



DRACULA

BY BRAM STOKER

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY NICK LANE

BLACKEYED
THEATRE

I BID YOU WELCOME

This education pack has been created to complement Blackeyed Theatre's touring production of Dracula, offering support to both teachers and students in their exploration of the play.

The materials are appropriate for both GCSE and A-Level students looking for an accessible reference tool and seeking a deeper understanding of the performance. Some sections are specifically tailored to help drama students critically evaluate what they observe on stage by offering insight into the decisions made by the creative team.

For further information on the production, please follow [this link](#).



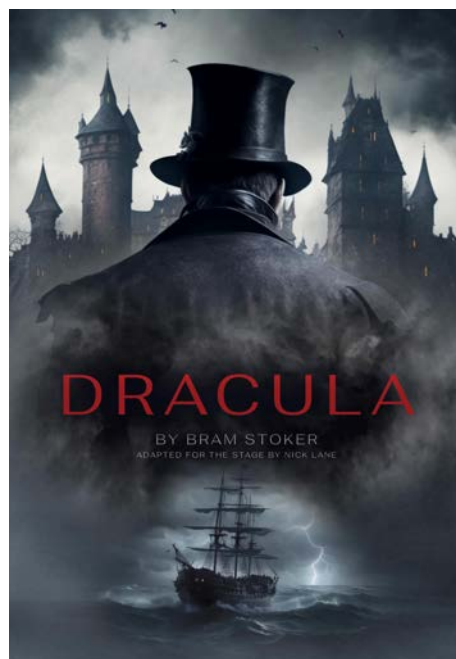
DRACULA

BY BRAM STOKER | ADAPTED BY NICK LANE

The time is 1897. Mankind is on the cusp of vast technological change, scientific mastery and media innovation. Poised between traditional beliefs, the threat of the unknown and the shock of the new world, an altogether darker fear is emerging. As a new shadow looms large over England, a small group of young men and women, led by Professor Van Helsing, are plunged into an epic struggle for survival.

Stretching from London, through provincial England, to the mountainous wastes of Transylvania, Bram Stoker's timeless gothic thriller embodies the struggle to break taboos, resist temptation and stop the unknown outside becoming the enemy within.

Adapted by Nick Lane, this brilliant, theatrical treatment of Bram Stoker's adventure blends Victorian Gothic with the Contemporary, showcasing Blackeyed Theatre's trademark ensemble performance style and featuring a haunting soundscape, powerful performances and innovative design for an exhilarating theatrical experience.



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BRAM STOKER



Abraham "Bram" Stoker was born in Dublin, Ireland on the 18th of November 1847, to Abraham Stoker and Charlotte Thornley.

His love of storytelling was borne from a period of childhood illness in which Stoker was frequently bedridden. During this time, his mother would entertain him with imaginative stories focused on supernatural events, strange occurrences and isolated characters.

"I was naturally thoughtful, and the leisure of long illness gave opportunity for many thoughts which were fruitful according to their kind in later years."

Superstition and horror were of great popularity during the Victorian era. Although Dracula is often seen as the pinnacle of horror fiction, it is predated by a variety of novels that developed the Victorian reader's fascination with the supernatural including; Mary Shelley's **Frankenstein** (1818) and Oscar Wilde's **The Picture of Dorian Gray** (1890). The little known **Carmilla** (1872) by Sheridan Le Fanu is regarded as one of Stoker's key inspirations for writing Dracula.

During his years as a student at Trinity College Dublin, Stoker became interested in the theatre. After a short stint of working as a clerk within the civil service, Stoker eventually began working as a theatre reviewer and critic with the Dublin Evening Mail.

After marrying Florence Balcombe in 1878, the Stokers moved to London after Bram accepted a position at the Lyceum Theatre as a business manager and personal assistant to the renowned actor Henry Irving. He held this position for 27 years.

During his tenure at the theatre, Stoker wrote Dracula. In the week prior to publication, Stoker hastily organised a performance of the novel on the Lyceum Stage. Theatrical readings of novels were commonplace at the time as a simple way for artists to copyright their works.

Although Stoker is widely regarded as a Gothic writer, over the course of his career he published a variety of novels and short stories in a range of genres. His creation, Count Dracula, has been an inspiration to a plethora of characters, each developing on Stoker's initial depictions of vampiric life.

The details of Stoker's death in 1912 are relatively unknown. His certificate of death states the cause of death as "Locomotor ataxia" - this is commonly regarded as a reference to syphilis. Stoker's ashes are stored in the Golders Green Crematorium in north London.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Jonathan Harker, a solicitor, travels to Transylvania to meet Count Dracula. Dracula is keen on purchasing a property in England and Harker travels to help finalise the sale.

Shortly after Harker's arrival at Castle, Dracula explains to Harker that he will travel to England. Harker begins to feel desperately uncomfortable; his host becomes increasingly controlling and Harker witnesses a variety of unusual and frightening events. Fearing for his life, Harker escapes the castle.



Meanwhile in England, Mina Murray (Harker's fiancé) and her friend Lucy Westenra discuss Lucy's recent engagement to Arthur Holmwood; her preferred choice of three suitors.

Mina receives word that Jonathan has been taken ill and travels to Europe to join him. Once Harker is well, the two eventually travel back to England together.

In Mina's absence, Lucy falls gravely ill. Despite the efforts of her former suitor, Dr Seward, her condition worsens. Failing to diagnose the issue, Seward contacts his former professor, Dr Van Helsing.

Van Helsing, an expert in folk medicine and ancient tradition, is able to ascertain that her affliction is related to vampyrism. Through a variety of unconventional methods, Van Helsing attempts to cure Lucy. However, despite the efforts to save her, Lucy eventually becomes a vampire. In an attempt to save her soul, Holmwood drives a stake through Lucy's heart.



Dr. Seward, overseeing an asylum, has a patient named Renfield. Renfield exhibits bizarre and unpleasant behaviours including the consumption of live animals. Renfield awaits the imminent arrival of their 'Master.' Dracula does finally come to meet Renfield. However, he is frustrated with his servant and Renfield dies at his master's hand.



Mina and Harker travel back to England and quickly realise that Dracula intends to travel away from England. In order to hinder him, they sanctify crates of soil that he had initially used to travel to England.

As a way of tracking Dracula's movements, Mina allows herself to be hypnotised and the group are able to follow the count back to Transylvania where they succeed in killing Dracula.

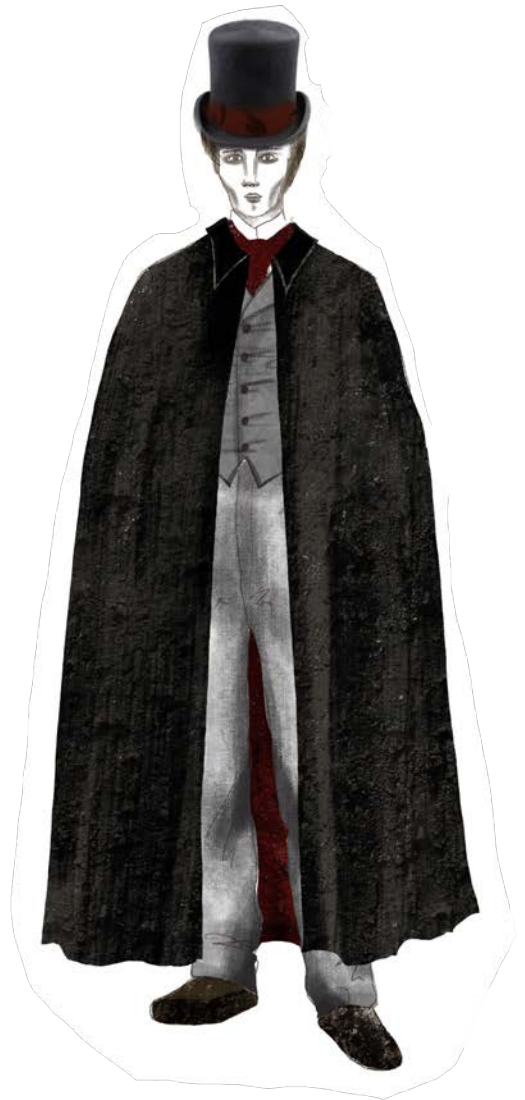
CHARACTERS

COUNT DRACULA | A vampire

Count Dracula, a Transylvanian nobleman, is the successor of the riches of an ancient and illustrious family, evidenced most notably by his home, a crumbling Gothic castle in the Carpathian Mountains filled with articles indicative of extraordinary historic wealth.

Dracula is a shapeshifter and has the ability to take the form of various animals (bat, dog) and meteorological states (fog, mist). He also possesses the ability to control minds and exhibit strength far beyond human capabilities.

Alongside his supernatural abilities, he is hindered by a variety of unique weaknesses. He is unable to cross the threshold of a victim's home without being welcomed, is repelled by the presence of sacred items and symbols of Christianity, and is unable to cross running water without assistance. Contrary to many modern depictions of vampires, Count Dracula is able to walk in the light of the sun; however, his supernatural abilities are hindered by daylight.



1897 - CHARACTERS



JONATHAN HARKER | A solicitor

Jonathan Harker is hired by Dracula to provide legal services related to a property purchase. Held captive in Dracula's castle, Harker witnesses a variety of strange and horrifying events and is fortunate to escape alive.

Harker's journal serves as the narrative voice for a large portion of Stoker's novel. Throughout the story, Harker transforms from a naive young man into an intrepid and brave fighter determined to avenge his wife, Mina, after she is transformed into a vampire by Count Dracula. Harker succeeds in his mission and ultimately brings about Dracula's downfall and death, releasing Mina from the vampiric curse.

DRACULA

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING | A professor

Van Helsing is a knowledgeable scientist, philosopher and doctor of medicine. His varied work in academia has led to the acquisition of a deep and comprehensive knowledge of the existence and attributes of vampires.

Driven by a moral obligation to protect innocent people from the horrors that Dracula is capable of, Van Helsing is the antithesis of Dracula. A man dedicated to good against Dracula's evil rule. Van Helsing's knowledge of vampiric activity, and how to combat against the supernatural, is an invaluable source that helps to lead to the group's success.



MINA MURRAY | A school teacher

Mina, Harker's fiancé, in many ways is introduced as a model Victorian woman; supportive, nurturing and virtuous. However, as the story progresses, Mina exhibits qualities that challenge the gender norms of the Victorian period; she is resourceful, independent and brave.

Mina experiences horrific events throughout the novel. At each stage, she remains resilient and resourceful. Her intelligent and meticulous approach to analysing a collection of newspaper clippings, letters and diary entries into a coherent narrative is key to the success of the group.



LUCY WESTENRA | A socialite

Lucy, like Mina, is initially portrayed as the embodiment of the ideal Victorian woman. She is beautiful, pure and gentle in manner. Her role as a symbol of Victorian ideals is evidenced by the keen interest of her suitors. However, unlike Mina, Lucy exhibits a naivety and vulnerability - characteristics that Count Dracula is able to take advantage of in order to control her.

