

Directed & adapted by Emma Rice Written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy



"Love haunts the forest. The dust has settled, and so has love. It is familiar, slow like mornings; sleepy like dusk. The dust has settled and so has love. Time slips by."



writers, Kneehigh perform with the joyful anarchy



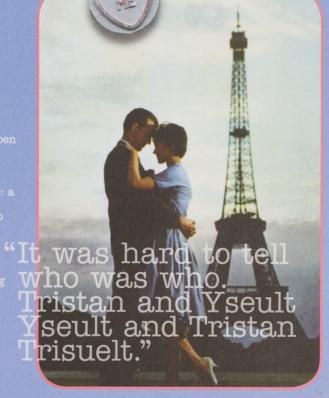




and Rufford Abbey, Nottinghamshire.

Tristan Sturrock falls off a wall in Padstow and breaks his neck in three places.

air at The Minack Theatre and The Eden Project.



Kneehigh and Cornwa



I returned home to Cornwall over 25 years ago to make theatre. It was a place where you could make things happen. Kneehigh started as a company making work for children and their families, but we soon found ourselves creating challenging, accessible and anarchic theatre for a diverse local and national audience. 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.

Kneehigh builds a team for each project. 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. Tristan & Yseult started its life as an outdoor show, playing in epic but intimate spaces: Restormel Castle, The Minack, The Eden Project and Rufford Abbey. These elemental and charged spaces add a physical and

vocal robustness to our performance style, which becomes further distilled when we work 'indoors'.

Kneehigh are an ever-changing ensemble, a kind of strange family, many of whom come from, or have chosen to live in, Cornwall; the extreme South West tip of the British Isles – outsiders, left-handers – engaging with the world with a sense of community and identity. As King Mark says in Tristan & Yseult, "We don't look inland there's not much point. No, outward, outward lies the way! Inland there's little to write home about and much less to say!"

The company changes for each project, there are those who have worked together for a long time and those who have just arrived. We look to surprise each other, to take leaps in the dark but there is no given formula for making the work. If we were to have a manifesto it might include words like generosity, passion, bravery, humility, ambition, instinct and irreverence. These words have become the secret principles that guide our work. Kneehigh is 25 years old this year. I could never have planned this; I certainly could never have foreseen it. There has been no great plan. Kneehigh has survived because it has actively evolved. We have committed to our home, our craft, to each other and to change. It's a privilege to still be part of that journey.

Mike Shepherd, Waarder Meraner - King Mark in Uristan & Pieruil





### Tristan's Routes

Stories are maps.

Storytellers are cartographers.

With every retelling, every tweak of plot or adjustment of character, storytellers are saying, "Here's how I see the world. Here's a route plan through my cosmography."

But whose map of the universe are we exploring with a story as old as Tristan? Even the earliest surviving written versions are merely medieval reinterpretations of something far older. Through the dark glass of these romances we catch traces of truly ancient mystery.

To find the roots of Tristan we need to go back to when the ancient British language (the early ancestor of Cornish, Welsh and Breton) was first spoken here: 5000 years in fact, to Neolithic times.

For our tribal forebears, religion was entirely bound into the fabric of daily life, reverence for the natural world and the turning seasons. Across Europe the same elements emerge in annual rituals; the Old Year dies, the Young Sun is reborn, the Goddess is wed. Traces of these rites, suppressed, secretly passed on, strangely altered, still work their seasonal magic through our Mummer's Plays, 'Obby 'Oss and other calendar customs.

This sacred information of the Old Religion also became encoded in memorable storylines; the Old King succumbs to the Young Hero who wins the Beautiful Maiden. In Tristan, such motifs as the battle on the island, the sword between the sleepers and the severed head point to specific details of how the original rites were actually performed.

Now, we enter the realm of the earliest storytellers, plotting and shaping their tales for audience impact. Inevitably, the retellings develop around 'archetypal figures'; collectively constructed icons that represent real facets, not of the external world, but of the human psyche itself. All those seeking an historical Tristan are unfortunately turning the wrong stones.

At the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasion 1500 years ago, thousands left these islands for Armorica to form a 'Little Britain' or 'Brittany' (hence 'Great Britain' was also coined). They took with them their language, their saints, their place-names and their stories.

From across the 'Celtic' world came a mass of lore, myth and legend (known as the 'Matière de Bretagne') including a whole sweep of Tristan stories, local variants and unrelated incidents. Breton bards stitched the mess of fragments into one epic narrative and sang it out across Europe (this compilation process accounts for the strangely repetitive nature of the plot, including two Yseults). Once the medieval romancers had a hold of the tale it swept through the courts of Europe igniting the chivalric fancy of the age. France, Germany, Italy and England all caught Tristan fever.

