

THE EVERYMAN PANTOMIME SPECTACULAR

# ROBIN HOOD

AND HIS MERRY MEN



TEACHING RESOURCE PACK

**EVERYMAN**  
THEATRE • CHELTENHAM



# CONTENTS

Welcome

Synopsis

The Origins of Robin Hood

The History of Pantomimes

The Cast

Behind the Scenes

Classroom Activities

About the Everyman Theatre

Grove Street Appeal



# WELCOME



Hello and welcome to the Everyman Theatre's Teaching Resource Pack for this year's *larger-than-life* pantomime, Robin Hood.

Within this pack you will find a host of different activities along with bundles of useful information which can be used ahead of and after your visit to the Everyman Theatre, for this year's pantomime.

If you have any questions about any of the activities, or you'd like to know about our education projects, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me (Stella Buckland, Education & Youth Theatre Manager) by dropping me an email on [stella.buckland@everymantheatre.org.uk](mailto:stella.buckland@everymantheatre.org.uk)

I hope you find this pack useful and I cannot wait to hear about your visit.

Warm wishes,

**Stella Buckland**  
Education & Youth Theatre Manager





# ROBIN HOOD SYNOPSIS

## ACT 1

TWEEDY SAYS HELLO WITH HIS PET KEEF. DO YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF PET KEEF IS?  
THAT'S RIGHT! A STEAM IRON!

SHERIFF OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARRIVES. SHE HAS EVIL MAGICAL POWERS. SHE SHOOTS A  
MAGICAL ARROW INTO THE WHOLE OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE TO MAKE IT SUPER SUPER COLD.

ROBIN HOOD ARRIVES AND SAYS HELLO.

HE WONDERES WHY IS IT SUDDENLY SO COLD?

ROBIN HOOD HAS FRIENDS EVERYWHERE -

ROBIN'S BEST FRIEND TWEEDY ARRIVES AND WANTS TO BECOME A MERRY MAN! HE  
COMPLETES A SILLY CHALLENGE AND BECOMES AN OFFICIAL MERRY MAN. HOORAY!

MAID MARIAN ARRIVES. SHE WANTS TO KNOW WHEN KING RICHARD WILL RETURN. HE'S  
AWAY FIGHTING WHICH IS WHY THE SHERIFF OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE IS IN CHARGE AND THE  
SHERIFF IS GOING TO RAISE MORE TAXES

ROBIN HOOD'S FRIEND WILL SCARLETT ARRIVES, HE IS STRONG, BRAVE AND READY TO HELP  
ROBIN OUT.

WE MEET NURSIE - SHE TELLS SOME BAD JOKES.

THE SHERIFF ALSO REALLY WANTS TO CAPTURE ROBIN HOOD - SHE'S OFFERING A 1000 GOLD  
PIECES REWARD! BOO! THE SHERIFF DECIDES THE ONLY WAY TO CATCH ROBIN IS TO HOST  
AN ARCHERY COMPETITION - THE PRIZE IS 1000 GOLD COINS...

TWEEDY TAKES PART IN THE COMPETITION, DO YOU THINK HE'S GOOD AT ARCHERY? HE'S  
TERRIBLE!

ROBIN HOOD TAKES PART IN THE COMPETITION IN DISGUISE. DO YOU THINK HE'S GOOD? HE  
HITS THE BULLSEYE!

OH NO! THE SHERIFF SAYS HE MUST BE ROBIN HOOD AND ORDERS THE GUARDS TO SEIZE  
HIM. MAID MARIAN TAKES SHERIFF'S SWORD AND TELLS THE SHERIFF TO LET ROBIN GO  
FREE AND THEY ESCAPE TO HIS CAMP IN THE WOODS.



# SYNOPSIS CONTINUED...

## ACT 2

ROBIN HOOD'S CAMP HAS BEEN RANSACKED BY THE SHERIFF AND HIS GUARDS. THEY'VE RIPPED UP ALL OF THE TENTS...!

SHERIFF'S PLAN IS TO FIND MAID MARIAN AND CATCH HER SO THAT ROBIN WILL COME AND RESCUE HER.

SHERIFF USES A DISGUISE TO FIND MAID MARIAN AND TAKES HER BACK TO THE CASTLE.

ROBIN AND HIS MERRY MEN DISCOVER SHE IS GONE AND THEY GO TO RESCUE HER.

BACK AT THE CASTLE, THE SHERIFF IS ABOUT TO FREEZE MAID MARIAN! ROBIN HOOD ARRIVES TO SAVE HER AND STARTS TO FIGHT THE SHERIFF BUT THE SHERIFF TAKES HIS SWORD. DISASTER!