Under Dracula's control, Lucy quickly embodies qualities that were seen as uncouth and unwomanly by Victorian society. She becomes overtly sexual and seductive - particularly towards Holmwood. Lucy is eventually killed by Holmwood in an attempt to save her soul.



DRACULA

JOHN SEWARD | A physician

Dr Seward is a thoroughly modern medical professional who is committed to the learnings of modern science and technology's role in the diagnosis and treatment of patients. However, as a former pupil of Van Helsing, he is accepting of different approaches. Ultimately, a combination of modern and ancient medical approaches is key to defeating Dracula.



ARTHUR HOLMWOOD | A nobleman

Holmwood is a member of the Victorian elite. Upon his father's death, he inherits the title of Lord Godalming. By inheriting this title, Holmwood becomes a direct parallel to Count Dracula and evidence that not all those with titles are evil.

Holmwood is successful in his pursuit of Lucy and the two become engaged. He is a devoted partner and displays great moral integrity during Lucy's downfall.



QUINCY MORRIS | An American

Quincy Morris, a brave and adventurous Texan, is an adept marksman and has a strong knowledge of nature and how to survive in the wilderness. In some ways, Morris is archetypal of the macho, rugged hero, however he is shown to portray a softer and more sensitive side; particularly in his dealing with Lucy.



HENNESSEY | Dr Seward's attendant

Hennessey is a minor character in the novel who, in Dr Seward's absence, takes charge of Renfield - one of the sanitarium's most notable and complex patients.



RENFIELD | A patient

Renfield is a patient in Dr Seward's sanitarium and is intermittently under Dracula's influence. Renfield's sanity shifts rapidly between complete lucidity and destructive madness. Renfield holds a belief that by consuming animals (flies, spiders, birds) their own life will be extended.



NB: In Bram Stoker's novel, Hennessey and Renfield are presented as male characters. In Blackeyed Theatre's adaptation of the novel, both characters are rewritten as women. This decision has been made to champion the role of emerging female physicians in the late Victorian period and to highlight the abhorrent incarcerations of women in sanitariums; many of whom were committed by their disgruntled husbands.

THEMES

THE OUTSIDER

In Victorian society, whilst the British Empire was at its height, media and government sought to create a fear and loathing of the outsider - particularly any threat to the elements of British imperialism; Christianity, commerce and civilisation. Transylvania, to a Victorian reader, stood as a threat to the English way of life.

Social anxiety towards the outsider is clearly reflected in Stoker's creation of Count Dracula:

- His journey to England reflects the fears of immigration and accepted xenophobia of the time.
- His repulsion towards objects and symbols linked to Christianity borne from Victorian anxieties about maintaining moral and religious purity in the face of perceived threats.
- His influence over Lucy. At the beginning of the novel, Lucy is perceived as pure, innocent and the embodiment of the ideal Victorian woman. Although her actions are involuntary, under Dracula's influence Lucy begins to portray qualities of the "New Woman" - an early feminist ideal calling for female independence, sexual liberation and an overthrow of the traditional gender roles.



GENDER & SEXUALITY

Victorian England's societal expectations and ideals were sexually repressive. Many believe that Stoker himself may have been homosexual and forced to hide this from public view through fear of being persecuted.

Gender norms were also heavily imposed on society; particularly the roles and expectations of Victorian women. Women were expected to be chaste, obedient and servile.

In many ways, vampyrism can be seen as a metaphor for sexual liberation; something that challenged the doctrines of Christianity that pervaded both private and political life in the 1890s.

MODERNITY

In the decades leading up to the publication of Dracula, advances in technology had moved significantly. The harnessing of electricity, the advancements in communication and new tools being implemented in modern medicine all represent a rapidly changing technological landscape.

Dracula is, in many ways, a symbol of tradition. He is a product of his lineage, supported by inherited wealth, and the epitome of archaic tradition.

The English characters in the story are all drawn towards novelty; Mina uses a typewriter, Seward uses a phonograph and Harker uses a pocket camera. However, It is only with the help of Van Helsing, a man with an in depth knowledge of folk medicine, that they are able to diagnose Lucy's condition.

Stoker, despite his love and fascination with modern technology, concedes that technological advancement alone cannot conquer all and warns the reader against putting too much faith in novelty.

1870

Discovery of Electricity

1875

Invention of the Telephone

1876

Invention of the Gaslight

1890

Invention of the Typewriter

1895

Discovery of Radioactivity

1897

Invention of X-rays



GENRE & STRUCTURE

GOTHIC

The Gothic genre's popularity grew immensely over the course of the 19th century.

Gothic literature is most easily classified by the presence of fear or haunting holding the narrative and its characters.

The context of the action often takes place within dark or eerie locations. By situating Dracula's castle at the distant heights of the Carpathian Mountains, Stoker isolates Dracula and his kind from general civilisation.

Harker's feelings of isolation, claustrophobia and fear within the castle, are typical of gothic style. Stoker highlights the absence of light, the abundance of strange relics and the cobweb lined crevices to build towards an environment of decay and antiquity.

Weather plays a key role within the Gothic setting; foreshadowing upcoming narrative events or reflecting a character's mental or physical state. Dracula often appears accompanied by the presence of destructive or frightening weather; all building towards a sense of foreboding and dread.



THE SUBLIME

The Sublime is an expansion of the philosophical branch aesthetics; a set of principles exploring nature, beauty and their use in artistic expression.

The poets of the Romantic period saw the Sublime as an opportunity to explore themes of enlightenment above rationalism in an attempt to take readers on an emotional, imaginative and immersive journey. Romantics sought to evoke feelings of awe and wonder in the reader by using vivid descriptions of the grandeur of nature.

Gothic, as an extension of Romanticism, aims to subvert some of the traditional application of the Sublime and uses principles of aesthetics to evoke a visceral response in the reader. Gothic authors aimed to evoke feelings of isolation, fear and terror alongside feelings of awe and wonder to take the reader on an immersive and emotionally complex journey.

EPISTOLARY FICTION

Epistolary novels are written in the form of diary entries, letters and other forms of communication.

This form of writing allows for different character viewpoints of the narrative events (through letters, logs, etc) as well as allowing the reader space to form a detailed understanding of each character by offering insight into a character's most intimate and private thoughts through diary entries and private correspondence.



BLACKEYED THEATRE is one of the UK's leading mid-scale touring theatre companies. Since 2004 we have been creating exciting opportunities for artists and audiences by producing theatre that's audacious, accessible and memorable.

Blackeyed Theatre has two principal objectives through the work it produces; to provide audiences and artists with fresh, challenging work; and to make that work sustainable by reaching as wide and diverse an audience as possible.

Over the past few years, Blackeyed Theatre has balanced these artistic and business objectives by creating new, exciting versions of established classics in unique ways and by identifying relevance with today's audiences.

Recent examples of this include the 2015 production of *The Great Gatsby*, whose cast of seven doubled up as a 1920s jazz band, and the 2012 production of Brecht's *Mother Courage And her Children*, set in a post-apocalyptic world, designed to establish relevance with 21st century world events. Recent new commissions include *The Valley of Fear*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Sign Of Four* and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde* and *Frankenstein*, as well as *The Great Gatsby*, which was published by Methuen.

Other touring productions include *Not About Heroes* (Stephen MacDonald), *Teechers* and *Teechers Leavers '22* (John Godber), *The Trial* and the world premiere of *Oedipus* (Steven Berkoff), *Oh What A Lovely War* (Theatre Workshop), *Alfie* (Bill Naughton), *The Cherry Orchard* (Anton Chekhov), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Mother Courage and her Children* and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Bertolt Brecht).

2024 - BLACKEYED THEATRE



Oh What a Lovely War (2023)



Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde (2021)



Frankenstein (2022)



Teachers Leavers '22 (2023)

Resident at South Hill Park Arts Centre in Bracknell, Blackeyed Theatre takes top quality theatre to more than fifty UK towns and cities each year and recently expanded its tours to include The Netherlands and China. We believe regional theatre audiences deserve choice in the same way London audiences do. And as a company that receives no funding, we believe we're a great example of a sustainable theatre producer. In other words, we don't need outside funding to survive: we're self-funded.



Jane Eyre (2020)



The Valley of Fear (2022)

2024 - BLACKEYED THEATRE

We make our work sustainable by producing theatre that audiences want to see in ways that challenge their expectations, by bringing together artists with a genuine passion for the work they produce, and through an appreciation that titles of work with a wide appeal can still be performed in ways that push artistic boundaries. In short, it's about following audiences but also leading them, being affordable and responsive to demand while innovating and challenging expectations.



“ My belief is that theatre can and should be sustainable, both commercially and artistically. ”

Adrain McDougall - Artistic Director

To learn more about Blackeyed Theatre please visit blackeyedtheatre.co.uk.

ACT ONE

CHAPTER ONE | A MEETING IN TRANSYLVANIA

Jonathan Harker, a solicitor from England, is finishing a long journey to meet a client in Transylvania to finalise the sale of a home in England. On this last stretch of his journey, he meets two locals who warn him of the dangers of interacting with Count Dracula. Their worry for Harker is so severe that they offer him a crucifix for protection.

Harker arrives at Castle Dracula, and is welcomed by the Count. Dracula is hospitable, but offers some strange house rules to Harker. He insists that Harker avoids certain areas of the castle and spends the majority of time in his own room.

Harker finds a book, *A History of Transylvania*, and begins to learn more about his temporary home. He challenges the morality of Dracula's people; the Count quickly retorts with evidence supporting similar brutalities committed by the British Empire. Dracula is well versed in British history and challenges Harker on the savageries of several recent events. Harker is worried that he may have offended his guest, but Dracula reassures him; **"Do not be ashamed of how your people take. Power comes from blood, is it not so?"**

Meanwhile, Mina (Harker's fiancé) meets with her friend Lucy who is thrilled to have received three marriage proposals. She discusses her suitors and their varying attributes; Jack Seward (a compassionate psychiatrist), Quincy Morris (a wealthy and bold American) and Arthur Holmwood (A Member of Parliament). We learn that Lucy has accepted Arthur's proposal. Lucy shares with Mina that her mother, who is frail, is keen for Lucy and Mina to visit her in Whitby. Mina accepts the invitation and Lucy exclaims **"It's going to be a wonderful summer!"**

Back in Transylvania, Harker stumbles across a variety of unsettling finds in the labyrinthian castle. Upon meeting two sirens (or female vampires) Harker's fears for his safety are confirmed. The Count becomes increasingly controlling, commanding that Harker write letters home at specific intervals to assure those in England of his safety. Dracula explains to Harker that he is bound for England.

Harker reveals that he has seen Dracula's ability to climb walls in an otherworldly, reptilian fashion. He is petrified and fears for his life. **"I do not know what shall become of me."** In a frantic attempt at survival, Harker scales the walls of the castle - desperate to escape.