Over the next few centuries, the English nearly completed the suppression of language, religious

practice and identity in Cornwall. The Englishman Malory (1485) drew his tales of high chivalry not directly from Cornish sources but from various trans-European versions.

The European flirtation with Tristan perhaps reached its zenith with Wagner's famous opera. Still theoretically set in Cornwall, Tristan and Isolde charted Wagner's own unconsummated passion, and changed the harmonic rulebook forever.

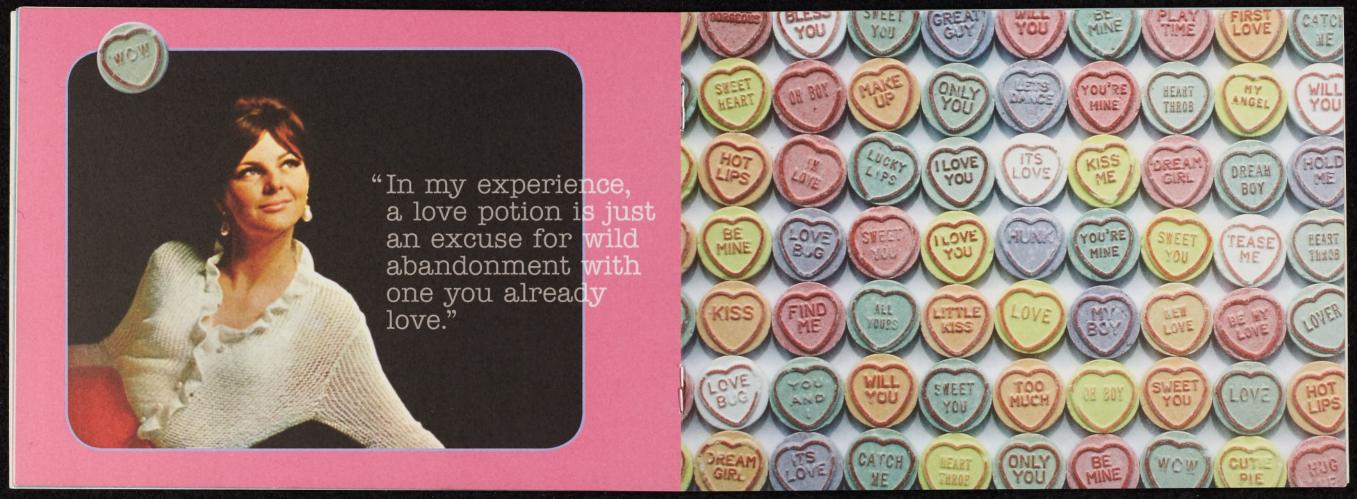
Meanwhile, the Victorians were all able to retell Tristan as a quintessentially 'English' moral tale each adding in their own way to the construct of Cornwall as somewhere 'romantic' and 'strange'.

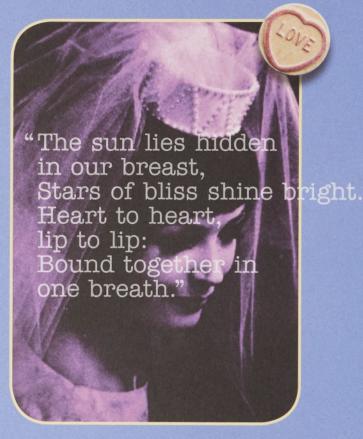
Today, a Cornish backdrop is still used to explore 'otherness'. We now live with TV's Wild West and Doc Martin, complete with imported writer, cast and crew, and the usual stereotypes. As 'maps of Cornwall' these series are of no more use than Jamaica Inn or Straw Dogs. However, something is stirring in Kernow—a palpable resurgence of indigenous theatre, film, music and dance is emerging. We need distinctive, diverse, homegrown, multicultural, inspired storytellers to help us chart our course.

Here, in Tristan and Yseult we have an archetypal epic with an ancient Cornish provenance. Who better to make a new map and reclaim this venerable territory than our own champion cartographers of the Cornish cosmography, Kneehigh Theatre?

Will Coleman

Abridged by ER, full version available at www.kneehigh.co.uk





before powdering, leave it to set, then put on a second coat. Then powder and allow some of it to fluff lightly over the lips. This sets the lipstick and prevents it from coming off. Then moisten the lips with the tongue to give a pretty natural highlight. (This is worth remembering, too, when the photographs are taken.) Just before leaving for the church a further application can be made if wished, but in that case the lips should be pressed lightly on a tissue to absorb excess grease.

# SPECIAL TIPS

There is not much opportunity for the bride to sit down either at the service or the reception and it will help if she rubs her feet with spirit and then powders them well before putting on her stockings.

It is a good idea to walk about in the wedding shoes in the house beforehand to be sure that they are absolutely confortable.

Hands are very much on show – everyone wants to look at the ring. They should be creamed regularly at night and hand lotion used during the day. A rub with cologne before leaving for the church will ensure that they remain cool and dry. A dusting of powder will prevent a struggle to put the ring.

CAST

Morholt/Brai Frocin Whitehands Yseult King Mark Tristan

Animateure

Craig Johnson Giles King Amanda Lawr Éva Magyar Mike Shephero Tristan Sturro Stu Barker Fiona Barrow

Alex Vann Michael Vince Simon Harvey James Traherne



COMPANY

Designe Writers

Lighting Designer
Musical Director
Sound Designer
Production Manager
Deputy Production Manager
Stage Manager
Technical Stage Manager
Sound Technician
ASM/Wardrobe
Dance Consultants

Fight Consultant Dramaturg Production Photography Emma Rice
Bill Mitchell
Carl Grose
Anna Maria Murphy
Alex Wardle
Stu Barker
Gregory Clarke
Alex Wardle
Jonathan Yeoman
Thomas Vowles
Mary O'Hanlon
Dominic Eilkey
Ami Mendes Houlston
Graeme Puckett
Tomas Wing





# Emma Rice Adapter/Director

Trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Gardzienice Theatre Association, Poland. She has worked extensively with Kneehigh Theatre, Theatre Alibi and Katie Mitchell. Choreography includes projects with the RSC, Welsh National Opera, Northern Stage and West Yorkshire Playhouse. Direction includes The Itch, Pandora's Box (coproduced with Northern Stage), Wild Bride (The Shamans, Budapest), The Wooden Frock (nominated for Best Touring Production 2004, TMA Theatre Awards), The Bacchae, Tristan & Yseult and The Red Shoes, for which she won Best Director 2002 in the Barclays TMA Theatre Awards. She has recently become Artistic Director of Kneehigh Theatre.

### Carl Grose Writer

Has performed in many Kneehigh shows including The King Of Prussia, The Riot, Pandora's Box, Skulduggery and Quick Silver, which he also wrote. Writing credits for the company include Tristan & Yseult, The Bacchae (with Anna Maria Murphy) and most recently Wagstaffe the Wind-up Boy (with Mike Shepherd). He has also written for Plymouth Theatre Royal, BBC TV and Radio. He co-founded the Cornish production company o-region, which is currently touring their new show Laughing Gas. He is also working on a new play (49 Donkeys Hanged) for the National Theatre Studio.

Anna Maria Murphy Writer
First started writing for theatre to avoid playing

a dog in a Kneehigh Wild Walk. Writing for the company includes The Bacchae, The Red Shoes, Tristan & Yseult, Skulduggery, Doubtful Island, Ghost Nets, Women Who Threw the Day Away, Telling Tales, Wild Bride (The Shamans), and the film Flight. She has also written for Theatre Alibi, Platform 4, Brainstorm Films, The Eden Project and with Scavel an Gow for Radio 4.

Stu Barker Composer and Musical Director
Has worked extensively for Kneehigh over the last
ten years. Shows include The Bacchae, The Wooden
Frock, Tristan & Yseult, Pandora's Box and The Red
Shoes. Other theatre includes The Odyssey for Bristol
Old Vic; Cloudland and Clown for Travelling Light and
productions for Welfare State International, Horse
and Bamboo, and Contact Theatre.

## Bill Mitchell Designer

Since 1989, Bill Mitchell has designed most of Kneehigh's shows, most recently The Bacchae, The Wooden Frock and The Red Shoes. He was artistic director of Kneehigh from 1995 until 2005 and has now set up his own company, Wild Works, specialising in interactive, site-specific events. Recent directing work includes A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings, a large-scale site-specific project based on a story by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, which has performed in Malta, Cyprus and Cornwall. Future projects include work for his own company and further artistic collaborations with Kneehigh.

