

THE OLD VIC



CHRISTMAS ISSUE



THE CLASSIC FAMILY PANTO






**THE
OLD VIC
THEATRE
COMPANY**

presents

**ROGER ALLAM, SAM KELLY,
MAUREEN LIPMAN, IAN MCKELLEN
and JOE MCFADDEN, JOANNA PAGE,
OWEN SHARPE, CAT SIMMONS, RAMON TIKARAM**

in the classic family panto

ALADDIN

A new version by Bille Brown

Original score by Gareth Valentine

Additional song 'I Believe in You' music by Elton John & lyrics by Lee Hall

Director Sean Mathias

Designer John Napier

Choreographer Wayne McGregor

Musical Supervisor Gareth Valentine

Costumes Mark Bouman

Lighting Mark Henderson

Sound Fergus O'Hare

Orchestrations Chris Walker

Musical Director Kevin Amos

Additional script by Ian Brown & James Hendrie

Designs inspired by the drawings of Flo Perry

Producer David Liddiment

Executive Producer Colin Ingram

Associate Producer Mig Kimpton

Casting Director Joyce Nettles

Production Manager Dominic Fraser

Assistant Director Emma Stuart

Assistant Choreographer Laila Diallo

First performance at The Old Vic, Friday 17 December 2004

Season sponsor

Morgan Stanley

Media partner

The Daily Telegraph

Left: drawing by Flo Perry



CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Abbanazar	Roger Allam
Aladdin	Joe McFadden
Hanky	Owen Sharpe
Panky	Joanna Page
Dim Sum	Maureen Lipman
Widow Twankey	Ian McKellen
Princess	Cat Simmons
Emperor	Sam Kelly
Genie	Ramon Tikaram
Ensemble	Marina Abdeen, Madalena Alberto, Peter Caulfield, Simon Clark, Nina French, Julia Hinchcliffe, Gavin Keenan, Daniel Redmond, Leah Sheldrick, Lee William-Davis, Matthew Wolfenden, Simon Clark
Walk-on understudy	

SONGS

- 1 Prologue/Anything That You Are Seeking
- 2 Family Matters
- 3 I Believe in You
- 4 Die! Die! Die!
- 5 Pantomime
- 6 Feng Yang
- 7 It's Not Over
- 8 Peace and Justice
- 9 There's Life in The Old Vic Yet/Panto Reprise

ALADDIN ORCHESTRA

Musical Director	Kevin Amos
Asst. Musical Director, keyboard	Simon Beck
Flute, soprano sax, clarinet	Howard McGill
Clarinet, recorder, alto sax	John Franchi
Bass clarinet, baritone sax, piccolo	Colin Skinner
Trumpet, flugel	Simon Gardner
Trumpet, flugel	Andy Greenwood
Trombone	Pat Hartley
Double bass, bass guitar	Rutledge Turnland
Drums, percussion	Allan Cox
Orchestra Management	Steven Hill, Musicians UK Ltd
Synthesiser Programmer	Mark Warman

Running time: approx 2 hours 15 minutes with one 15 minute interval

FOR ALADDIN

Company Manager (OVTC) Jane Semark
Stage Manager Jill Davey
Deputy Stage Manager Emily Hallesy
Assistant Stage Manager Maxine Foo
Assistant Stage Manager Lisa Poet
Stage Management Intern Vicky Eames

Head of Wardrobe (OVTC) Fiona Lehmann
Deputy Head of Wardrobe (OVTC) Louise Askins
Head of Wigs Ara Moradian
Wigs Supervisor Joanna Taylor

Head of Lighting (OVTC) Stuart Crane
Deputy Head of Lighting (OVTC) Andrew Taylor

Head of Stage (OVTC) PJ Holloway
Deputy Head of Stage (OVTC) Tom Humphrey
Stage Dayman Steve Grant

Production Sound Engineer Crispian Covell
Sound Operator No 1 David Beckham
Sound Operator No 2 Becky Stocking
Sound Assistant James Napier

Costume Supervisor Tracy Stiles
Costume Design Assistants Mia Flodquist
Louisa Parris

Martial Arts Co-ordinator Ponciano Almeida
Slapstick Co-ordinator Danny McGrath
Music Copying Anne Barnard
Properties Supervisor Chris Lake
Casting Assistant Louise Cross

Dresser to Ian McKellen Andrew Ross
Dressers Jordan Sophie Colls
Kate Jones
Clive Morris

Follow-spot Operators Viv Clavering
Chris Gillies
Debbie Pursey
Liz Frankl
CLive Hutchinsonson
Jamie Sandford

Board Operator AKA
Show Crew (020 7836 4747)
Public Eye
(020 7351 1555)
Production Photographer Manuel Harlan

FOR THE OLD VIC THEATRE COMPANY

Artistic Director Kevin Spacey
Producer David Liddiment
Executive Producer Colin Ingram
Marketing Director Vivien Wallace
Head of Marketing Fiona Richards
Marketing Officer Rachael Stevens
Production Manager Dominic Fraser
Production Assistants Simon Fliegner
Ros Povey
Nicole Harford

Intern R&D&Co with John Simmons
Branding
Legal Lawrence Harrison for
Harrison Curtis Ltd
Stephen Pennington
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Production Accountant
Production Insurance

Acknowledgements

Set & boxes constructed & painted by Plymouth Theatre Royal Workshop
Set construction & painting by Capital Scenery
Vases & fans constructed by Extraordinary Designs
Cave construction by The Kite Studio
Cave decoration & painting Samantha Fellows
Fan & vase painting Belinda Clisham & Anna Stamper
Front cloths, walkdown & Hollywigan cloths painted by Belinda Clisham & Anna Stamper
Washing & Peking cloths painted by Samantha Fellows
Barbary cloths painted by Visual Scene
Cloths supplied by J & C Joel & Ken Creasey Ltd
Carpet supplied by Show Flooring Ltd
Additional lighting equipment supplied by White Light Electrics
Additional sound equipment supplied by Autograph Sound
Human flying fx by AFX/Kirbys Flying Ballet
Cave rigging by Vertigo Rigging
M.A.V Wallcoverings Ltd
Angels Fancy Dress
Costumes by Paddy Dickie, Gill Linley, Stephen Harrington, Kevin Mathias, Bristol Costume Services, Sten Vollmuller, Sasha Kier, Kit Reading, Laela Barnard
Hats by Jenny Adey, Sean Barrett
Wigs by Mario Audello
Ian McKellen's cabaret wig donated by Peter Owen
Prop makers Nigel Schofield at MDM Props Ltd, Frank & Allan at Capital Scenery, Claire Sanderson, Damon Glitter & Mark at Nomad Design, Lucy Griffiths, Victoria Fifield & Lynette, Lara Mason, Matt Lawrence, Pam & LJ, Sian Burston, Nazare at Angel Prints

The Old Vic Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges its financial investors: Old Vic Productions plc, Michael Melnick and the Nederlander Producing Company Ltd.