CHAPTER TWO | THE DEMETER

This physically driven section of the play describes the perilous journey of the Demeter - a ship bound for England. Through the voice of the ship's Captain, we learn that the initially calm and peaceful journey starts to take a turn.

Initially, crew members start to feel uneasy, as if something terrifying is to set upon them. This unease grows throughout the ship's crew but they are unable to explain their discomfort to the captain - only that they believe "there is something on board with us."

Crew members start to disappear from the ship. These unexplained disappearances begin to cause further panic, fear and dread for the crew on board the Demeter.

As perilous weather starts to further antagonise the ship's journey, for one member of the crew this journey proves too unsettling. They decide to take their fate, and their life, into their own hands.

As the ship reaches its destination, the Captain and last surviving crew member reveals that he has seen the beast that destroyed his colleagues. He laments his journey and prays, "May God help all those on land..."



CHAPTER THREE (PART ONE) | THE CORRUPTION OF LUCY WESTENRA

Lucy is fast asleep on a bench in a cemetery. We learn that sleepwalking (a habit that began in Lucy's childhood) has become a frequent occurrence and this is the fourth time Lucy has unwittingly made the journey between her residence in Whitby and the local cemetery.

Mina gently rouses her and Lucy shares that she is feeling uneasy. Initially she tries to justify this feeling as a response to Harker's absence and her worry for Mina - we learn that Mina has not heard from her fiancé in some time.

Upon reading of the fate of the Demeter, Lucy becomes convinced that an evil presence is closing in. Soon, her health starts to deteriorate rapidly. Alongside her sleepwalking and feelings of dread, Lucy becomes agitated and aggressive. It seems that Dracula may be possessing Lucy in her less lucid states.

Arthur Holmwood, Lucy's now fiancé, contacts Doctor Seward and asks for his help. Seward agrees to visit Lucy in Whitby.

Finally, Mina receives word of Harker. A nurse in a hospital in Budapest informs Mina that Harker has been unwell for six weeks and is suffering from hallucinations, delirium and is in a physically weak state. In haste, Mina packs her bags ready to journey to Budapest.

CHAPTER THREE (PART TWO) | FROM THE RECORDINGS OF DR SEWARD

Seward reveals that after hearing from Holmwood, his reasons for responding to his call are not purely selfless. He wishes to see Lucy and despite her rejection to his proposal, it is evident he still cares for her deeply.

Upon their reacquaintance, Lucy is initially cheerful and claims to be feeling well. Mina explains to Seward that she has a trip to plan for and excuses herself.

Lucy's attempt to hide her health issues quickly crumbles; she admits to Seward a series of unusual symptoms; particularly a pounding and insufferable headache "like something monstrous is inside my skull, pushing out."

Mina enters and Lucy instantly reassumes the facade of someone in good health. Seward shares with Mina that Lucy's condition is not one he has encountered before and is beyond his knowledge. He decides to write to his old professor, Van Helsing. Mina, reassured that her friend's health will return swiftly, embarks on a journey to Budapest.

Van Helsing arrives swiftly and quickly asserts that Lucy's condition is severe and showing signs of a type of blood condition not recognised by modern medicine; instead, a condition that has only ever existed in the realm of folklore. Van Helsing conducts multiple blood transfusions and with each one, Lucy's health gradually improves. Finally, Van Helsing forces a wreath of garlic around Lucy's neck. Seward, a modern man, is sceptical of this approach but Van Helsing insists it will aid Lucy's recovery.

Lucy's mother, Mrs Westenra, smelling something distinctly unpleasant, enters Lucy's bedchamber. Unwittingly, or possibly under Dracula's influence, she removes the garlic from Lucy's room.

Dracula enters from the shadows and Lucy beckons him towards her - welcoming him in. Dracula bites Lucy's throat and continues to feed as the scene turns to black.

ACT TWO

Newspaper reports detail a variety of mysterious deaths; most notably the death of Lucy and her mother and of Arthur Holmwood's father. There are also various reports of children coming to harm whilst spending time with a bloofer (beautiful) lady.

Van Helsing and Lucy's three suitors, Holmwood, Seward and Morris are gathered around Lucy's coffin. Van Helsing is keen to seek permission from Holmwood to open Lucy's coffin - he believes that Lucy is in fact 'undead' and could be the bloofer lady of the children's reports.

Eventually, Holmwood relents. They open the coffin and find it empty. Immediately, Lucy (now a vampire) appears behind the group and attempts to lure Holmwood to her.

"Come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you."

As Van Helsing uses a crucifix to repel Lucy, she becomes agitated and starts to speak in fluent Romanian. The group manages to restrain Lucy and Holmwood, reluctantly, drives a stake through her heart. Finally, Van Helsing beheads Lucy and frees her soul from Dracula's curse.



CHAPTER FOUR | RENFIELD

NB: This chapter is a recollection of the events in Seward's life. The timeline of this chapter runs parallel to events in Chapters One and Two.

A new patient, Renfield, has been admitted to the Carfax Sanatorium and is placed in Seward's care; he is assisted by his colleague Doctor Madeleine Hennessey.

Renfield asks for a notebook and the Doctors oblige. Next, she requests flies - presumably to study their behaviours. Seward admits that he may not be able to help with this request but Renfield uses some sugar to tempt flies to her cell.

Renfield's focus of study soon shifts from flies to spiders, then sparrows; using the last to feed the next. Once her room is filled with seventeen sparrows, Renfield begs for a kitten to continue her studies - a request that is denied by Seward.

Suddenly, all of the sparrows disappear and Renfield asserts that they have taken flight. The Doctors, however, deduce that Renfield has likely eaten the sparrows.

Albeit disturbed, Seward is fascinated by Renfield's case; he coins a new diagnosis (Zoöphagous maniac) and believes that his discovery of Renfield's psychosis could lead to a new publication.

Seward receives word from Holmwood that Lucy has fallen ill. He departs immediately leaving Renfield in Hennessey's care.

Renfield's health deteriorates quickly. Dracula communicates with her, promising to relieve her of her pain. Renfield promises her "Master" to patiently await his arrival. Her desperation to meet Dracula proves too much - she escapes her cell. The doctors and orderlies of the Sanatorium follow her to Carfax Abbey and eventually restrain her. Her actions displease Dracula who dismisses her pleas for forgiveness.

"You bring uninvited guests. To my house."

Renfield begins to flit between lucidity and madness. When left in the company of an orderly, Wesley, Renfield attacks him with a knife and drinks from the wound - "The blood is the life!"

As the timelines of the two acts start to align, Doctor Seward is clearly distraught by recent events; not only has he witnessed horrific scenes, but his belief and trust of modern medicine has been shattered.

2024 - ACT TWO

Van Helsing joins Seward at the Sanatorium and Renfield pleads with the men to allow her to leave; they refuse, believing she is still a threat to public safety.

Meanwhile, Mina and Harker are travelling back to London. On their journey, Harker spies a younger incarnation of Dracula and directs the driver to take them straight to the Carfax Sanatorium.

Upon their arrival, Harker is clearly distressed. Seward attempts to calm him with a sedative. Led by Mina, the group piece together the timeline of events and deduce that Dracula has travelled to England and is responsible for Lucy's fate and Renfield's recent descent into madness; they deduce that Dracula must be seeking sanctuary in Carfax Abbey (The property that Dracula had been looking to purchase, for which Harker travelled to Transylvania to finalise the sale).

Mina states, "According to folklore, vampires rest only in the soil of their homeland." Harker recalls the note he found in Castle Dracula, relating to a cargo order aboard the Demeter.

The team set about finding the crates of soil that Dracula has stored in Carfax Abbey. They find the crates and use holy water to sanctify the soil.

Dracula, blaming Renfield for initially leading the group to his home, attacks her. Whilst trying to save Renfield, Harker spots a word written in Renfield's blood - DECOY.

CHAPTER FIVE | THE PURSUIT OF DRACULA

Mina, separated from the rest of the group, encounters Dracula. Dracula takes control of her against her will. He cuts his chest and forces Mina to drink his blood.

Harker, Van Helsing and Seward enter and attempt to use a crucifix to force Dracula away from Mina. Dracula's power has increased and he forces the crucifix across the room with a swift flick of his hand.

As Harker challenges Dracula's actions, the Count again raises the hypocrisy of the British.

"Allowing their own to starve, to die in the street of disease for which medicine is saved only for ones such as you.

I could drink deep of your masses, and you would not know I was even here."

As the three men attempt to overpower Dracula, he swiftly disappears.

The team realise that one crate may have been missing from the fifty and deduce that Dracula could use this final crate to travel and settle anywhere in the world.

Mina suggests that her recent connection with Dracula could be used to track him down. Van Helsing hypnotises Mina. Mina describes being in a dark space with the sound of lapping water. The team realise that Dracula must have boarded a ship back to Transylvania.

Holmwood and Morris volunteer to go ahead, to attempt to intercept Dracula. However, on their travels they encounter the Sirens and ultimately meet a violent end.

Seward, Harker and Morris are next to encounter the Sirens. As Dracula's power over Mina increases, she joins the sirens in their attempt to seduce the three men into submission.

The men are able to overpower Dracula's servants and eventually come upon the Count himself.

Harker takes a stake and drives it through the heart of Count Dracula.

DRACULA IN A MODERN CONTEXT

THE OUTSIDER

Throughout the narrative, Dracula is perceived as a threat to the British way of life; a perspective drawn from the anxieties felt by many in the Victorian Era and the belief that a 'reverse colonisation' could dismantle the Empire's values.

Many scholars have drawn parallels between the treatment of Jewish settlers, forced from their homes in Eastern Europe through pogroms, and the descriptions of Dracula. Victorian media frequently labelled Jewish people as 'blood-suckers' and created a false narrative that framed the Jewish population as a major threat to Christianity. Further to these claims, antisemitic rhetoric often described Jewish people as parasitic.

Sadly, in modern day Britain, there are still fears of 'the outsider' that permeate throughout society. Xenophobic rhetoric spreads rapidly through social media and various influencers offer narratives that point towards immigration and multiculturalism as threats to the British way of life.

At the time of writing, riots are breaking out across the UK driven by those with far right beliefs. As in the Victorian era, some members of the British public are intent on casting 'the outsider' as the enemy.



GENDER & SEXUALITY

Dracula's portrayal of the model Victorian woman in parallel with the behaviours of vampiric women was reflective of the fears of 'the new woman;' sexual liberation, gender equality and feminist theory were all seen as major threats to the patriarchal Victorian society.

Today, women still face systemic oppression and most powerful decision-making roles are held by men worldwide.

Traditional gender roles suggest that certain behaviours or responsibilities can only be partaken by men or women. These beliefs continue to be weaponised, particularly towards genderqueer, trans or non-binary people whose gender identities disrupt more conventional notions of masculinity and femininity.

MODERNITY

As in Victorian times, fear of vampyrism (or the supernatural vs the traditional) can be reflective of the anxieties towards modern day technology.

