

Coming up next...

THE CRUCIBLE



BY ARTHUR MILLER

27th September - 5th October at 8pm

An imaginative re-telling of a classic true story, re-told with our turbulent times in mind

In the tight-knit, Puritan town of Salem, a group of girls are discovered dancing in the woods and then immediately fall ill. When no earthly cause can be identified, fear and suspicion begin to percolate in the small, isolated community, that something larger, more fearsome and other-worldly may be to blame. Buried secrets and resentments are brought to light and attempts to root out evil lead to finger-pointing, treachery and betrayal.

THE 39 STEPS

Adapted by PATRICK BARLOW

18th - 26th October at 8pm

A brilliant, fast-moving spoof of this classic film

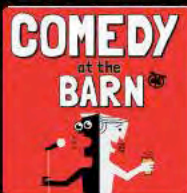
The acclaimed 2005 parody version of the Hitchcock film, after the John Buchan novel. Four actors play all the roles, sometimes more than one at a time, employing lightning-fast costume changes and highly creative use of props and set. Played mainly for laughs, the show contains many references and allusions to other Hitchcock works for aficionados in the audience to spot.



7th July at 7pm

Sing or listen to songs from the shows and more

The monthly opportunity for all singers to perform in the Barn's clubroom to an appreciative audience. Audience tickets are £7 on the door. If you would like to sing, please see more information. The bar will be open from 7pm.



Keep an eye out for more Comedy at the Barn

Hosted by the Barn's very own standup Eamon Goodfellow (finalist in the 2019 New Act of the Year competition), the nights bring the finest of local and international comedy talent.

www.barntheatre.co.uk



THE RED SHOES

From the story by Hans Christian Andersen
Based on poetry by Anna Maria Murphy
Adapted by Emma Rice
Originally performed by Kneehigh Theatre Co.
21st - 29th June 2019 | Price £1.50

Welcome to the Barn Theatre for our production of *The Red Shoes*. I'm still not entirely sure how we have come to get the rights to perform this fascinating piece – Kneehigh are incredibly protective of their work, and rightly so. Someone has worked some magic to get it to us...



The original production from the Cornwall-based Kneehigh theatre company was a unique take on the original Hans Christian Andersen story, and dealt with the darker side of his stories. The 'script' is just a few pages long – 23 or so I believe – and relies on the creativity and vision of the director (at that time, Emma Rice) and the performers to bring it to life in all its vibrant colour, dark and light mixing with humour and tragedy, with music, sound and costume all used to great effect.

Who else would it be given to but director Lou Wallace who has for long time loved Kneehigh's work and assembled a cast of great variety, with some well-known Barn faces, but also some new members. I have seen small glimpses of musical rehearsals, the odd flash of costume or make-up – looks fabulous!

As a community of volunteers, we're always looking for new faces to get involved, even if it's only in a small way. If acting is not for you there are lots of backstage roles where you can become part of the team and enjoy putting together a production for everyone. We don't expect anyone to walk straight in as a stage manager – we will ease you in, with lots of opportunities to learn the ropes and try a few things out and see what you enjoy. If the idea appeals to you, have a chat to one of the Barn members helping out this evening, and they'll put you in touch with someone to find out more.

I'm sure you're going to love *The Red Shoes* – sit back and enjoy, and on your way out make sure you grab a leaflet for next season which promises to be at least as rich as this one. See you for the Fringe in September!

Simon

Simon Parr
Barn Theatre Club Chairman



Red, red, red...

The colour red instantly fires our imagination: blood, lust, passion, wine, lipstick, flames, hell, wounds, danger. It's a powerful, decadent and sexy colour – not for the faint-hearted – and has long been viewed as an object of desire, perhaps even forbidden fruit?

Shoes as red as desire, that's what I crave

Historically the huge expense of creating red dye for fabrics meant they were a clear sign of wealth and status. Pre-Roman Etruscan kings wore shoes coloured with costly and rare red dye, and Roman Emperors and European aristocrats continued this tradition. In fact, in some cultures the privilege of wearing red was strictly reserved for society's elite. In Japan and Italy, for example, there was a time when the wearing of red clothes was a mark of nobility, but conversely those outside the upper ranks would 'break the rules' by wearing red-lined kimonos or – horror of horrors – red underwear! Our craving for red as a symbol of power is deeply rooted in our psyche and fundamental to our shared history.

Throughout Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, heels were an obvious sign of wealth or status, for both women and men. The construction of a heel for a shoe was a difficult and costly operation and so wearing such a shoe would show the world you were a person of some substance. In France things went even further in the fashionable court of Louis XIV. Now Louis loved his heels and was rather proud of his shapely legs. His beautiful silk stockings were often rounded off with a stunning pair of neatly turned heels... of the deepest scarlet. Louis was a fabulous self-publicist: aware of his image and its lasting impact. He was keen that his court was viewed as a centre of style and sophistication. Understanding the power of symbols and colour, Louis issued a royal decree stating that only those granted access to his court would be allowed the privilege of wearing red heels in public. Those heels instantly became something unattainable, something special, something that marked you as being different – and something that other people craved!



Cast

Tania Amado Fish.....Storyteller, Soldier and Preacher's Wife
Jessica Anne.....The Girl (20, 22, 25, 27, 29 eve) and Storyteller
Esther Bishop.....Storyteller, Musician and Justine
Chris Gill.....Storyteller and Preacher
Jude Kerswill.....Lady Lydia
Jim Kinloch.....Storyteller and Butcher
Verity Roberts.....The Girl (21, 24, 26, 28, 29 mat) and Storyteller
Divyesh Thakerar.....Storyteller, Shoemaker and Angel / Airman
Lorna Thompson.....Storyteller and Old Lady
Rob Wallace.....Musician and M'Artha

Creative Team

Company Manager.....Carol Bush
Production Manager.....Sue Talbot
Stage Manager.....Simon Wallace
Deputy Stage Manager.....Sharon Francis
Assistant Stage Manager.....Frank Wallace
Set Design.....Rosemary Bianchi
Construction.....Ian Bage, Hannah Cobb, David Fairhurst
Keith Lambert, Norman Merry, John Sear
Eddie Washington
Costume.....Sarah Deamer, Sue Owen, Sue Talbot, Margaret Wallace
Properties.....Sheila Grimant, Georgie Palmer
Lighting Design.....Trevor Wallace
Lighting Operation.....Clifton Hoyle
Production Images.....Simon Wallace
Make-Up Design.....Tammy Wall
Vocal Coach.....George Curry
Movement Coach.....Natalie Garvey
Sound Operation.....Kenny Doherty, Archie Wallace
Musical Director.....Rob Wallace
Director.....Lou Wallace
Posters and Programmes... John Cook, Simon Wallace, Clive Weatherley

Original music

Shoes as Red as Wounds.....Jude Kerswill, Rob Wallace
Stroll.....Rob Wallace
The Shoemaker's Theme.....Rob Wallace
Incidental music / sound.....Rob Wallace
Arrangements of other songs.....The company

Soles that with the Devil have danced...

It may be the colour of Satan, but red is also most definitely the colour of the Roman Catholic Church and is often linked with all forms of religious ceremony. Renaissance paintings often depict Jesus and the Virgin Mary wearing deep red robes; Indian brides wear red saris at their wedding; Japanese women wear a red kimono as a symbol of happiness and good luck; cardinals wear red; the communion wine is blood-red; and popes generally wear red shoes – a tradition dating back to the 16th century! Pope Francis has bucked this trend by opting for black shoes in public as a sign of humility and austerity. However, he still saves the red shoes for indoors!

Sensible footwear is just too hard to bear...

First published in Denmark in 1845, Hans Christian Andersen's macabre story is another example of a 'cautionary tale', although this might not be designed just for children? Surely with this story we have a clear warning of the dangers of young girls and women becoming too demanding by securing the object of their desire. Whatever the shoes represent eventually leads to a bloody downfall; and their power is all-consuming. In this version, however, our heroine (both our heroines) finally realise that 'redemption' or perhaps 'acceptance' is possible if it's found within, not granted from above. The themes, imagery and 'message' of the story, and our response to them, have guided our journey through rehearsal and, although we go to some very dark places in the telling of the tale, eventually we hope for an uplifting, empowering resolution.



There was once... a story

Making this show has been unlike any other rehearsal process that most of us have experienced. The text is scarcely 21 pages long and the only roles allocated when we began were those of the Girl and Lady Lydia, other characters being assigned as we went along, rather like in the play itself! This meant that the actors were taking a huge leap of faith and approaching the rehearsal room in an even more open, generous and trusting fashion than might usually be the case!

We began, as all good stories do, at the beginning, with the story itself and a large sheet of paper! We shared our responses, discussed themes, collected images, ate cake, found songs and brought in props that were all inspired by the narrative. We played games, explored, tried new skills, composed original music, tested new ideas and gently pushed each other to 'play' harder. Slowly our world of misfits, oddities, the displaced, the non-conformists, the tellers of stories began to form and we created 'storyteller' characters who are all drawn to share their peculiar tale with the audience. We were lucky to have costumes, props and music with us from the beginning and this has allowed us to work imaginatively, with a kind of theatrical toy box, reminiscent of the 'let's pretend' games we played as children. This has afforded us some artistic freedom and has created an unusual world on stage. So, we have a soldier who looks like an authentic WW1 private, but is played by a woman, and an old lady with a fruit bowl on her head and a steering wheel made from a top hat. The style here is playful, perhaps child-like in its imaginative breadth, with references and characters drawn from a range of sources and historical periods. Children have a capacity for believing in their play and as actors we have had to recreate that belief in order to tell our story.

Mike Shepherd (founder of Kneehigh Theatre Company) uses the phrase 'hold your nerve' – and this has proved something of a mantra for us (and for me in particular) during this process. The 'vision' was very clear, detailed and 'real' throughout our creative journey, but making this vision come to life on stage has taken guts, and the 'through line' has not been an easy route to chart at times. Belief, experimentation and playful imagination have proved vital. That, and getting the right group of people together to 'have a go' in the first place, of course! I have to say that returning to a more 'traditional' form of making theatre will undoubtedly be easier and might result in fewer sleepless nights worrying about red paint, doors on wheels and size-nine heels... but I doubt very much that it will be as much fun. What a joy this has been!

Lou x



The Red Shoe Movement (yes, there is one!)

This was created by Mariela Dabbah in response to ongoing gender inequality in the workplace. Its seven founding principles include mentoring younger, less experienced women and providing honest feedback to women within your professional network without being unnecessarily critical or hurtful. Essentially it's about empowerment and celebration. Wearing red shoes on a Tuesday is a visual symbol and reminder to maintain the movement's principles and perhaps to feel as emboldened as our girl first does when she tries those glorious shoes on!

Who are Kneehigh?

Founded in 1980 by Mike Shepherd, then a Cornish schoolteacher, Kneehigh have grown from humble beginnings to become one of our most celebrated and undoubtedly most exciting theatre companies. In the early days, Shepherd led workshops for local people outside of school hours. These playful, inclusive and at times 'anarchic' projects quickly led to shows touring the county. They performed anywhere and everywhere, from village halls to Cornish cliffs, quarries, even an old gunpowder works. Their work was playful, cheeky and often rather anarchic, and their popularity soon spread.

Emma Rice joined the company in 1994, initially as an actor, and directed her first production *The Itch* in 1996, but it was *The Red Shoes* in 2003 that was the game-changer. It won its director a TMA award and Rice said afterwards, 'It was then I became a director, a storyteller and an artist'. Rice and Shepherd became joint artistic directors of the company and soon they had productions making waves not just in Cornwall, but all over the world.

Barn Fact File

In 1984, after long negotiations and a major fund-raising campaign, the Barn Theatre Trust purchased the freehold of the building, finally achieving the goal of an amateur theatre in the town, owned and controlled by its members.


The Howard Centre
Welwyn Garden City Shopping