Aladdin programme

Design R&D&Co
Rehearsal photos Manuel Harlan
Additional photos Julian Anderson
Advertising sales & print John Good Holbrook

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Standing in the wings of the Grand Theatre, Bolton, a stage-struck lad marvels at the comics and magicians, the chorus girls and acrobats performing on the music-hall stage. Some 50 years later, having reached the theatrical heights and attained international screen stardom, Ian McKellen is fulfilling a long-held dream.

'I think everybody has some ideal about what a pantomime should be, and it's probably the first one they saw. I went to many of them in my childhood, at first with my parents, who had to hold me back when children were invited up on the stage, and then by myself. I've always thought it a wonderful form, because it can include anything the theatre is able to give a welcome to. For years I kept asking myself why I wasn't playing in one. The answer was, there was no opportunity. Eventually I realised I'd have to create my own.'

How then did the McKellen dream become a reality? How did this renowned Shakespearean actor come to be fooling around in frocks in a theatre best known for staging the classics? Shortly before rehearsals of *Aladdin* began I talked to the show's creative team and principal actors, to find out how this multi-talented group of artists were putting together their spanking new version of this ancient fable.

The story begins with McKellen himself. In his early days in rep at Ipswich he had played a Chinese policeman in *Aladdin*. Now, having also considered *Cinderella* and *Mother Goose*, he decided to stage the same show, with himself as the Dame, Widow Twankey. As a first step he read and digested several versions of the story. Then, at the 2004 Sydney Theatre Festival, he met the writer and actor Bille Brown, an old friend whose work included the RSC's panto *The Swan Down Gloves*. A true pantomime buff, Brown asked to be adviser on the project, but McKellen suggested he should write it instead, and commissioned a treatment.

After studying various versions and adaptations from different periods, Bille Brown produced a rough draft. The Old Vic snapped him up. **'It showed great trust on Kevin Spacey's part,'** McKellen admits. **'To an American, pantomime is as mysterious as cricket. When I explained it to him, his face misted over. Then he laughed, and said, "I don't know what it's going to be, but you must do it!"'** The Old Vic then offered it to director Sean Mathias, who accepted, but without being able to see a proper script.

NEW GAGS FOR Old

JONATHAN CROALL TALKS TO THE ACTORS
AND CREATIVE TEAM BEHIND ALADDIN



'This was daunting, because normally it's the text that unlocks my creative imagination' he says. **'But when it arrived I thought it was great. Because it's inspired by a version of *The Arabian Nights* it has a romantic quality. It also has a very strong story, and because I'm used to narrative that made me feel I could do it.'**

His chosen set designer was John Napier who, long before working on *Cats*, *Starlight Express*, *Les Misérables* and other glittering West End shows, had designed the celebrated McKellen/Dench *Macbeth* with a budget of just £250. This proved an excellent calling-card for The Old Vic show. **'Pantos are often a bit tacky scenically,'** Napier says. **'The challenge with this *Aladdin* was to do something terrific, but on a shoestring. You have to use your imagination in a different way.'**

The first design idea emerged from discussions between designer and director. **'Although the story is set in China, it takes us to a number of other places,'** Mathias points out. **'I wondered how we could represent these places without using the traditional pantomime cloths, and also make it Chinese. I had this notion of a red lacquered box; John liked the idea, and quickly ran with it.'**

While pondering what style to use for the sets, Napier had a 'eureka' moment. **'Flo Perry, the daughter of a family who were neighbours of mine, had done a watercolour drawing of my house. I was looking at it one evening, and suddenly realised she might be the key. Her drawings were strange, very childlike, but also clever. I thought they would be a good basis for something fresh.'**

He commissioned Flo, now 12, to do a few black and white drawings, which he then cut up, re-pasted and coloured. Their collaboration grew as the idea proved fruitful: first she drew the front cloth, then Widow Twankey's washing line, next the Emperor's palace, and eventually the finale curtain. **'Originally I tried to draw them myself, but my versions were horrible, much too architectural,'** Napier says. **'Flo's were delicate and beautiful. She's been a true inspiration.'** Flo, who intends to be a fashion designer, adds: **'John says my drawings have got a naïve sophistication, but I don't really know what that means.'**

Flo has also done several costume sketches, providing a jumping-off point for the costume designer. **'They got me looking for images that relate to her vision as well as to John's sets,'** Mark Bouman explains. **'I've found contemporary photos of Japanese and Chinese kids dressing really creatively for the street, which could be the inspiration for the ensemble.'** With around 100 costumes to design, ten of them for Widow Twankey, he's been uncovering many Chinese and Arabian images in books and museums.

For composer Gareth Valentine, recently seen on Channel 4's *Musicality*, *Aladdin* has proved rich in musical possibilities.

'It's a really good story to write a score for,' he says.

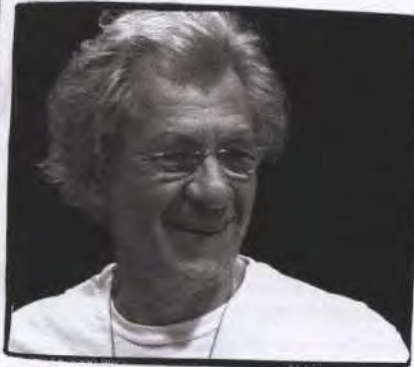
'I wanted the numbers to be as diverse as possible, so I've treated it rather like a box of confectionery.' The flavours on offer in his witty and brilliantly varied score include 1940s swing music, grand opera, a touch of Gilbert and Sullivan, a Broadway moment, a hint of *Madame Butterfly*, jazz, ballet music, a pastiche of *Sheherazade*, and a piece based on his own Requiem Mass.



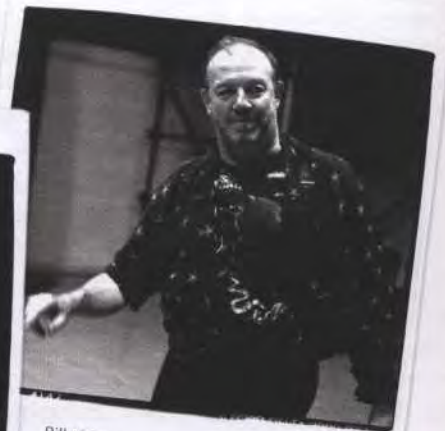
Cont...