With recent advancements in artificial intelligence, particularly the rise of generative AI, we are met by a technology that feels human. It's important to note that unlike many supernatural characters of the Victorian era (Frankenstein's Monster, for instance) Dracula has the ability to blend into human society. Many industries are now training AI platforms to generate text in a human manner and AI generated passages are often indistinguishable from pieces written by humans.

AI is also, in a sense, vampiric. In order to generate responses, AI's feed on data to expand their knowledge and enhance their performance.

Dracula also has the ability to control his victims' behaviour. There are parallels to be drawn between Dracula's ability to control and the rise of social media and the impact of influencers on everyday life. The behavioural influence of social media on our lives, albeit subtle, has the ability to change people's perspective, behaviour and opinions.

2024 - DRACULA IN A MODERN CONTEXT



BRECHTIAN INFLUENCE

MULTI-ROLING

Simply put, multi-roling is a performance mechanism that allows for one actor to play a multitude of characters. The technique was heavily used by Brecht as a way of distancing the audience from the emotional journeys of characters and instead to focus on the events of a narrative. Actors change physical and vocal skills in order to portray different roles throughout the production.

In order of appearance:

ACTOR ONE

Dracula | Van Helsing | Crewman of the Demeter | Brand

ACTOR TWO

Lucy | Katja | Siren 1 | 1st Mate of the Demeter | Renfield

ACTOR THREE

Mina | Siren 2 | Crewman of the Demeter | Mrs Westenra | Hennessey

ACTOR FOUR

Harker | Morris | Crewman of the Demeter | Wesley

ACTOR FIVE

Dracula | Seward | Coachman

ACTOR SIX

Dracula | Holmwood | Florin | Captain of the Demeter | Simmons



PLACARDS

Brecht wanted theatre to have the same energy as that as a boxing ring; with people encouraged to discuss the action in a way not ordinarily associated with live theatre. He wanted to stop audiences losing themselves in the story. Similar to boxing 'rounds,' Brecht would break up the action and often display the titles of each segment to the audience; encouraging audiences to pause for a moment to think about what they have just seen, or what they are about to see.

Dracula uses the placard technique by vocally offering a title to each section of the play. Actors introduce each part of the show as chapters of the story. More often than not, these are very literal suggestions of the action that is about to take place (i.e. Chapter One: A Meeting in Transylvania).

NARRATION AND DIRECT ADDRESS

Brechtian characters frequently speak directly to the audience, breaking down the 'fourth wall.'

This technique was initially created to remind audience members that they are spectators of a performance, and that the action they are witnessing is not 'real life.'

A narration technique is utilised throughout Dracula, but for a different purpose. As the novel is a collection of different letters, memoirs and journal entries, the actors deliver this text directly to the audience.



SYMBOLIC COSTUME

In this production of Dracula, the actors are on stage throughout the performance. There are no traditional 'entrances and exits' that allow for characters to change costumes out of view of the audience.

Costumes within Brechtian performance were always there to symbolise something about a character and frequently the audience would be able to see the actor change on stage.



GESTUS

Gestus, or Gesture, was a key part of how Brecht presented his characters. Gestures were used to highlight the archetypal nature of many of the roles in his plays; often character names were also simplified to their role in society; "The Cook," "The Mother," "The Young Woman."

Within Dracula, Gestus is used to connect the actors playing the role of Dracula ("The Vampire" or "The Outsider.").

INTERVIEWS

NICK LANE | Writer & Director

What was your approach to reimagining the character of Count Dracula in your adaptation of this classic story?

I suppose the main thing I've looked at, because Dracula is such a well written and widely re-written character, there are certain tropes he always has and you can't get away from that.

I was interested in the British Empire in the 1890s. It had plateaued as a global power though we were still doing some pretty despicable things, and I imagined Dracula as an admirer of that savagery. In an early scene he confronts Harker about the British cutting the thumbs off weavers and bombing the palace of Zanzibar. Through that lens, England is the natural destination for him. And, as he sees it, the ruling classes of Britain - feeding on the voiceless lower order in one way or another - are as vampiric as he is already so ought to understand making that next natural physical change - or at the very least, not to stand in his way.

I didn't want to make Dracula purely a bad guy. That's a zero-sum game; we're all good because he is bad. I wanted to explore the idea that there is a more complex side to the human struggle against vampirism, because in some ways we aren't much better.



Are there other characters that you found particularly interesting to adapt for a modern audience?

So, let's take Mina, who I think is the beating heart of the group. She is the one who pulls together all of the information. In the novel, that is less explicit. Stoker was writing for his audience and that audience was, for the most part, wealthy white men. You didn't get a lot of intelligent, self-aware female characters in male Victorian literature.



But Mina, because she transcribes Seward's notes and Harker's diaries, brings it all together and creates the timeline. She comes up with the idea of hypnosis. She has all of the ideas. Van Helsing says it's down to her 'man brain,' which is hilarious; we won't be referring to 'the man brain' in this version!

I wanted to give a journey to Mina; from innocence to experience and rebellion. Rather than conforming to what Victorian society expects of her.



How do you intend to portray the Victorian era on stage?

Because we've only got a cast of six, it's essentially in the body language and the physical relationships between the characters. You suggest the societal relationships between the characters through physicality.

Someone like Arthur Holmwood; the son of a lord and member of the aristocracy has different physical and spatial relationships to someone like Seward; a doctor who is dealing with people who are voiceless.



Dracula is an epistolary novel. How much of that writing style are you able to replicate in your adaptation?

Great question! In the first draft I took the approach of telling each section of the story in a slightly different style, so as to maybe reflect the different voices within the novel. It was probably a too literal approach and ultimately I wasn't happy with it. It's always been important to me that the author's work and themes are honoured, and the style is what makes Stoker's book stand out against the Gothic fiction of his contemporaries.

When I read the book - all these letters, telegrams, diary entries and what have you - as well as looking at these characters pulling together a mystery, it also felt a bit like I was prying on them! Finding a way to convey to the audience that the actors onstage are doing both of those things in part was what I thought I ought to be aiming for. In the end the style we have employed, I think, does convey that feeling - we're very open about whose letters or journals we are hearing - so that the audience (particularly the ones who perhaps have never read the book) is right there piecing the story together with the characters.



What are you most excited about getting your adaptation on stage?

I'm excited to work with Enric (Movement Director) and Tristan (Composer) on the physical and vocal elements of the project and work out how they interweave with the spoken text. We're looking at Transylvanian folk tunes and creating a vocal soundtrack, so as well as having music, a sound world can take over at certain moments.

The excitement for me is bringing all of these different ideas together. I want to tell a story where the audience are both getting what they expect and not. It needs to be Dracula, but it needs to be a version of Dracula that offers something unique. For those who don't know the novel, if we get it right, it's fresh, it's different and it's entertaining. For those who have read the book, it allows for some 'compare and contrast.'

2024 - WRITER & DIRECTOR



How did you set about deciding which actor would take which characters?

Each actor has two key roles, and three actors play Count Dracula. In the novel, the character of Dracula gets younger as he feeds, so having different actors play him should be an effective way of dramatising that de-ageing process.

David, who plays Van Helsing (the oldest other character), therefore plays Dracula the first time we see him. Playing those dual roles is interesting because you have two opposing figures. Van Helsing is invested in humanity and life, if not the empire. Dracula's investment is more about conquering and having everyone become him.

Dracula is then played by Richard, who also takes the role of Seward, a character who is physically unconfident and nervous. That offers a really fun contrast with Dracula, who is arguably the apotheosis of physical confidence. And the third Dracula - the strong, young, virile and dangerous Dracula - is played by Harry, who also plays Arthur Holmwood. Because Arthur doesn't drive the narrative particularly, it seemed much more fun to me to give that actor the meat of the vampire's conflict with the humans. He gets all the cool scenes!

Harker, played by Pelé, has a journey of realisation; he begins very much as someone who believes that England is the centre of the universe and by the end he is more aware that there is good and bad everywhere - including here.

Two characters who are male in the novel - Dr Hennessey and Renfield - are female in our version. For me it allows us to shine a light on the social norms of the time and gives the narrative more dramatic character-driven tensions. Maya-Nika, who plays Mina, also plays Hennessey. In 1897 there were fifty female doctors in London and 200 nationwide, so giving women that sort of power was very much in its infancy.

Meanwhile Marie, who plays Lucy, also takes the role of Renfield. I did a lot of reading into what they called "Asylums for Lunatic Women", the largest of which was a place called Hanwell. Women were treated dreadfully in Victorian society. At that time, if women were to answer back, didn't want to have sex, wanted too much sex, had heavy periods or couldn't have children, men were able to say "Right, let's commit them and I'll re-marry". All sorts of awful things would happen to those women.

ACTOR ONE

Dracula | Van Helsing | Crewman of the Demeter | Brand

ACTOR TWO

Lucy | Katja | Siren 1 | 1st Mate of the Demeter | Renfield

ACTOR THREE

Mina | Siren 2 | Crewman of the Demeter | Mrs Westenra | Hennessey

ACTOR FOUR

Harker | Morris | Crewman of the Demeter | Wesley

ACTOR FIVE

Dracula | Seward | Coachman

ACTOR SIX

Dracula | Holmwood | Florin | Captain of the Demeter | Simmons

During your writing process, was there anything that you stumbled upon in your research that became a driving force for this adaptation?

One of the concepts within this adaptation of Dracula when exploring vampirism, particularly in a post-pandemic world, was to explore what might actually be happening within the body of a vampire's victim. Even Professor Van Helsing, the most knowledgeable of the allies set against Count Dracula, is only really aware of the folkloric nature of the victim's transformation - a vampire bites, it feeds, the victim is somehow taken over, dies and then rises to become undead. In looking at finding a unique way of conveying that transference of power, I came across a number of articles on 'Bloodline Memory.'

I suspect the majority of us have heard of 'past lives' theory; a spiritual connection with our former selves rooted in the idea that a person's current life is not their first existence, but rather a continuation of their soul's journey through multiple incarnations. Some people, placed in deep hypnotic states, claim to have been able to 'access' the skills, feelings and memories of those past lives. And I'm not here to say that none of that is true - I understand that the idea of reincarnation is very powerful for a lot of people.

However, a counter-theory to that of reincarnation and past lives, is the idea of bloodline memory. That when, under hypnosis, a subject appears to be recalling activities, abilities or emotions they themselves have experienced, what they may actually be accessing is the experiences of their own ancestors. The closest actual evidence of this in science is "Transgenerational Epigenetic Inheritance." Experiments on mice (it's always the poor mice, isn't it?) in the US in 2013 revealed that a traumatic event can affect the DNA in sperm, thereby altering the brains and behaviour of subsequent generations.

These scientists' findings have led experts in the field to believe that a form of memory could be passed between generations, considering them highly relevant to things like phobias, anxiety and post-traumatic stress. Indeed, following the experiments Professor Marcus Pembrey from UCL said that it was, "High time public health researchers took human transgenerational responses seriously." Further, his belief was that we would, "Not understand the rise in neuropsychiatric disorders... without taking a multigenerational approach."

