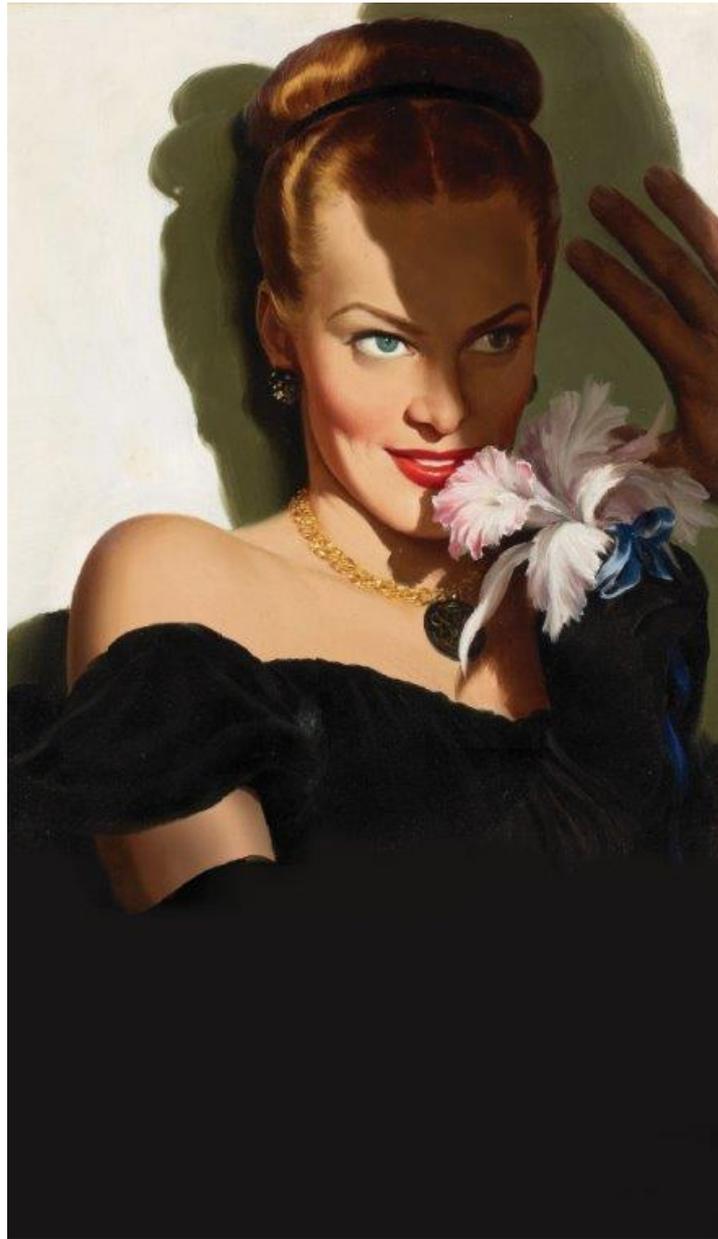


REBECCA



RESOURCE MATERIALS

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Introduction

Welcome to the resource materials for REBECCA that accompany Emma Rice's spellbinding new production of Daphne du Maurier's masterpiece which conjures Cornish romance and theatrical magic.

Following the mysterious death of his first wife, Maxim De Winter returns to Manderley with his young bride. Surrounded by memories of the glamorous Rebecca, the new Mrs De Winter is consumed by jealousy. She sets out to uncover the secrets of the house and a past fiercely guarded by the sinister housekeeper Mrs Danvers.

These materials include a synopsis of the play, interviews with the director and designer, background information on the producers and Kneehigh, the characters and Daphne du Maurier and suggestions for further research.

We hope you use this resource pack as a spring board for further exploration -there are endless possibilities for using this production as a stimulus for discussion and learning about literature, drama and theatre.

The Cast

in alphabetical order

Frith/Doctor **Richard Clews**

Robert/Ben **Katy Owen**

Mrs Danvers **Emily Raymond**

Mrs de Winter **Imogen Sage**

Maxim de Winter **Tristan Sturrock**

Jack Favell **Ewan Wardrop**

Giles **Andy Williams**

Bea **Lizzie Winkler**

Creative Team

Emma Rice *Adaptor/Director*

Emma is the Joint Artistic Director of Kneehigh. Productions for Kneehigh include: The Red Shoes, The Wooden Frock, The Bacchae, Tristan & Yseult (2003-6; UK/US tour 2013/14), Cymbeline (in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company), A Matter of Life and Death (Royal National Theatre in association with Kneehigh), Rapunzel (in association with Battersea Arts Centre), Brief Encounter (a David Pugh and Dafydd Rogers Production in association with Kneehigh Theatre); Don John (in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company and Bristol Old Vic), Midnight's Pumpkin, The Wild Bride, Wah! Wah! Girls (with Sadler's Wells, Theatre Royal Stratford East for World Stages) and Steptoe and Son. Emma's other work includes the West End production of The Umbrellas of Cherbourg, Oedipussy for Spymonkey, The Empress for the RSC and An Audience with Meow Meow for Berkeley Rep, USA.