Sam Kelly



Ian McKellen



Bille Brown

'I WANTED THE NUMBERS TO BE AS DIVERSE AS POSSIBLE, SO I'VE TREATED IT RATHER LIKE A BOX OF CONFECTIONERY'

A lot of the music is gleaned from the Middle East, and some of it is akin to Jewish music. He's now sent the score to Chris Walker for orchestration. **'I have in mind a lot of Chinese sounds, percussive ones like tam tam gongs, finger cymbals and Chinese mouth organ.'**

He's also been working on the lyrics. **'Bille Brown's script included some lyrics, but really just as a guide. I've had carte blanche to rework them, and with some numbers to invent them from scratch. Ian and Sean have also had a hand in writing them, so we've all thrown our bit in, which has been great fun.'** But one song will not be theirs: when McKellen and Mathias spoke about the show to Elton John at an Oscars party, he agreed to write a love song for it. **'We shook hands on it in the balmy Hollywood air,'** McKellen recalls.

The choreography for the ten numbers is the responsibility of Wayne McGregor, who runs Random Dance, the resident company at Sadler's Wells. With only three weeks in which to rehearse, he's having to map out certain ideas in advance.

'Using Gareth's score, I'm discussing them with Sean. But really you need to have the actors there, so things might change radically in rehearsal.'

After all, the thing about panto is for the actors to get their personalities over, so I want to encourage them to physicalise their characters so they communicate properly.'

Casting the ensemble has been one of the toughest tasks, he says. He and Mathias saw more than 200 people in order to select just eight. **'We got there in the end, but it took a long time to find the right balance. Those who are first-class dancers can't necessarily sing very well, while those with good voices aren't always the best movers. And that's without considering their acting ability, for the chosen eight will understudy the principals.'**

While the creative team was busy, the script was being worked on collaboratively by the show's writer, director and star. **'It's like a Christmas pudding, we all get a stir,'** Bille Brown observes. He recalls that the idea of Twankey's show business ambitions had its origins in McKellen's Lancashire background. **'Ian talked about the tradition of amateur dramatics in the north, and about his passion for the theatre.'** But the idea also resonated with Mathias, whose mother, an amateur actress, loved to play the Dame in her village hall.



Casting the other three principal roles proved easier than expected. For Abbanazar, Mathias and McKellen were looking for a classical actor who could sing, catch the pantomime villain's dark and menacing quality, but also play light, have a sense of fun, and handle the camp element. Their first choice, Roger Allam – whose roles have included Javert in *Les Misérables*, Captain Dennis in *Privates on Parade* and Willy Brandt in *Democracy* – fulfilled all these requirements.

Although Sam Kelly, cast as the Emperor of China, has considerable pantomime experience – he's played Wishy Washy twice in *Aladdin*, and been in *Cinderella* and *Robinson Crusoe* – he was essentially chosen on the basis of his delicious performance in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. **'I always thought he was a bit of a comic genius, a very good actor with great musicality,'** Mathias says. **'Then Ian and I saw him in *Forum*, laughed a great deal, and that was it.'**

Finding their Dim Sum – usually known as Wishy Washy – was a little more complicated. The original idea was to have a male actor. **'But then I read the script again,'** Mathias recalls, **'and had this instinct it would be wonderful played by a woman.'** Since *Aladdin* was to be male rather than a female principal boy, McKellen also supported the idea of a bit of extra cross-dressing. **'We made up a list, and just then Maureen rang to ask if there was a part for her. The answer was yes.'**

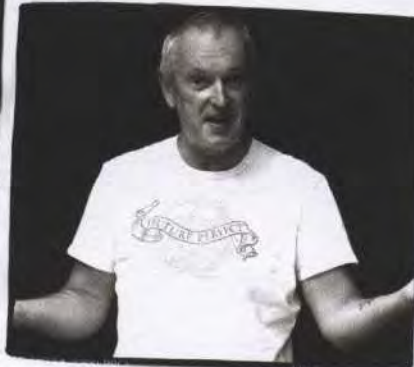
Like McKellen, Maureen Lipman has had her *Aladdin* moment, as the Genie of the Ring at the Watford Palace in 1969. **'I had a blue frizzy wig, John Lennon glasses, lots of beads and bangles, and I entered on a pogo-stick,'** she remembers. **'It was great fun and absolutely exhausting.'** Roger Allam, a former Sheriff of Nottingham in *Babes in the Wood* at the Glasgow Citizens, found the experience liberating, and is looking forward to playing another pantomime villain. **'I hope there'll be many chances to over-act,'** he says. **'The opportunity to change appearance and disappear through trapdoors is immensely appealing.'** For Sam Kelly too it's a chance to let his hair down: **'You have to treat it seriously at first, but then you can go a little mad.'**

Amidst all this intense and high-level creativity, it's apparent that everyone is also having enormous fun. As rehearsals loom, the main players are clearly relishing the work. **'It's wonderful to be doing something which requires such lightness and wit,'** Mathias says. **'I hope it will really brighten up Christmas in London.'** McKellen has similar hopes: **'It's all a bit of an adventure for me. In a pantomime there's a wider variety of pure theatre than you get even in Shakespeare. And if it works, it's unforgettable.'**

Jonathan Croall is a freelance journalist and theatre biographer



Roger Allam



Sean Mathias



Maureen Lipman

POTTED PANTO

MARK RAVENHILL

TRACES THE ROOTS

PANTOMIME

I see British pantomime as a great big Christmas pudding, It's stuffed full of ingredients grabbed from several hundred years of theatrical tradition – stirred together to create the rich, satisfying feast we enjoy today.

My first experience of panto was seeing an amateur production in Haywards Heath town hall. I was absolutely hooked. And then delighted when, aged ten, I discovered a book called *Potted Pantomime Writer*, a sort of Lego kit for the budding playwright. The book laid out the basic plots for all the classics (*Cinderella*, *Babes in the Wood*, *Aladdin* etc) and showed how to introduce the various routines – the haunted house scene, the Dame's comic striptease, the song sheet, and the spectacular transformation scene. Looking back, I suppose it was my first writer's workshop – a lesson in how you might combine story, patter, spectacle and song to create an evening's entertainment.

But it all began in the early 18th century as a rather high-minded experiment. The aim was to emulate the 'pantomimus' of classical Greek and Roman theatre, with the stories told, not with words, but through dance and movement. The experiment proved to be popular, and soon London's only licensed theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, were competing to produce spectacular productions that incorporated dance, music and clever scenic effects, some of which are still used in the transformation scenes today.

Gradually, the rather elevated style of these 'pantomimus' was squeezed aside by a cuckoo in the nest. Initially introduced as a short interlude, the Harlequinade proved a big hit with audiences. Based on the stock characters of Italian Commedia dell'arte, the sequences revelled in complex physical comedy and slapstick, and eventually grew longer and longer. The Harlequinade came to dominate the whole evening, and there were grumbles of 'things changing for the worse'. But at the same time, panto discovered its first star, the clown Joey Grimaldi, who had early 19th century audiences agog with the physical bravery of his comic stunts.

Over time, audiences' tastes changed and so did pantomime... again. The Victorians created a culture of family and nationhood that centred around Christmas. Panto became a seasonal entertainment and the middle-classes demanded a more genteel evening at the theatre. It started to draw on 'burlesque' – retellings of popular fairy stories in prettified rhyming couplets, often in pastiche of Shakespeare and other authors. The Good and Bad Fairies made their entrances from opposite sides of the stage, and songs were introduced.



By the end of the 19th century, theatre managers came up with a ground-breaking idea to attract larger audiences. They cast music hall stars, who had previously only performed in working-class areas, and with them came hissing and booing from a rowdy crowd, song sheets and the distorting of traditional stories to incorporate the new stars' music hall routines. Again, the grumblers complained that pantomime was being coarsened, but a new audience discovered the delights of panto and ensured it entered the 20th century in a healthy state.

The first half of the new century saw pantomime at its most popular. The arrival of radio, film and television meant that people were more aware than ever of music hall comics and singers, and eager to see them on stage. There were pantos all across the country, often running from Christmas to Easter.

By now the ingredients were all in place: cross-dressing principal characters who harked back to the men-only companies of Shakespeare's day; the 'breeches parts' taken by the first female actors of Restoration theatre; spectacular scenery and costumes inspired by the 18th century's very first 'pantomimus'; physical knockabout introduced by the Harlequinade; the popular fairy stories introduced by the Victorians; and the rowdy shouting and sing-alongs that accompanied the music hall stars. The pudding was fully cooked.

During the 1970s and 80s, pantomime was still popular outside of London, but it had more or less disappeared from the capital. There was a sense that it had become a bit tacky, that washed-up soap stars and super-annuated pop acts were simply taking their money in a rather cynical way. Then Philip Hedley, Artistic Director of the Theatre Royal Stratford East, set about reinventing the form all over again, finding strong links between Jamaican comedy, urban rap and traditional pantomime, that appealed to the Theatre's culturally diverse community. Less celebrated, but extremely popular, were comedian Jim Davison's 'blue' pantos for adults-only. Although sold on their sexual titillation, Davison told me that what audiences actually enjoyed were all the traditional elements – the 'smut' simply gave them an excuse to come along.

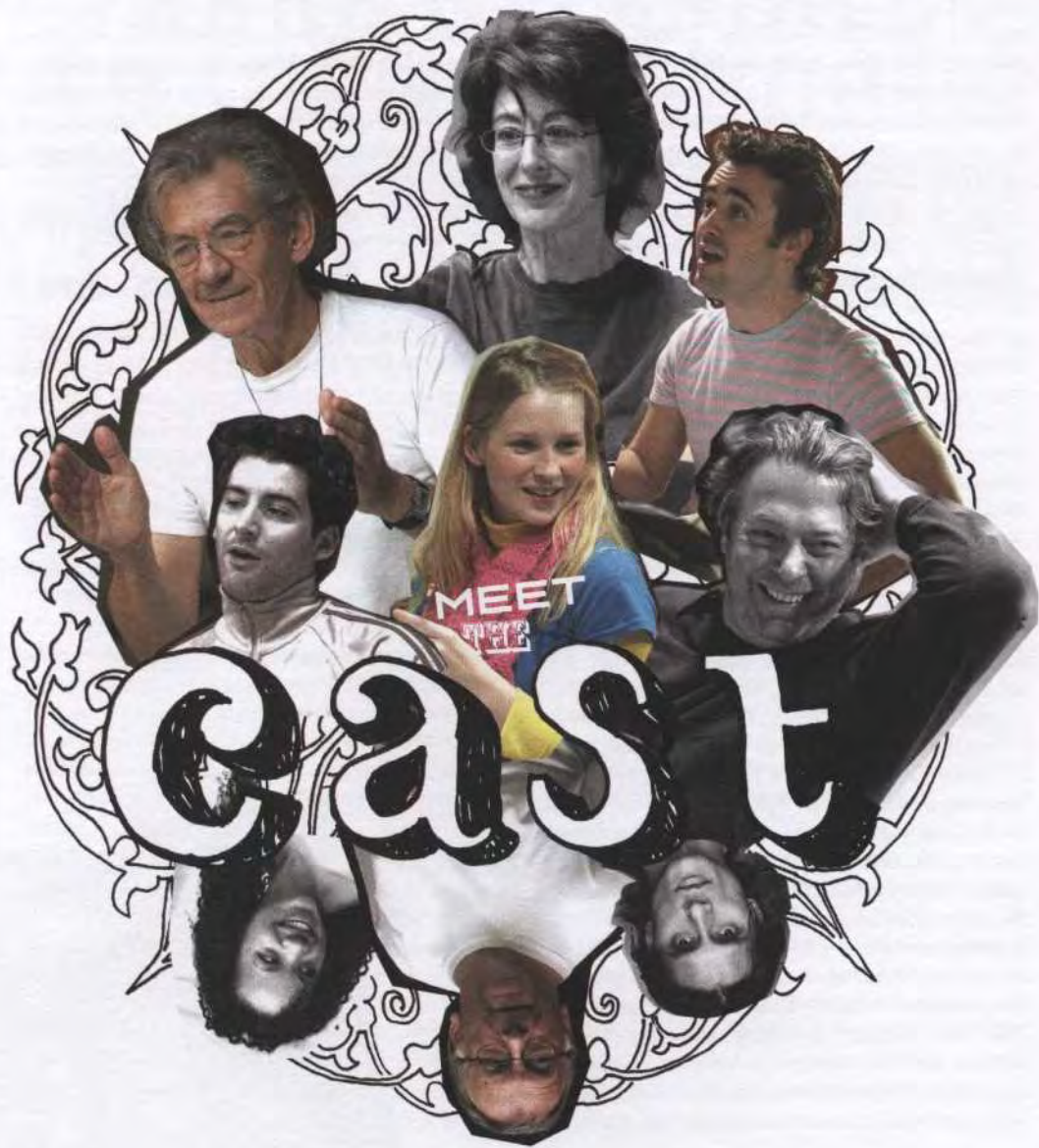
As a teenager, I hugely enjoyed Peter Nicholl's play *Poppy*, which cleverly and wittily used all the elements of pantomime to tell the story of the Victorians' reliance on the opium trade with China. When my own play, *Mother Clap's Molly House*, was produced at the National Theatre I was surprised when several people described it as 'a kind of pantomime'. Although I suspected that some of them meant it to be slightly derogatory, looking at the play, which includes cross-dressing, songs, emblematic figures entering from opposite sides of the stage and a transformation scene just before the interval, I realised they were right. The lessons learned from studying the *Potted Pantomime Writer* all those years ago had obviously stuck with me.

It seems appropriate that The Old Vic is bringing panto back to the West End. A theatre that in its time has seen drunken evenings of rowdy Victorian music hall, as well as some of the finest classical acting, is an excellent home for a form which has always slung together the high and the low, tradition and novelty. Pantomime is going strong. Long live panto!

Playwright Mark Ravenhill's work includes *Shopping and F***ing*, *Some Explicit Polaroids* and *Mother Clap's Molly House*.



The budding playwright:
Mark Ravenhill, aged 10



MARINA ABDEEN ensemble / understudy Princess

Marina made her West End debut in the original cast of *Bombay Dreams* (Apollo Victoria). Other credits include Intoto Dance Company (UK tour), *Razzle Dazzle* (Hackney Empire), The Royal Variety Performance (Hammersmith Apollo) and *Stars of Stage and Screen* with Simon Callow. Television includes *All About Me* (BBC) and *V Graham Norton* (Channel 4).

MADALENA ALBERTO ensemble

Theatre includes *My Name is Alice* and *Songs for a New World* (Bird Theatre Company, Portugal, Austria & Jersey) and *A Musical Theatre Evening* which she devised and performed. *Aladdin* is Madalena's professional theatre debut.

ROGER ALLAM Abbanazar

Roger is an Associate Artist of the RSC where he has played many roles, including Benedick, Macbeth and Javert in *Les Misérables*. He has won two Oliviers and the Clarence Derwent Award for recent theatre work – *Privates on Parade* at the Donmar, and *Troilus & Cressida* and *Money* at the National Theatre, where he has also played in *The Cherry Orchard*, *Albert Speer*, *Summerfolk* and *Democracy*. Recent work in the West End includes *City of Angels*, *Arcadia* and *Art*. Recent television includes *Manchild*, *Inspector Lynley*, *The Creatives* and *The Robinsons*. Films include *Tristram Shandy*, *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone* and *Stranded*.

PETER CAULFIELD ensemble / understudy Aladdin

Theatre includes *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (NT); *Elegies*, *Our House* (West End); *The Emperor and the Nightingale* (Newbury), *Falsettoland* (Edinburgh Festival). Television includes *Our House* for the BBC.

SIMON CLARK ensemble / understudy Abbanazar, Widow Twankey, Emperor

Theatre includes *At the End of the Day*, *Oliver!*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Windy City*, *High Society*, *Murderous Instincts* (West End). He has appeared in productions at theatres across the UK and toured internationally, including *Much Ado* and *Cyrano* (RSC to USA & Europe). Television includes *Colditz*, *How We Used to Live*, *A Dance to the Music of Time*, *Trial and Retribution II* and *Judge John Deed*.

NINA FRENCH ensemble / swing

Theatre includes *Brighton Rock* (Almeida); *Guys and Dolls*, *Sweet Charity*, *A Chorus Line* (Sheffield Crucible); *Chess* (Scandinavian tour); *The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals* (Lyric Theatre); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* (national tour); *Miss Saigon*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Fame*, *Saturday Night Fever* (West End); *Chicago* (Zimbabwe); *Pal Joey* (Chichester Festival Theatre) and *Grease* (national tour).

JULIA HINCHCLIFFE ensemble / understudy Dim Sum

Theatre includes *Anything Goes*, *Cats* (West End); *On Your Toes* with Adam Cooper (Festival Hall); *Singin' in the Rain* (West Yorkshire Playhouse & tour); *Grease*, *42nd Street* (national tours); *Die Walkure*; *Das Rheingold* (Royal Opera House); *Giovanna D'arco* (Opera North & tour).

GAVIN KEENAN ensemble / understudy Hanky

Theatre includes Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* (international tour), *Cats* (UK tour), *Sunday Night Live* (Drury Lane). He also participated in the demo recording for the new musical, *Little Women*.

SAM KELLY Emperor

Theatre includes *The Two Ronnies* (Palladium); *Pericles*, *War and Peace*, *The Homecoming*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (NT); *Dead Funny*, *HMS Pinafore* (Savoy); *Toast*, *Under the Whaleback* (Royal Court); *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (Edinburgh Festival). Sam has appeared in numerous comedy series with Ronnie Barker, Victoria Wood, Les Dawson, Dick Emery, Dave Allen and Cilla Black among many others. His films include *Blue Ice* with Michael Caine and Mike Leigh's *Topsy Turvy* and *All or Nothing*.

MAUREEN LIPMAN Dim Sum

Maureen spent three years at The Old Vic, 1970–73, under the aegis of Sir Laurence Olivier, and half of 1994, in *The Sisters Rosensweig*. She thinks it's the best theatre in the world. Her last film was Polanski's *The Pianist* and her first was *Up the Junction* in 1967. Amongst her numerous acclaimed performances, she considers *Oklahoma!* at the National Theatre in 1998 the most fun, and *Re:Joyce!* and *Peggy For You* her best work to date. Her last panto was in 1967 at the Watford Theatre, and she's still recovering.

JOE McFADDEN Aladdin

West End theatre includes *A Life in the Theatre*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Entertaining Mr Sloane* and *Rent* (West End). Films include *The Trouble with Men and Women*, *Dad Savage* and *Small Faces*; and for television *Raphael*, *Peter Ackroyd's London*, *Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll*, *Spark House* and *The Crow Road*.

IAN MCKELLEN *Widow Twankey*

Ian McKellen first appeared at The Old Vic with Laurence Olivier's fledgling National Theatre Company, as Claudio in *Much Ado About Nothing*. After 40 years, he is pleased to be back. Between times he has acted in much Shakespeare and produced classical and new plays for the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre and other companies. In the West End, most recently, he was in Sean Mathias' production of *Dance of Death*. On television he has appeared as David Copperfield, Walter, Chauvelin, Hitler and Amos Starkadder. On the big screen he has been DH Lawrence, Richard III, James Whale (*Gods and Monsters*), Magneto and Gandalf. Soon to come are *Asylum* and *Neverwas*. His first pantomime was in 1962 as 'TV the comic Chinese policeman' in another *Aladdin* for Ipswich Arts Theatre. There is a photograph of this and much more on www.mckellen.com. With thanks and respect to Christopher Biggins, Wynn Calvin MBE, Julian Clary, Ronnie Corbett, Roy Hudd, John Inman, Danny La Rue, Dave Lynn, Lily Savage and Richard Wilson; and remembering Les Dawson, Norman Evans, Regina Fong, Jimmy Jewel and Ben Warriss.

JOANNA PAGE *Panky*

Theatre includes *Camera Obscura* (Almeida); *The Mysteries*, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (NT); *Billy Liar* (UK tour). Films include *Poliakoff Film 2*, *Love Actually*, *Miss Julie*, *This Year's Love*, *From Hell* and *Very Annie Mary*; and for television *Mine All Mine*, *To the Ends of the Earth*, *The Cazalet Chronicles*, *David Copperfield*, *The Lost World*, *Ready When You Are Mr McGill*.

DANIEL REDMOND *ensemble / understudy Genie*

Theatre includes *The People Next Door* (Traverse Theatre Edinburgh & European tour); *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Oxford Playhouse); *Mother Clap's Molly House* (NT); *La Cava* (Victoria Palace/Piccadilly Theatre); *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (Battersea Arts Centre); *They Shoot Horses, Don't They* (Royal Academy of Music). Daniel has also recorded the soundtrack of *La Cava*, taking the role of Somal.

Photos opposite

- 1 Ian McKellen, Roger Allam
- 2 Lee William-Davis, Julia Hinchcliffe
- 3 Ramon Tikaram
- 4 Marina Abdeen
- 5 Gavin Keenan, Leah Sheldrick
- 6 Joanna Page, Owen Sharpe
- 7 Ian McKellen, Joe McFadden
- 8 Maureen Lipman, Joe McFadden
- 9 Julia Hinchcliffe, Peter Caulfield, Gavin Keenan, Matthew Wolfenden, Madalena Alberto
- 10 Joe McFadden, Cat Simmons
- 11 Madalena Alberto, Nina French
- 12 Maureen Lipman, Ian McKellen
- 13 Sam Kelly, Daniel Redmond, Simon Clark

OWEN SHARPE *Hanky*

Theatre includes *Oliver Twist* (Lyric, Hammersmith), *The Recruiting Officer* (Lichfield), *She Stoops To Conquer*, *A Laughing Matter*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (NT), *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Jubilee*, *Bartholomew Fair*, *Shadows*, *This Lime Tree Bower* (RSC), *The Barbaric Comedies*, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Macbeth*; in Dublin, *A Thief of a Christmas* (Abbey), *Christmas Carol* (Gate), *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Billy Liar* (Andrews Lane), *Dear Jack* (Ark); and *Jacko* (Hawkswell, Sligo). Television includes *The Favourite*, *Deco*, *The Lolly Man* and *My Oedipus Complex*. Films include *My Left Foot*, *Borstal Boys* and *A Second Death*.

LEAH SHELDRIK *ensemble / understudy Panky*

Whilst training, Leah's roles included Rosalia in *West Side Story* (Peacock Theatre); Christina in *Phantom of the Opera* and Ida in *Honk!* (Cochrane Theatre); Bell in *Beauty and the Beast* (Nojesteatern, Sweden). *Aladdin* is her professional West End debut.

CAT SIMMONS *Princess*

Theatre includes *We Happy Few* (Gielgud), *Simply Heavenly* (Young Vic), *Fame* (Cambridge Theatre), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (national tour), *Whistle Down the Wind* (Aldwych); and workshops of *Talking to Mr Warner* and *The Story* (Soho Theatre). Television includes *Holby City*, *Girl's Weekend* and *Doctors*.

RAMON TIKARAM *Genie*

Theatre includes *Bombay Dreams*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (West End); *The Ramayana* (NT); *Amphitryon* (The Gate); *LA Plays* (Almeida). Television includes *Murphy's Law*, *Down to Earth*, *Silent Witness*, *MIT*, *Judge John Deed*, *Daylight Robbery*, *Dream Team* and *This Life*. Films include *Take Three Girls*, *Waiting at the Royal*, *Wolverine*, *Kama Sutra* and *Cut Throat Island*.

LEE WILLIAM-DAVIS *ensemble / swing*

Theatre includes *Chicago*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Beauty and the Beast* (West End); *Loves Labours Lost* (NT); *Anything Goes* (NT & West End); *42nd Street*, *A Chorus Line* (UK tour); and the original cast of *Summer Holiday* (Blackpool Opera House). Television and film credits include *La Passione*, *Without Words*, *Uncle Jack*, *An Actor's Life* and *Birds of a Feather*.

MATTHEW WOLFENDEN *ensemble*

Theatre includes *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (NT); *Saturday Night Fever* (national tour); *Romeo and Juliet* (West End). Television includes *Courtroom* for Mersey TV.



INTRODUCING THE CREATIVE TEAM

BILLE BROWN Playwright

Australian writer and actor Bille Brown's career in film, theatre and television has taken him all over the world, including to the UK and America. He wrote a series of plays for young people for the Queensland Theatre Company, one of which, *tufff*, went on to a season at the Royal Court. He was commissioned by the RSC to write *The Swan Down Gloves* (Stratford & London). His recent play, *Bill & Mary*, was produced and published last year. He has also written for documentary and feature films, including *The Light Fantastic*, and worked with the John Cleese company, Lemur Entertainment. His most recent writing, *Herself*, is included in 'Best Australian Essays 2004'. His acting credits include Wilde in *The Judas Kiss* (Company B), the title role in *Howard Katz* at The Sydney Opera House, and he defended God against Billy Connelly in the film, *The Man Who Sued God*. Bille is the Artist in Residence at The Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

GARETH VALENTINE Original Score & Musical Supervisor

Gareth is currently a presenter and Musical Supervisor for Channel 4's *Musicality*, and Musical Supervisor for the forthcoming Victoria Wood musical, *Acorn Antiques*. West End credits include Musical Supervisor/Dance Arranger/Musical Director for *Anything Goes* (NT & Drury Lane); Musical Supervisor/Dance Arranger for *Tonight's the Night*, *My One and Only*, *Kiss Me Kate* (also RSC), *Chicago* (also Gottenburg & Moscow), *Damn Yankees*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Baker's Wife*, *Cats*, *Cabaret*, *42nd Street*, *Closer Than Ever* and *Windy City*. Other theatre includes *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Nine*, *Company* (Donmar); *Camelot* (Covent Garden Festival); *Toad of Toad Hall* (Old Vic); *Chita* (Chita Rivera Tribute, New York); *Strike Up the Band*, *101 in the Shadow*, *Panama Hattie* (Lost Musicals Project); *Annie* (Crucible); Wayne Sleep's *Sleep With Friends* (Bath & York); *Oh Kay!* (Chichester); *Oliver!* (Toronto & UK tour). He has conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra; and has been an adjudicator for the Llangollen International Eisteddfod and the BBC Voice of Musical Theatre. Cast album recordings include *Musicality*, *Anything Goes*, *The Baker's Wife*, *Company*, *Chicago* and *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*. Gareth's *Requiem* was recorded at Abbey Road Studios and has been performed all over the world, including Washington, San Francisco, Melbourne, Colorado, Scandinavia, San Diego and Southwark Cathedral, London.