Alex Wardle Lighting Designer
Studied German and Electronics at Keele University,
and Theatre Arts at the Freie Universität Berlin and

at Goldsmiths' College, University of London.
Lighting designs for Kneehigh Theatre include Tristan & Yseult outdoors and at the National Theatre,
Wagstaffe the Wind-up Boy, The Wooden Frock, Cry
Wolf, The Riot and The Red Shoes – including tours to
China, Scandinavia and the Middle East.
Other designs include Blonde (C-Scape Dance), Etta
Jenks and Achidi J's Final Hours (Finborough),
Smashed Blue Hills (New End), Voyagers (Croydon
Warehouse), Lonely Lives (Union Theatre and BAC)

### Gregory Clarke Sound Designer

Sound designs for theatre includes No Man's Land at the National; The Merry Wives of Windsor, Coriolanus and Tantalus for the RSC and on tour; National Anthems at The Old Vic; My Boy Jack at the Yvonne Arnaud and on tour; several productions for the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, Hampstead Theatre, Theatre Royal Bath and Chichester: The Cherry Orchard, Demons, Dybbuks and The Black Dahlia for Method and Madness: Baiju Bawra at Theatre Royal, Stratford East; Dick Whittington at Greenwich; Paradise Lost and Relatively Speaking at Northampton Theatres: Krindlekrax at Birmingham Rep; The Hackney Office at Druid Theatre, Galway; Whose Life Is It Anyway? and Journey's End at the Comedy; The Dresser at Duke Of York's; Betraval at the Duchess; Abigail's Party for the New Ambassadors and Whitehall theatres; Mum's The Word at the Albery; Lady Windermere's Fan and The Royal Family at Theatre Royal, Haymarket; and Song Of Singapore at Mayfair Theatre.

Fiona Barrow Musician

Began playing the piano as soon as she could sit

up and began learning violin at 7. After touring Australia with Hampshire Youth Orchestra in 1988 she moved to Ireland to play traditional music in pub sessions, in between travelling around Europe and beyond with various busking outfits and street shows. She toured with Travelling Light's Into the West including a sell-out run on Broadway. Fiona also composes and has written for shows with Same Sky, Sly Fox Storytellers, Passion Dance Collective and ACTA. This is Fiona's second tour with Kneehigh after Pandora's Box in 2002.

## Simon Harvey Animateur

Graduated from Dartington College of Arts in 1997. He is a co-founder and co-artistic director of o-region, and is involved in all of the company's output, from running film screenings, publishing a magazine to producing film and theatre projects. Recent work includes directing Laughing Gas by Nick Darke and Carl Grose and performing in Wagstaffe the Windup Boy and Tristan & Yseult (2004) for Kneehigh Theatre. Simon is about to direct his first short film One Step Forward, Two Steps Back through the digital shorts scheme.

### Craid Johnson Morholt/Brandian

Has worked as a musician, puppeteer and performer in places ranging from New York City to the Shetlands, most notably with musical comedy trio Squeal Like A Pig and the Penzance-based company Theatre Of Fruit. He has also directed three shows for The Eden Project Theatre Company. For Kneehigh has appeared in Wolf, Fish Boy, Wild Jam, Quick Silver, Skulduggery, Tristan & Yseult and The Bacchae.



## Giles King Frocin

Left Dartington College of Arts in 1987 and since then has worked extensively for Kneehigh, including touring The Red Shoes to China, Syria, Lebanon, Hungary, Monaco, Denmark and Norway, Tristan & Yseult and The Bacchae. He departed for a while to steer the theatre ship Fitzcarraldo, travel the west coast of Europe and play in the band Bagattack

### Amanda Lawrence Whitehands

Trained at Bretton Hall. Her work in theatre includes The Wooden Frock and Tristan & Yseult at the National for Kneehigh; The Firework Maker's Daughter and Playing the Victim (at the Royal Court) for Told By An Idiot; Joshua's Egg for Theatre Centre; Hello You, Ubu Roi, The Cherry Orchard, Fascinations from the Crowd, 27 (Total Theatre Award), Hamlet, Fallen Angels, The Pleasure Dome and Face to Face for Fecund Theatre, Haharmonics for Why Not Company; Why The Whales Came for Theatre Alibi; More Grimm Tales, Animal Farm, The Ballroom of Romance, A Clockwork Orange and Grimm Tales for Northern Stage; and The Tempest and Dr Faustus for Compass. TV and film includes The News Never Sleeps, Casualty, Tabloid TV and Andout.