Now, I find all of that memory science stuff highly fascinating, but how do we link it to the vampire myth? Well, I thought... imagine that you have lived hundreds, possibly thousands of years. Imagine all the memories you would hold within you - an unstoppable tidal wave of years. So now, what if, I wondered... what if, when a vampire sinks his fangs into that innocent flesh, not only is blood being drawn from the neck, but something enters the victim's bloodstream. The viral infection of bloodline memory. The vampire's bloodline memory. Growing ceaselessly, dominating the host body, pushing out the original memories and personality of the victim and supplanting them with those thousands of years of hunting, killing, feeding... until, once the battle is won, the victim becomes the vampire.

If nothing else, it's a creepy thought... 29

VICTORIA SPEARING | Set Designer

What is a moment or theme in the production that you are particularly interested to explore? And how will you do this through your design choices?

When reading the script it was evident that there are a number of locations telling the story. Blackeyed Theatre has always beautifully embraced using one set and changing the space by moving furniture to suggest different locations letting the audience's imagination fill in the gaps.

There is always a backdrop for the piece, on this occasion myself and the director spoke about rooms and doorways. With this in mind I have created the three 'corners' in the set that could represent different rooms or locations. Each room has its own doorway so by weaving in and out of the doorways it allows actors to arrive in a new location. As the set is skeletal, the journey behind the set to a new place could be as interesting as the arrival. Maybe Dracula is ever present viewing the scenes unfolding?

Of course it is always fascinating to see how the cast and director use the set once they go into rehearsals, they often find ways to use things that you didn't imagine while you sit designing it on paper.

2024 - SET DESIGNER



Victoria's initial sketches of the set

What challenges have you encountered designing for this production?

Often the challenges of designing for a touring production are practical rather than artistic. As a designer, you need to consider how a set will come apart to be transported from venue to venue. The size of the van you transport the set in can influence how big the set is or how the set breaks down to be moved about.

The brief for the set was to fill larger theatre spaces so height is desirable. Tall walls are a good way to achieve this. As dull as it sounds, the length of space in the van influences the size of the flat (wall section) you can build. As I say - not all design decisions are artistic.

You also have to consider how much time it might take to put up and down too - as there is often a limited amount of time for get-in and get-outs. On this occasion, as there are steps and platforms, these had to be built in a way that would be practical to carry about and put up.

**Is there one element of the design that you are particularly proud of? Could you expand on the reasoning behind this choice?**

It is difficult to answer this before seeing the final piece - You never know how the set will work for a production until it is in a theatre space being performed on.

Something that I hope will work is the added element of foliage on the set. When reading the script, many of the locations are inside but there are moments outside. By adding little bits of foliage sprouting out of the set, hopefully it will help the cross over between inside and outside. A slight feeling of plants creeping over the set, of it being overgrown. It will add small flashes of texture and colour - similar to rearranging the furniture to change a location. Hopefully, a tiny hint at foliage will be enough for the audience to imagine outside locations.

In design, especially touring theatre, you don't always need a whole new set to appear on stage to take the audience to a new location. A small change, or highlighting an element on the set that was always there, or a change in the temperature of lighting on the same fixed set can be a signpost to the audience that the mood or location of the piece has just shifted.

Talking of texture and lighting, the set being open and skeletal will hopefully be interesting when lit. The themes of the play are often dark and sinister so I hope the lighting design with the skeletal walls will create interesting shadows - maybe you might spot a crucifix here and there, and we all know the effect of those on vampires!

THE CREATION OF A TOURING THEATRE SET



Initial sketches are made displaying Victoria's vision for the set. A motif of crucifixes is clearly integrated into the design.

When lit, the interesting shape of this structure can create a variety of threatening or ominous shadows on the floor of the stage.



Next, Victoria creates a **model box**. A three dimensional, scaled-down version of the set. Although the exact ratios of a model box can differ, the industry standard is 1:25.

Sometimes, designers will also create small figures to represent actors so the creative team and cast can have a better understanding of how the set can be used.



Victoria then adds a colour palette and a variety of different textures to the model.

This show also features a printed dance floorcloth. This is an excellent material for touring shows as it is very hard wearing and can be quickly rolled up and transported throughout the duration of the tour.



The final stage of the creation of a set is known as 'The Build.' This is when the full scale version of the set is created. Depending on the makeup of the set, this can involve a variety of different skills including building, carpentry, metalwork and painting. If the set is being built during the rehearsal process, marks (known as **spikes**) are made on the floor of the rehearsal room to indicate where the set will fit within the playing space.

2024 - SET DESIGNER

NAOMI GIBBS | Costume Designer

What is a moment, theme or character in the production that you are particularly interested to explore? And how will you do this through your costume design choices?

I was particularly interested in how we'd represent Renfield's introduction. Nick Lane references a 'straitjacket' in the script. A garment synonymous with mentally unwell people of the time-and sometimes the character Renfield in previous adaptations of Dracula.

Straitjackets, or 'strait waistcoats' (called so because they would be tightly fitting and restrictive) were used from the Georgian period onwards to attempt to alleviate the burden of violence or injury in understaffed asylums.

To me, whilst the straitjacket is a direct, brutal representation of a mental health patient of the era, it also metaphorically alludes to the tight hold that Dracula has on Renfield's psyche. I think of it almost like a moth's cocoon, and Renfield, the moth, desperate to emerge reborn and powerful.



We're creating a very simple garment that will be easy for Marie to quickly put on and wear over her base costume. It is more symbolic than accurate, but references to historic garments were researched. I'm excited to see what Marie does with the costume in rehearsal - how she will work it.



What challenges have you encountered with this production?

My main challenge is often the same for many productions: reigning myself in! As a lifelong Dracula fan (yes, I did the goth kid pilgrimage to Whitby at 16 with a face of black smudged makeup and trailing sleeves), my first sketches overshot the subtleties of the production in terms of complexity and perhaps a little ostentation.

I looked at traditional Romanian and Turkish textiles and silhouettes for Dracula and his 'world', and naturalistic Victorian era dress for the cast in England. I went as far as to illustrate the lot, but discussion with Nick brought us gently to the far simpler, pared back designs you see in the show. Something more impressionistic, with a more limited palette seemed more appropriate for this production.

Still, in classic Blackeyed form, everything is modular for multi-role and based on a foundation costume that can be considered 'neutral'. Once I'd let go of the colour, references and complexity I'd initially imagined, I saw the merit in the more austere and simple presentation. It was a challenge uncoupling from my first instinct but each time that happens, I feel it is an opportunity for growth and development as a designer.

How will you use costume to signify the Victorian setting of the play? Obviously, true Victorian dress would be incredibly difficult to emulate in a multi-rolling production. How will costumes 'hint' at the period?

Because we are being more 'broad brush strokes' in terms of costuming, silhouette is the key here. We're providing foundations for each actor to impress various characters upon, with gesture, bearing, accent or perhaps the help of a hat.

Though I have previously created complex quick-change costumes in full Victorian style for prior Blackeyed productions, we're trying a different approach and allowing a bit more space for actors to breathe! This approach allows for less costume related labour in each actor's show track.

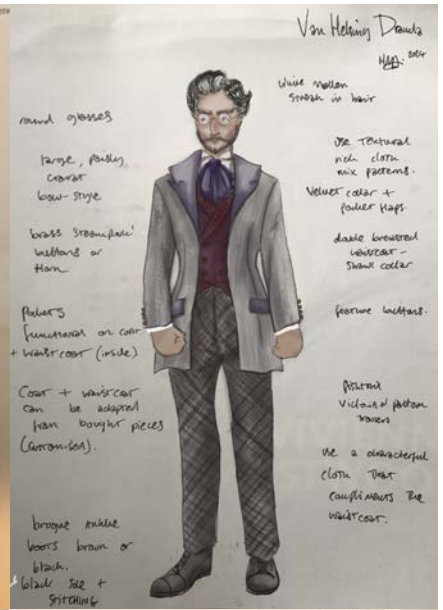
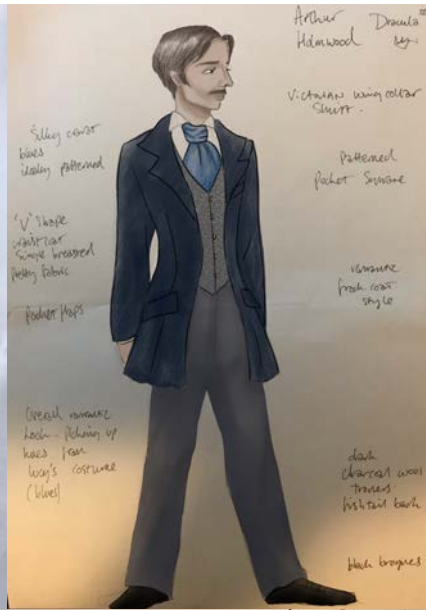
The pieces created look classic, they could almost be of any era. Given that this story is told 'after the fact' this timeless nature works well. Footwear and headgear help add the impression of period also, so I choose those very carefully, especially as they have to stand up to touring and be comfortable for actors to work in.

2024 - COSTUME DESIGNER



INITIAL SKETCHES

2024 - COSTUME DESIGNER



Naomi's initial sketches are perfectly housed in the Victorian era and each character's design is heavily detailed.

Although it is possible to create complex quick-change costumes in this style, the physically driven approach to this show meant that a decision was made to simplify the costumes to allow the actors more space to use their physical and vocal skills to portray the characters.

However, many elements of these initial design elements are visible in the final costume designs.

FINAL DESIGNS

2024 - COSTUME DESIGNER



Naomi's final designs work with a **base layer** system.

Although the actor's base layers hint towards the fashions of the Victorian period (single breasted waistcoats and floor length skirts), their simplicity allows for them to feel timeless.

Individual character costumes are then created by wearing additional costume elements (hats, coats, glasses, etc). This way of depicting characters with simple additions to a base layer is common in multi-rolling productions as actors will often have very little time between scenes to change costume.

OLIVER WELSH | Lighting Designer

What is a moment, theme or character in the production that you are particularly interested to explore? And how will you do this through your lighting choices?

I will be very interested to explore the character of Dracula through lighting. As vampires hide in the proverbial shadows, it will be interesting to explore how we can play with his visibility. How much light do we put on Dracula? Do we keep him somewhat hidden from the audience to evoke a sense of fear? Can we expose him on stage by lighting him starkly and shock the audience into having to confront his image? Perhaps we can use light to keep him isolated from other characters in the show to explore the emotional distance between them.

We can also use lighting to 'sculpt' the characters and present them in different ways. For instance soft, warm lighting on a character's face will help to create a pleasant and approachable person that we can relate to. Harsh, or cold coloured lighting can make characters appear less friendly and open. There's lots of scope to play with to help the audience form various opinions (positive and negative) of the characters on stage.



How will you use lighting to represent the gothic setting of the novel?