SEAN MATHIAS Director

As a director, Sean's work includes *Antigone* (Cape Town); *Dance of Death* (Broadway, West End & Sydney Festival); *Company* (Washington DC); *The Elephant Man* (Broadway); *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Design for Living* (West End); *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *A Little Night Music*, *Uncle Vanya* (NT); *Marlene* (West End, Broadway & international tour); *Les Parents Terribles* (NT & Broadway, as *Indiscretions*); *Bent* (NT, West End & film). As a writer, his plays include *Cowardice*, *Infidelities*, *A Prayer for Wings*, *Poor Nanny* and *Swansea Boys*; plus the adaptation of David Leavitt's novel *The Lost Language of Cranes* for BBC TV; and a novel, *Manhattan Mourning*. He has won the *Evening Standard* and Critics' Circle Awards for Best Director and his productions have been nominated for 18 Olivier and 14 Tony Awards. The film *Bent* won numerous international awards, including La Prix de la Jeunesse at Cannes.

JOHN NAPIER Designer

John's designs for musical theatre include *Cats*, *Starlight Express*, *Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Sunset Boulevard* (West End, Broadway & around the world); *Time*, *Children of Eden*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (West End); *Jane Eyre* (Broadway). He is Associate Designer at the RSC, where his work includes *Macbeth*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *King Lear*, *Once in a Lifetime*, *The Greeks*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Peter Pan* and *Mother Courage*. Other theatre work includes *The Party* (Olivier's last performance at The Old Vic), *Equus*, *Trelawny of the 'Wells'*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Peter Pan*, *Candide*, *South Pacific* (NT); *The Tower*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Almeida); *Skellig* (Young Vic). Opera credits include *Lohengrin*, *Macbeth* (Royal Opera House); *Idomeneo* (Glyndebourne); *The Devils* (ENO); *Nabucco* (Metropolitan Opera). He also designed the films *Captain EO* (starring Michael Jackson) and Spielberg's *Hook*; and designed and co-directed *The Siegfried and Roy Show* in Las Vegas. John has won two Society of West End Theatre Awards, an Olivier, a Bafta and five Tony Awards. He is a member of the American Academy of Achievement, a Royal Designer for Industry and an Honorary Fellow of the London Institute.

WAYNE MCGREGOR Choreographer

Wayne is the founder and Artistic Director of Random Dance (resident company at Sadlers Wells) and has made over 30 works for the company. His many awards include two *Time Out* Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Dance. Ballet commissions include *Qualia*, *Symbiont(s)* (Royal Ballet); *Nautilus* (Stuttgart); *2Human* (ENB); *PreSentient*, *Detritus* (Rambert). Theatre includes *The Woman in White* (West End); *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *A Little Night Music* (NT); *Cleansed* (Royal Court). Opera includes *La Bohème*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Orpheus et Eurydice* (Scottish Opera); *Salome* (ENO); *Manon* (English Touring Opera). Films include *Bent* and the forthcoming *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.

MARK BOUMAN Costume Designer

Mark's recent theatre work for English Touring Theatre includes *King Lear* (& Old Vic) *Romeo & Juliet* (& Hong Kong), *John Gabriel Borkman*, *Loves Labours Lost*, *Twelfth Night*, *Cabaret* (Chichester). Opera designs include *Idomeneo*, *La Boheme* (Glyndebourne); *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Garsington); *The Tsarina's Shoes* (Guildhall); *Leonore* (Bologna Opera). As Associate Designer/Supervisor, his credits include *Anything Goes* (NT & West End); *Hamlet* (Old Vic); *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Lady Windermere's Fan* (West End); and numerous productions for English Touring Theatre, Chichester Festival Theatre, ENO, Glyndebourne and in the U.S, the Spoleto Festival & Lyric Theatre Chicago. Television credits include *The Lenny Henry Show* and *Comic Relief*.

MARK HENDERSON Lighting Designer

Mark has worked with the UK's most prestigious theatre, opera and ballet companies. Recent West End productions include *Cloaca*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Grease*, *Democracy*, *Our House*, *Endgame* and *Tonight's the Night*. He has lit a number of Broadway and UK touring productions, and his film and television credits include *The Tall Guy* and *Rowan Atkinson Live in Boston*. He has also worked on architectural projects including the Royal Court re-development and Madam Tussauds in London, Las Vegas and New York. He has won four Olivier Awards for Best Lighting (plus four further nominations) and two Tony Award nominations.

FERGUS O'HARE Sound Designer

Previously for The Old Vic *Cloaca*, *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *24 Hour Plays*. Other recent work includes *Anna in the Tropics* (Hampstead); *Vermillion Dream* (Salisbury); *Clouds* (tour); *Home*, *The Quare Fellow*, *Candida*, *Singer* (Oxford Stage Company); *Twelfth Night* (Albery); *Shimmer* (Traverse); *Holy Terror* (Duke of York's). Work in New York, Los Angeles and Sydney includes *The Shape of Things*, *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg*, *Dance of Death*, *Noises Off*, *Electra* (Drama Desk nominee) and *An Enemy of the People*.

CHRIS WALKER Orchestrations

Chris has worked as a Musical Director and Orchestrator on productions across the UK and USA. Recent credits include *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Ragtime* (West End); *An Evening with Maria Friedman* (New York); *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* (Houston); *Privates on Parade* (Donmar); *My Fair Lady* (NT & West End); *The Secret Garden* (RSC & West End). He has also worked extensively for television and film and as a record producer for First Night Records.

KEVIN AMOS Musical Director

Kevin's West End credits as Musical Director include *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats* (he conducted the final London performances), *42nd Street*, *Sugar Babies* and *Grand Hotel*. He was Music Director on Sean Mathias' production of *Marlene*, for which he also wrote the incidental music and arrangements for its production in the West End, South Africa, Paris and New York. As an accompanist, he has made appearances in major venues in London, Europe and at the Carnegie Hall in New York. As an arranger and conductor, he has worked extensively for theatre and radio both in England and Scandinavia.

EMMA STUART Assistant Director

Work as Assistant Director includes *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Midwinter* (RSC); *Romeo and Juliet* (English Touring Theatre); *Great Expectations*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (Bristol Old Vic Theatre); *Betty* (Vaudeville); *Kosher Harry* (Royal Court). She has also directed *The Irish Play*, *Rat in the Skull* (RSC readings); *The Zoo Story* (Gate Theatre); and was director on attachment at the NT Studio, sponsored by The Bulldog Princep Theatrical Fund, which included assisting on *Edmond*. Emma is the theatre representative for Stellar Network UK and co-ordinates the Old Vic New Voices Open Page project.