## Éva Magyar Yseult

Trained at the Budapest Drama and Film Academy, then played the lead in the American film, Understudy. Now a director, actor and choreographer, she runs her own company. The Shamans have been highly acclaimed in Hungary and internationally, winning numerous awards including: Best Actress (Poland), Best Director (Cairo), The Independent Award (California) and The Herald Angel (Edinburgh). In 2002 she performed in Wild Bride, a Shamans show directed by Emma Rice and designed by Bill Mitchell and has also appeared previously in Kneehigh's Tristan & Yseult and The Bacchae.

## Mike Shepherd King Mark

Started Kneehigh in 1980 and has worked almost exclusively for the company ever since. Other work includes directing and acting in The Riot for the National, Marat Sade (Bristol Old Vic), Antigone at Hell's Mouth for The National Youth Theatre. Recent acting includes national and international touring in The Red Shoes, The Wooden Frock and The Bacchae.

### Tristan Sturrock Tristan

Recent work in theatre includes The Riot at the National; Tristan & Yseult at Restormel Castle in Cornwall; The Mysteries and Spanish Tragedy for the RSC; As You Like It and Bring Me Sunshine at the Royal Exchange; Edward II at Sheffield Crucible; The Beaux Stratagem and Dolls Heart at Bristol Old Vic; Jerusalem Syndrome and Station at Soho Theatre; and Salome at Riverside Studios. TV includes Bad Girls, The Royal, The Project, Holby City, Bodily Harm, Menace, Rescue Me, Doc Martin, The Bill, The New Adventures of Robin Hood, Liverpool One and Wycliffe. Film includes Saving Grace. He has worked with Kneehigh for 10 years.

### James Traherne Animateur

Trained at Rose Bruford College. His theatre work

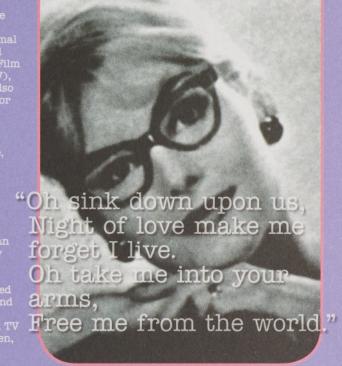
includes The Thieves Carnival (The Watermill), Nicholas Nickleby (Red Shift), Twelfth Night and The Hired Man for Theatre By the Lake. Junk and Johnny Blue (Oxford Stage Co.), Caledonian Road (Almeida), Gulliver's Travels (Group K at the Riverside), Beauty and the Beast and The Jungle Book (Trinity Theatre), Of Mice and Men and Animal Farm (Snap), Squealin (OTTC). He has also toured Europe with The English Teaching Theatre. TV & Film includes Go Now (BBC2), Jump (ITV), Jenner (ITV), The Bill (ITV) and Dream Team (Sky). James is also a keen singer and songwriter and has composed for Kazzum, OTTC and Theatre By The Lake.

### Alex Vann Musician

Is a member of acoustic four-piece, Spiro, and has toured extensively throughout the UK and Europe, performing at venues including the Royal Festival Hall and the Barbican. His work as composer and musician for Exeter-based Theatre Alibi includes The Swell, Shelf Life and The Freeze.

### Michael Vince Musician

Is a self-taught, professional percussionist who originally started playing mainly Eastern European styles. He moved from Bath to Bristol in the early 90s to specialise in Latin music and rhythms and for the last fifteen years he has been studying Brazillan and Afro Cuban music. He has performed with Calima Flamenco, k\*cheveve, Popacata Petl and Vladimir Steamboat with fellow Tristan & Yseult musicians Stu Barker and Fiona Barrow. Film and TV soundtrack work includes work with Desperate Men, the BBC's natural world documentary Killer Antz and film work by Nicolas Roeg.













# Friends Scheme





We have produced our first published anthology of recent work - Tristan & Yseult, The Bacchae, The Wooden Frock & The Red Shoes. This collection from Emma Rice, Tom Morris, Anna Maria Murphy and Carl Grose, it offers a unique insight into our approach to making theatre, revealing how a script can emerge from a collaborative devising process.

The anthology is published by Oberon Books Ltd. If you would like to buy a copy of our anthology

Emma Rice Ali Firth

Our thanks to Dave Mynne, John Voogd, Graham Jobbins, Fiona Hankey, Pete Hill, Lucy Gaskell, Karl Róbert Lucskay, Pieter Lawman, Anthony Shuster, Dan Canham, Sarah Moody, Angela Bisset, Carol

This production of Tristan & Yseult is dedicated to Mr Tim Germon (surgeon) and all his team who managed to heal Tristan's wounds and put him back









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