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WUTHERING
HEIGHTS



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800 E. Grand on Navy Pier
Chicago, Illinois 60611
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*Part of the John W. and Jeanne M. Rowe
Inquiry and Exploration Series*



"O earth, I will
befriend thee."
—W.S.

About CST

A Regional Tony Award recipient, Chicago Shakespeare Theater produces a bold and innovative year-round season—plays, musicals, world premieres, family productions, and theatrical presentations from around the globe—alongside education programming for students, teachers, and lifelong learners, and engagement with communities and artists across the city.

Founded in 1986, the Theater has evolved and expanded to present as many as twenty productions and 650 performances annually, and has been honored with numerous national and international awards. Chicago Shakespeare is the city's leading presenter of international work and has toured its own productions to five continents. The Theater is dedicated to welcoming the next generation of theatergoers; one in four of its audience members is under the age of eighteen.

Recognized as a national leader in arts education, the Theater's arts-in-literacy programs support work in classrooms across the region by bringing words to life onstage for tens of thousands of students each year and through a variety of professional learning opportunities for teachers. Its free citywide Chicago Shakespeare in the Parks program has fostered creative community engagement for more than a decade.

As a nonprofit organization, Chicago Shakespeare works to embrace diversity in all its forms, prioritize inclusion, provide equitable opportunities for growth and success, and offer an accessible experience for all. The Theater strives to engage today's artists and audiences in active and critical conversations with the work of its namesake playwright.

Located on Chicago's iconic Navy Pier, Chicago Shakespeare's campus features the Jentes Family Courtyard Theater, The Yard at Chicago Shakespeare, and the Thoma Theater Upstairs. Onstage, in classrooms and neighborhoods across the city, and in venues around the world, Chicago Shakespeare is a multifaceted cultural hub—inviting audiences, artists, and community members to share powerful stories that connect and inspire. ■

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Director's Note

Visit chicagoshakes.com to explore more ideas and stories behind the art on CST's stages.

WUTHERING HEIGHTS

- BASED ON THE NOVEL BY EMILY BRONTË
- ADAPTED & DIRECTED BY EMMA RICE
- THE YARD AT CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE
- JANUARY 27–FEBRUARY 19, 2023
- 312.595.5600
- WWW.CHICAGOSHAKES.COM

My relationship with *Wuthering Heights* started in my childhood. My family were keen campers and many a wet weekend in the 1970s was spent shivering in a tent. One such trip was to the Yorkshire Moors, where it was decided that we would try and find Top Withens, the house said to have inspired *Wuthering Heights*. Remote, bleak, and somehow devastating, we were all struck by how small the house seemed. I hadn't read the book at that point but my Mum and her friend Marielaine's enthusiasm for literature was contagious. That time lives on for me in a fuzzy memory of happy wildness. But, as Catherine Earnshaw said, "There is no happiness."

In the 1980s I was a gothic punk. I left school at 16, dyed my hair blue and put on black. I looked more hardcore than I felt with my spiky hair and thick make-up. I chose to wear armour—all traces of my true self disguised and ignored. When I was 12, I lost my best friend (and daughter of Marielaine) to leukemia. In that chapter of illness and tragedy, I lost not just my friend, but my protective cloak of youthful invulnerability.

And so, it was with this internal backdrop that I strutted into sixth form and discovered *Wuthering Heights* for myself. Until then, I had struggled in education, often bored and waiting for my life to begin. Then came *Wuthering Heights* and everything changed. There was no avoiding the intoxicating pull of this book and I loved it with a passion. My blood stirred, my mind fizzed and my energy popped. This didn't feel like work, this felt like jumping off a craggy cliff and flying. How could I resist a world filled with ghosts, betrayals, and passions? I loved its drama and its intrigue, but most I loved a story that spanned not only generations but life and death. I didn't have a literal ghost knocking at my window, but I was haunted by memories that knocked at my soul. In my teenage mind, I was Heathcliff. I was misunderstood, angry, and grieving—I wanted people to feel, see, and understand my pain. Emily Brontë saw me. She felt death everywhere and understood loss as sharply as I felt my own.



Life moved on, as it has a habit of doing, and *Wuthering Heights*, my grief, and my dyed hair faded. *Wuthering Heights* was consigned to my past and I thought no more about it until a few years ago.

In 2016, I was horrified by scenes from the refugee camps at the Calais Jungle and enraged by the negotiations about how many unaccompanied children the UK was willing to take whilst not actually taking any. Something triggered in my brain. Wasn't Heathcliff an unaccompanied child? Wasn't he found on the Liverpool docks and taken in by Earnshaw? My instincts itching, I pulled out my old copy and started to read.

I didn't have a literal ghost knocking at my window, but I was haunted by memories that knocked at my soul.

This time, the book fell into a very different soul. No longer intoxicated by impossible passions and unresolved griefs, I saw a story not of romance but of brutality, cruelty, and revenge. This was not a gothic romance, this was a tragedy; a tragedy of what might happen if, as individuals as well as a society, we allow cruelty to take hold. "Be careful what you seed," my pen wrote, and it kept writing, giving new voice to my adult rage.

I cut Nelly Dean (the novel's narrator), took the form of a Greek tragedy, and created a chorus of The Moors. It is The Moors that tell the story of *Wuthering Heights* in my production. Singing and dancing as one, they warn us that "A scatter of yellow stars might seem to welcome hope, but the adder slides beneath." This production is epic, the characters super human; Catherine, Heathcliff, and Hareton the Gods of Chaos, Revenge and Hope.

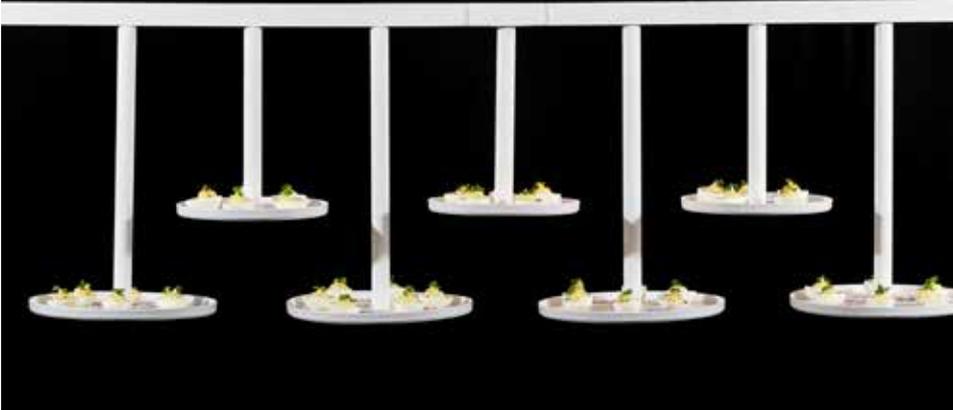
This production of *Wuthering Heights* is woven from the talent, passion, truth, and experience of all who are contributing to the show. Rich with our humanity, it holds our own stories, our losses, hopes, fears, and dreams. Made with love, this is a Revenge Tragedy for our time and one that warns how our actions today will affect the world for decades to come.