LAILA DIALLO Assistant Choreographer

Laila has been performing with Random Dance since 1997, also acting as Wayne McGregor's assistant on Sarah Kane's *Cleansed* (Royal Court), as well as restaging his *Skinned Prey* with the National Youth Dance Company. She has recently appeared in Nick Mead's *Dice Life*, a dance film based on Luke Rhinehart's cult novel, *The Dice Man*.

SALLY GREENE Chief Executive,
The Old Vic Theatre Trust

Theatre impresario Sally Greene is well known for rescuing and restoring The Old Vic, Criterion and Richmond theatres. In 1999 she launched Old Vic Productions plc, which to date has 700 investors and has produced over 40 plays in the West End and on Broadway. She appointed Kevin Spacey as Artistic Director of The Old Vic Theatre Company in 2000 and they intend to bring the best of American and British talent onto the stage over the next five years. Sally is starting work on her fourth theatre, an entirely new build, on the site of the Collins Music Hall in Islington. She is also co-producing *Billy Elliot* with Working Title Pictures and a creative team including Elton John and Stephen Daldry. She recently became the proprietor of the renowned Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club. She was presented with the Montblanc de la Culture Arts award for 2004.

KEVIN SPACEY Artistic Director,
The Old Vic Theatre Company

Kevin Spacey directed *Cloaca*, the opening production for The Old Vic Theatre Company, and will star in the next two productions this season, *National Anthems* and *The Philadelphia Story*. Other theatre work includes *The Iceman Cometh* (Almeida, The Old Vic & Broadway) for which he won the *Evening Standard* and Olivier Awards for Best Actor and was nominated for a Tony, *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Broadway & West End), *The Seagull* (Washington DC), *Barbarians* (SoHo Rep), *Playland* (Manhattan Theatre Club) and *Lost in Yonkers* for which he won a Tony Award for Best Supporting Actor. Films include *Beyond the Sea* (producer, director & lead role), *The Usual Suspects* (Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor), *American Beauty* (Golden Globe, Screen Actors' Guild, American & British Academy Awards for Best Actor), *Swimming with Sharks*, *The Usual Suspects*, *Se7en*, *LA Confidential*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, *The Negotiator*, *Hurlyburly*, *Looking for Richard*, *The Big Kahuna*, *K-Pax*, *The Shipping News* and *The Life of David Gale*. Kevin's Trigger Street Productions has produced *The Iceman Cometh*, *The Big Kahuna*, the off-Broadway production of *Cobb*, and the film *The United States of Leland*.

DAVID LIDDIMENT Producer,
The Old Vic Theatre Company

David started his career at Granada TV, where he became Executive Producer of *Coronation Street* and nurtured a new generation of TV dramatists including Paul Abbott, Kay Mellor and Russell T Davis. In 1997 he was appointed Director of Programmes at ITV, where he brought to the screen those two modern television phenomena: *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* and *Pop Idol*. In addition, he presided over a rich period of drama including *The Russian Bride*, *Bloody Sunday*, *Cold Feet*, *The Second Coming*, *Fat Friends*, *At Home with the Braithwaites* and *Foyle's War*. He was a governor of West Yorkshire Playhouse (1993-2003) where he directed the world premiere of Kay Mellor's *A Passionate Woman*. He is Creative Director of independent producer, All3Media and is a regular columnist for the *Guardian*.

COLIN INGRAM Executive Producer,
The Old Vic Theatre Company

Educated in Law and Chartered Accountancy, Colin began his theatre career at Cameron Mackintosh Ltd as Production Administrator, where he managed *Les Misérables* (West End & UK tour), *Phantom of the Opera* (Edinburgh & UK tour), *Oklahoma!* and *Witches of Eastwick* (West End). He also managed the *Les Misérables* 10th Anniversary Concert at the Royal Albert Hall, Cardiff Castle, Hyland Park and as part of the closing ceremony for Euro '96 at Wembley. He then headed up Walt Disney Theatrical UK Ltd, where he managed *Lion King* (West End) and *Beauty and the Beast* (UK tour). As Executive Producer of Old Vic Productions plc he is also currently working on *Billy Elliot*, opening in the West End, April 2005.

MIG KIMPTON Associate Producer

Mig has spent more than 20 years working in theatre. He has been the General Manager for the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain, run West End theatres, including The Playhouse at Charing Cross, managed tours for Lesley Joseph, Sandi Toksvig, Sian Phillips Elaine Stritch, Janet Street Porter, Lily Savage and toured extensively with Ian McKellen. As a producer, he has worked on many charity galas, including eight Stonewall Equality shows at the Royal Albert Hall and the 2003 Grand Concert at The Old Vic. As a company manager, he has recently worked on *Stones in his Pockets*, *The Arab Israeli Cookbook* and *Batboy the Musical*. Mig is also a flower design demonstrator and has just completed a successful tour of theatres across the country with his 'Celebrity Flowers Christmas Roadshow'.

JOYCE NETTLES Casting Director,
The Old Vic Theatre Company

Joyce was Head of Casting at the RSC for 10 years under the Artistic Directorship of Trevor Nunn. She cast most of Jonathan Kent's productions whilst he was Artistic Director of the Almeida, and has worked with Peters Hall, Brook and Stein. Her television credits include five series of *The Midsomer Murders*, *Foyle's War*, *Kavanagh QC*, *Inspector Morse*, the award-winning *Goodnight Mr Tom* and several films for HBO, including *RKO 281* for which she won an Emmy. Her film credits include Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* and several films with Lars von Trier, including *Breaking the Waves*.

DOMINIC FRASER Production Manager,
The Old Vic Theatre Company

As Technical Director at the Donmar Warehouse, from its re-opening under Sam Mendes in 1992 until summer 2004, Dominic oversaw the technical development of the theatre and production managed more than 80 productions, including tours and transfers of work on both sides of the Atlantic. He has also been production manager for numerous shows in the West End and across the UK.



FLO PERRY

Flo is 12 years old. She draws and paints in her spare time, sometimes with her father, Turner Prize winner, Grayson Perry. Her drawings caught the attention of John Napier, who used them as the inspiration for his set designs. Since the age of three, Flo has wanted to be a fashion designer, so she is delighted that Mark Bouman was also inspired by her work for his *Aladdin* costumes.

Flo's vases below





Spot ^{THE} DIFFERENCE

Can you spot **TEN** differences between these pictures of the Emperor and Aladdin?



THE MAZE

Aladdin is trapped in the cave, but only one rope leads to freedom. Can you help him find his way to daylight?





JOIN THE DOTS

Join the dots from 1 to 224
to find out who's hiding