SUDDENLY WE HEAR A FANFARE AND IT'S KING RICHARD WHO HAS RETURNED TO ENGLAND! KING RICHARD ORDERS THE SHERIFF TO UNDO ALL OF HER ICE MAGIC AND THE KING DECIDES THE SHERIFF WILL NOW BE A COURT JESTER AND DO SILLY TRICKS TO MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH.

KING RICHARD KNIGHTS ROBIN.

MARIAN ASKS HER UNCLE KING RICHARD IF SHE CAN MARRY ROBIN. HE SAYS YES.

THEY GET MARRIED AND THAT'S THE END OF THE SHOW. WHAT DO WE DO AT THE END OF THE SHOW? ALL THE ACTORS BOW AND ALL THE AUDIENCE CLAP AS LOUDLY AS THEY CAN!



# THE ORIGINS OF ROBIN HOOD

## The Story of Robin Hood – Where Did He Come From?

Robin Hood is one of the most famous heroes in English stories. But who was he, and where did his legend come from?

### 1. A Long Time Ago

The first stories about Robin Hood appeared over 600 years ago, in the late 1300s! At first, he was mentioned in songs and poems, and sometimes in court records as an outlaw – a man who broke the law.

### 2. Stories in the Forest

By the 1400s, Robin Hood was part of many ballads and tales told around England. These stories gave us the Robin Hood we know today:

A hero who helps the poor by stealing from the rich.

Living in the forest (Sherwood Forest or Barnsdale).

A band of friends, called the Merry Men, like Little John, Friar Tuck, and Will Scarlett.

An expert archer, who could shoot arrows better than anyone else.

### 3. Was He Real?

We're not sure if Robin Hood really existed. Some historians think he could have been inspired by real outlaws from the Middle Ages. Others think he was a made-up hero, showing how people wanted someone to fight for fairness.

### 4. Stories Changed Over Time

In the 1500s and 1600s, ballads helped spread Robin Hood's stories across England.

By the 1800s (the Victorian era), the stories were made safe for children and focused on heroism and helping others.

Today, Robin Hood appears in books, films, TV shows, and pantomimes, often with lots of humour, adventure, and excitement.

### 5. Why We Love Robin Hood

Even if he wasn't real, Robin Hood teaches us:

Justice – standing up for the people who need help.

Cleverness – using brains and skill to outsmart unfair rulers.

Friendship – working together with friends to achieve something good.

**Fun Fact:** Robin Hood's story changes a little every time it's told! That's why we have so many exciting versions, from old ballads to today's theatre shows.



# THE HISTORY OF PANTOMIME

PANTOMIME, OR “PANTO” FOR SHORT, IS A TYPE OF THEATRE SHOW FULL OF FUN, MUSIC, JOKES, AND AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION. BUT DID YOU KNOW IT HAS BEEN AROUND FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS?

## 1. ANCIENT BEGINNINGS

PANTOMIME STARTED A LONG TIME AGO IN ANCIENT ROME.

BACK THEN, “PANTOMIME” MEANT A PERFORMANCE WHERE ACTORS USED MOVEMENTS AND GESTURES INSTEAD OF WORDS TO TELL A STORY.

THESE SHOWS WERE SERIOUS AT FIRST, OFTEN ABOUT MYTHOLOGY OR LEGENDS.

## 2. THE BIRTH OF ENGLISH PANTOMIME

THE KIND OF PANTO WE KNOW TODAY COMES FROM ENGLAND IN THE 1600S AND 1700S.

IT BEGAN AS PART OF CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS, MIXING MUSIC, COMEDY, AND DANCING.

EARLY ENGLISH PANTOMIMES WERE OFTEN BASED ON FAIRY TALES AND FOLK STORIES, LIKE CINDERELLA OR JACK AND THE BEANSTALK.

## 3. THE VICTORIAN PANTOMIME

IN THE 1800S, PANTOMIME BECAME VERY POPULAR DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON.

MANY OF THE TRADITIONS WE KNOW TODAY STARTED THEN, SUCH AS:

THE DAME – A FUNNY CHARACTER PLAYED BY A MAN IN A WOMAN’S COSTUME.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – CHEERING “HE’S BEHIND YOU!” OR SHOUTING AT THE VILLAIN.

SLAPSTICK COMEDY – SILLY, EXAGGERATED ACTIONS THAT MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH.

## 4. MODERN PANTOMIME

TODAY, PANTOMIMES ARE STILL A BIG PART OF CHRISTMAS IN BRITAIN.

THEY INCLUDE:

WELL-KNOWN FAIRY TALES OR LEGENDS (ROBIN HOOD, PETER PAN)

SONGS, DANCING, AND JOKES FOR ALL AGES

CHARACTERS LIKE THE HERO, THE VILLAIN, THE DAME, AND A COMIC SIDEKICK

LOTS OF AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT, MAKING EVERYONE PART OF THE STORY!

## 5. WHY WE LOVE PANTOMIME

IT’S FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY.

IT TEACHES STORYTELLING, PERFORMANCE, AND HUMOUR.

IT SHOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF HEROES, VILLAINS, AND TEAMWORK IN STORIES.

FUN FACT: MANY OF THE AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION PHRASES WE USE TODAY, LIKE “OH NO IT ISN’T!” / “OH YES IT IS!”, COME FROM VICTORIAN PANTOMIMES AND HAVE BEEN USED FOR OVER 150 YEARS!



# THE TRADITIONAL PANTOMIME CAST

PANTOMIMES ALWAYS HAVE A SET OF COLOURFUL CHARACTERS THAT APPEAR IN MOST SHOWS. EACH ONE HAS A SPECIAL ROLE TO MAKE THE STORY FUN AND EXCITING.

## 1. THE HERO

USUALLY THE MAIN CHARACTER, LIKE ROBIN HOOD, ALADDIN, OR PETER PAN.  
BRAVE, CLEVER, AND KIND.

FIGHTS THE VILLAIN AND SAVES THE DAY.

## 2. THE HEROINE

THE STORY'S FEMALE LEAD, SUCH AS MAID MARIAN OR CINDERELLA.

SMART, BRAVE, AND OFTEN THE HERO'S LOVE INTEREST.

SOMETIMES HELPS THE HERO WITH TRICKY PROBLEMS.

## 3. THE VILLAIN

THE CHARACTER WHO CAUSES TROUBLE, LIKE THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM OR CAPTAIN HOOK.

OFTEN GREEDY, BOSSY, OR SNEAKY.

MAKES THE HERO'S LIFE HARD BUT IS ALWAYS DEFEATED IN THE END.

## 4. THE COMIC SIDEKICK

PROVIDES FUN AND LAUGHS, OFTEN MAKING MISTAKES OR TELLING JOKES.

EXAMPLE: FRIAR TUCK OR BUTTONS.

SOMETIMES SPEAKS DIRECTLY TO THE AUDIENCE FOR EXTRA LAUGHS.

## 5. THE DAME

ALWAYS PLAYED BY A MAN IN A FUNNY COSTUME, USUALLY AN OLDER WOMAN.

EXAGGERATED, LOUD, AND SILLY.

OFTEN INVOLVED IN JOKES AND SLAPSTICK COMEDY.

## 6. THE CHORUS / ENSEMBLE

GROUP OF PERFORMERS WHO SING, DANCE, AND ACT AS TOWNSFOLK, VILLAGERS, OR MERRY MEN.

HELP TELL THE STORY AND INVOLVE THE AUDIENCE IN SONGS AND DANCES.

## 7. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

NOT A CHARACTER, BUT VERY IMPORTANT!

AUDIENCE MEMBERS CHEER FOR THE HERO, BOO THE VILLAIN, AND JOIN IN THE CALL-AND-RESPONSE JOKES.

## FUN FACT

SOME CHARACTERS, LIKE THE DAME AND THE COMIC SIDEKICK, ARE UNIQUE TO PANTOMIMES. THEY MAKE THE SHOW FUNNY AND INTERACTIVE, EVEN WHEN THE STORY IS OLD OR FAMILIAR.



# Behind the Scenes - Making a Panto - The Pantomime Timeline

Producing a Pantomime is a year-long process, which involves lots of planning and preparation. Everything needs to be co-ordinated and organised well before the opening night, to ensure everything goes as smoothly as possible.

## January

This year's pantomime story is selected  
The Writer, Director and Designers are hired  
Tickets on sale to general public

## February

The Writer begins to write the script

## March

Tickets go on sale to schools.  
Some lead performers are cast

## April

The first pantomime advert goes in the brochure  
The first draft of the script is submitted

## May

A production meeting takes place, where the production team discuss the styles and themes of the show.  
The costume and set design begins

## June

Casting calls are issued for the main cast

## July

Main cast auditions take place

## August

Final casting is announced

## September

The Writer, Director and Designers have a production meeting to discuss set and costume designs

## October

Cast receive their contracts  
Items are found to go in the pantomime goody bags  
Pantomime adverts begin to appear in local press, magazines and on buses.  
Pantomime workshop practitioners are hired and trained  
Most of the songs are decided

## November

Rehearsals start  
Pantomime workshop practitioners start visiting schools  
The pantomime opens on the last weekend

## December

The pantomime is performed 76 times over 6 weeks  
The theatre closes for two days on Christmas Day and New Year's Day



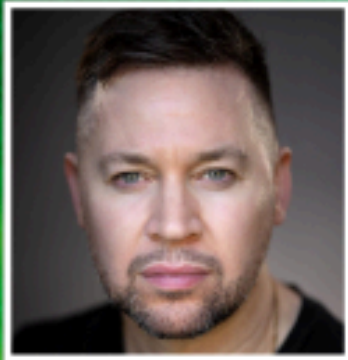
# CAST OF CHARACTERS

Performers in pantomime have to be skilled in acting,  
dancing and singing.