Emma Rice, Artistic Director
Wise Children

above: Leah Brotherhead,
photo by Muriel Steinke, courtesy
of Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

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A World of Welcome...

Please join us in enthusiastically welcoming the company of Wise Children's *Wuthering Heights* from the United Kingdom to Chicago.

Chicago Shakespeare's **WorldStage Series** offers the extraordinary opportunity to engage with the world's great theater, and to share our work across the globe. Over the years, more than 1,300 artists from 22 countries spanning 6 continents have taken part in this dynamic cultural exchange. From South Africa and Belarus, to Mexico, China, France and beyond, these productions have challenged, inspired, and awakened us all.

With each performance comes the uniting power of theater—the magic of a singular moment in time experienced live, together. Transcending language and tradition, we celebrate our individual identities as well as the interconnected stories we share in a conversation unbound by geographic lines.

To each of you and to artists far and wide, our doors and our hearts are open. Welcome in...



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RICK BOYNTON
Creative Producer

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presents

WISE CHILDREN'S WUTHERING HEIGHTS

adapted and directed by
EMMA RICE

based on the novel by
EMILY BRONTË

A NATIONAL THEATRE, WISE CHILDREN, BRISTOL OLD VIC
& YORK THEATRE ROYAL CO-PRODUCTION,
IN ASSOCIATION WITH BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE

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JACOB SPARROW,
and **WISE CHILDREN**

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DOREEN SAYEGH for
PEMBERLEY PRODUCTIONS
and **ANNIE SHEA GRANEY,**
Associate

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There will be one 15-minute intermission.

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Cast

Lockwood/Edgar Linton/The Moors

SAM ARCHER

Isabella Linton/Little Linton/The Moors

GEORGIA BRUCE

Robert/The Moors

RICARDO CASTRO

Zillah/The Moors

KATY ELLIS

Swing

STEPHANIE ELSTOB

Mr. Earnshaw/The Moors

LLOYD GORMAN

Frances Earnshaw/Young Cathy/
The Moors

STEPHANIE HOCKLEY

Dr. Kenneth/The Moors

TJ HOLMES

The Leader of the Yorkshire Moors

JORDAN LAVINIÈRE

Hindley Earnshaw/Hareton Earnshaw/
The Moors

TAMA PHETHEAN

Catherine

ELEANOR SUTTON

Heathcliff

LIAM TAMNE

Band

**SID GOLDSMITH
PAT MORAN (Music Director)
VINCENT DE JESUS
with LLOYD GORMAN,
TJ HOLMES**

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Profiles



SAM ARCHER (*Lockwood/Edgar Linton/The Moors*)
Theater credits include: *Bagdad Cafe* (Wise Children/The Old Vic); *Wise Children* (The Old Vic/UK Tour); *The Happy Prince* (The Place); *An*

Ideal Husband (Vaudeville Theatre); *wonderland* (National Theatre/Théâtre du Châtelet); *La Bohème* (Royal Albert Hall); Arthur Pita's *Metamorphosis* (The Joyce Theater, NY); *Wind in the Willows* (Linbury Studio Theatre); *Chariots of Fire* (Hampstead Theatre/Gielgud Theatre); *Earthquakes in London* (UK Tour); *Oklahoma!* (Chichester); *Mary Poppins* (UK Tour); *We Will Rock You* (Dominion Theatre); *Oliver!* (London Palladium); *Lord of the Flies*, *Swan Lake*, *The Red Shoes*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *Nutcracker!* (Matthew Bourne's New Adventures). Screen credits include: *Humans* (Kudos/C4); *Mr. Selfridge* (ITV); *Allied* (Paramount Pictures); Disney's *Muppets Most Wanted*; *Life Is a Buffet*.



GEORGIA BRUCE (*Isabella Linton/Little Linton/The Moors*)
Georgia is an actor, comedian, and musician. Credits include: creating the role of Sally in the original cast of *Fisherman's Friends* (Hall

for Cornwall); Bill in Emma Rice's *Malory Towers* (Wise Children); the title role in *Robin Hood* (The Watermill Theatre); *Bruce: just a pretty face* (Edinburgh Fringe); *Callisto: a queer epic* (Arcola Theatre); *ArtsLab: Comedy Troll* (North Wall Arts Centre); *Suddenly Last Summer* (Oxford Playhouse); *The Oxford Revue: Hello You* (Edinburgh Fringe); *Colin & Katya* (North Wall Arts Centre); *The Oxford Revue & Friends* (Oxford Playhouse); *The Changing of the Guard* (O'Reilly Theatre); *The Alchemist* (Arcola Theatre). Film credits include: *Not All Men* (Neuron Hub). TV credits include: Sal in Russel T Davies' *It's a Sin* (Channel 4) and *Doctors* (BBC).



RICARDO CASTRO (*Robert/The Moors*)
Ricardo trained at the Portuguese National Conservatoire and at the Associated Studios Academy of Performing Arts. Theater credits

include: *Come From Away* (Phoenix Theatre, West End); *Motown* (Shaftesbury Theatre, West End and UK tour); *Gobsmacked!* (The Underbelly, Edinburgh Festival); *Legally Blonde*, *Sister Act* (Aberystwyth Arts Centre); *Fame* (Gordon Craig Theatre and European Tour); *They're Playing Our Song* (Yvonne Arnaud Theatre). TV credits include: *The Chelsea Detective* (BBC); *The Man Who Fell To Earth* (Paramount Plus); *Misfits* (Channel 4); *Outlines Of Love* (Discourse Pictures); *Humshakals* (Fox Star Studios), and *Nightbus* (Talent TV). Film credits include: *It's All Coming Back to Me* (Sony Pictures Entertainment). Ricardo won best actor for the short film *Outlines of Love* at the Monaco International Film Festival.



KATY ELLIS (*Zillah/The Moors*)
Theater credits include: *Never Tickle a Tiger*, *The Pesky Rat* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Malory Towers* (Wise Children/Theatre by the Lake); *The*

Scarecrows' Wedding (Scamp Theatre/Leicester Square Theatre/UK Tour); *Metamorphosis* (Collide Theatre/Tristan Bates); *Daisy Pulls It Off* (Charing Cross Theatre). For Guildford School of Acting: *First Lady's Suite*, *A Grand Night for Singing*, *Daisy Pulls it Off*, *Henrietta*.



