into character. For the actor playing Lydia, for example, Tim Curry in *The Rocky Horror Show* might show the extravagance of the character.

Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:





Remember the key pillars of Kneehigh's work:

ENSemble
music (live or recorded)
Story telling
immediacy
a sense of liveness
a sense of play...

all for one, and one for all

The Kneehigh Legacy Movers and Shakers

There are so many brilliant people who contributed to the Kneehigh journey - some stayed, some left, some left and came back!

As well as performers there were artists, engineers, producers, managers, technicians, stage managers, directors, designers, composers, writers, choreographers, administrators and more. Many of these listed were multi-skilled, worked across disciplines and defied definition!

Here are some of them, starting with the early days...

Charlie Barnecut, John Mergler, Emma Wilby, Lisa North, Pandora Feltham, Allan Drake, Tim Dalling, Dave Mynne, Jim Carey, Maggie Hutton, Will Coleman, Hilary Coleman, Annabelle McFadyen, Jon Oram, John Downie, Bob Butler, Amanda Harris, Anna Maria Murphy, Nick Darke, Tristan Sturrock, Mary Woodvine, Bec Applebee, Sue Hill, Bill Mitchell, Giles King, John Voogd, Robin Kewell, Morgan Lowndes, Swifty, Carl Grose, Simon Harvey, Richie Smith, Steve Jacobs, Craig Johnstone, Éva Magyar, Robbi Luckay, Steve Tanner, Emma Rice, Colin Seddon, Simon Baker, Steph Curtis, Vicky Hutchinson, Jack Morrison, Kyla Goodey, Inner Sense Percussion Orchestra, The Baghdaddies, Simon Edwards, Marian Masoliver, Helen Tiplady, Sally Knight, Polly Motley, Emily Alden, Gísli Örn Garðarsson, Nína Dögg Filippusdóttir, Ed Woodall, Andy Williams, Mandy Lawrence, Stu Barker, Malcolm Rippeth, Ben Nicholls, Alex Wardle, John Surman, Luis Santiago, Natalia Tena, Adjoa Andoh, Tom Morris, Brett Harvey, Vicki Mortimer, Etta Murfitt, Rina Fatania, Ian Ross, Pat Moran, Seamus Carey, Lizzy Westcott, Andrew Durand, Jack Shalloo, George Frost, Martin Hyder, Sarah Wright, Lyndie Wright, Jenny Beare, Omari Douglas, Paul Crewes, Michael Vale, Mike Gunning, Calvin Dean, Zaid Al Rikabi, Rachel Leonard, Ben Sutcliffe, Kate Foster, Charlie Simpson, Aled William Thomas, Dave Harraway, Paul Tregunna, Kirsty Woodward, Millie Jones, Patrycja Kujawska, James Gow, Alex Lupo, Justin Lee Radford, Dom Coyote, Bettrys Jones, Bev Rudd, Audrey Brisson, Phil Brodie, Edith Tankus, Carly Bawden, Ncuti Gatwa, Adébayo Bolaji, Tommy Jackson Greaves, Nandi Bhebhe, Pete Buffery, Dean Nolan, Andy Brodie, Gareth Charlton, Marc Antolin, Paul Hunter, Niall Ashdown, Katy Owen, Stu Goodwin, Hannah Vassallo, Dom Marsh, Hayley Carmichael, James Lailey, Janys Chambers, Ruth DeCourcy Shepherd, Jay Jones, Joey Holden, John Lee, Keziah Serreau, Liz King, Louis King, Lucy Davies, Lucy Gaskell, Lucy Rivers, Matt Armstrong, Myrddin Wannell, Neil Murray, Les Brotherston, Dave Johnzy, Paka, Pete Hill, Sean Donohoe, Stu McLoughlin, TJ Holmes, Tamsin Griffin, Terry Taplin, Adam Pleeth, Avye Leventis, Adam Sopp, Ailsa Dalling, Alex Murdoch, Alex Vann, Ali Firth, Andy Graham, Angela Hardie, Annette McLaughlin, Charles Hazlewood, Chloe Kitching, Chris Jared, Damon Daunno, Dann Carroll, Dom Bilky, Dot Atkinson, Ed Hughes, Eddie Jay, Ewan Wardrop, Fay Powell Thomas, Fiona Buxton, Hal Sylvester, James Traherne

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LINKS & NOTES:

[↗] You can find out more about individual productions and artists' contributions by exploring Kneehigh's archive material at **www.thisiskneehigh.co.uk**





Take notes here:

LINKS & NOTES:

