

Kneehigh ON TOUR



The Red Shoes

Memory Aid for Students:
Don't Write Notes, Watch the Show!

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1. Introduction



Adapted from Hans Christian Andersen, this production of *The Red Shoes* is passionate, irreverent, funny and rude. Like a gust of salty sea air, this award-winning piece fuses live and recorded sound, visually and physically powerful images and a story to make your heart pound.

Kneehigh are one of the UK's most exciting touring theatre companies who specialise in visually stunning, adventurous theatre, ensemble playing and beautiful music; bringing a real sense of joy and spontaneity to everything they do.

Kneehigh productions include: *Don John* (National Tour 2008/9) *Brief Encounter* (West End 2008, National Tour and USA tour 2009, Broadway 2010); *A Matter of Life and Death* (National Theatre 2007); *Rapunzel* (BAC, National Tour and New York 2007/8); *Cymbeline* (National and International Tour 2007/2008); *Tristan and Yseult* (National Theatre and National Tour 2006)

The *Red Shoes* saw Artistic Director Emma Rice win a TMA Award for Best Director Award (2002).

This production features members of the company who have been involved for a long time: Founder Mike Shepherd, (co-founder) Dave Mynne and long standing company member Giles King.

Press quotes from summer 2010:

*Exquisitely dark, sexy and mischievous - The Times******

*Stunning - The Times ******

*Brilliantly simple visual richness - The Guardian ******

*Intensely charismatic theatre - The Guardian ******

2. Overview

The Red Shoes is adapted from a Hans Christian Andersen fairytale of the same name. Narrated by Lady Lydia, and told through the four story-tellers, The Red Shoes tells the story of a girl....

The girl is taken in by a rich old lady after her mother's death. She tricks The Old lady into buying her a pair of red shoes which she wears to church. The Old Lady hides away the red shoes but then when she becomes ill, The Girl, driven by desire, steals back the shoes. She feels her feet being to twitch and once she begins dancing, she can't stop. The shoes take over. She cannot control them and they are stuck to her feet.


The shoes continue to dance, over hills and down the dales. She can't even attend The Old Lady's funeral. An angel appears to her, condemning her to dance to damned eternity. The Girl finds her way to the butcher's door and begs with him to chop off her feet. He does so and carves her a pair of wooden feet. Thinking that she has suffered enough for the red shoes, the girl goes to church but the doors of the church will not open. The chopped-off feet with the red shoes haunt her and dance before her, barring the way. She finds work from the Preachers wife but the shoes continue to haunt her. The Angel reappears demanding that she go with him to heaven. She decides to fight and battles with the Angel until she is free.



Emma Rice, Director, on 'Making a Show':



"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 audiences 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. Stu Barker (musical director and composer) and I exchange music we have heard, that inspires us or just feels right. We talk of themes and feelings. From these conversations he creates a musical palette of melodies and sound-scapes. 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."

**Emma Rice, Joint Artistic
Director, Kneehigh Theatre**



Mike Shepherd: Why Do We Do Theatre?

We do theatre because it's live.

The components of performance and audience create a different chemistry each and every night, there is no formula. On a good night we might "gel" an audience, take them on a journey and leave them somewhere they never expected to be. On a good night the auditorium can crackle with enchantment and excitement, it's all a delicate and indefinable balance to be lost or found every night.

Theatre is live – it's not like cinema where, sadly, most of the audience need a bucket of coke and a trough of popcorn to enjoy; it's not the casual channel flipping experience of TV – it aims to engage and transport so please: watch rather than take notes.

In response to the frequently asked questions about process and style... There is no Kneehigh formula or style. This is demonstrated by the three very different shows currently playing: The raw but crafted dance theatre of The Red Shoes; the elegant and rich inspiration of Brief Encounter; and the anarchic improvisation of Hansel and Gretel.