STEPHANIE ELSTOB (*Swing*)
Training: Central School of Ballet. Theater credits include: Mother, Dance Captain & Assistant Choreographer in *Whistle Down the Wind* (Watermill Theatre);

Grisette in *Merry Widow* (London Coliseum); *Swing* in *Kiss Me Kate* (London Coliseum &

Tour); Swing in *The Bodyguard* (International Tour); *Edward Scissorhands* (Matthew Bourne's New Adventures UK Tour); *Amadeus* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *La Boheme* (Royal Albert Hall); *Stravinsky Project* (Michael Clark Company); covered and played Cinderella in *Cinderella* (New Wimbledon Theatre); Princess Jasmine in *Aladdin*; ensemble in *Snow White and Robinson Crusoe* (Qdos). Workshop credits include: *Machinal* (The Almeida, Arthur Pita), Swing in *Pleasured Progress* (Royal Opera House, Will Tuckett), Jane in *Shadowthief* (Tom Jackson Greaves & Craig Adams). Film credits include: *Beauty and the Beast* (Disney); *Anna Karenina* (Joe Wright); *Avengers - Age Of Ultron* (Marvel). Television credits include: Marie Tagliani in *Victoria* (ITV); Veronica synth in *Humans* (Channel 4); *The Hour* (BBC); Dancer in *Pennyworth*; assistant choreographer for *Grantchester, Mr. Selfridge* (ITV); *The Royal Variety Performance*.



LLOYD GORMAN

(*Mr. Earnshaw/The Moors*) Lloyd trained at Rose Bruford College. Theater credits include: *Whistle Down the Wind* (Watermill Theatre); *Once* (UK Tour); *One Man, Two Guvnors* (New Wolsley Theatre/Nuffield Southampton); *Arthur/Merlin* (Iris Theatre); *The Hired Man* (Queen's Theatre Hornchurch/Hull Truck/Oldham Coliseum); *The Jungle Book* (Royal and Derngate Northampton/UK Tour); *Worst Wedding Ever* (Salisbury Playhouse/UK Tour); *Sunny Afternoon* (Harold Pinter Theatre, West End); *Nicobobinus* (Dumbwise/UK Tour); *Saturday Night* (Arts Theatre, West End); *Our House* (New Wolsley Theatre/UK Tour); *The Story Giant* (Shanty Theatre Company/UK Tour); *Faust* (Greenwich Theatre); *Anyone Can Whistle* (Jermyn Street Theatre); *Pinocchio* (Tolmen Centre, Cornwall); *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *David Copperfield*, *White Nights*, *The Nose and Harmless* (Octagon Theatre, Bolton); *Fewer Emergencies* (Deptford Albany); *Grimethorpe Race* (Arcola); *Treasure Island* (UK Tour).



STEPHANIE HOCKLEY

(*Frances Earnshaw/Catherine Linton/The Moors*) Stephanie trained at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts. Theater credits include: *Wuthering Heights* (Wise Children/Royal National Theatre/UK tour), *Malory Towers* (Wise Children/UK Tour); *Robin Hood* (Watermill Theatre); *A Christmas Carol*, *Julius Caesar*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Storyhouse); *The Show Must Go On* (St Luke's Bombed Out Church); *Return to the Forbidden Planet* (Upstairs at the Gatehouse); *Robin Hood, the Rock n' Roll Panto*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty & the Beast*, *Rapunzel* (Liverpool Everyman); *Sleeping Beauty* (Mercury Theatre, Colchester).



TJ HOLMES (*Dr. Kenneth/The Moors*)

Theater credits include: *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Shakespeare's Globe and Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse); *La Strada* and *Cinderella* (Sally Cookson); *The Hired Man* (Queen's Theatre Hornchurch); *One Man Two Guvnors* (Derby Theatre); *Mother Courage* (Red Ladder); *The BFG* (Birmingham Rep); *The Jungle Book* (Max Webster); *The Threepenny Opera* (Graeae); *Spend* (Watermill); *As You Like It* (Curve Theatre); *Hansel and Gretel* (Kneehigh); *Cider with Rosie* (Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds). TV credits include: *Doc Martin* (ITV); *A Rogue and a Patriot* (Channel 5); *The Harry Hill Show* (Channel 4). TJ also works as a historical interpreter with HistoryRiot.



JORDAN LAVINIÈRE

(*The Leader of The Yorkshire Moors*) Theater credits include: *All That* (King's Head Theatre); *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (Apollo Theatre);

Hairspray (UK tour); *Rent* (UK tour); *Bugsy Malone* (Lyric Theatre, London); *The Life*

(*The English Theatre, Frankfurt*); *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (Workshop); *We Will Rock You* (European Tour); *Thriller Live* (UK and European Tour); Young Simba in *The Lion King* (Lyceum); *Whistle Down the Wind* (Aldwych Theatre). Film/Television credits include: *X Factor* (Freemantle Media); *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (Warner Bros.); *Little Miss Jocelyn* (BBC); *Disney Kids Awards* (Disney). Jordan would like to thank his family and friends for their eternal love and support!



TAMA PHETHEAN

(*Hindley Earnshaw/Hareton Earnshaw/The Moors*) Tama trained at Rose Bruford College. Theater credits include: *Wuthering Heights* (The National Theatre/Wise Children); *The Great Duke of Florence*, *The False One* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Night of the Living Dead* (Aria Entertainment); *Macbeth* (Young Shakespeare Company); *The Great Christmas Feast* (The Lost Estate); *Bells Are Ringing* (Union Theatre); writer and performer in *ManMuck* (AM Media Productions). Television credits include: *Eastenders* (BBC).



ELEANOR SUTTON

(*Catherine*) Theater credits include: *Lori in Hungry* (Soho Theatre); *Jane Eyre* in *Jane Eyre* (Stephen Joseph Theatre/New Vic Theatre); *Black Love*, *Really Big and Really Loud* (Paines Plough); *The Crucible*, *A Little Night Music* (Storyhouse Chester); *Amadeus* (National Theatre); *Windows* (Finborough Theatre); *As You Like It* (UK Tour); *The Master Builder*, and *Future Conditional* (The Old Vic).



LIAM TAMNE (*Heathcliff*)

Liam trained at Laine Theatre Arts. Theater credits include: *The Prince of Egypt* (Dominion Theatre); *Bonnie and Clyde* (Theatre Royal Drury Lane); *The Light In The Piazza* (Royal Festival Hall/LA Opera); *Spamilton* (Menier Chocolate Factory); *Mack*

and *Mabel Concert* with London Musical Theatre Orchestra (Hackney Empire); *Working* (Southwark Playhouse); *The Rocky Horror Show* (UK Tour); *The Phantom of the Opera* (Her Majesty's Theatre); *Les Misérables* (The Queens Theatre); *Departure Lounge* (Waterloo East Theatre); *Hair* (Gielgud Theatre); *Hairspray* (Shaftesbury Theatre); *Wicked* (Apollo Victoria Theatre). Screen credits include: *Doctors* (BBC). Liam was on *The Voice Series 2* and BBC's *Eurovision You Decide*. Awards include: Black British Theatre Awards Nominee (2021); Grammy Nominee (2020).



VINCENT DE JESUS

(*Percussion*) Vincent De Jesus is a native of San Antonio, Texas, with roots in Mexico and Puerto Rico. With over 12 years of teaching experience in a variety of disciplines

including music, design thinking, math, science, and creative technology, Vincent is passionate about serving the community as a teaching artist, musician and education consultant. He holds a Bachelor's degree in theological studies and currently teaches world percussion, 3D modelling and printing, video game design (computer coding), and design thinking. As a band leader, composer, and multi-percussionist, Vince is the recipient of the Berkeley Civic Arts' Individual Artist Grant for his Bay Area Latin Soul recording project, which explores the contemporary fusion of Afro-Caribbean music and Black American music like jazz, funk, and hip-hop.



SID GOLDSMITH (*Guitars*)

Bristol-based musician Sid Goldsmith is a stalwart of the English folk scene. His recordings of folk songs have been nominated for a BBC2 Folk Award and he has

performed at countless festivals and gigs and live sessions for BBC Radio 2/3. His duo Aldridge/Goldsmith were recently awarded the number one spot in Songlines "Top 10 Climate Conscious Artists." As a multi-instrumentalist (Vocals, Guitar, Cittern, Concertina, Double Bass) he's in demand

and current projects include *Awake Arise* (a show celebrating winter traditions, featuring Lady Maisery) and *Tarren* (trio with Danny Pedlar and Alex Garden).



PAT MORAN (*Bass Guitar & Music Director*) Pat trained at California Institute of the Arts (USA), earning a performer/composer dual focus MFA. He relocated to the UK in 2015 and has

worked extensively as a theater multi-instrumentalist and music director. UK theater credits include: *Wuthering Heights* (The National Theatre/Wise Children); Charlotte Westerra's *The Wicker Husband* (Watermill Theatre); *Cinderella* (Hall for Cornwall); *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Bridge Theatre); *Brief Encounter* (Kneehigh); *Hireth* (Hall for Cornwall/O Region); *Tristan & Yseult, 946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* (Kneehigh); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare's Globe) and *Sleeping Beauty* (Bristol Old Vic). Pat served as resident composer/lyricist/musical director/multi-instrumentalist for the San Francisco Mime Troupe from 2007–2013. Recent compositions include work with BBC Ideas, visual artist Adébayo Bolaji, and with the projects PM Syndicate, *Unreliable Witness*, and *Yesterday's Camel*.

EMMA RICE (*Adapter & Director*) Emma Rice is the proud Artistic Director of her company, Wise Children, and an internationally respected theater-maker and director. For Wise Children, Emma has adapted and directed the productions *Bagdad Cafe*, *Romantics Anonymous*, Enid Blyton's *Malory Towers*, and Angela Carter's *Wise Children*. As Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe: *Romantics Anonymous*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Little Matchgirl (and Other Happier Tales)*. As joint Artistic Director of Kneehigh: *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*, *Tristan & Yseult, 946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*, *The Wild Bride*, *The Red Shoes*, *The Wooden Frock*, *The Bacchae*, *Cymbeline* (in association with the RSC), *A Matter of Life and Death* (in association with National Theatre), *Rapunzel* (in association with Battersea Arts Centre); *Brief Encounter* (in association with David Pugh and Dafydd Rogers Productions); *Don John* (in association with the RSC and Bristol Old Vic); *Wah! Wah! Girls* (in association with Sadler's Wells and Theatre Royal Stratford East for World Stages); and *Steptoe and Son*. Emma received the Outstanding Contribution to British Theatre award at the 2019 UK Theatre Awards, and in 2022 was named in the Sky Arts Top 50 most influential British Artists of the last 50 years.

IAN ROSS (*Composer*) Ian is a Bristol-based multi-instrumentalist, composer, and Head of Music for The School for Wise Children. He leads the band Eleven Magpies and is part of Benji Bowers Orchestra Collective, Terra Coda. Credits as Composer include: *Wise Children*, *Malory Towers*, *Bagdad Cafe*, and *Wuthering Heights* (Wise Children); *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare's Globe); *The Very Old Man with Enormous Wings*, *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* (Kneehigh). Other theater credits for Kneehigh include: *Brief Encounter*, *The Red Shoes*, *Don John*, *The Wild Bride*, *Tristan & Yseult*, *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*, *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*. Theater credits as music director includes: *Girl from the North Country* (Toronto 2019, Runway), research & development with PJ Harvey (The National). Composer for film includes *Weekend Retreat* (O-region); *The Princess and Peppernose* (Joe Wright and RSA).

VICKI MORTIMER (*Set & Costume Designer*) Vicki has designed extensively for theater, opera, and dance, including work for the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Bridge Theatre, Wise Children, the Royal Opera, Wayne McGregor, Kneehigh, Young Vic, Donmar Warehouse, Almeida Theatre, Royal Court, on Broadway, and internationally.

SIMON BAKER (*Sound & Video Designer*) Theater credits include: *Wise Children*, *Malory Towers*, *Bagdad Cafe*, *Romantics Anonymous* (Wise Children Tours); *Woman in Mind* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Lungs*, *Present Laughter*, *Girl from the North Country* (also US Tour, West End, Broadway, and Australia), *Groundhog Day*, *A Christmas Carol* (also Broadway, Tony Award, Best Sound) (The Old Vic); *The Birthday Party*, *The Moderate Soprano*, *Shakespeare in Love* (West End); *Matilda The Musical*, Olivier Award - Best Sound (RSC, West End, Broadway, and UK Tour); *Hex*, *Pinocchio*, *The Light Princess*, *Amen Corner* (National Theatre); *Standing at the Sky's Edge*, *Oliver* (Sheffield Crucible); *Tristan & Yseult*, *Brief Encounter*, *The Red Shoes*, *The Wild Bride*, *Steptoe and Son*, *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*, *Rebecca*, *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* (Kneehigh). Simon is an associate of The Old Vic (London). He is also Wise Children's Technical Director and Digital Producer.

JAI MORJARIA (*Lighting Designer*) Jai trained at RADA and won the 2016 Association of Lighting Designer's ETC Award. Recent design credits include: *The Trials* (Donmar Warehouse); *Chasing Hares* (Young Vic); *Wuthering Heights* (National Theatre/Bristol Old Vic); *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *Scissors* (Sheffield Theatres); *Cherry Jezebel* (Liverpool Everyman); *House of Ife*, *Lava*, *Pawn/Limbo* (Bush Theatre); *Cruise* (Duchess Theatre); *Big Sky*, *The Hoes* (Hampstead Theatre); *Birthmarked* (Bristol Old Vic); *My Son's A Queer (But What Can You Do?)*, *WhatsOnStage Award for Best Off West End Production* (Underbelly/

Turbine Theatre); *The Cherry Orchard* (The Yard/HOME); *Hushabye Mountain* (Hope Mill); *Out of the Dark* (Rose Theatre Kingston); *Shuck'n'Jive*, *Whitewash* (Soho Theatre); *Anansi the Spider*, *Aesop's Fables* (Unicorn Theatre); *I'll Take You to Mrs. Cole* (Complicité); *Mapping Brent* (Kiln Theatre); *Glory* (Duke's Theatre/Red Ladder); *Cuzco* (Theatre503); *Losing Venice* (Orange Tree Theatre); *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Northern Stage); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear*, *Lorna Doone* (Exmoor National Park); *A Lie of the Mind* (Southwark Playhouse); *46 Beacon* (Trafalgar Studios with Rick Fisher); *Out There on Fried Meat Ridge Road* (White Bear Theatre/Trafalgar Studios 2); *Acorn*, Off-West End Award nomination for Best Lighting (Courtyard Theatre).