Leslie Travers *Designer*

Leslie Travers trained at the Wimbledon School of Art. Theatre designs include Twelfth Night (Chichester Festival Theatre), The Duchess of Malfi, Streets of Rage and Silent Cry (West Yorkshire Playhouse), The Persian Revolution (Lyric Hammersmith), The Man with Two Gaffers (York Theatre Royal), Shirley Valentine (Derby Playhouse), Majnoun (Lyric Hammersmith, Riverside Studios and Tour), Death by Heroin(e) (Riverside Studios), Taj (UK

Tour), Vurt (Contact Theatre – Winner of Arthur Peter Design Award and nominated for Manchester Evening News Design Award), Veriete (Lindsay Kemp Company, World Tour)

Tim Lutkin *Lighting Designer*

Tim is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. He recently won Best Lighting Design in the 2014 Laurence Olivier Awards for *Chimerica* at the Harold Pinter Theatre. Recent work includes: *The Crucible* (Old Vic), *Strangers On A Train* (Gielgud), *Chimerica* (Almeida / Pinter), *Candide* and *All's Well That Ends Well* (RSC), *Merlin* (Royal & Derngate, Northampton), *State Red* (Hampstead), *A Bunch of Amateurs* (Watermill), *Children of the Smoke* (Glasgow Green/Glasgow 2014 Cultural Programme), *Hope Place* (Everyman, Liverpool), *The Summer Book*(Unicorn), *The Life of the Party* (Menier Chocolate Factory), *Venice Preserv'd* (Paynes & Borthwick Wharf, Greenwich), *Minotaur* (Polka), *Once A Catholic* (Tricycle & Royal Court Liverpool), *The Full Monty* (Noel Coward and UK Tours), *Calendar Girls* (UK Tours), *Ghost - The Musical* (UK Tour - co-design with Hugh Vanstone), *Philadelphia Here I Come!* (Donmar), *Megan Mullally & Supreme Music Program*, *Alan Cumming - I Bought a Blue Car Today* (Vaudeville), *Party* (Arts), *The Dark At The Top Of The Stairs* (Belgrade, Coventry), *Our Brother David* (Watford Palace), *Wondershow* (Roundhouse), *The Go Between* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Bronte* (Shared Experience), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Royal Festival Hall), *My Dad's a Birdman* (Crucible, Sheffield), *That Face* (Tron, Glasgow), *Restoration* (Salisbury Playhouse), *Fuchsia* (White Bear), *Lucky You* (Assembly Rooms)

Simon Baker *Sound Designer*

Most recent credits include *Matilda The Musical* (RSC and Cambridge Theatre 2012 Olivier Award for Best Sound), *My Fair Lady* (Sheffield), *Merry Wives of Windsor* (RSC), *Steptoe and Son* (Kneehigh Theatre/UK Tour), *Loserville* (West Yorkshire Playhouse/Garrick Theatre), *Hedda Gabler* (Old Vic), *Wah Wah Girls* (Saddlers Wells), *Angus Thongs and Even More Snogging* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Batman Live* (World Arena Tour), *Me and My Girl* (Sheffield), *The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg* (Lyric Theatre), *The Real Thing* (Old Vic), *The Norman Conquests* (Old Vic and Broadway), *Late Middle Classes* (Donmar), *La Bete* (Comedy Theatre and Broadway), *Lord Of The Rings* (Theatre Royal Drury Lane and Toronto 2007 Olivier Nomination Best Sound), *Deathtrap* (Noel Coward Theatre), *Boeing Boeing* (Comedy Theatre and Broadway - 2007 Tony Nomination for Best Sound), *Di Viv and Rose* (Hampstead Downstairs). Bridge Project for BAM/Old Vic Theatre 2009, *The Birds* (Dublin), *Closer To Heaven* (Arts Theatre). For Kneehigh Theatre work includes *Brief Encounter* (London, WYP, UK and US Tours, Broadway and St Anns Warehouse NY 2011 Tony Nomination for Best Sound), *Don John* (RSC and International Tour), *The Red Shoes* (International Tour), *The Wild Bride* (International Tour), *Midnight's Pumpkin*, and all three years of Kneehigh's *Asylum* Season.

Casting Director *Sarah Bird CDG*

Producers **David Pugh & Dafydd Rogers** in association with **Steve & Jenny Wiener**

Interview with Emma Rice

Adaptor and director of Rebecca



What made you choose Rebecca?

The bigger question is why haven't I done it before! Daphne du Maurier is the Cornish high priestess of storytelling, and Rebecca is a feminist work; all the characters explore different aspects of femininity.

Is your production inspired by the book or/and the film?

I've steered clear of the film. My inspirations are the book and the play written by Du Maurier in the 1930's. Then, of course, there is what my experience and my imagination bring to it! I have been much more faithful to the book than the film. I've made a big change in the third act. Both the book and the film end up with a group of blokes we don't know anything about deciding the outcome of the play. So I made a decision to make it more immediate and much more theatrical.

What is the play's relationship to Cornwall?

It's set in Cornwall, that's where she sat when she wrote it. I don't think there's any doubt that it's Cornwall that she's talking about. Kneehigh is a Cornish company and Cornwall is at the heart of who we are. We choose to make work here, and to live on the outside. We look out to the sea rather than inland. I hope this production brings out the mythical nature of the place.

Tell us about the devising and rehearsal process

This will be less of a devising process than other shows I've directed as it's scripted, and is a classic text. It's a psychological drama so we will be working in depth on the characters and making sure they are as believable and strange as real life. This is all about truth and lies so we need a lot of oxygen in the rehearsal room to ensure we can play and explore together with total freedom. It must have tension and truth and humanity. However, I always make sure that the room is full of people who care more about the piece as a whole than they do their individual character. We are story tellers first and foremost.

What are the themes of the play?

Daphne de Maurier said it was "a study in jealousy", and jealousy runs through the heart of the piece in all its aspects. It's also about morality, natural law and the enormous issue of class (it can never be forgotten that Maxim is from the upper classes). But for me it is a feminist piece. It is about woman being capable of all things: rage, fear, manipulation, love, loyalty, sexual freedom and anger. My aim is to not to get sucked into any form of romanticism. It's worth pointing out that Daphne du Maurier hated it when anyone called it a romance. This is a psychological thriller and a horror.

The Main Characters



Mrs de Winter's: first nor maiden name is never revealed. She is a naive young woman in her early 20s



Maximilian "Maxim" de Winter: is the reserved, unemotional owner of Manderley. He marries his new wife after a brief courtship, yet displays little affection toward her after the marriage.