They perform the show 76 times over 6 weeks.



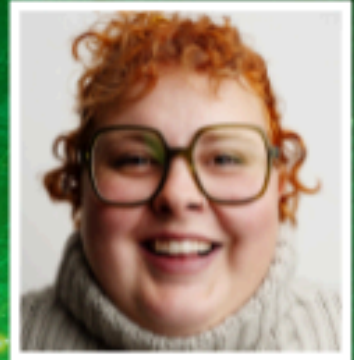
Tweedy  
Friar 'Tweedy' Tuck



Kevin Brewis  
Dame Nursie



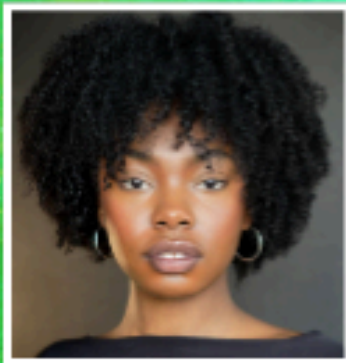
Kane Verrall  
Will Scarlett



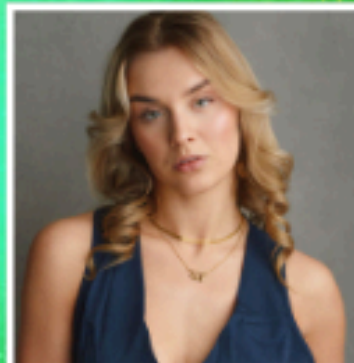
Lizzie Bea  
The Sheriff of Gloucestershire



Dan Wilshire  
Robin Hood



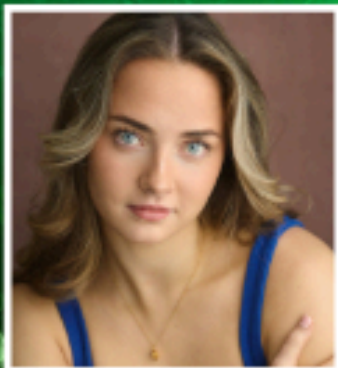
Jewelle Hutchinson  
Maid Marian



Tina Skrzypiec  
Ensemble



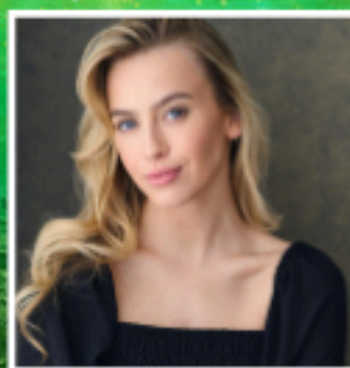
Michael Dean-Wilson  
Ensemble



Tia Gyngell  
Ensemble



Benjamin Drew  
Ensemble



Amber Pierson  
Ensemble

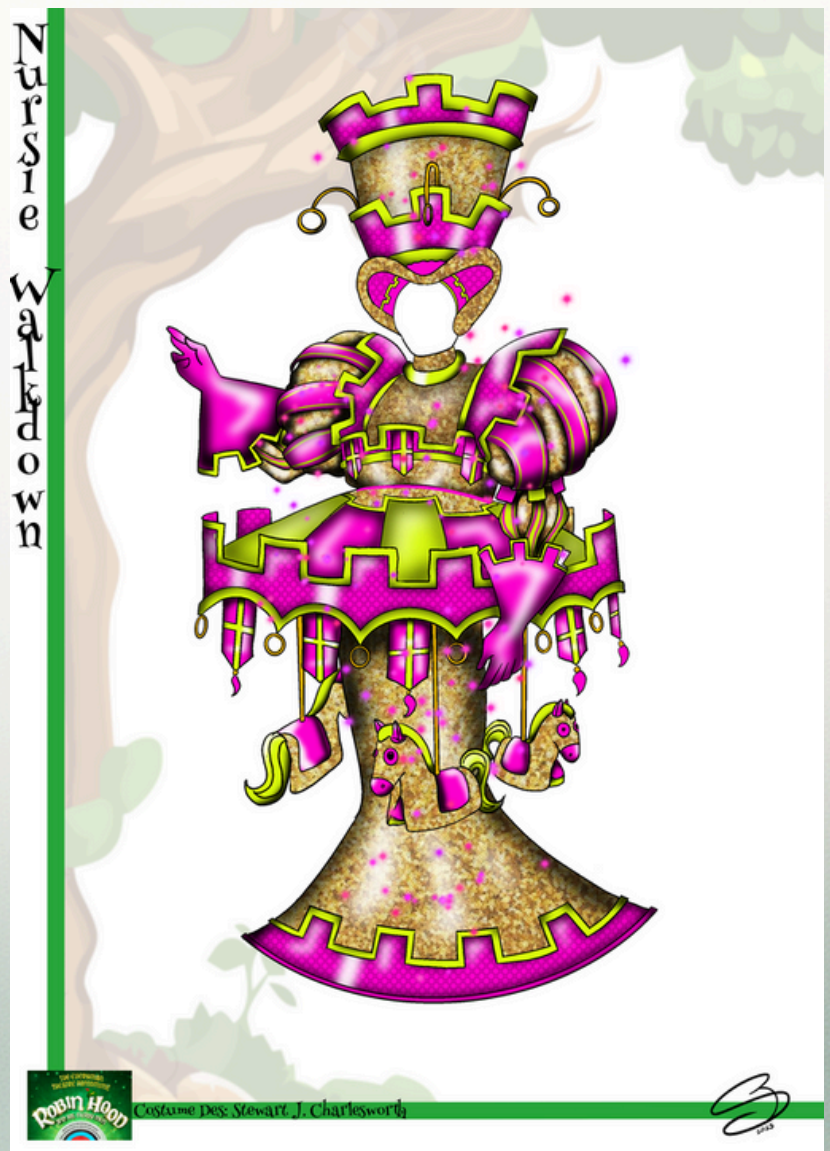