ETTA MURFIT (*Movement Director & Choreographer*) Theater credits as choreographer with Emma Rice and Wise Children includes: *Bagdad Cafe* (Old Vic); *Wise Children* (Old Vic/UK Tour), *Romantics Anonymous* (Bristol Old Vic/The Globe); *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (Kneehigh/Curve Leicester/West End); *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk, 946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*, *The Wild Bride*, *Midnight's Pumpkin*, *Steptoe and Son* (Kneehigh/UK tour); *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare's Globe). Etta is the Associate Artistic Director of Matthew Bourne's New Adventures.

JOHN LEADER (*Puppetry Director*) Theater credits include: *A Monster Calls*, *Bagdad Cafe* (The Old Vic); *The Lion*, *the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Bridge Theatre); *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Vivaldi's The Four Seasons: A Reimagining* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Peter Pan*, *War Horse* (National Theatre); *Chigger Foot Boys* (Tara Arts); *Running Wild* (Regent's Park); *Romeo and Juliet* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Beasty Baby* (Theatre Rites/Polka); *Alice's Adventures Underground* (Les Enfants Terribles). Television includes: *The Sandman*, *Doctors*, *Britannia*, *The Girlfriend Experience*.

LAURA KEEFE (*Associate Director*) Theater credits as director include: *WildFire Road* (Sheffield Theatres); *The Christmas Goblin* (Marlowe Theatre); *One Million Tiny Plays About Britain, Robin Hood* (Watermill Theatre); *Parakeet* (Boundless Theatre); *Dennis of Penge* (Albany Theatre Ovalhouse); *The Ladykillers of Humber Doucy Lane* (Eastern Angles); *My Beautiful Black Dog* (Roundhouse/Southbank Centre). Theater credits as associate director include: *Bagdad Cafe, Romantics Anonymous, Malory Towers* (Wise Children). Theater credits as staff director include: *As You Like It* (National Theatre). Theater credits as assistant director include: *Brief Encounter* (West End); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Regent's Park); *Feast* (Young Vic); *The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare's Globe). Laura is Wise Children's Head of Performance and a Creative Associate at The Northwall, Oxford.

NANDI BHEBHE (*Associate Choreographer*) Theater credits include: *Bagdad Cafe* (Wise Children, The Old Vic); *A Monster Calls* (The Old Vic); *Fela!* (National Theatre/Broadway); *A Season in the Congo* (Young Vic); *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, 946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Boy Breaking Glass* (Sadler's Wells); *The Tin Drum* (Bristol Old Vic); *Ubu* (Shoreditch Town Hall). Film credits include: *Cyrano*.

KEV MCCURDY (*Fight Director*) Kev is an Equity registered Fight Director/Choreographer, Director, Actor, and Action performer. Kev is also co-founder and Chairman of The Academy of Performance Combat. Recent theater credits include: *The Colour Purple, Mary's Seacole, The Welsh Dragon, Sister Act, Les Misérables, Rigoletto, Bajazet, Don Giovanni, Jenufa, The Barber of Seville, The House of Shades, Making of a Monster* (Radio 4), *Troilus and Cressida, Billy Elliot, Jitney, Red Pitch, Moreno, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em, Nine Night, Gunpowder, Guardians of the Galaxy*. Recent TV credits include: *The Pact S2* (BBC); *The A List* (Netflix); *Y Golau/The Light; Pobol Y Cwm* (BBC Wales/S4C Wales).

VICTORIA BRENNAN (*Lighting Programmer & Associate*) Victoria has worked extensively in the industry as a designer and programmer. Her work for Wise Children includes: *Malory Towers* (Passenger Shed), *Romantics Anonymous* (Bristol Old Vic), and *Bagdad Cafe* (The Old Vic). Lighting design credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare's Globe); Bristol Old Vic 250th Gala (Bristol Old Vic). Associate lighting designer credits include: *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (Kneehigh Theatre/Curve/West End); *Wah! Wah! Girls* (Kneehigh Theatre/Sadler's Wells); *Brief Encounter* (West End); *Strictly Ballroom* (West End); *The Book of Mormon* (UK Tour); *King Kong* (Melbourne/Broadway). Programming credits include: *Don John, The Red Shoes, Midnight's Pumpkin, The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk, FUP, Tristan & Yseult* (Kneehigh Theatre); *Imogen, Tristan & Yseult, Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare's Globe); & *Juliet* (Toronto); *Mrs. Doubtfire* (UK).

ANNA LEWIS (*Costume Supervisor*) Anna is a Costume Supervisor and Performance Designer. She was the lead costume supervisor for *we're here because we're here*, supervising over 2,000 World War I costumes. She supervised *The Book of Dust and Straight Line Crazy* at Bridge Theatre. She assisted on English National Ballet's *Cinderella* (Royal Albert Hall); *The Snow Queen* for the Tivoli Ballet designed by Queen Margret II; and the Tony Award-nominated *The Inheritance* by Bob Crowley. As a designer her work has been nominated for Off West End Awards for Best Set and Costume and in 2016 the production *Life According to Saki* which she designed for Atticist won the Best of Edinburgh Award and transferred Off Broadway. She is currently designing new productions for Tara Theatre and Reading Rep.

GIUSEPPE CANNAS (*Wigs, Hair & Make-up Supervisor*) From Sardinia originally and a Londoner since 1994, Giuseppe trained and worked in London until 2002 when he moved to Australia. In 2003 Giuseppe became Head of Hair and Make-up for Disney's *The Lion King* in Sydney, Australia. Going on to work across numerous *Lion*

King productions, EPK's and publicity appearances across the world ending with the 2010 Singapore show. Giuseppe was Head of Wigs, Hair and Make-up at the National Theatre UK from 2011-2021. He led a large team working on numerous stage productions, NT Live cinema broadcasts, and still shoots for press/digital, including shoots for *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue US*. He has presented masterclasses at the National Theatre, for MAC cosmetics in New York, has taught periodically at Christine Blundell Academy, and is now a Freelance Hair and Make-up designer/supervisor across theater, film and editorial in the UK and Europe. Giuseppe has been a participant and judge at numerous IMATS conventions in the UK and US and is also a member of annual wigs, hair, and make-up convention Opera Europa, bringing together head creatives in the field from across Europe and beyond.

LIZZIE FRANKL & FAHMIDA BAKHT (*Props Supervisors*) Based in London, Propworks are a team of experienced artisans and stylists who source and make props, and style and dress sets for productions and events all over the world. They have worked with Wise Children on *Wise Children* (The Old Vic/UK Tour) and *Bagdad Cafe* (The Old Vic). Other recent credits include *Get up Stand Up* (Lyric Theatre); *Singin' in the Rain* (Sadlers Wells); *Cinderella, The Musical* (Gillian Lynne Theatre); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* (Palladium Theatre); and *Pretty Woman* (Savoy Theatre).

TOM KNOWLES (*Music Supervisor*) Tom Knowles is a composer, music director, orchestrator and pianist. Work as music director and orchestrator includes: *Beauty and the Beast Panto* (Chelmsford Civic); *Robin Hood Panto* (Camberley); *The 12 Tenors* (Monte Carlo). As co-music director: *The Crazy Coqs Presents* (Brasseries Zedel). Audition pianist: *Summer Holiday* (UK Tour); *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (UK Tour); *Sh*t-faced Showtime* (Stockwell Playhouse).

Piano playing: *London Musical Theatre Orchestra A Christmas Carol* (Lyceum Theatre); *London Musical Theatre Orchestra with Ben Forster* (Theatre Royal Haymarket). Performances with Marisha Wallace: *Love Supreme Yamaha Experience Lounge* 2019; *Yamaha at The Waldorf, London*; *Kipps AMD* (Trinity Laban Blackheath Halls). Composition credits: *GPEC* (28 Dance Exercises 2021); *Signifying Nothing* (SATB, Royal Albert Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall). Other credits include: *Penny Pots Sounds - Co-Founder, Elverson Studios Vocal Reels - Co-founder, Transcriber* (Sony, Lydian Collective, Laszlo Project).

KATE FOSTER (*Company Stage Manager*) Kate is a freelance stage manager. Starting her career in Liverpool, she has gone on to tour around the world. Credits include: *Captive Queen, Love's Labour's Lost, Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare's Globe); *The Misanthrope* (ETT/UK Tour); *Royal de Luxe's Memories of August* (Liverpool Wide). For Wise Children: *Wuthering Heights* (UK Tour); *Bagdad Cafe* (Wise Children/The Old Vic); *Romantics Anonymous* (Bristol Old Vic); *Malory Towers* (UK Tour). For Kneehigh: *Dead Dog in a Suitcase and Other Love Songs, UBU, Flying Lovers of Vitebsk, The Tin Drum, Tristan & Yseult, and 946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*. For Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse: *Our Town Needs a Nando's, Christmas Cabaret, Spy Monkey's Christmas Carol, The Alchemist, A Streetcar Named Desire*, amongst others.

ALED THOMAS (*Technical Stage Manager*) Theater credits include: *Wuthering Heights* (UK Tour); *Romantics Anonymous, Wise Children* (Wise Children/UK Tour); *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk, Tristan & Yseult, Dead Dog in a Suitcase and Other Love Songs, 946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips, Steptoe and Son* (Kneehigh/UK Tour/International Tour); *Greek* (Tongyeong International Music Festival/UK Tour); *The Intelligence Park* (Royal Opera House/Music Theatre Wales).

CHARLIE SMALLEY (*Deputy Stage Manager*)

Charlie is a freelance stage manager and props buyer for theater. Previously for Wise Children: *Wuthering Heights* (UK Tour); *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*, *Romantics Anonymous*, *Malory Towers*, *Wise Children*. Theater credits include: *Disco Inferno* (Cirque Bijou); *Macbeth*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Light Princess*, *Hot Air* (Tobacco Factory Theatres); *Blue Heart*, *The Directors' Festival* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Hamlet*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The School for Scandal*, *The Conquering Hero* (Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory); *PSYCHOPOMP* (Fen Theatre); *Medea* (Bristol Old Vic); *The Love of the Nightingale* (Bristol Old Vic Young Company); *The Stick House* (Raucous); *Intimate Apparel* (Ustinov Studio).

MEGAN McCLINTOCK (*Stage Manager*)

Megan is pleased to be back on the road with an Emma Rice show, after stage managing the US tour of *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*. Megan is a Bay Area-based stage manager who has been on the stage management team for more than 30 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Favorites include *Kiss My Aztec!*, *Treasure Island*, *Girlfriend*, *Tristan & Yseult*, *The Wild Bride*, *Arabian Nights*, *The White Snake*, and *Dear Elizabeth*. Megan has also stage managed at American Conservatory Theater, The Curran Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, and St. Ann's Warehouse. Megan has a B.A. in theater and history from Willamette University.

CHARLIE SIMPSON (*Head of Sound*)

Charlie is a Sound Operator and Production Sound Engineer based in London. He has been working for Wise Children since its early beginnings and has been Head of Sound on their productions of *Wuthering Heights*, *Bagdad Cafe*, *Romantics Anonymous*, *Wise Children*, and *Malory Towers*, as well as broadcast sound operator for all of their live streams. Previously, Charlie was also Deputy Head of Sound for Emma Rice's Wonder season at Shakespeare's Globe. Other credits include: *946: The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips*, *Flying Lovers of Vitebsk*, *Rebecca*, *Tristan & Yseult*, *UBU*, *Dead*

Dog in a Suitcase and Other Love Songs (Kneehigh); *Girl from the North Country* (UK & Ireland Tour); *Nativity* (UK Tour); *Touching the Void* (West End/Bristol Old Vic); *King Charles III* (West End).

JIMMY O'SHEA (*Sound No. 2*) Jimmy graduated from Rose Bruford College in 2018 with a BA in performance sound. Theater credits include: *Robin Hood* (Watermill); *Wuthering Heights* (UK Tour); *Wise Children* (Wise Children/UK Tour); *The Lovely Bones* (UK Tour); *Romantics Anonymous* (Wise Children); *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* (Bristol Old Vic/Kneehigh/Wise Children Live Stream); *Lyceum Christmas Tales* (Edinburgh Lyceum); *Lexi* (Bohemians Theatre Company); *Girl From The North Country* (UK Tour & Ireland).

EMMA DAVIDSON (*Head of Wardrobe*)

Since graduating from Arts University Bournemouth with a degree in costume with performance design in 2015, Emma has worked as a wardrobe assistant and manager for a variety of theater productions including: *The Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *The 39 Steps* (Eastbourne Theatres); *The Braille Legacy* (Charing Cross Theatre); *South Pacific*, *The Long Son*, *Crazy for You* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Wuthering Heights* (UK Tour).