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

Mike Shepherd, Joint Artistic Director, Kneehigh Theatre

3. Credits

Cast

Lady Lydia
The Girl
The Old Lady/The Preachers Wife
The Soldier/The Shoemaker
The Preacher/The Angel/The Butcher
Musicians

Giles King
Patrycja Kujawska
Dave Mynne
Robert Luckay
Mike Shepherd
Ian Ross / Stu Barker

Production

Director
Assistant Director
Poems
Design
Design Associate
Music
Film
Lighting
Sound
Additional Text
Production/Stage Manager
Lighting Operator
Sound Operator
Photography
Graphic Design
Illustration
Producer

Emma Rice
Simon Harvey
Anna Maria Murphy
Bill Mitchell
Sarah Wright
Stu Barker
Mark Jenkin
Malcolm Rippeth
Simon Baker
Mike Shepherd
Steph Curtis
Ben Nichols
Andy Graham
Steve Tanner
Dave Mynne
Daryl Waller
Paul Crewes



4. Scene Structure

Preshow – The storytellers roam amongst the audience

Clearance – The storytellers wash their feet and await the arrival of Lady Lydia

1. Lady Lydia enters, she conducts the storytellers
2. The first Storyteller is chosen to play The Girl
3. The Girl paints her feet red
4. The second storyteller is chosen to play The Old lady
5. Old Lady and takes in The Girl
6. The Girl is scrubbed and cleaned
7. The third storyteller is chosen to play The Shoemaker
8. The Girl visits The Shoemaker, she leaves with The Red Shoes
9. The Old Lady teaches The Girl some manners
10. The Levitation
11. The Old Lady takes The Girl to church
12. The Girl meets a Soldier
13. The Girl attends confirmation at the church
14. The soldier casts a spell on The girl
15. The Girl and The Old Lady fight. The Old Lady takes off her red shoes and puts them away
16. The Escapology
17. The Old Lady on her death bed
18. The Girl gets back the red shoes (first dance 'The Slow Groove')
19. The Soldier returns from war
20. (Dance 'Can Can')
21. The Girl puppet with hair
22. The Angel appears, condemns The Girl to dance to damned eternity
23. (Dance 'Jurassic 5')
24. The Girl puppet with no hair
25. The Old Lay's funeral
26. (Dance 'The Charleston')
27. She dances to The Butcher's door. He cuts off her feet.
28. The severed shoes come to life
29. Preacher's wife finds The Girl
30. The Angel appears, tries to lead The Girl to heaven. Fight
31. Lady Lydia revealed



5. The Script

Anna Maria Murphy (writer) talks about writing the Red Shoes

To write for Kneehigh is an adventure.

To be asked to write a poem that may inspire a vision, a dance, an idea, is a dream commission for me.

This is what I was asked to do for *The Red Shoes*.

One dance was not enough for our heroine, The Girl and one poem was not enough for me. As I wrote they danced their way out onto the page.

We've all seen things we wish we'd never seen and this was to be our starting point; a chorus of characters who had seen horrors they wish they hadn't. For me, it was the memory of stories my grandfather told from the trenches and my father of the landings at Dunkirk.

The mud.

The dirt.

The blood.

Everything in this company's work tells the story: the actors, the set, the music, the costume, the props. A living script grows with Emma and the actors, through devising, improvisation and the poems. Each plays an equal part.

I say living, as it's always changing and we all own it.

Anna Maria Murphy Writer

THE RED SHOES
A STORY IN ONE ACT

LYDIA:

Shoes as red as wounds
That's what I want.
Not an orange hue
Or a vermilion pink
But red red red
Kicking under my bed.

Sensible footwear
Is just too hard to bear.
Shoes as red as desire
That's what I crave.

No glass slippers for me
That turn to skin at the midnight hour
Shoes that bleed
That's what I need.

Soles that with
The Devil have danced
That's what all you girls need!

There was once a girl:

She chooses one of the STORYTELLERS to play The GIRL.

The other STORYTELLERS clothe her.

Yes, there was once a girl
But not like me.
And she was pretty
And her mother had died.

Yes, her mother had died
Which, in the way of children,
She had not thought possible --
God had lied.
So she was sad
And pretty
Pretty and sad
Pretty sad.

Let me lick the dust from your shoes
Let their colour shine through
Like pomegranates
Like red eyes crying
Like bull's blood
Like the matador's cloak.

And dance for me,
Dance for me.

SOLDIER:
What beautiful Red Shoes.
Dancing shoes.

LYDIA:

Well some say she danced to the very gates of hell,
But I don't think so.
Not me.