Mrs Danvers: The cold-hearted, overbearing housekeeper of Manderley. Danvers has lived with Rebecca for years, being her family's maid when Rebecca was a child. She is unhealthily obsessed with Rebecca and preserving her memory, and resents the new Mr. de Winter.

Scene Structure

Act 1

Prologue

The play begins with a chorus of fishermen singing and a woman's body floating down from the flies. There is a rope around her ankle that is attached to a small fishing boat above. The boat comes to rest on the sea bed covering and trapping the body of the woman beneath its hull.

Scene 1

May 7th 1936. We are in the Hall of Manderley, Maxim De Winter's country seat. Frith, the butler and Beatrice and Giles are eagerly awaiting Mr De Winter and his new young wife, who he married in Monte Carlo barely eleven months since Rebecca, his first wife, drowned. Robert announces the arrival of the newly married couple. Maxim is greeted by his dog Jasper and the new Mrs De Winter nervously enters.

When Maxim goes to inspect Giles' new car Beatrice confides in Mrs De Winter of her concerns about Maxim and offers her sartorial advice.

Frith persuades Maxim to revive the Fancy Dress Ball. Maxim agrees to invite the whole county on Midsummer Eve.

Mrs De Winter meets Mrs Danvers the housekeeper of Manderley, who tells her how the staff were all devoted to the late Mrs De Winter. When Maxim returns Mrs De Winter expresses her insecurity about being part of Maxim's world and Mrs Danvers' frosty attitude towards her.

Scene 2

Six weeks later. Mrs De Winter takes Jasper for a walk and finds herself on the beach where she meets Ben Bolitho digging for shells. She notices a small beach cottage, pushes against the door and walks in to find that it was furnished just as Rebecca had left it. Ben tells her that the late Mrs De Winter threatened to have him put in the Asylum. Mrs De Winter sees an alabaster vase standing on the mantelpiece for the roses she has brought in from her walk. As she stands on tiptoe to take it, it falls to the ground and breaks. She picks up the broken pieces, wraps them in newspaper and stuffs them in the coal scuttle. A man, Jack Favell, comes to the open window and looks in upon her. He looks round him and over his shoulder and hops in through the window and puts a record - 'Let's Face the Music' - on the gramophone. He introduces himself, claims to be a friend of Mrs Danvers and urges Mrs De Winter not to mention his visit to Maxim.

Mrs Danvers confides in Beatrice her insecurities about being different from Rebecca and says that it is her that feels as if she is drowning. Beatrice admits that Rebecca was “the most beautiful creature I ever saw in my life.”

Preparations are underway for the party and Maxim is regretting agreeing to it. Frith explains to Maxim that Robert is in trouble with Mrs Danvers for having broken the alabaster vase. Mrs De Winter admits to Maxim that she broke it and apologises to Mrs Danvers. Maxim and Mrs De Winter argue over her insecurity and her allegations that he regularly visits Rebecca’s beach cottage.

Mrs Danvers gives Mrs De Winter a dress to wear at the party and offers to help her to try it on. Mrs. Danvers tells Mrs De Winter that “Sometimes I wonder if she (Rebecca) comes back here to Manderley, and watches you and Mr de Winter together...” We hear the sound of rockets outside; an indication that a ship has gone aground in the bay.

Scene 3

The Fishermen sing as they decorate Manderley for the Midsummer Ball. Frith tells Robert to keep the press and gatecrashers out of the party and informs Giles that the coastguard has sent a diver down to have a look at the ship that sank. Maxim challenges Mrs. Danvers about Jack Favell’s visit, and tells her to tell him he must keep away from Manderley in future. Giles and Beatrice arrive in their costumes. As the guests arrive, Mrs De Winter appears at the top of the stairs wearing the dress Mrs Danvers gave her. Maxim is furious and orders her to go and change. Mrs De Winter turns and runs blindly away.

Act 2

Scene 1

The Fishermen sing as the boat is raised from the ocean bed.

Manderley, 4.30am. Beatrice explains to Mrs De Winter that the dress she was wearing was the same one that Rebecca wore two years ago at the same Midsummer party. Maxim has gone out and no one is sure where he is. Mrs De Winter breaks down and accuses Mrs. Danvers of playing a hideous trick on them both. Mrs Danvers responds saying that Rebecca cared for nothing and for no one and that Maxim was wracked with jealousy. “She's still mistress here, even if she is dead,” she says. “Why don't you leave Manderley to her, why don't you go? You're not happy. He doesn't love you. There's not much for you to live for, is there?” As Mrs De Winter is pressed against the rail of the stairs, Mrs Danvers suggests “Why don't you fall? Why don't you let yourself go?” The telephone rings and Robert’s approach disturbs them.

Scene 2

The Fishermen sing as they surround the body, covered with a tarpaulin. Frith explains to Mrs De Winter that the boat that Rebecca was sailing when she drowned had been found with a body tethered to it.

Mrs De Winter runs down to the beach, a frantic mirror of her earlier journey. She sees the fishermen out at sea, working to retrieve the wreck. She enters the beach cottage and sees Maxim who tells her that the discovery of the boat will reveal the truth. "There was no accident. Rebecca was not drowned. I killed her. I shot her here in this very cottage." He tells his wife how he hated Rebecca, how she was incapable of love and how she used the cottage for her string of affairs including Jack Favell. Rebecca had told him that she was carrying Jack's child and he shot her with the revolver. He explained how he carried her out in the boat, tied her to the rail and spiked the deck so that it sank. Mrs De Winter urges Maxim to rekindle their relationship.

Frith arrives and explains that the press are wanting to know if the late Mrs De Winter's body has been discovered with the boat so that it can finally be laid to rest. The coastguard arrives to inspect the body that has been stripped bare by the sea, and asks Maxim who drove the holes in the boat. The coastguard then asks Ben Bolitho what he saw that night and questions Maxim about his relations with his late wife. Mrs De Winter faints and then urges her husband to remain strong and to deny murdering Rebecca. Mrs Danvers tells Mrs De Winter that she knows the truth and will fight her to the grave.