PEMBERLEY PRODUCTIONS (*US Tour General Managers*) Pemberley Productions is comprised of Doreen Sayegh, Tim Smith, and Annie Shea Graney. We collaborate with overseas companies and US-based productions to book and manage tours across North America as well as internationally. We work with regional theatres, universities, and performing arts centers as they build their seasons to provide projects that suit their audiences and individual considerations. We are proudly transparent, thoughtful, and dynamic. We build collectively beneficial relationships and stand behind our words and values. In 2022/23, Pemberley also tours *Wuthering Heights* to St. Ann's Warehouse, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Wallis (Beverly Hills), and McCarter Theatre Center. In spring 2023, Pemberley tours Good Chance Theatre's *The Jungle*

to St. Ann's Warehouse and Shakespeare Theatre Company. Pemberley was last at Chicago Shakespeare with the National Theatre of Great Britain's *An Inspector Calls*, directed by Stephen Daldry. For information on upcoming tours and projects in development, visit www.pemberleyproductions.com

NATIONAL THEATRE (*Co-Producer*) The National Theatre's mission is to make world-class theatre, for everyone. We create and share unforgettable stories with audiences across the UK and around the world, striving to be accessible, inclusive and sustainable. The NT empowers artists and craftspeople to make world-leading work, investing in talent and developing new productions at our New Work Department. We work with young people and teachers across the UK through performance, writing and technical programmes to ignite the creativity of the next generation, and we create ambitious works of participatory theatre in deep partnerships that unite theatres and local organisations. nationaltheatre.org.uk

BRISTOL OLD VIC (*Co-Producer*) Bristol Old Vic is the longest continuously running theatre in the UK and celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2016. The historic playhouse aims to inspire audiences with its own original productions, both at home and on tour, whilst nurturing the next generation of artists, whether that be through their 350-strong Young Company, their many outreach and education projects, or their trailblazing artist development programme, Bristol Ferment.

YORK THEATRE ROYAL (*Co-Producer*) York Theatre Royal is a brave, creative hub at the heart of the city. It is one of the region's most successful producing theatres, welcoming over 200,000 people each year to its 275-year-old building. Known for its innovative work throughout the community, York Theatre Royal's recent projects include: *The Travelling Pantomime*, a small-scale pantomime that visited 16 different neighbourhoods in York; *Mugabe, My Dad and Me* in co-production with

English Touring Theatre; *Around the World in 80 Days*, an outdoor performance on the playing fields of York; and *Love Bites*, a series of 22 new 'love letters' by York-based artists.

RICK BOYNTON (*Chicago Shakespeare Theater Creative Producer*) focuses on current and future artistic planning and production, as well as the development of all new plays, musicals, and adaptations for Chicago Shakespeare Theater (CST). Projects include: *The Notebook*, *It Came From Outer Space* (CST, TheatreSquared), *SIX* (CST, American Repertory Theater, Citadel Theatre, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Broadway—Tony Award Nominee), *The Book of Joseph* (CST, Everyman Theatre, Off Broadway as *The Lucky Star*), *Ride the Cyclone* (CST, McCarter Theatre, MCC, 5th Avenue/ACT, Alliance Theatre), *Sense and Sensibility* (CST, Old Globe), *Cadre* (co-director) (CST, Johannesburg, Grahamstown, Edinburgh, Vancouver), *Othello: The Remix* (CST, London, Germany, Edinburgh, South Korea, New York), *Funk It Up About Nothin'* (CST, Edinburgh, Australian tour, London), *A Flea in Her Ear* (CST, Williamstown Theatre Festival), *The Three Musketeers* (CST, Boston, London), *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, *Murder for Two* (CST, New York), and *The Feast: an intimate Tempest* (in collaboration with Redmoon). Former artistic director of The Marriott Theatre and multiple Jeff Award-winning actor, he has starred in productions nationally, including CST's production of *A Flea in Her Ear* as Camille (Jeff Award, After Dark Award). As casting director/associate at Jane Alderman Casting, projects included: the television series *Early Edition*, *Missing Persons*, *Untouchables*, and *ER*; the films *While You Were Sleeping* and *Hoodlum*, among others; and numerous national tours. Boynton has lectured at his alma mater Northwestern University and is the former president of the board of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre.

BARBARA GAINES

(Chicago Shakespeare Theater Artistic Director, Carl and Marilyn Thoma Chair) has directed nearly 60 productions at Chicago Shakespeare since founding the Theater in 1986, including thirty of Shakespeare’s plays. Honors include the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, the prestigious Honorary OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in recognition of her contributions strengthening British-American cultural relations, the Making History Award, Chicago Innovation Hall of Fame, as well as multiple Joseph Jefferson Awards for Best Production and for Best Director. Gaines has directed at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and The Old Globe in San Diego.

Chicago Shakespeare productions are made possible in part by the Illinois Arts Council Agency and a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

Chicago Shakespeare is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group, Inc., the national service organization of non-profit theaters; National Alliance for Musical Theatre; Shakespeare Theatre Association; Arts Alliance Illinois; the League of Chicago Theatres; and Ingenuity, Inc.



Actors' Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsunion.org

WISE CHILDREN

ABOUT WISE CHILDREN

Created and led by Emma Rice, Wise Children launched in April 2018 and is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organization. Based in the South West of England, we make ground-breaking work with exceptional artists, and tour across the world. In the dark days of 2020, we led the field in live streaming, becoming the first company to broadcast a fully staged production, without social distancing, from a UK theatre after lockdown.

THE SCHOOL

Alongside our shows, we run a unique professional training program, The School for Wise Children. Led by Emma, and her award-winning collaborators, the School for Wise Children offers workshops, courses and other opportunities for fearless, free-thinking theatre makers and emerging companies. For more information about The School and how to train with Wise Children, head to our website: www.wisechildren.co.uk

THE CLUB

The Wise Children Club is our community: a growing group of allies who support our work and share ideas and dreams. Right now, as we face uncertain and difficult times, we need the Club more than ever!

It costs £10 a year to be a member, but joining the Wise Children Club isn't just about the money! Club members are our ambassadors—online and in person. They spread the word, bring new people to our shows, and look for opportunities for Wise Children to grow as a creative force for good!

You might also be inspired to know that everyone who works for Wise Children (from those who tread the boards to the Board itself) joins the Club and donates to the company. If you'd like to join us, you can do it at www.wisechildren.co.uk

EMMA RICE
Artistic Director

POPPY KEELING
Executive Producer

SIMON BAKER
Technical Director and Digital Producer

STEPH CURTIS
General Manager

JAY JONES
Event and Operations Producer

MONICA BAKIR
Producer

RHYS BUGLER
Assistant Producer

HELEN COMERFORD
Participation Producer

LAURA KEEFE
Associate Director

HELENA PRICE
Fundraiser

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Wise Children is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. This production has been made possible by the generous support of Cynthia and Ronald Beck, The Broughton Family Charitable Trust, and Jon and NoraLee Sedmak.