I, who have seen things that should never have been
seen,
Been to places I should never have been;
I, who have known despair
And seen souls beyond repair.

These hands... these hands have been encrusted in filth
And there are some things that can never be washed
away.
I stand here now, in the flesh
And my secret's reserved for those
Who dare to dance a different dance:
With me.

*LYDIA is now a man dressed only in vest and pants, like the
others.*

*The Khachaturian Waltz plays and the STORYTELLERS
dance.*

The End.

OLD LADY:
Are they smart?

STORYTELLERS:
Yes.

OLD LADY:
Are they shiny?

STORYTELLERS:
Oh yes.

OLD LADY:
Are they black?

Pause.

STORYTELLERS:
... yes.

6. Set Design

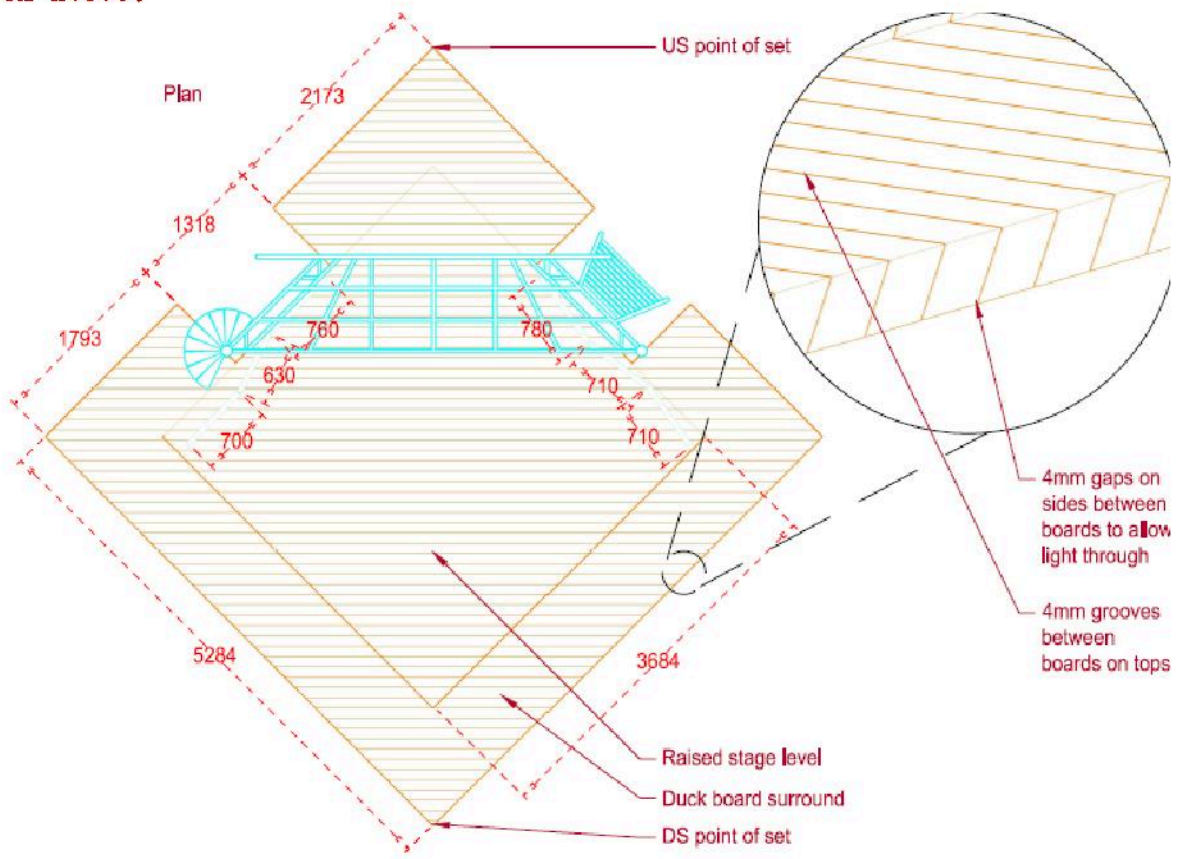
The production was originally designed by former Artistic Director Bill Mitchell. It is a simple setting that transforms quickly for each scene moved by the company on stage. Think chocolates and roses for a colour reference with the all important Red Shoes, character costumes and simple props used to transform the performers during each phase of the story.