Drunken Favell appears with Beatrice, challenges Maxim to account for the holes in the boat and reveals that he received a note from Rebecca on the day she died telling him that she would be at the cottage as she had something to tell him. He threatens to blackmail Maxim and when this is resisted, shows the note to the coastguard, telling him that Maxim had murdered Rebecca. Mrs Danvers confirms to the coastguard Favell's relationship with Rebecca. Dr Baker arrives and confirms Mrs Danvers' claim that Rebecca was not pregnant but had an incurable illness

Mrs De Winter orders Mrs Danvers to pack her bags and leave Mrs Danvers curses Manderley and all those who tried to confine her mistress.

Maxim urges his wife to return to Italy with him but she says he must stay at his beloved Manderley. Mrs Danvers leads a procession of Fishermen carrying flaming torches. Mrs De Winter finds a dressing gown in the sand. It is Rebecca's from the cottage. She slips off her dress and puts it on. She takes a cigarette from Maxim's pocket and smokes it as she speaks to the audience.

"Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. For a while I could not enter, for the way was barred to me. There was a padlock and a chain upon the gate. Then, like all dreamers, I was possessed of a sudden with supernatural powers and passed like a spirit through the barrier before me. Nature had come into her own again."

Manderley burns to the ground.

Emma Rice talks about Kneehigh's approach and why she does theatre

There is no formula to the way we make theatre. However, it always starts with the story. No, it starts before then. It starts with an itch, a need, an instinct.

Each one is raw, relevant and personal. Stories have an ability to present themselves, to emerge as if from nowhere. But they never are from nowhere. This is the seminal moment of instinct. This is when your subconscious stakes its claim and intervenes in your carefully ordered life. I sit up when a story taps me on the shoulder. I respect co-incidence. I listen to impulse. One of my most hated questions when making theatre is 'Why?'. 'Because', I want to answer, 'Because...!'

For me, making theatre is an excavation of feelings long since buried, a journey of understanding. Bruno Bettelheim in 'The Uses of Enchantment' his book about children's relationship to fiction, states that "our greatest need and most difficult achievement is to find meaning in our lives". He argues that by revealing the true content of folktales, children can use them to cope with their baffling and confusing emotions. My fascination with certain stories is fuelled by my own subconscious. The Red Shoes charts the pain of loss, obsession and addiction, The Wooden Frock, follows the slow and faltering healing process, Tristan & Yseult is a poem to love and its madness and The Bacchae a terrifying glimpse at the beast in us all. These are not children's themes but I often approach them in a childlike way. In my experience, our basic needs and desires are the same - to be communicated with, to be delighted, to be surprised, to be scared. We want to be part of something and we want to feel. We want to find meaning in our lives.

The event of live theatre is a rare chance to deliver all these needs. We can have a collective experience, unique to the group of people assembled in the theatre. I don't want the fourth wall constantly and fearfully placed between the actors and their audience, I want the actors to speak to their accomplices, look at them, to respond to them. I want a celebration, a collective gasp of amazement. I want the world to transform in front of the audience's eyes and demand that they join in with the game. Theatre is nothing without the engagement of the audience's creativity. Theatre takes us right back to Bruno Bettelheim and his belief in the therapeutic and cathartic nature of stories. We tell them because we need them.

Months before rehearsals begin, I start work with the creative team. We gaze at books and films, sketch and begin to form a concept; an environment in which the story can live, in which the actors can play. This physical world holds meaning and narrative, it is as much a story telling tool as the written word. With the writer or writers, we talk and dream. We map out the structure and the overall shape of the piece. They go away and write collections of poems or lyrics or ideas. Each writer works in a different way but what none of them do is to write a script or a scene in isolation.

It is this fertile palette of words, music and design that we bring to the rehearsal room. As I said, Kneehigh is a team. The shared imagination is greater than any individuals so we begin the rehearsal process by returning to the story. We tell it to each other, scribble thoughts on

huge pieces of paper, relate it to our own experience. We create characters, always looking to serve and subvert the story. Actors like Mike Shepherd and Craig Johnson delight with their deft improvisation, breathing life and naughtiness into the bones of the story, performers like Bec Applebee and Eva Magyar use their painfully eloquent bodies to create physical poetry and story, Giles King and Tristan Sturrock tickle and disarm with their tragic clowns. Stu's music is used to help create the world, to guide and inform improvisation and release feeling. Lighting is used from day one, the design is developed with ideas coming from the devising team. The writers are in rehearsal. They watch and inspire, feeding in their poetry, their lyrics. They respond to improvisation and craft scenes and characters alongside the actors. Layer upon layer the world is created, the story released.

We lay the foundations, then we forget them. If you stay true to the fundamental relationship between yourself, your team and the subject matter, the piece will take on a life of its own. Armed with instinct, play and our building blocks of music, text and design, Kneehigh do fearless battle. One of our most used phrases in the process is 'hold your nerve'. There is no room for neurosis or doubt, these will only undermine the process, hold your nerve, stay open and delight in the privilege of making theatre.

Each writer, Anna Maria Murphy, Carl Grose and Tom Morris bring their own beautiful and distinctive voice to the work. But remember, these texts represent just one layer of the worlds that Kneehigh creates. As you read, close your eyes from time to time. Let a tune drift back from your childhood or recall a painting that made your heart pound. Remember falling in love or losing control, leaving a loved one or laughing 'til you cried. Now the work lives. Now there is a connection. Now there is meaning.

Interview with Leslie Travers

Rebecca designer

Is this the first show you have designed for Emma Rice?

I have never worked with Emma before but I have seen lots of her work with Kneehigh. I love the way she works and the techniques that she has developed with Kneehigh. They are an extremely visual company that use lots of storytelling in their visual landscape. They have a very unique way of bringing images together. There is a really strong sense of story telling in their work and, as a designer, it really appeals to me. As they create settings they are very careful about the choices of elements they use; they create atmosphere through the use of space. I have always been drawn to them.