Gothic novels are set historically in times without the use of modern electric lighting and so we have to decide how we will approach the look and feel of the show. Should we light it in a modern way (i.e. bright and with a broad even colour spectrum), or should we aim to recreate more old-fashioned lighting sources such as candles, gas-lights, or natural light from the sun and moon? Such questions might be purely aesthetic but might also be tied to the direction and production design of the show.

For instance if the set and costumes are all historically accurate to the period of the book's writing, then this will inform the choice of our lighting. However if the show is set in a modern time, or perhaps in a time period that's not clear and obvious, then we have more freedom in how we choose to represent the light sources.

Gothic fiction is often characterised by themes such as fear and supernatural forces, and the lighting could help to support these by creating surprise and shock moments (such as lightning), or mysterious and obscure lighting (through different colours and shadows) to help create a supernatural feel to scenes.

TRISTAN PARKES | Composer

What is a moment, theme or character in the production that you are particularly interested to explore?

I'm particularly interested in Dracula as a character and as a looming supernatural force throughout the whole play. The sound of Dracula to me shouldn't be a sound we associate with music made by the living or music made on conventional western musical instruments.

This has led me to think about electroacoustic composition, where you take acoustic sounds and put them through electronics to transform them into something that sounds new, surreal, expressionistic or otherworldly. This process of composition began in France and Germany in the mid 20th century with composers of the Music Concrète school .

So I've been sampling various sources of acoustic music and then using my computer to process them into sounds of otherworldliness. In the back of my mind there's a little bit of a ghost hunt going on, so when you hear these experimental weird sounds in the play, they are something new to your ear - this is where Dracula is approaching or his presence is near. The intensity of the sound in my imagination it's like a radar or a Geiger counter that marks distance or danger to life.



What challenges have you encountered with this production?

I feel the challenge of composing music for a theatre production of Dracula is to aim to approach it as an entirely new story and to forget all of the cinematic versions of Dracula we've known since it was written.

Dracula is so embedded into our consciousness from a very early age and plants all sorts of visual and sonic material we expect to see and hear. Dracula even has an emoji!

The Cathedral organ and church bells interest me. As these sounds are the accompaniment of births, marriages and deaths - the full range of human joy and grief. And Dracula I feel is excluded from this human pattern and imprisoned in immortality and blood lust. However, I don't want to just recreate a Hammer House Horror movie score. Or maybe I do!

Of course I'd be a bit arrogant to ignore all of this great (and some not so great) work, and that could be disappointing to an audience, but the challenge is to create something new and surprising and that hopefully will trigger a new conversation on an audience's journey home from the theatre.

How will you use sound to create distinction between the human and the vampiric characters we meet? Or to help us understand the geography of the story?

Using music to map out the geography of the story is something Nick and I talked about from the beginning of the adaptation.

We have been listening to Romanian folk songs and the music of travelling communities. I don't think this is Dracula's world at all, as I've said the sound of Dracula is not of this world. Further to this, I wouldn't want to associate the wonderful folk music of Romania with a sense of fear and evil. But it does give us a sense of journey which would've been much more difficult in the 19th century in terms of time and planning. So I like the idea of some music here sounding like you happened upon it on a long uncharted journey across Eastern Europe.

I feel Lucy and Mina represent the sound of western classical music and here I've used conventional orchestration of string instruments and a parlour piano with a sense of a societal class in England at the time.

In my imagination, I do think there's a dusty old grand piano in Dracula's castle. In one of the locked rooms. Maybe sitting there since the mid 1700s. We hear that echo as a sort of memory of Dracula as a mortal being. And the sadness of that memory. And also to birth and accompany the live singing of the Sirens.

On the ship to Whitby, there is an interesting juxtaposition of music and sound where we have the presence of Dracula plus songs that sailors might have sung.

Hopefully the music will give you a sense of place and also a sense of the characters but inevitably it all gets quite mixed up and I think being too linear is never a good thing as that can possibly ignore an audience's intelligence and imagination and make things a bit too obvious.

Overall the score becomes a cake and the ingredients I've mentioned are all mixed together to hopefully make something tasty to the ears.



SCRIPT EXTRACTS

EXTRACT ONE - THE ENSEMBLE

The actors speak directly to the audience.

ACTOR ONE There are such beings as vampires.

ACTOR TWO They are known everywhere that men have been.

ACTOR THREE They possess the strength of twenty living men.

ACTOR FOUR They have control over the dead.

ACTOR FIVE *moves from his position to a central position, closer to* **ACTOR ONE.**

ACTOR FIVE There are such beings as vampires.

ACTOR FOUR They are cunning and pitiless.

ACTOR THREE Some of us have evidence that they exist.

ACTOR TWO They cannot die by the passing of time.

ACTOR SIX *slowly moves to join* **ACTOR FIVE** *and* **ACTOR ONE.**

ACTOR FOUR They are known everywhere that men have been.

ACTOR THREE They cast no shadow or reflection.

ACTOR TWO They possess the strength of twenty living men.

ACTOR FOUR They cannot enter without invitation.

ACTOR SIX There are such beings as vampires.

Slowly, ACTOR ONE, ACTOR FIVE and ACTOR SIX shift physically so they are standing in an identical manner during the following lines.

ACTOR FOUR They can appear as bat or as dog.

The underscore begins to lift in volume and intensity.

ACTOR THREE Or become as smoke.

*The three in the centre speak as one, as they are our **DRACULAS**:*

DRACULAS There are such beings as vampires.

ACTOR TWO They can direct the elements. Storm. Fog. Thunder.

ACTOR THREE And call the baser creatures to command.

ACTOR FOUR The wolf. The rat.

ACTOR TWO They cannot die by the passing of time.

*Now the three **DRACULAS** are in sync, possibly mirroring a move or specific piece of physicality which they will return to during the course of the play.*

ACTOR TWO, ACTOR THREE and ACTOR FOUR (all on higher positions in the set) speak together:

TWO/THREE/FOUR There are such beings as vampires.

*They look down at the three in the centre. From this point on, the lines spoken by **ACTOR THREE, ACTOR TWO and ACTOR FOUR** are repeats, and are almost whispered, as **ACTOR ONE, ACTOR FIVE, and ACTOR SIX** power over them.*

ACTOR ONE To exist they must drink of human blood.

ACTOR FIVE And in so doing, they change their victim.

ACTOR SIX From living to dead.

ACTOR THREE They cannot enter without invitation.

ACTOR SIX And from dead to vampire.

ACTOR TWO They are cunning and pitiless.

ACTOR ONE The blood makes the vampire powerful...

ACTOR FOUR They are known everywhere that men have been.

DRACULA

ACTOR FIVE Restoring strength...

ACTOR TWO They possess the strength of twenty living men.

ACTOR SIX ...and youth.

ACTOR THREE They cast no shadow or reflection.

*As the music ramps up, **ACTOR TWO**, **ACTOR THREE** and **ACTOR FOUR** descend to join the others in the central space.*

ACTOR FOUR There are such beings as vampires.

ACTOR TWO They are known everywhere that men have been.

ACTOR SIX And there is one above all.

ACTOR FIVE Fearsome and without mercy.

ACTOR ONE The lord of all darkness and despair.

The company are together as one. They all say:

ALL Dracula.

EXTRACT TWO - PHYSICALLY DRIVEN STORYTELLING

ACTOR THREE (To audience) Chapter two. The Demeter.

The pulse is lost amid the sound of crashing waves. This section of the story will be told largely non-verbally – a mixture of physical theatre and dance. Some of the actors move to create, with what props are to hand, the look of a ship. Others appear to be loading cargo.

The **CAPTAIN** steps away from the set-up and addresses the audience:

CAPTAIN From the Captain's log.(To audience) July sixth, 1897. We finished taking in cargo, silver sand and, what was most curious, boxes of earth. At noon set sail. East wind, fresh. Crew, five hands... two mates, cook, and myself.

*The crew are working together. All is well – the comfort and camaraderie of routine. One of the **ACTORS** dons a cap denoting them momentarily as a **CUSTOMS OFFICER** as **CAPTAIN** continues:*

Eleventh of July. Entered Bosphorus at dawn. Boarded by Turkish Customs officers. Backsheesh. All correct. Under way at four.

*A further routine, a shaking of hands, all is well. "Backsheesh," incidentally, is a small bribe, so that might be worth adding to the choreography. Music upbeat and light in tone. The actors perform further uniform movement. The music changes slightly - our first air of disharmony. One of the **ACTORS** is forced by the others to approach the **CAPTAIN**. Once this physical moment passes, the **CAPTAIN** says:*

July thirteenth. Passed Cape Matapan. Crew dissatisfied about something. Seemed scared but would not speak out.

*More elements of darkness creep into the routine on the ship – the physicality of the sailors changes. They are nervous; become antagonistic with one another. There's pushing and shoving among the crew which **ACTOR ONE**, as **FIRST MATE**, has to break up.*

The music begins to raise intensity – or at the very least becomes more sinister in tone; more aggressive. The physicality with which they have depicted sailing thus far becomes more difficult. At a point in this phrase in the music, there is some kind of violent sting, after which:

CAPTAIN Sixteenth July. Petrofsky missing. Cannot account for it.
Men convinced there is something aboard with us...

*The storm appears to get worse, the music lifts intensity another notch... our second **DRACULA** is silhouetted against a part of the sail/ship. Watching, waiting.*

July Eighteenth. Weather worse still. One of crew, Olgaren, believes he saw a tall, thin man aboard the ship on his watch. He followed him aft... but found no one.

*Storm effects now in with music, **SAILORS** all hanging onto ropes, steering, securing cargo. The next passage may inform the action here:*

Twenty-fourth July. Entering Bay of Biscay with no break in wild weather ahead. Olgaren lost – disappeared, like Petrofsky. Men in a panic; all fear to be alone...

All fall to deck; all stand. Steering the ship is harder still. Music and storm fighting each other.

July twenty-ninth. A third tragedy – second mate lost. Crew in absolute panic. Small arms issued to first mate and myself.

*Music lightens, storm effects lessen... **SAILORS** stand, hold sails, pull ropes.*

July thirtieth. We are nearing England. Only self, mate and two hands left to work ship.

*Ominous note. Fog drifts in. **CAPTAIN** and **FIRST MATE** brandish pistols; the other two **SAILORS** steer or else look out.*

August second. Three days of fog. We seem to be drifting to our doom...

Further music. The remaining crew do what they can, repeating moves we saw earlier but clearly in ragged shape.

CAPTAIN

Third August. No sign of Abramoff. God help us. We must be past straits of Dover and will soon reach North Sea. Fog seems to move with us...

*A scream. **FIRST MATE** climbs onto the crates. Holding a rope, he swings out as if he is over the ocean. **CAPTAIN** appeals to him but in vain. The **FIRST MATE** jumps overboard. Music becomes simultaneously dramatic and tragic. The **CAPTAIN** begins to lash himself to the wheel.*

August fourth. At last, I have seen the beast that destroyed my crew and have no doubt over his intentions for me. So ends the journey of the Demeter. I have never abandoned a post, and as Captain my duty is plain. May God help all of those on land...