Simple yet brilliantly effective and in true Kneehigh style, pretty transparent for the audience to see much of the workings of the show, without losing the magic... particularly 'Janine's' levitation!

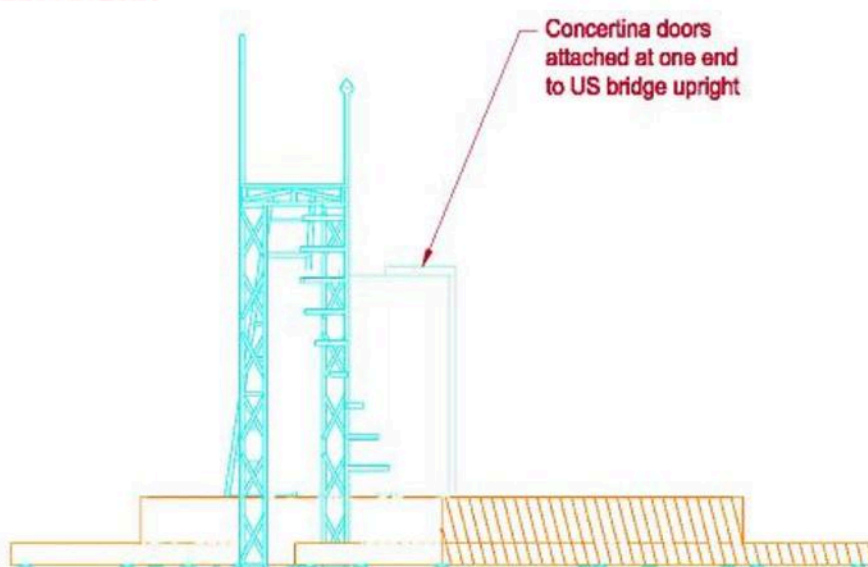


The designs on the next two pages were drawn by Tom White

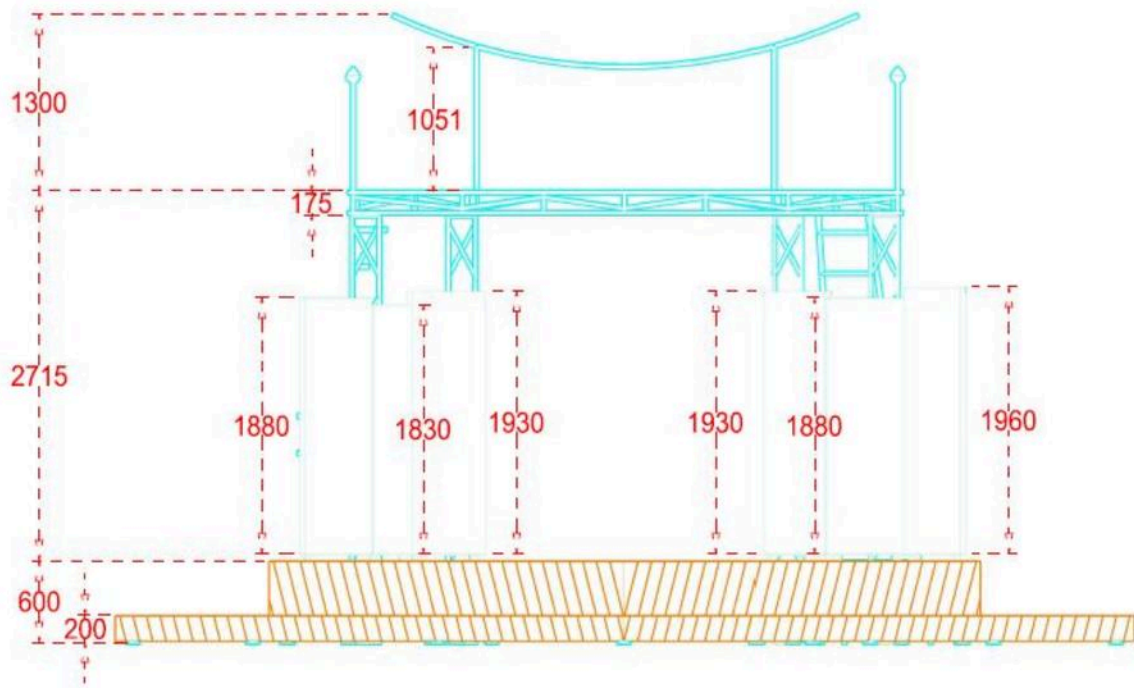
From Above:



Side Elevation:



Front Elevation:



7. Costume

The company all start out in white vests and white Y-fronts, plus a pair of Cornish clogs which they put on at the beginning of the show. The exception is Lady Lydia who is dressed in full make-up, a wig and long fur coat at her entrance.

The Girl is dressed in clean vest & pants, after she is scrubbed up by her adoptive mother, and is given a white dress which through the dancing scenes changes turns red. There are several dresses, each one more ripped and showing more red fabric beneath, until The Girl is wearing an entirely red dress.

When each story-teller is picked to play their part, they put on a basic costume which comes out of a labelled suitcase.



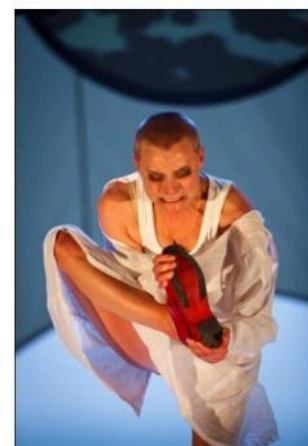
The Girl:	Coat and Hat
Preacher:	Black polo-neck, brown jacket, glasses, large cross necklace, whip
Old Lady:	House coat and hat, glasses, walking sticks
Shoemaker:	Green jacket, measuring stick
Congregation:	A Chapeaugraphy Hat, worn in several different ways to show different members of the congregation
Other Costumes...	
Angel/Airman:	White shirt and trousers, braces, flying goggles, white paper umbrella
Butcher:	Butcher's hat, white apron
Preacher's Wife:	Long coat, hat
Soldier:	First World War uniform (?)

The Shoes

The clogs that the whole company wear are purpose made Cornish Clogs, made by Walkley Clogs. Cornish Clog Dancing is a traditional dance in Cornwall, which in this production is combined with all kinds of other dance (tap, ballet, can-can!)

The company all wear sensible black clogs... with the exception of:

THE RED SHOES



8. Music



Original Music - Stu Barker

1. Mother's Lament
2. Red Shoes Them
3. Chocolate and Cream
4. The shoemaker
5. The Soldier Blues 1
6. The Soldier Blues 2
7. Old Lady III
8. Deathbed
9. Slow Groove
10. The Soldier's Blues 3
11. Red Charleston
12. Haunted Vibes
13. Haunted Shoes

Non-Original Music

Title	Composer	Performer
Waltz From Masquerade	Khachaturian	Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra
Vessels (from Koyaanisqatsi)	Philip Glass	The Western Wild Vocal Ensemble
Allegro Brillante (from Gaité Parisienne)	Offenbach	Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (Preuin)
Overture (from Gaité Parisienne)	Offenbach	Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra (Preuin)
Polka (from gaité Paisienne)	Offenbach	Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra
Tempo Di Marcia (from Gaité Parisienne)	Offenbach	Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra
Lesson 6: The Lecture	Jurassic 5	Jurassic 5
Allegro Vivace Misterioso (From Gaité Parisienne)	Offenbach	Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra

9. Background to Kneehigh

Manifesto

Kneehigh now finds itself celebrated as one of Britain's most innovative theatre companies. For 30 years the company has created vigorous, popular and challenging theatre for audiences throughout the UK and beyond. Using a multi-talented team of performers, directors, designers, sculptors, administrators, engineers, musicians and writers, Kneehigh perform with the joyful anarchy that audiences have come to expect from this groundbreaking theatre company.

The Kneehigh Statement

Kneehigh tell stories. We make world-class theatre. We are based in Cornwall in our breathtaking barns on the south coast and create theatre of humanity on an epic and tiny scale. We work with an ever-changing ensemble of performers, musicians, artists, technicians and administrators and are passionate about our multi-disciplined creative process. We push the boundaries of our art and our business, and strive to surprise and challenge ourselves, and our audiences alike.