I'm very excited as I do a lot of opera work for big international houses and big spaces that often require big scenic element, so its exciting to work in a different way and be allowed to bring some of my world into the Kneehigh/Emma Rice experience.

Tell us about the design process

It all started last summer on an overnight sleeper train from London to Cornwall, arriving at dawn at St Austell. I remember waking up seeing the Tamar River and valley full of boats and water. That was the point when I started work on the piece.

We jumped into workshops with actors so we would spend the days trying things out with the script, talking it through in a very organic way. I could have easily felt like an observer but the Emma's process does not allow for sitting on the sidelines so I was very involved with the show. The show is constantly being refined and new ideas are always been tried out.

The Theatre Royal Plymouth has started building the set today. Some things have been decided however new and exciting ideas will continue to come out of the rehearsals.

What challenges have you faced in designing this show?

All good design is about challenges and about tackling them. We need to tell the story in the right way and ensure that the creative world has cohesion. My time in Cornwall has strongly influenced the work as it reflects the landscape of the story. The workshop period was the key time and I was able to speak with Emma Rice alone and discuss what I had seen that day.

What has inspired you to create the designs?

Although the production is very filmic it has nothing to do with the film and is very much based on the book. Emma (Rice) has gone through the book again and again and created her own multi location story. It moves around in very dramatic places and the way we create these locations will, I hope, be very surprising.



Music in Rebecca

The music in Rebecca takes the form of sea shanties. Sea shanties were originally a way to keep the men on a ship working to a rhythm or as part of a team.

The introduction of steamships in the second half of the nineteenth century resulted in the decline of the sea shanty as a working song. However by the mid twentieth century there was a renewed interest in sea shanties as part of a broader folk music revival. Sea shanties continue to play an important part in Cornwall's maritime heritage. The Falmouth International Sea Shanty Festival, attracts groups from across the globe to celebrate and safeguard this strong coastal tradition. The 2014 festival was the biggest yet with 48 shanty groups, 21 venues and 261 hours of shanty singing.

In the extract from the play below the Fishermen sing as they decorate Manderley for the Midsummer Ball

ONE MORE DAY

Oh, have you heard the news, me Johnny
One more day
We're homeward bound tomorrow
One more day
Only one more day, me Johnny
One more day
Oh, rock and roll me over
One more day.
Only one more day a-pumpin', Johnny
Only one more day a-bracin'
Oh, we're homeward bound today, Johnny
We'll leave her without sorrow, Johnny
Pack your bags today me Johnny
Oh, an' leave her where she lies, Johnny
Only one more day a-workin', Johnny
Oh, come rock 'n' roll me over
No more gales or heavy weather
Only one more day together
Manderley. The lights

Daphne du Maurier

Dame Daphne du Maurier, playwright and author, started her literary career at the age of twenty. Her works have been adapted into plays and films, some of which have been directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Her first novel, *The Loving Spirit*, was published in 1931 and received great acclaim, driving her to create more exhilarating work such as *Frenchman's Creek*, *Jamaica Inn*, and *Rebecca*.

Daphne du Maurier came from a family of creatives. She was the granddaughter of George du Maurier who was both an artist and a writer and she was the daughter of Gerard du Maurier who was an actor. Born in London in 1907, Daphne du Maurier was one of three daughters to Sir Gerald du Maurier, renowned actor-manager and Muriel Beaumont who was an actor. These family ties aided the development of her literary career.

Du Maurier often faced criticism as her work was not seen as “intellectually heavyweight” and classed as if it belonged to a bygone age. However her work today is often seen in a different light and she has been highly credited as a first class storyteller. For decades the popularity of her works has increased in libraries, and her novel *Rebecca* was ranked at number 14 of the “nation’s best loved novel”.

Rebecca was one of the three plays written by Du Maurier, adapted from her novels. In 1940 *Rebecca* opened at the Queen’s Theatre directed by George Devine. The production then transferred to the Strand Theatre after 181 performances and ran for another 176. *The Years Between* was her second play, which she began writing in 1943. Directed by Irene Hentschel, it was first staged at the Opera House, Manchester in 1944 and transferred in 1945 to Wyndham’s Theatre, running for an amazing 617 performances. In 2007, the play was revived at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond by Caroline Smith.

Du Maurier’s third play, *September Tide*, opened at the Aldwych Theatre in 1948, running 267 performances. The play revolved around a middle-aged woman whose bohemian artist son-in-law falls for her. Playing the role of Stella, actor Gertrude Lawrence and Daphne Du Maurier developed a close personal and social relationship during the run. The play itself has received occasional revivals, such as in 1994 at the Comedy Theatre.

Daphne Du Maurier became a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in June 1969, and was in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list. It was a title she accepted but never used. The news was kept hidden, even from her children, until they discovered it in a newspaper.

Dame Daphne du Maurier died on 19th April 1989 in Cornwall, the place which inspired the majority of her works.

Cornwall

Cornwall that inspired *Du Maurier*

Daphne du Maurier lived in Cornwall and many of her novels had Cornish settings, including *Rebecca*, *Jamaica Inn*, *Frenchman's Creek*, *My Cousin Rachel*, and *The House on the Strand*. Cornwall provided the inspiration for *The Birds*, one of her terrifying series of short stories, made famous as a film by Alfred Hitchcock.

Just outside Fowey, on the south coast of Cornwall is the 17th century Menabilly Estate. It has been owned by the Rashleigh family from the 16th century to the present day and was home to Du Maurier for 25 years from 1943. Manderley, the imposing residence in which the novel and the play are set was actually based on Milton Hall in Cambridgeshire, which du Maurier visited in her youth. However she placed Rebecca in the setting of Menabilly, the home she leased, hidden away in the woods outside Fowey. She called it 'a jewel in the hollow of a hand', "I must get down to Fowey. Fowey would be my salvation," wrote du Maurier of her twentysomething self, "jaded with London society and desperate to write – and fish, and sail – in peace".