*Music swells. **DRACULA** descends. There is a scream. Red wash on stage. The company gather once more and sing a short folk song.*

EXTRACT THREE - ADAPTING EPISTOLARY FICTION

ACTOR TWO *takes a lantern and reads from HARKER's Diary*

ACTOR TWO *(To audience)* May 5th. After breakfast, I explored the castle.

HARKER *(To audience)* It's without doubt the strangest place I've ever been. There is evidence of huge wealth – wrought gold, fine silks, ornate furniture the like of which you would ordinarily find only in a museum – and yet I have not seen a single servant. It's almost as if the Count lives here alone...

ACTOR ONE *moves across the space with a chair, places it down and takes the lantern.*

ACTOR THREE *crosses in the opposite direction and gives HARKER a book.*

ACTOR TWO *(To audience)* The majority of the day is spent in the library, where I found a wealth of material on, and from, England...

ACTOR SIX *(To audience)* As well as reference books such as the London Directory, Whitaker's Almanac and the Law Lists, are books on British history, geography, politics, economics – even geology.

ACTOR ONE *(To audience)* My host returned at nightfall, by which time I had found another book to occupy my time...

DRACULA *enters. Reads the title of the book.*

DRACULA "A History of Transylvania."

HARKER *looks up.*

(Smiling) You are learning of my country, yes?

HARKER A little.

DRACULA It pleases me to see how we are viewed by such... illustrious neighbours. What have you learned?

HARKER I've read about the wars with the Turk...

DRACULA Did you find passage on road of spikes?

HARKER There was a part about impaling some Turkish warriors? I don't recall a reference to... a road...

DRACULA Is how it was known.

A beat.

Four days. In baking sun. Hearing the screams. A symphony of pain. The blood-caked sons of Turkey-land. Faces twisted in... agonies untold.

HARKER You speak as if you were there.

DRACULA *says nothing.*

All sounds rather savage anyway.

A pause.

DRACULA And your England... she does not have savages in her past, no?

HARKER Of course. But. As you say. In the past.

DRACULA Engineering opium addiction in China to secure a better price on tea.

HARKER Ah, you see, there, the East India Company...

DRACULA Not East India Company. Your country. Went to war for this. Twice.

HARKER Well...

DRACULA Cutting thumbs off Indian weavers to ensure control of silk trade...

HARKER That's... not...

DRACULA Firing on Palace of Zanzibar for not appointing British Empire-sanctioned Sultan, and then making survivors pay for munitions.

HARKER I'm sure that's all long ago...

DRACULA Twelve months ago. Imagine paying for shells that kill your family. The...savagery... of that.

A pause.

HARKER If I have offended you, Count Dracula, I apologise. For my manner and my country.

DRACULA You have caused no offence, friend Jonathan. Do not be ashamed of how your people take. Power comes from blood, is it not so? Whether blood is drawn by sword, or... policy. I have watched your Empire rise, built from the foundations by thieves and butchers. To serve the people? No. The crown? Perhaps, but... to serve itself. More. Blood needs blood.

DRACULA *smiles.*

A debate worthy of your parliament, yes? Though I am still uncertain with words I choose.

HARKER You speak English very well.

DRACULA You flatter, yes, and I thank you, my friend. But none in London would not know me for a stranger. Here I am noble; I am boyar; the common people know me, and I am master. But a stranger in a strange land, he is no one; men know him not – and to know not is to care not for. So. You will help me.

A beat.

Now please do report of my London home.

HARKER Of course...

Music. HARKER picks up a folder and begins to show it to the count.

ACTOR TWO *(To audience)* We spent the next hour talking through the finer details of the deed...

HARKER Carfax Abbey contains in all some twenty acres, surrounded by a solid stone wall, and includes its own chapel.

ACTOR SIX *(To audience)* Using one of the Count's own maps of England to point out the Abbey's precise location...

HARKER It dates back to medieval times.

ACTOR THREE *(To audience)* ...I noted that it was marked in several other places, including another part of London and the Yorkshire coastal town of Whitby.

HARKER There are few houses close at hand, one being very large and used as a private lunatic asylum. It's not visible from the grounds however, so...

DRACULA You have made excellent work. I am glad that it is old and big. I rejoice also that there is a chapel of old times. We Transylvanian nobles love not to think that our bones may lie amongst the common dead.

He shakes HARKER's hand.

And now, my young friend, I would have you write a letter to Mr. Peter Hawkins. Say, if it please you, that you shall stay with me until a month from now.

HARKER Do you wish me to stay so long?

DRACULA I desire it much.

A beat.

And I will take no refusal.

Music. DRACULA moves upstage. HARKER sinks into a chair. MINA is lit on one of the raised areas.

MINA

(To audience) My dear Jonathan – It has been over a fortnight since your last letter. You were clear about the limited opportunities for correspondence, but I am still persisting in writing to you – as silly as that must seem. I am to head to London later this week to meet with dear Lucy, who is clearly bursting with news, though on what subject she would not say. I will send her your love, just as you know you have mine. Always, Mina.

Lights down on MINA, who returns to the upstage area. HARKER stands. ACTOR TWO places the lantern in HARKER's hand.

ACTOR FIVE

(To audience) May 9th. A routine has established itself. By day I read, make legal notes or else wander through what rooms I have access to.

ACTOR SIX

(To audience) I am restricted to a number of chambers split between two floors on the eastern side of the castle...

ACTOR FIVE

(To audience) ...and appear to have no route to an outer door.

HARKER *makes as if trying a door. Very faintly we hear the same indistinct female vocal we heard earlier. HARKER listens, then moves on. As he does so, ACTOR THREE passes, takes the lantern and replaces it with a wine glass.*

ACTOR TWO

(To audience) At night the Count speaks either of his country's history...

DRACULA

We were a proud race. When the Magyar, the Bulgar, or the Turk poured his thousands on our frontiers, we drove them back with steel and will.

ACTOR TWO

(To audience) ...or London.

CAST

MAYA-NIKA BEWLEY

Mina | Siren 2 | Crewman of the Demeter | Mrs Westenra | Hennessey



Maya-Nika trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts.

Her credits include *Locomotive for Murder: The Improvised Whodunnit* (Edinburgh Fringe, Greenwich Theatre, Offie Nominated), *Seal Boy* (Riverside Studios, Offie Nominated), *News Revue* (Canal Cafe Theatre) and *Cinderella* (Regal Theatre).

Her television credits include *US* (BBC).



DAVID CHAFER

Dracula | Van Helsing | Crewman of the Demeter | Brand



David's theatre credits include *I Love You, Mum – I Promise I Won't Die* and *Hard to Swallow* (TiE It Up Theatre), *Damned United* (Red Ladder), *The Last Seam* (Cast), *SUS* (Unfinished Histories), *The Last Shift* (Garry Morris/Seven Arts), *The Get Lost Show* (York Maze), *Striking Dilemmas* (The Melting Shop), *All Things Considered* (Esk Valley Theatre), *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Theatre Mill), *September in the Rain* (The Booking Office) and *The Daughter-in-Law* (Crucible Theatre).

David's film credits include *Low Rollers* and *The Human Solution* (Bae Batt LLC), while his television credits include *Coronation Street*, *Hollyoaks*, *Emmerdale* and *Scott & Bailey*.

David is the producer for TiE It Up Theatre, touring plays to secondary schools and theatres. He also delivers drama-based corporate training as a facilitator/actor/writer.

RICHARD KEIGHTLEY

Dracula | Seward | Coachman



Richard's theatre credits include *Ben and Imo* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Watch on the Rhine* (Donmar), *Twelfth Night* (National Theatre), *Hamlet* (World Tour), *Of Mice and Men* (UK Tour), *The Mousetrap* (West End and Asian Tour), *Wind in the Willows* (New Vic, Stoke), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (The RoseTheatre, Kingston), *After the Dance*, *As You Like It*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Lady of the Lake* and *Enlightenment* (Theatre by the Lake, Keswick), *Pictures of Dorian Gray* and *For Services Rendered* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *Home Death* (Finborough Theatre), *Bliss Bear* (Arcola Theatre), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* (Guildford Shakespeare Company).

His television and film credits include *Gandhi Before India*, *Ragdoll*, *Game Over* and *Best Man*.



PELÉ KELLAND-BEAU

Harker | Morris | Crewman of the Demeter | Wesley



Pelé trained at the Identity School of Acting, Stratford East Young Company & National Youth Theatre.

His theatre credits include Mark in *People, Places And Things* and John in *Labyrinth* (Collective Acting Studio), Courtney in *Bystanders* (Theatre Peckham), Aaron in *Run* and Corey in *Painkiller* (Theatre Royal Stratford East) and *Fog Everywhere* (Camden People's Theatre).

MARIE OSMAN

Lucy | Katja | Siren 1 | 1st Mate of the Demeter | Renfield



Marie trained at Identity School of Acting.

Her theatre credits include *Dorothy, A Play* (Institute of Contemporary Arts), *Baking Hot* (White Bear Theatre), *I'll Be Right Here* (Four Fig Theatre), *Amandla!* and *Nowhere To Run* (Hampstead Theatre) and *Babe, The Sheep Pig* (Regents Park Open Air Theatre).

As a writer, Marie has had her plays performed at Hampstead Theatre, as well as the opportunity to collaborate with and receive mentorship from esteemed playwrights Roy Williams, John Kani, and Steve Waters.

Her short film *Carry Me*, which she wrote and starred in, is set to begin its festival run in Autumn 2024.



HARRY RUNDLE

Dracula | Holmwood | Florin | Captain of the Demeter | Simmons



Harry trained at Rose Bruford College.

His theatre credits include *Harry Potter & The Cursed Child* (Palace Theatre), Florian Zeller's *The Son* (Duke of York Theatre) and multiple iterations of *NewsRevue* (Canal Cafe Theatre and Seven Dials Playhouse).

His television credits include *Doctors* (BBC).

Harry is also a writer and recently workshopped his first play *Colliery Boys* at Laurels Theatre, Whitley Bay.

CREATIVES

NICK LANE

Writer & Director



Nick's previous adaptations for Blackeyed Theatre include *Sherlock Holmes: The Valley of Fear*, *Frankenstein*, *Jane Eyre*, *Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*. Other adaptations include *Dark Winter* (E52), *Frankenstein* (Theatre Mill), *The Wakefield Mysteries* (Theatre Royal Wakefield), *1984* (Northern Broadsides), *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and a co-adaptation (with John Godber) of *Moby Dick* (Hull Truck).

Original adult plays include: *The Derby McQueen Affair* (York Theatre Royal), *My Favourite Summer*, *Blue Cross Xmas* and *Me & Me Dad* (Hull Truck), *Housebound*, *Hopeless Romantics* – co-written with

Fiona Wass – and *Seconds Out* (Reform), *Royal Flush* and *Odd Job Men* (Rich Seam Theatre), *Murder at Berrington* – co-written with Fiona Wass – and *The Goal* (Hereford Courtyard).