The Kneehigh Mission

We have a commitment to the ongoing spiritual health of ourselves, our community and the theatre. We want to collaborate with our fellow human beings, whether they are adults or children, professionals or outsiders and are hungry to meet and work with new and vivid people from different backgrounds. We want to create event and offer experiences that can profoundly change people's lives. We want to create relevant, innovative and emotionally charged work, to reach out in meaningful ways to the non-theatre going community, to build a non-elite audience and to celebrate our delicious time on the planet.

The Kneehigh Manifesto

We choose to be based and work in Cornwall, within a community but outside the 'business'. We are inspired by Cornwall and calmed by Cornwall. Here, we dedicate ourselves to thinking outside the constraints of fear and neurosis. We fight for our process and each other. We believe in the principles of play, generosity, vulnerability, ambition, bravery, anarchy and instinct. We profoundly believe that human beings are capable of anything and push ourselves to find new depths, new joys and new excitements in our relationship to our work and our audience.

The Barns

We 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.

Previous Shows (2000 - 2010)

The Red Shoes

2000 & 2010

Winner of the TMS Award for Best Director 2002

Pandora's Box

2002

Co-Produced with Northern Stage

Conceived & Created by Emma Rice & Neil Murray

Text by Margaret Wilkinson

The Wooden Frock

2003

Co-produced with Battersea Arts Centre in association with West Yorkshire Playhouse

Directed by Emma Rice

Adapted by Emma Rice and Tom Morris

Nominated for the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2004

Tristan & Yseult

2003 -2006

Directed & adapted by Emma Rice

Written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy

Nominated for the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2004

The Bacchae

2004

Directed By Emma Rice

Written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy

Winner of the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2004

Nights at the Circus

2005

Lyric Hammersmith, Bristol Old Vic in association with Kneehigh Theatre

Based on the novel by Angela Carter

A new adaptation by Tom Morris and Emma Rice

Rapunzel

2006

A Kneehigh Theatre and BAC Co-Production

By Annie Siddons

Directed by Emma Rice

Cymbeline

2006

Kneehigh Theatre in association with the RSC

Co-commissioned by Nottingham County Council STAGES
Directed and freely adapted by Emma Rice, written by Carl Grose
Inspired by William Shakespeare

A Matter of Life & Death

2007

Based on the film by Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger

A Royal National Theatre Production

Directed by Emma Rice

Written by Tom Morris & Emma Rice

Brief Encounter

2007 –2010

Originally produced by David Pugh & Dafydd Rogers and Cineworld

By Noel Coward

Adapted & directed by Emma Rice

Winner of the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2009

Don John

2008 –2009

Kneehigh Theatre in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company and Bristol Old Vic

Directed & adapted by Emma Rice

Written by Anna Murphy

Hansel & Gretel

2009 -2010

Co-produced with Bristol Old Vic

Directed & Adapted by Mike Shepherd

Written by Carl Grose

10 Further Information



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Book

Created for Kneehigh's 30th anniversary, *The Book* is lovingly researched and beautifully produced, and chronicles three decades of inspiring and groundbreaking work in sections including **Home, Story, Wonder, Love, Bravery, Naughtiness, and Imagine**. It is available to buy on our website, or by calling the office on 01872 267910

Inspiration

Andersen, Hans Christian: *The Red Shoes in New Fairy Tales. First Volume. Third Collection*. C. A. Reitzel, Copenhagen (1845)

Bettelheim, Bruno: *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* Knopf, New York (1976)

Powell, Michael & Pressburger, Emeric: *The Red Shoes* (1948 film)

Kneehigh Scripts

Kneehigh's Anthology - a collection of recent work: *Tristan & Yseult, The Bacchae, The Wooden Frock & The Red Shoes*. ISBN No. 1-84002-564-6

Cymbeline - produced in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company for the Complete Works Festival.

Rapunzel - A BAC and Kneehigh Theatre co-production, written by Annie Siddons.

Nights at the Circus - A Lyric Hammersmith and Bristol Old Vic production in association with Kneehigh.

If you would like to buy a copy of any of these scripts please contact Oberon Books Ltd www.oberonbooks.com ;+44 (0)20 7607 3637; info@oberonbooks.com