"She always had this thing that places were more important than people," explained her son Kits Browning. (1) While she was in Egypt, she had confessed to missing the then abandoned house of Menabilly more than her sons.

Du Maurier wrote a book, *Vanishing Cornwall* in which she bemoaned the way her beloved West Country was succumbing to tourism.

For an interview with Daphne du Maurier talking about Cornwall see

<http://www.visitcornwall.tv/cornwall-videos/daphne-du-maurier-cornwall-fowey>

(1) *From an interview by Christian House in The Daily Telegraph 17 Aug 2013*

Kneehigh's home

Kneehigh are based in a collection of barns on the south Cornish coast, they are at the top of a hill where the road ends and a vast horizon stretches far beyond Dodman Point. By their very nature the barns let the weather in and out again. A large multi fuel burner needs to be stoked and fed for rehearsals; there is no mobile phone reception and nowhere to pop out for a cappuccino or a snack. The isolation of the barns, and the need to cook and keep warm provides a real and natural focus for our flights of imagination. This is not a conceit; it is a radical choice that informs all aspects of our work.

Although much of our work is now co-produced with larger theatres, we always try to start the creative process at these barns, to be inspired by our environment and where we work. This creative space is at the heart of how we create and conceive our work.

Feminism in the 1930s

Feminism is a collection of movements and ideologies that seek to define, establish, and defend equal political, cultural, social and economic rights for women. This includes establishing equal opportunities for women in education and employment. A feminist generally identifies as someone who supports the rights and equality of women

Although the Representation of the People Act 1928 gave women the same voting rights as men most women in the 1930's still worked in the home, cooking and cleaning. Women were not encouraged to work at all in the 1930's though some chose to or were forced to work. Many worked in conditions men would not dream of and most did it for less pay. There was a strong belief that working women were taking jobs away from men and many were told to stay in the home.

In the late 1930s when Daphne du Maurier was writing Rebecca feminists were divided on what to do to improve their rights. Some believed that now women had the right to vote, they needed nothing else. Many others believed that voting was not the only issue women should be concerned about. Although women now had the right to vote, few women played leading roles in politics, the judicial system, industry or business. Yet despite setbacks, some women were beginning to get into positions of political power and make improvements in their lives.

Class Divide in the 1930s

Up until the outbreak of war in 1939, British society had retained a rigid class structure, with the educated middle and upper classes tending to believe in their own moral and cultural superiority over the working classes. Proper models of behaviour were seen to emanate from this section of society, including correct pronunciation, table manners, appropriate dress and even the courting of wedding partners. With few exceptions, the holders of power and authority came from an upper class background and had a public school education. They saw themselves as the guardians of culture, and those lower down the social order seldom questioned their position. It was a social and cultural hierarchy that was largely self-policed, with members of different classes rarely willing or able to move to alternative social groupings. It was expected that people would conform to the values of their peer group, and any attempt to transcend this hierarchy was restricted by social convention.

(From Designing Britain 1945 – 1975; the visual experience of post war society)

Rebecca: Film, Television and DVD

There have been a number of film adaptations of *Rebecca*. Alfred Hitchcock's Academy Award winning 1940 film is the best known and starred Sir Laurence Olivier as Maxim, Joan Fontaine as the second Mrs De Winter and Dame Judith Anderson as Mrs Danvers. Although it was based on the novel, Hollywood's production code required that if Maxim had murdered his wife, he would have to be punished for his crime. Consequently, the key turning point of the novel – the revelation that Maxim, in fact, murdered Rebecca – was changed so that it seemed as if Rebecca's death was accidental. At the end of the film version, Mrs. Danvers perished in the fire she had started. The film quickly became a classic and, at the time, was a major technical achievement in film-making. In Pakistan, *Rebecca* was produced as an Urdu serial television drama, *Noorpur Ki Rani (Queen of Noorpur)*, and was popular with audiences in Pakistan and India.

Rebecca has also been adapted for television. The 1979 BBC version starred Jeremy Brett as Maxim, and Joanna David as the second Mrs de Winter. The 1997 Carlton production starred Emilia Fox as the second Mrs de Winter, Charles Dance as Maxim and Diana Rigg as Mrs. Danvers, and is available as a DVD.

About the Producers

David Pugh and Dafydd Rogers

David Pugh and Dafydd Rogers commissioned Emma Rice to adapt Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter* and originally produced the piece with Cineworld Plc at the Cinema on the Haymarket in London's West End where it played for more than 350 performances. David and Dafydd first produced Yasmina Reza's *Art*, which became the most successful play in London of the last 25 years while winning every major award, including the Tony Award for Best Play. They then produced the play *What I Wrote*, directed by Kenneth Branagh, which won the Olivier Award for Best Comedy and a Tony Award nomination for Best Special Theatrical Event. Their production of Tom Stoppard's adaptation of *Heroes* opened in the West End in 2005 and won the Olivier Award for Best Comedy. Pugh and Rogers then produced one of the most successful productions ever in the West End, *Equus*, which starred Richard Griffiths and Daniel Radcliffe. They have since produced Christopher Hampton's adaptation of Reza's *God of Carnage* in the West End where it won the Olivier Award and on Broadway where it won the Tony Award. Their production of Tim's Firth *Calendar Girls* played a record breaking West End season and toured for over 5 years becoming the most successful touring production of a play ever in the UK.

Theatre Royal Plymouth

The Theatre Royal Plymouth is dedicated to producing new plays by some of the country's most exciting writers, and has built a national reputation for the quality of its pioneering work. It seeks out new creative talent and works with established producers and artists, and they continually share and exchange new ideas, skills and expertise. Their productions and co-productions have toured within the UK and internationally, resulting in hundreds of thousands of people enjoying shows originally produced in Plymouth.

