

KNEEHIGH
T · H · E · A · T · R · E

**TING
TANG
MINE**

BY

**NICK
DARKE**

Have you ever bin to Egypt?
It's a short day's walk that way.
Have you never seen a Pharaoh King?
Then set eyes on Jan May.

Have you never seen a peacock?
With its feathers in full fan?
Then look across the river,
And set your eyes on Jan.

Have you never seen a jackass?
Or heard its empty bray?
Don't look any further,
E id'n far away . . .



The first version of *Ting Tang Mine* was called *The Earth Turned Inside Out*. It had a cast of 90 speaking parts and was performed at Penrice School, St. Austell, in the winter of 1984. In 1985 I workshopped the play with a group of acting students from RADA, reducing the cast to 30 and the title to one word *Mine*. Such minimalism didn't appeal to the National Theatre, who purchased the play in 1986, so I increased the title by a factor of three to *Ting Tang Mine*, but further reduced the cast to 22. When the Kneehigh Company told me they intended to produce the play I was naturally delighted but alarmed at the prospect of re-writing it to accommodate a mere eight performers. Such is the company's genius for disguise, doubling and creating characters out of thin air that I was able to leave the cast list intact and concentrate on honing the story.

Ting Tang Mine is a period piece, set in 1815, and though I don't care for historical accuracy it is vital that a play should have contemporary relevance. The boom and bust aspect of the Cornish copper mining industry provides a good analogy for the credit-mad eighties and the central character, Jan May, satirises the empty-headed, greed-driven modern young man whose sole objective is self-aggrandisement at any cost. At the onset of the 1990's this monster, though discredited, is still with us. Looking back over the decade at the various drafts of the play I've noticed that since Jan May first appeared at Penrice School he's amassed more wealth, title and prestige, suffered greater ruin, become pushier and less lucky in love. The stakes are higher, there's more to lose . . .

Nick Darke

ACT 1

Ting Tang Mine is in **bonanza**. Brigans men cross the parish boundary – an **oath** is sworn; **Jan May** the prodigal returns home, falls in love, receives a hero's welcome and **leaves**. Jan May arrives at **Brigan**, a deal is forged, an **Empire** born – The figure-head ascends the Throne.

ACT 2

Ting Tang Mine goes **bust**. Idle miners face a choice – break an oath or **emigrate**. A **death** in Michigan. The potatoes fail, farmers revolt, the **Empire crumbles**. Jan May crosses the river for the last time . . .

CAST

Jan May Giles King
Maude, Salathiel Sue Hill
Gonetta, Gran Anna Maria Murphy
Roscrow, Betty Mary Woodvine
Hailsham, Lisha Mike Shepherd
Trefusis, Trice Jim Carey
Rutter, Colan Charles Barnecut
Tom May David Mynne

Plus a multitude of characters to be played by all the Company.

Director & Designer Bill Mitchell

Production Manager Allan Drake

Costume Designer Maz Bullen

Musical Directors Jim Carey & Giles King

Set Construction and Making Adam Hebb, the Plymouth Theatre Royal Workshops, Alice King and Maggie Hutton

Production Assistant Claire Shepherd

Special Technical Advisor Mine Captain John Bullock of King Edward Mine

Administration Amanda Harris

All Music composed by Jim Carey and the rest of the company.
 Musical influences: Mahler, The Pogues, Boys of the Lough and Duke Ellington.

The Company gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Plymouth Theatre Royal in the mounting of this production and of Orchard Theatre for the loan of their trilight.

This show has been built by the Company almost entirely from recycled materials.





"What steps would you take if steam pressure went up to two hundred pounds?"
 "Longest ones I could, Cap'n."



"Gunpowder, Cap'n! There ain't a man had more experience widdun."

UNDERNEATH CORNWALL

... a desolate tract of country exposed along the skyline to every wind of heaven ... This is the land of abandoned mines or, as a Cornishman would say, 'knack't bals,' where tall, gaunt engine-houses with smokeless stacks point like fingers to the sky ... a desolate moor of which one square mile alone was considered the richest piece of ground in the Old World. Here millions of pounds of metallic ores have been raised, forests of timber have been used to support the ground and rivers of water have been brought to the surface ... This is the great copper district ...

A.K. Hamilton Jenkin, *The Cornish Miner.*

Jan May returns home with a tale to tell and no-one to listen, a bag full of money and a head full of dreams. Ting Tang Mine where copper seams are rich but the natives are poor ... where Mrs Roscrow is a witch, Salathiel is gin-distant, Lisha is praying for pump engines and Gran is plucking sparrows ... when Waterloo's won, Boney's crushed and Mr Prussia's on his knees.

The Devil, it used to be said, never came into Cornwall for fear of being made into a pie ... Nothing was too big, too small, too tough or too greasy - nothing was considered too 'common or unclean' to compose a Cornish pie. Proof of this may be seen in the mackerel pies, pilchard pies, conger pies, bream pies, ram pies, muggety pies, taddago pies, nattlin pies, curlew pies, squab pies, lammy pies, giblet pies, leek pies, tatty pies, herby pies and many more which formerly graced the tables of Old Cornwall.

A.K. Hamilton Jenkin, *Cornwall and its People.*

Sing from the chamber to the grave,
 I hear the dying miner say,
 A sound of melody I crave,
 Upon my burial day.

Sing sweetly as you travel on,
 And keep the travel slow,
 The angels sing where I am gone,
 And you shall sing below.

Then bear me gently to the grave,
 And as you pass along,
 Remember twas my wish to have,
 A pleasant funeral song



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A COPY OF VERSES ON THE
Dreadful Accident
 At North Great Work Mine,
 On Saturday, October 1st, 1859.

IT appears that one of the miners employed in North Great Work Mine, in the parish of Breage, was employed to clear an old adit level, and finding the place unsafe to work in, stated his apprehensions to Capt. Moffet, when both descended into the level for the purpose of inspecting the same; and whilst there it proved to be too true that the place was unsafe, for they had not been there long before a large mass of rubbish gave way and buried both of them. Moffet was taken out on Sunday, but Thomas until the following

WHAT dangerous paths we walk! Then quick the news ran thro' the town,
 Unmindful of our gear, One step may lead to rocks above - Or sink to hell below.

Tin - 'Throw us a lifeline!'
 Cash hand-out cuts rate rises
 Store manager's sudden death
 £15,000 of food goes to waste
 SACKING REVERSED

PROTEST
 Of the Miners of Cornwall.
 W^hilst the Miners of Cornwall, having in the Min, said to be proposed by St Edward Hudd, school master in Truro, a ...

Tin - it's still in the balance
 It could be the end, says expert

CORNWALL
FALMOUTH PACKET &
 Saturday, July 21, 1810.]

IN THE VICE-WARDEN'S COURT.
WILLIAMS and others, v. TWEEDY and others,
 Assignees of Joseph Michell, a Bankrupt.

In re Unity Wood Mine, East.
 Same v. Same,
In re Unity Wood Mine, West.

Notice is hereby given, that the SALES of the SHARES of the said Defendants in the above MINES, respectively advertised to be holden at PRACE'S ROYAL HOTEL, TRURO, on the 20th Instant, WILL NOT TAKE PLACE.

J. ROBERTS,
 Plaintiff's Solicitor.

Office, Truro, 16th March, 1851.
 TRURO. PRINTER. 44, OPPOSITE THE CORNER.

BIOGRAPHIES

Nick Darke was born in Wadebridge and raised at Porthcothan. After a 20 year absence he has returned to Cornwall where he spends most of his time writing plays, beachcombing and building wreck sheds to commission.

Giles King and his performing eyebrows are still going strong. His best friend Trystan Sturrock is hibernating but Giles continues to strut his funky stuff.

Sue Hill was born in Penzance, raised in Redruth and has now emigrated to Camborne via Peking, Plymouth and Peterborough. Her last appearance in a Kneehigh show was as an exploding priest in *Tregeagle*.

Anne Maria Murphy is a Polperro maid, raised in Penzance. She is taking a brief rest from getting wet in processions and flattening out tin cans to join the tour because 'those that can't schemey must louser'.

Mary Woodvine has spent half her life in Cornwall. Apart from playing a loony on telly she has performed mostly in the South West and had some *Beastly* and some *Dreamy* experiences. No, it is not a wig.

Mike Shepherd is a founder member of Kneehigh. *Ting Tang Mine* is his thirtieth show for the company ... what's next?

Jim Carey is a master of disguise. So much so, that he's been in most shows since 1983 and few have noticed yet. Does a great impersonation of a Scotsman.

Dave Mynne is a founder member. He's died in most Kneehigh shows and *Ting Tang Mine* is no exception. At forty-two years of age he's getting harder to resurrect.

Charlie Barnecut is a founder member and Cornish farmer. Last Kneehigh appearance was as a dog. His TV roles include 'man with carrier bag' and 'man with blue tights in rowing boat.' Still waiting to be discovered and for the rain to stop so he can finish harvest.

Bill Mitchell is a Director, Designer and Londoner. While working with Kneehigh over the last three years, he has been studying how to be Cornish; he will soon be doing everything dreckly ...

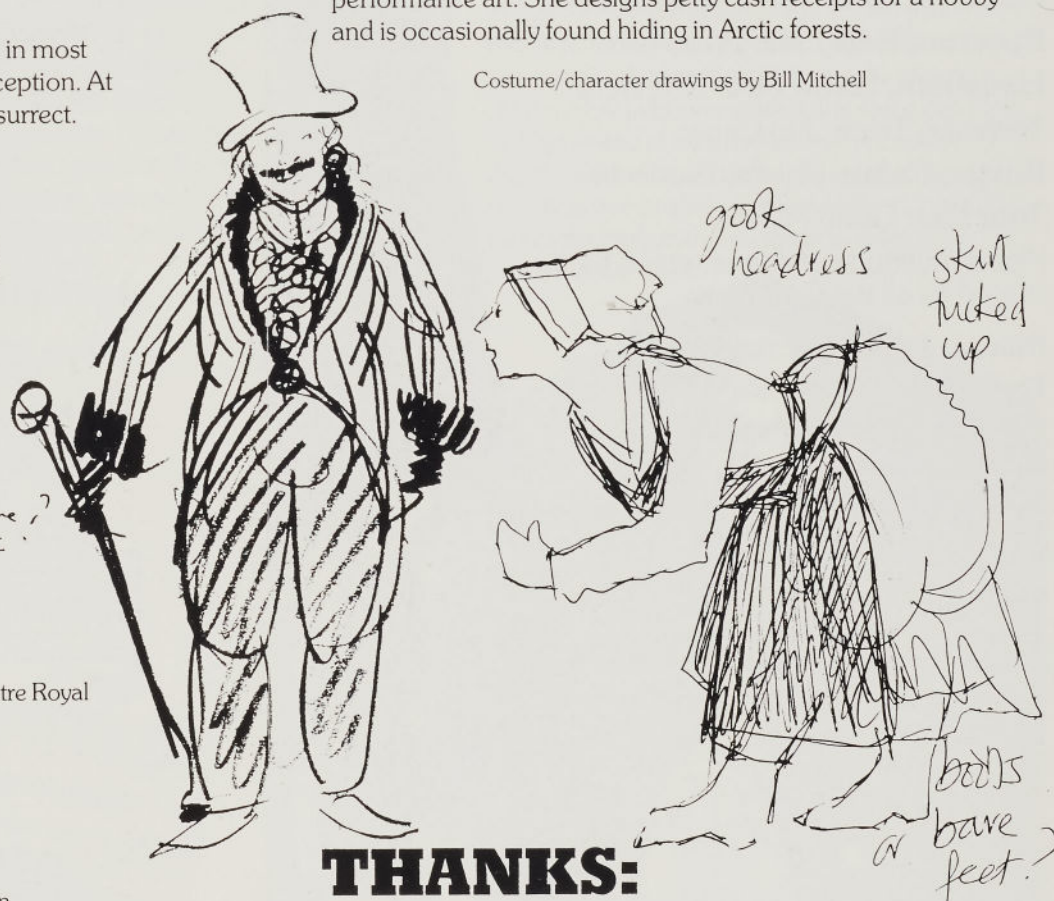
Allan Drake is yet another founder member. He's still rockin' and rollin' and relishes another opportunity to apply the 'Tardis' technique whilst packing the latest Kneehigh epic into the back of a van. He is the sound and lights wizard on this tour.

Maz Bullen was born in Flushing, Cornwall. Maz has been a freelance costume designer, props maker and scene painter for more years than she cares to remember and has worked with theatre companies throughout the country. She has been known to be gin-distant and usually has a bottle written into her contract.

Adam Hebb set constructor. It's very cold in winter and my feet are wet, but I don't mind, because I'm making a Kneehigh set!

Amanda Harris plays the syncopated typewriter, juggles figures, writes a mean envelope and has an MA in telephone performance art. She designs petty cash receipts for a hobby and is occasionally found hiding in Arctic forests.

Costume/character drawings by Bill Mitchell



WINTER TOUR

December

4th & 5th Newquay Treviglas School
 6th & 7th Princess Pavilion, Falmouth
 11th Pool School
 12th & 13th Calstock Village Hall
 17th Cornish Goldsmiths, Portreath
 19th-21st The Acorn, Penzance

January

7th & 8th Launceston College *Copper colour? warts?*
 9th Bodmin School
 10th Octagon Theatre, Okehampton
 14th & 15th David Hall, South Petherton
 16th Glastonbury Assembly Rooms
 17th Salisbury Arts Centre
 21st-Feb 1st The Drum Theatre, Plymouth Theatre Royal

February

5th Metrodome, Barnsley
 12th College Theatre, Coleford
 13th Queens Hall, Narberth, Dyfed
 14th & 15th Albany Centre, Bristol
 18th St. Austell V1th Form College
 20th-22nd City Hall, Truro
 26th Queen Elizabeth's College, Crediton
 27th Rolle College, Exmouth
 29th St. Donats Arts Centre, Nr. Cardiff

March

3rd Lux Park Leisure Centre, Liskeard
 5th Weymouth College
 6th Corn Exchange, Dorchester

Next Community Arts Events: Tom Bawcock's Hot Lantern Procession, Mousehole 23rd December, Lantern Workshop, Tehidy Country Park 4th January.

THANKS:

Malcolm Ashton of Hancock & Lawrence Solicitors, Tony Brookes at CSM, Graham Davis, Dave Hunter, Tony & Janet Stefan, John Miller & Michael Truscott, Alan Monks, Martin Maynard, Alan Merrick, Claire and Harry Hewlett, Pandora Feltham, Ali Firth, Don & Barney Hill, Phil Jukes, Jamie Crowe, Sue Walpole, Heather Hunt, Rob & Frances Millbank, DRV, Professional Light & Audio Co., Cornwall County Council for the loan of Dulcoath Technical College for rehearsals. The Chase Charity. A special thanks to Trystan Sturrock for his continued and unstinting support. Programme design A.Crosby

THE COMPANY

Based in Cornwall, Kneehigh was formed eleven years ago to provide exciting live theatre for children and their families (hence the name). Whilst retaining this aim, the company now provides a wide programme of work: theatre for children, innovative visual theatre with a commitment to new writing, touring nationally and into Europe, theatre work in schools, community arts events, design and technology, special building projects, in-service training for teachers and residential summer schools based at our barn in Gorran Haven.

This work is done by a pool of practitioners all living in Cornwall. Kneehigh has a small core of performers, a director, administrator and community arts workers. Kneehigh draws on the larger pool of performers, musicians, technicians, teachers, artists and builders for different projects. This means that the company can offer a wide range of professional skills and resources. Individual members also work with other companies including Bedlam Theatre, Welfare State International, Orchard Theatre, Hub Theatre School and the Nottingham Playhouse.

Although Sue Hill and Anna Maria Murphy are performing in *Ting Tang Mine*, this winter's community arts events are being master-minded by Alice King.

Kneehigh Theatre is a member of the South-West Theatre Consortium. The arts are in crisis, theatres are shutting all over the country but in the South-West at least, a creative collaboration of six major theatre companies; The South-West Theatre Consortium, has successfully ensured that ever decreasing resources are used to their full potential. The Consortium is an effective working model of co-operation between diverse companies: Kneehigh Theatre, Plymouth Theatre Royal, Northcott Theatre, Orchard Theatre, Rent-a-Role and Theatre Alibi.



Kneehigh Network will keep you informed of everything the Company is doing — including current work, tour schedules and future productions. If you would like to join and receive newsletters free of charge, all you have to do is complete the form below and send it to the office address. All we ask in return is that when we're visiting your neck of the woods you display a couple of posters in your local shop or workplace and distribute a few handbills to your friends.

Kneehigh Memorabilia A full-length video of *Tregeagle* filmed at The Minack Theatre. **Jump & Moxy!** A cassette of music from five Kneehigh shows. Both of these are available at venues and also by mail order. Please use this form to order your copies:

No. of videos @ £14.99 plus p&p @ £1 per video	Amount
No. of cassettes @ £5.00 plus p&p @ 40p per cassette
Total

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Please make cheques payable to **Kneehigh Theatre Trust Ltd** and send with this form to **Kneehigh Network, 11 Castle Street, Truro, Cornwall TR1 3AF**. If you wish to keep this programme intact simply use a separate piece of paper. For any further information please call the Kneehigh office on (0872) 223159.



The Body Shop, Truro,
Supporting the Arts

Bryans of St. Austell