Edan Smart  
Ensemble



# COSTUMES

Pantomime costumes are big, bold and colourful. Costume designers and makers work hard to create several costumes for each performer.





# More Costume Designs

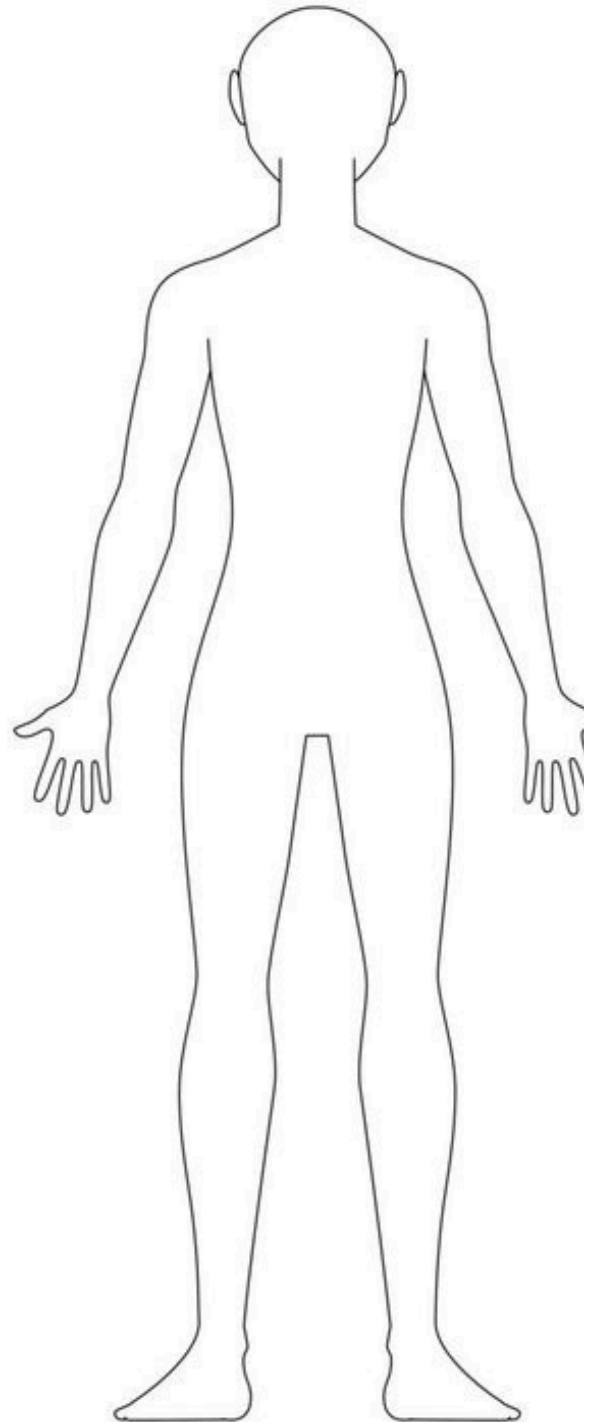
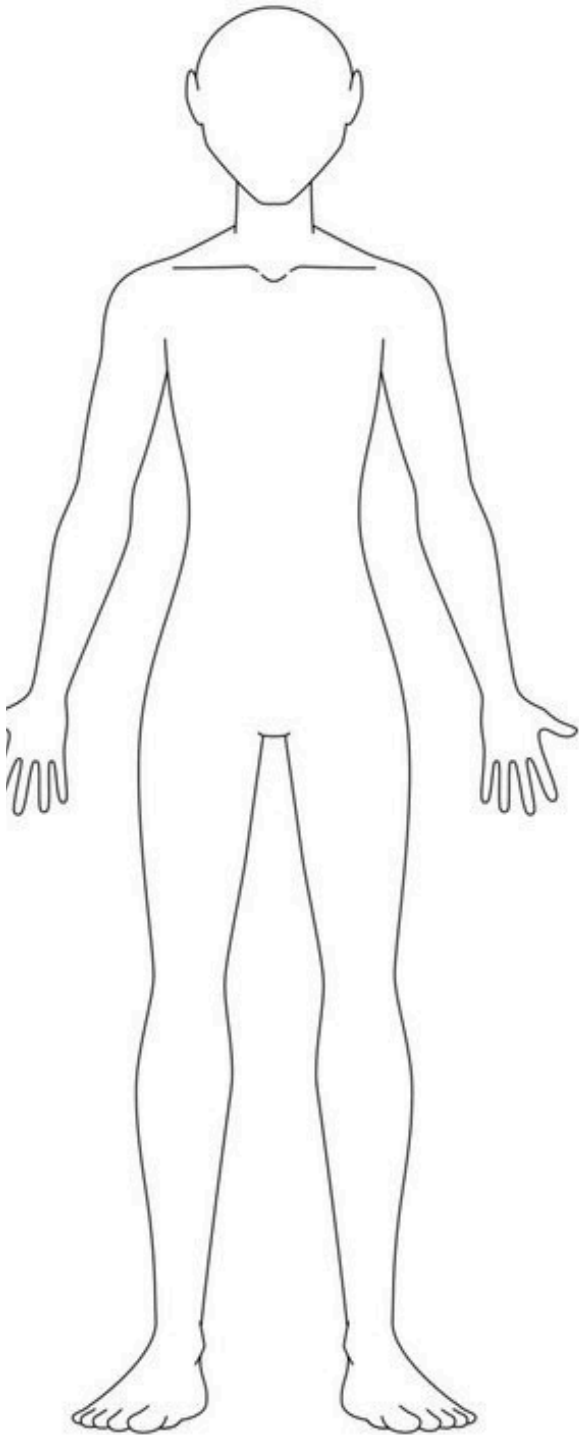
By designer Stewart J Charlesworth