The range of work presented and produced on The Lyric stage is incredibly extensive and includes major touring drama and musical productions by producers and theatre companies such as Cameron Mackintosh, Propeller, Frantic Assembly and the National Theatre; as well as welcoming leading opera and dance companies to the South West including Glyndebourne, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Welsh National Opera, Rambert and Matthew Bourne.

The Theatre Royal Plymouth also produces its own drama and musical productions, often with commercial or subsidised partners and many tour nationally or transfer to the West End.

About Kneehigh

Kneehigh is a UK based theatre company with a local, national and international profile. For over 30 years Kneehigh has created vigorous, popular and challenging theatre and performed with the joyful anarchy that audiences have come to expect from this ground-breaking company.

Kneehigh tell stories. Based in Cornwall in breath-taking barns on the south coast the company create theatre of humanity on an epic and tiny scale. They work with an ever-changing ensemble of performers, artists, technicians, administrators, makers and musicians and are passionate about their multi-disciplined creative process.

In 2010 Kneehigh launched The Asylum, a beautiful and flexible nomadic structure, which means the company now has a venue to call home as well as being one of the leading touring theatre companies in the UK. The company have now presented four seasons in The Asylum in Cornwall, and will continue to reinvent the space and explore new locations in future years.

Alongside their national and international touring and Asylum seasons, Kneehigh run their Rambles programme aiming to engage creatively with communities in Cornwall and beyond through event and adventure.

Kneehigh productions include A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings (in association with Little Angel Theatre, UK tour 2013), Steptoe and Son (UK Tour 2012/13) The Wild Bride Pumpkin (The Asylum, Cornwall 2011, Battersea Arts Centre, 2012); The Red Shoes (UK Tour 2001/2, Winner of TMA for Best Director 2002, UK Tour, USA and Australia 2010/11), Hansel & Gretel (UK Tour 2010/11), Don John (UK Tour 2008/9), Brief Encounter (West End 2008, UK Tour and USA Tour 2009, Broadway 2010, Australia & US tour 2013/14), A Matter of Life and Death (Royal National Theatre 2007), Rapunzel (BAC, UK Tour and New York 2007/8), Cymbeline (UK and International Tour 2007/2008) and Tristan and Yseult (Royal National Theatre and UK Tour 2006, UK and US tours in 2013/14 & 2014/15), Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs), UK tour 2014.

Activities

These three extracts from the play are intended as a stimulus for discussion, literacy and drama activities

EXTRACT 1

BEATRICE I should think you're a placid little thing. *(She smiles.)* Don't mind me saying so, but I think you ought to do something to your hair. Why don't have you it waved? It's so lanky, isn't it? Must look awful under a hat. Try sweeping it behind your ears.

MRS DE WINTER *does so.*

BEATRICE No, that's worse. Too severe. What does Maxim say? Does he like it bobbed?

MRS DE WINTER I don't know. He's never talked about it.

BEATRICE Oh! Well, perhaps he likes it. Don't go by me. Tell me, did you get any clothes in Paris or London?

She picks up her hat, returns and fixes it in front of the glass.

MRS DE WINTER No, we hadn't any time. Maxim wanted to come home to Manderley.

BEATRICE I can tell by the way you dress you don't care a hoot what you wear.

MRS DE WINTER I do. I'm fond of nice things. I never had much money up to now.

BEATRICE I wonder Maxim didn't stay a week or so in London to get you something decent to wear. He's always so particular.

MRS DE WINTER Is he? He never seems particular to me. I don't think he notices what I wear at all.

BEATRICE Oh? Oh, he must have changed then. *(Another pause.)* D'you suppose you'll have a lot of people down to stay?

MRS DE WINTER I don't know. Maxim hasn't said.

BEATRICE One never could get a bed in the old days. Tremendous parties. Somehow I don't quite see you... *(She stops and pats her arm.)* Oh, well... it's a pity you don't ride or party. You must miss a lot. You don't sail, by any chance, do you?

MRS DE WINTER No.

BEATRICE Thank God for that!

GILES (*calls from the hall*) Bee, come on!

BEATRICE I must be off.

TALK ABOUT

How you think Mrs De Winter is feeling at the end of this conversation.

ACT OUT

In pairs improvise a short scene in which Mrs De Winter confides in a friend about her new life with Maxim at Manderley.

In pairs improvise a short scene in which Beatrice is travelling home with her husband Giles in their car. She shares her thoughts about the new Mrs De Winter.

WRITE ABOUT

A letter from Mrs De Winter to a close friend describing her thoughts and feelings about her new life.

EXTRACT 2

MRS DE WINTER is alone. She wipes her eyes with her handkerchief. MAXIM comes in from the terrace with JASPER.

MRS DE WINTER (*getting licked by JASPER*) Hello. Hello boy. Oh!

MAXIM Get off her Jasper!

MRS DE WINTER (*catching hold of his hand.*) Where did you go?

MAXIM Only across the lawn to look over the park. You've been crying.

MRS DE WINTER No, I haven't. I swear I haven't.

MAXIM It's been a long day. You want your dinner. That's what it is, isn't it?

MRS DE WINTER Yes, yes, I expect so.

MAXIM You mustn't mind, you know, if I'm out a good deal. Running an estate like Manderley is a full-time job. I don't loaf here like I did in the south of France and in Italy.

MRS DE WINTER No, of course not. *(A pause.)* Beatrice said I was younger than she expected.

MAXIM Beatrice can mind her own business.

MRS DE WINTER I shan't know what to say to all your friends. They'll think I don't belong to your world.

MAXIM What do you mean... my world?

MRS DE WINTER You know what I mean. This - Manderley.

MAXIM What do you know about Manderley? I'm the best judge aren't I? I wouldn't have asked you to marry me if I hadn't been certain about it, would I?

MRS DE WINTER I - I don't know.

MAXIM What do you mean, you don't know?