Nick is also an accomplished children's playwright – his credits include: *A Christmas Carol*, *Beauty & The Beast*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *The Snow Queen* (Hull Truck); *Pinocchio*, *A Scarborough Christmas Carol* and *Alice in Wonderland* (SJT); *Snow White* and *Little Red Riding Hood* (York Theatre Royal); *The Elves & The Shoemaker* (Hereford Courtyard); and *Hansel & Gretel* (Pilot). His original work for children includes *Ginger Jones and the Sultan's Eye* (Polka/ Drum Theatre Plymouth/ York Theatre Royal), *'Twas the Night before Christmas*, *When Santa Got Stuck in the Fridge* and *A Christmas Fairytale* (Hull Truck).

Nick's directing credits outside of his own work include *The Glass Menagerie*, *Departures*, *Life's A Beach*, *Studs*, *Beef*, *Amateur Girl*, *Lucky Sods* and *Ring Around the Humber* (Hull Truck), *April in Paris*, *Two*, *September in the Rain* and *Little Italy* (York Theatre Royal), *Don't Dribble on the Dragon* and *There Was an Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly* (PTC).

TRISTAN PARKES

Composer



Tristan has performed, composed, designed sound, and musically directed material for film, theatre, major events and television for two decades. This includes over fifteen productions for Hull Truck Theatre, multiple productions for the Edinburgh Festival including *An Audience with...* starring Alistair McGowan 2015, over a decade of productions for The National Youth Theatre of Great Britain.

Tristan was a musical director on the Beijing and London Olympic Games and a composer for the British Pavilion at the World Expo' in Shanghai. Film work includes *To All the Girls I've Loved Before* for Channel 4 Films Directed by Henrique Goldman,

When Romeo Met Juliet abridged by Lolita Chakrabarty and *The Merchant of Venice abridged* by Tom Stoppard for the BBC and director Joe Wright's *Anna Karenina* for Working Title Films.

Recent work as composer and sound designer includes *The Power of Myth* for Cartier at Theatre des Variétés in Paris and La Palais de Congrès in Marrakech. A national tour of *Dead Sheep* by Johnathan Maitland, *Goat Song* for London Contemporary Dance, *Frankenstein Revelations* for York Theatre Royal and *#Hashtag Lightie* for the Arcola Theatre, written and directed by Lynette Linton. Also, for Blackeyed Theatre a national UK tour of *Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four* which included dates in The Netherlands and China along with 2023's UK touring production of *Sherlock Holmes: The Valley of Fear* and subsequent 2024 London remount.

As an actor-musician recent work includes *Wasteland* for Garry Clarke Company at The Place Theatre, London, *Storm* a new play by Juliet Knight for the Vault Festival 2020 / National Theatre Studio and Southwark Playhouse 2023.

With the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain Tristan has arranged pop song choirs for Sophie Ellis Bextor, Beverley Knight MBE, The Feeling and Heather Small for charity events hosted by Prince Edward, The Duke of Edinburgh.

Tristan has won a UK Heritage Award 2020 for Best Exhibition/Event for Our House - an immersive and site-specific theatre show about the LGBTQ+ heritage and history of Eltham Palace for which he wrote the score and musically directed alongside the physical theatre company The Pappy Show.

Tristan is active academic and facilitator of music and theatre workshops across the country; as an Education Associate for the Donmar Warehouse Theatre, Associate Artist for National Youth Theatre of Great Britain and is a Senior Lecturer in Performing Arts at the University of East London.

VICTORIA SPEARING

Set Designer



Graduating from Bretton Hall in Theatre Design and Technology in 2001, Victoria started work as a freelance set designer with South Hill Park Arts Centre, where she is now resident designer and with whom she won the award for Best Staging / Set at the 2019 Great British Pantomime Awards for their production of *Dick Whittington And His Cat*. She has also been nominated for the same 2020 award.

This will be the 22nd design for Blackeyed Theatre, from *The Caretaker* to the highly acclaimed tours of *Not About Heroes*, *Dracula* and *Teechers*. Her design for *The Beekeeper* was nominated for the Best Set Design in the 2012 Off West End Theatre Awards.

She has designed over one hundred sets for a variety of companies, producing initial sketches and model boxes through to involvement in set building, painting and final dressing.

For South Hill Park she has designed the last twelve pantomimes, as well as a range of in-house productions, including *Brassed Off*, *Stepping Out*, *Blood Brothers*, *Calendar Girls* and *Oh What A Lovely War*. She also redesigned South Hill Park's Wilde Theatre Bar and Foyer to create a new performance space.

Her design work for other companies includes the world premier of *A Little History of the World* (Watermill Theatre), *The Dumb Waiter*, *Miss Julie*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Race* and *The Nativity that Goes Wrong* (Reading Rep), *Journey's End*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *The Madness of George III*, *Three Men in a Boat* and *Birdsong* (Original Theatre Company), *Lotty's War* (Giddy Ox), *Loserville* (Youth Music Theatre), *The History Boys* and *Danny the Champion of the World* (London Contemporary Theatre), as well as various Christmas shows for The Castle Wellingborough.

NAOMI GIBBS

Costume Designer



Naomi is a costume designer from Southsea. She's been designing for stage for over a decade and working with Blackeyed Theatre since 2016. In 2009 Naomi set up her costume design business Society Belle which has recently expanded to form a collective of skilled professionals under the name Portsmouth Costumiers.

Other costume design credits include **Moon Language** (Stopgap Dance Company), **Hypozeuxsis** (FunkForma), **Beauty and the Beast** (New Theatre Royal Portsmouth), **The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde**, **Teechers**, **Teechers Leavers '22**, **Jane Eyre** and **Sherlock Holmes: The**

Sign of Four (Blackeyed Theatre), **Peter Pan** (New Theatre Royal Portsmouth), **Grimm Tales** (South Hill Park), **The Nutcracker** (New Theatre Royal Portsmouth) and **Aladdin** (South Hill Park).



OLIVER WELSH

Lighting Designer



Oliver formerly worked at Whitelight, an entertainment lighting company, then New Victoria Theatre Woking, moving on to Southampton's Mayflower Theatre in 2005 and is now freelance lighting designer / production electrician based in Brighton with a portfolio covering the corporate, theatre and event industries throughout the UK, USA and Europe.

His lighting design credits for Blackeyed Theatre include **The Caucasian Chalk Circle**, **Beauty and the Beast** and **Oh What a Lovely War**, and for Rabble Theatre **Twelfth Night**, **Much Ado About Nothing**, **Romeo and Juliet**, **Henry I of England**,

Henry II and **Matilda the Empress**. His associate lighting design credits include – for Qdos / Crossroads Pantomimes – **Beauty and the Beast** (Belfast Grand Opera House), **Aladdin** (Churchill Theatre Bromley), **Cinderella** (New Victoria Theatre Woking) and **Snow White** (Darlington Hippodrome).

ENRIC ONTÚNO

Movement Director



Enric Ortuno is an Intimacy, Fight and Movement Director and certified Stage Combat Teacher by the British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat and an Intimacy Recognised professional by Intimacy Directors International UK. He holds a four year BA in Musical Theatre from the Spanish Conservatoire of Dramatic Art and an MA in Movement Studies from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

He is the resident stage combat teacher at Drama Studio London and Italia Conti and teaches regularly at RADA, Central School of Speech and Drama and has taught workshops in Spain, USA and Germany.

Intimacy Coordination credits include productions for and by Netflix, Channel 4, Amazon Studios and Sky TV amongst others.

His fight and intimacy credits include *Romeo & Juliet* (Orange Tree Theatre), *Out of Sorts* (Theatre 503), *Crystal Clear* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *Jerker* (King's Head Theatre), *Jane Eyre* (Blackeyed Theatre), *Jekyll & Hyde* (Arrows & Traps Theatre), *The Pride* (Landor Theatre), *The Amber Trap* (Theatre 503), *The Three Musketeers* (OneEleven Theatre), *Mission Creep* (Controlled Chaos Productions), *Men Should Weep* (Landor Theatre), *The Drag* (Arcola Theatre), *Boris: World King* (Trafalgar Studios), *Croydon Avengers* (Ovalhouse Theatre), *Dracula* (Arrows & Traps Theatre Company), *Treasure Island* (Oxford Theatre Guild), *Candy Cansino Checks In* (Landor Theatre), *Love Me Now* (Tristan Bates Theatre), *Othello* (Barons Court Theatre), *Dangerous Giant Animals* (Underbelly Edinburgh), *Days of Significance* (Landor Theatre), *Titus Andronicus* (Smooth Faced Gentlemen), *Monster* (Worklight Theatre), *Verdi's Macbeth* (Iford Arts), *The Autumn Garden* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *Othello* (Smooth Faced Gentlemen), *Escape the Scaffold* (Theatre 503).

STEVE McCOURT

Education and Outreach



Steve is a theatre maker and educator. Originally from a performance background, Steve trained as an actor at the Central School of Speech and Drama.

He has made work for a variety of the world's most recognised stages. Theatre work includes *Howl* (Two Foot Tall), *Oh My Heart, Oh My Home* (Edinburgh Fringe), *A Place that Belongs to Monsters* (Adelaide Fringe – Best Theatre Winner), *The Great Gatsby* (West End), *The Wizard of Oz* (Paperback Theatre), *Wilde Creatures* (Sydney Opera House), *The Canterville Ghost* (Tall Stories), *Thea Saves her Parents* (Hounslow Arts Centre), *The Little Match Girl* (Improbable), *Le Rossignol* (Blind Summit) and *Die Zauberflöte* (Bregenzer Festspiele).

As an educator, Steve works with theatrical principles to help teachers challenge their own creative practice and empower young people to take ownership of their learning.

Steve is an associate artist of The Arts Centre, Hounslow and the associate director of Punchdrunk Enrichment.



JAY HIRST

Technical CSM



Jay started working in theatre in a voluntary capacity at Hull Truck Theatre in November 2000 and since toured extensively across the UK and internationally, working with companies such as Hull Truck, Stephen Joseph Theatre and Northern Broadsides.

DRACULA

BLACKEYED
THEATRE

ADRIAN McDOUGALL

Producer / Artistic Director



Adrian is the founder and Artistic Director of Blackeyed Theatre. He grew up in Berkshire, studying modern languages at Southampton University, going on to work in marketing and PR, before becoming a theatre producer in 2004.

Since Blackeyed Theatre's very first production, Effie's Burning, he has produced 19 national tours, including the world premiere of Steven Berkoff's *Oedipus* and a brand new stage adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. As a director, his credits include – for Blackeyed Theatre – the world premiere of *The Beekeeper* and national tours of *Oh What A Lovely War*, *Teechers* and *Alfie*, as well as *Brassed Off* and *House And Garden* (for South Hill Park).

He has also worked as an actor, touring the UK with Oddssocks Productions, Premiere Stage Productions and the Phoenix Theatre Company.



BLACKEYED
THEATRE

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