# ACTIVITY

Have a go at designing your own costume for one of the characters



WWW.DIMAR-C  
COPYR



# SET DESIGN

The set designer is responsible for creating the world of the play on stage.



PANTOMIME SETS ARE BRIGHT, BOLD, AND FULL OF MAGIC. THEY HELP TELL THE STORY, CREATE ATMOSPHERE, AND GIVE THE AUDIENCE LOTS TO LOOK AT.

BIG, COLOURFUL  
BACKDROPS  
TRADITIONAL PANTOS OFTEN  
USE PAINTED BACKDROPS  
POPULAR SCENES INCLUDE:  
FORESTS  
CASTLES  
VILLAGES OR MARKET  
SQUARES  
MAGIC CAVES OR  
ENCHANTED WOODS

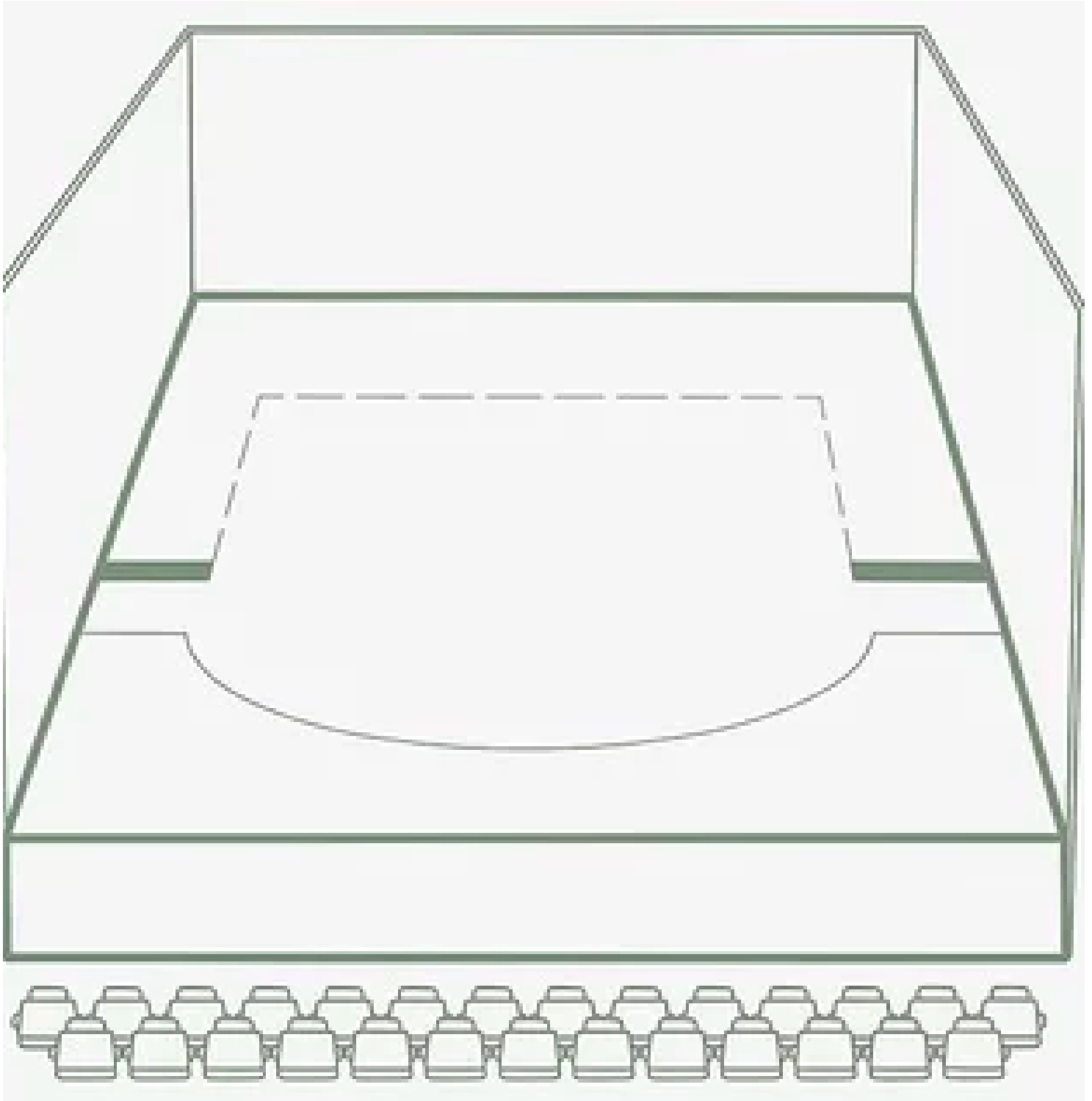


PANTOMIMES MOVE FAST, SO THE SET MUST CHANGE QUICKLY AND SMOOTHLY. DESIGNERS OFTEN USE: FLY-IN FLATS (PAINTED BOARDS LOWERED FROM ABOVE) AND ROLL-ON SCENERY ON WHEELS



# ACTIVITY

Design a set for an imagined scene in a Panto of your choice





# CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITY

Here are some creative ideas to try in class

- Write a list of main events that happen in the story
- Write a list of characters in the story
- What does each character want (what is their objective)?
- Tell the story of the pantomime from the point of view of different characters. Imagine that you are one of the following characters and write a letter:
  - As one of the Merry Men at the start of the story, talking about life in the forest.
  - As The Sheriff at the end of the story, writing advice to her younger self
- Write a poem based on the characters of the pantomime. First, map out words or make up a word bank. Then use one of the following ways to write a poem:
  - A narrative poem with rhymes
  - A shape poem, for example; in the shape of an arrow
  - An alliterative poem using words which begin with the same letter
- You could collect these poems into a class book with illustrations or send them to the Everyman Theatre where we will display them
- Write a sequel to Robin Hood
- Write a fairy story as a class on the computer, adding a sentence each



# DRAMA ACTIVITY

This activity introduces the story and encourages students to make quick decisions as a group. It also allows them to tell a story using their bodies and their physicality. (It is best suited to a hall or large, clear classroom but you could work in smaller spaces by dividing up the group so half can watch and swap over).

Ask your students to walk around the space with energy and try and fill in any gaps they see to balance the space. Suggest you are all walking on a raft on the sea and need to keep the space balanced between you to keep the raft from capsizing.

Now ask them to FREEZE. Then call out a number and ask them to get into groups of the number. (With uneven numbers, you can make larger groups, such as groups of 3 and a few 4s etc.).

Each time you do this, call out the name of something or someone from Robin Hood and explain that they must create a frozen image or tableau of that person or thing, using every member of the group. Starter words could include: Bow and Arrow / Castle / Forest / Magic / Snow.