MRS DE WINTER I wish I was ten, fifteen years older. I wish I was dark, and clever and amusing.

MAXIM You wouldn't be with me here now if you were! And stop biting those nails, they're ugly enough as they are.

MRS DE WINTER It's all very well for you. You know everything there is to know about me, but I - why, I scarcely know anything more about you than the day we met.

MAXIM And what did you know then?

MRS DE WINTER Well - that you lived at Manderley and - and that you had lost your wife.

As soon as she says this she regrets it. MAXIM's face is very hard. A long pause.

MAXIM I told you in Monte Carlo I didn't want to discuss the past.

MRS DE WINTER Maxim, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Don't be angry with me, Maxim.

MAXIM I'm not angry with you.

MRS DE WINTER I'm sorry. I love you so much.

MAXIM *(fiercely)* Do you, do you?

MRS DE WINTER What is it, darling? Why do you look like that?

TALK ABOUT

When Mrs De Winter says she fears his friends think she doesn't belong in his world. What does she think his world consists of? How is it different to hers?

ACT OUT

Work in pairs to improvise the rest of this scene.

Work in pairs to recreate the scene in Monte Carlo where Mrs De Winter asks Maxim about Rebecca and Manderley.

EXTRACT 3

MRS DANVERS I understand, madam, that you have done nothing about a costume for the ball tonight.

MRS DE WINTER I'm afraid I've been rather idle, Mrs Danvers. I thought I might go as a gypsy.

MRS DANVERS I would never have chosen a gypsy, not if I were you. *(She picks up the box and crosses to the table with it.)* Of course, it's none of my business, I know, but there are so many people coming here, to see you for the first time. *(She unties the string, and lifts the lid of the box.)* I'm interfering, perhaps. It's nothing to do with me. But when I heard you had done nothing about a costume, I couldn't help wondering about this.

MRS DE WINTER *(Leaning forward)* What is it? What have you got?

MRS DANVERS *(Carefully lifting the dress out of its box)* Look at the fine lace. Look at the little waist. *(MRS DE WINTER stands up. MRS DANVERS measures it beside her.)* It would fit you, I'm convinced of that. And then with your hair pulled back from your face. *(She looks at her through half-closed eyes.)*

MRS DE WINTER Do you think so? Would it suit me?

MRS DANVERS Suit you? Yes, of course it would suit you.

MRS DE WINTER It would be a surprise, wouldn't it, for Mr de Winter?

MRS DANVERS Yes.

MRS DE WINTER Oh, it will be fifty times better than the gypsy. Take it upstairs. I don't want anyone to see. *(She folds it quickly, and replaces it in the box.)* It was nice of you to think of it, Mrs Danvers.

MRS DANVERS does not answer for a moment. She still stares curiously at MRS DE WINTER.

MRS DANVERS When you are dressed, and we've put a little colour on your cheeks, and your hair is styled strong and sleek, then you'll come to the head of the stairs and show yourself to Mr de Winter, and you'll be transformed.

MRS DE WINTER Transformed...

MRS DANVERS I'll help you to dress. I'd like to help you to dress.

MRS DE WINTER That's very kind of you.

They stand looking at each other. MRS DANVERS moves to the foot of the stairs and turns, watching her.

MRS DANVERS *(Gently)* Why don't you come upstairs and try on the dress?

MRS DE WINTER I - I don't know.

MRS DANVERS I expect Mr De Winter's out walking. He'll not return till lunch-time. *(MRS DE WINTER hesitates, then walks slowly to the foot of the stairs, where MRS DANVERS is standing.)* You'll find the hooks of the dress awkward, all by yourself. I did everything for Mrs De Winter, you know. "You dress me better than anyone, Danny", she used to say. "I won't be dressed by anyone but you." *(She goes up three steps.)*

MRS DE WINTER Danny. She called you Danny? *(She goes up one step.)*

MRS DANVERS Yes. It was always Danny. I feel her everywhere. I fancy I hear her just behind me. Do you think the dead come back and watch the living?

MRS DE WINTER I don't know...

MRS DANVERS Sometimes I wonder if she comes back here to Manderley, and watches you and Mr de Winter together...

A pause; and then the silence is shattered suddenly by the sound of a rocket, outside on the shore. The first is followed by a second, and then a third. They both turn and look towards the window.

MRS DE WINTER What is it? What's happened?

MRS DANVERS They're rockets. From the Coastguard on the cliff. It must mean there's a ship gone ashore in the bay.

TALK, WRITE AND ACT ABOUT

Talk about why the heroine remain nameless? Do you think this is symbolic?

Do you think *Rebecca* a ghost story?

Do you think justice is served at the end of the play?

Discuss the role of Manderley --both the house itself and its grounds and beach. How does the setting contribute to the plot?

Talk about the heroine's marriage to Maxim. How does their relationship develop during the course of the play?

The Fancy Dress Ball attracted the attention of the press. Write a feature for a newspaper outlining the events of the evening

Work in small groups to create still images/freeze frames of photographs of the evening to accompany the feature. Decide on an eye-catching headline.

Take it it turns to take on the role of Mrs de Winter and Mrs Danvers. The rest of the group should take on the role of the press and ask them questions about the rumours and events they have seen or heard.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT

How one edition of the book was used by the Germans in World War II as the key to a book code. Sentences were made using single words in the book, referred to by page number, line and position in the line.

How the end of the Alfred Hitchcock film and this theatre production differ from the end of the book. What do you think are the reasons for changing the endings?

Further Information

Rebecca programme

Available to buy at each venue, the programme contains notes by Emma Rice, production photos by Steve Tanner & more information on the show.

Rebecca website

<http://www.rebeccatheplay.com>

Kneehigh Website

<http://www.kneehigh.co.uk>

Our website has lots of information about past shows, including rehearsal notes, directors' comments, photos and lots more. Kneehigh Friends can access the member's area which contains even more exclusive treats.