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Artistic Director
Carl and Marilyn Thoma Chair

RICK BOYNTON
Creative Producer

KARA RIOPELLE
Managing Director

EXECUTIVE, ARTISTIC & PRODUCING

MICHAEL ROSS
Interim Executive Director

PAIGE WHITSON-MARTINI
General Manager

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Artistic Associate/Casting Director

DANIEL J. HESS
Company Manager

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Associate Producer

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Casting and Producing Associate

JO ANN WOOLLEY
Executive Assistant and
Special Projects Manager

MERSEDEZ HOOVER
Assistant to the Creative Producer

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SADAF HABIB
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The Enigma of Heathcliff

Heathcliff's ethnicity is a mystery: all we know for certain in the novel is that he was rescued from the streets of Liverpool by Mr. Earnshaw—but that is it. Who was Heathcliff? Was he Irish? Romany? African? Indian? Mixed race? The enigma of Heathcliff's birth origins is all part of the enduring fascination with *Wuthering Heights*.

Heathcliff is described in many different ways by the characters of *Wuthering Heights*: old Mr. Earnshaw calls him both “a gift of God” and “dark almost as if it came from the devil”; Mrs. Earnshaw rejects him as a “gypsy brat” (ch. 4); Mr. Linton thinks he is “little Lascar, or an American or Spanish castaway” (ch. 5); while Nelly consoles him with the thought that his father might be “the Emperor of China and your mother an Indian queen,” but also says to him, “If you were a regular black ...” Through these descriptions, Brontë cleverly implies that Heathcliff was not a white Anglo Saxon child of the streets of Liverpool but was “foreign,” referring to his “otherness,” his “dark hair and dusky skin.” She also shows how he is subjected to discriminatory, degrading and abusive treatment by others—all except Cathy—and seeds suggestions that his (indeterminate) race is a cause of his passionate and sometimes brutal reactions. As Steph Reed writes in *The Literature Blog* (2018), “Throughout the novel, Heathcliff is repeatedly collocated with notions of racial inferiority; he is frequently compared to darkness and criminality.”

When we first encounter Heathcliff, Nelly comments that, “I had a peep at a dirty, ragged, black-haired child... it only stared round, and repeated over and over again some gibberish that nobody could understand.” From this we can surmise that his mother tongue is not English, though this still leaves open numerous options as to his real origins. We can narrow this down by better understanding the context of Liverpool at the time.

Wuthering Heights is set in Yorkshire and the action of the novel takes place from 1801 to 1802 with the retrospective plot events taking place over



the previous thirty years. During this period, Liverpool, where Heathcliff was found, was at the heart of Britain's links with the slave trade, controlling over sixty percent of British and over forty percent of Europe's slave trade. Profits from Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade financed urban and industrial development throughout the Northwest and indeed, across England. In Caryl Phillips' extraordinary novel, *The Lost Child*, he depicts Heathcliff as Earnshaw's illegitimate son with a formerly enslaved woman, brought to Liverpool from the Caribbean. This is one of the plausible ways in which the character of Heathcliff could have a connection with the slave trade in his backstory.

The Brontë sisters' home may have been nearly a hundred miles away from Liverpool, but their school, Clergy Daughters School, was just a few miles from the Dentdale home of a notorious slave trading family, the Sills, who worked more than thirty enslaved Africans on the grounds of their estate. Emily Brontë would have been aware of the debates and discussions around the subject of abolition of slavery and certainly aware of the wealth of the local sugar barons. Heathcliff can certainly be read as someone affected by the dehumanization of the slave trade, and his claiming of the house and land can even be seen as an act of revenge for the colonial plunder of land and for Britain treating human beings as property.

**During this period,
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the slave trade**

Liverpool's involvement in the British Empire had links closer to home as well. When *Wuthering Heights* was published in 1847, the potato famine in Ireland was surging. Starving, and seeking food and shelter, hundreds of thousands of Irish immigrants came to Liverpool. It is thought that in just five months in 1847, the population of Liverpool doubled as a result of immigration from Ireland. Most Irish immigrants lived in atrocious conditions, with 60,000 catching typhus and 40,000 suffering from dysentery in just the single year of 1847.

The newly arrived Irish met a hostile reception in Liverpool and were harshly treated and demonized—unfairly blamed for taking English jobs and spreading disease. If Brontë intended Heathcliff to be the child of an Irish immigrant abandoned on the streets of Liverpool, this scapegoating and xenophobia would make sense of the distrust and bigotry he met in his life. ►►

above: Jordan Lavinieri, Stephanie Elstob, Liam Tamne, Ricardo Castro;
photo by Muriel Steinke, courtesy of Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

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Tanika Gupta, MBE, who contributes this essay, is a British playwright. She has also written for television, film, and radio plays.

Another possible reason that Heathcliff could have found himself in Liverpool, is because he may have been at sea or related in some ways to the lascars in the merchant navy. “Lascars” first began to be employed in small numbers from the seventeenth century by the East India Company, which was founded by Royal Charter to increase trade with India. Although the term “lascar” was used for almost all non-European sailors, including Arab, Cypriot, Chinese, and East African sailors, the majority of lascars came from the Indian subcontinent, mainly from the coastal areas of Gujarat, Malabar and Bengal, with Bombay and Calcutta being major ports for their recruitment. Lascars worked in every role from being able seamen to stoking furnaces, from being cooks, storekeepers or on-board butchers to being first mates (known as “serangs”).

From the early nineteenth century it is estimated that at least 1,000 lascars visited Britain every year and this rose to over 10,000 a year by the end of the century. Many lascars would be temporarily stranded, often for months at a time over winter, as they waited for their next opportunity to work. The shipping companies assumed no responsibility for them during these periods and distressed lascars were often left homeless, wandering the streets—becoming known as “the black poor.” Christian missionary societies were often the only source of help.

Liverpool was so linked with the British Empire in the late eighteenth century that Heathcliff’s origins are likely to always be out of reach. But that is perhaps the point.

Moreover, low pay, appalling conditions, and abusive treatment on many of the ships led some lascars to desert or jump ship in Britain, settling in rundown port areas such as Liverpool, mixing freely with the local population and sometimes marrying and starting families with English and Irish working-class women, creating some of the first multi-racial communities. Heathcliff could have been an unwanted or abandoned child from such a relationship. But he could also have been a lascar cabin boy (who were sometimes as young as eight), who jumped ship in Liverpool. He may even have been a stowaway who smuggled on board a ship in a port somewhere in the Empire and who was thrown off in Liverpool.

Liverpool was so linked with the British Empire in the late eighteenth century that Heathcliff’s origins are likely to always be out of reach. But that is perhaps the point. Emily Brontë keeps Heathcliff’s origins deliberately mysterious but plants enough seeds for readers to imagine him as being connected to the transatlantic slave trade or lascars in the merchant navy or refugees from the Irish famine. In one way or another he is a product of the British Empire. He may be of unknown birth, but he represents someone whose origins are connected to a colonized under-class, defined in part by the color of their skin, who are consistently “othered” by white British society. The power of his character comes from the universality of his backstory combined with the enigma of his origins.

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