Encourage them to create their images without talking and give them a countdown of 5 or 10 seconds to help.

**Once they get the hang of this, introduce more complex images. Eg: Archery Contest; King John's Kingdom; The Merry Men's hidden camp in the forest; The freezing of Gloucestershire.**

**Discuss this activity together. Was it easy to create the images with small groups or large groups? What were the challenges? Did the time constraints help? Do these images give any clues as to what this play is about?**



# ABOUT THE EVERYMAN THEATRE

**The Everyman is Gloucestershire's theatre - and has been serving the county (and beyond) since 1891.**

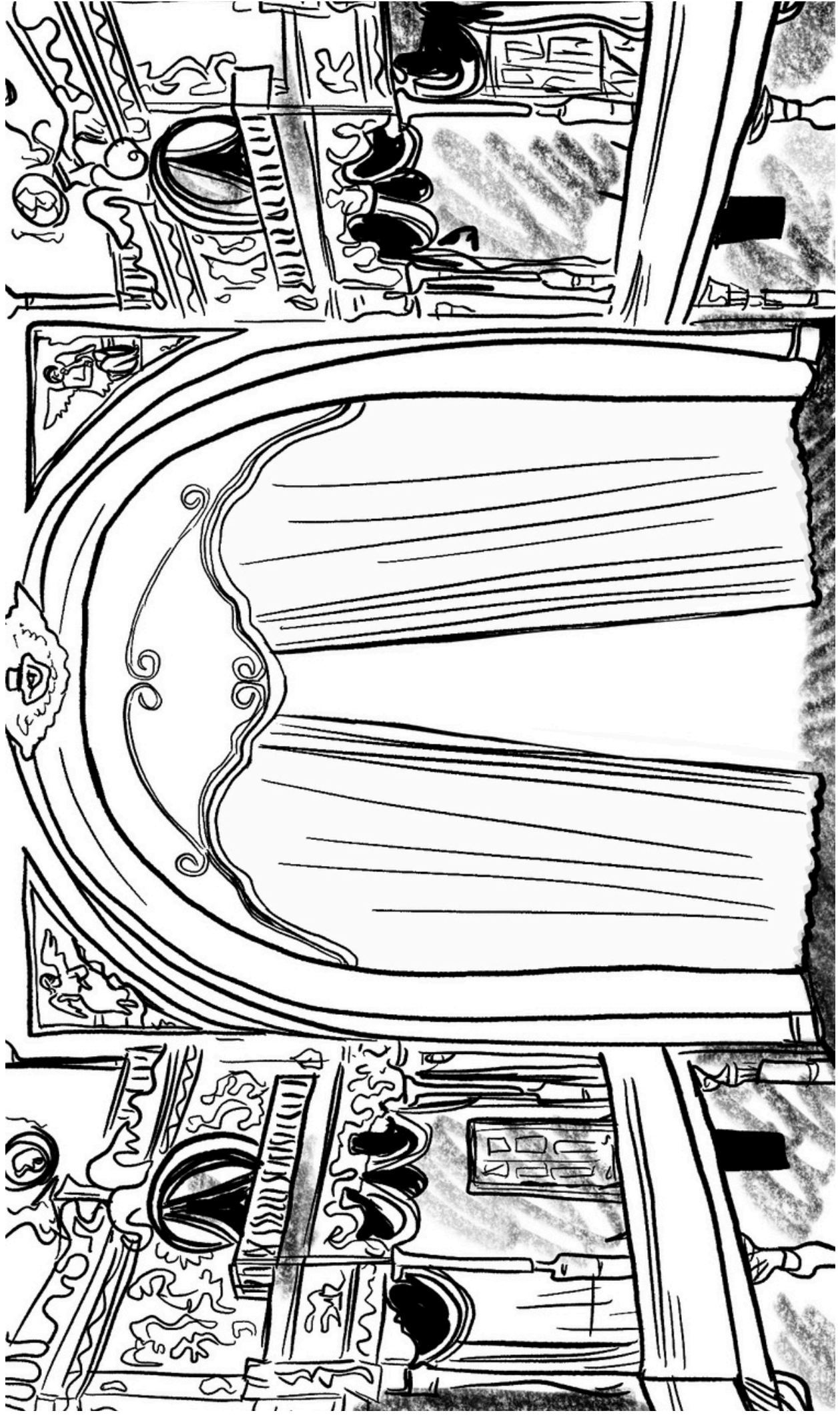
Our main auditorium is an architectural masterpiece designed by Frank Matcham that has inspired generations of performers. The common thread throughout the many years has always been our relationship with our audience - a relationship that we treasure.

The Everyman presents a wide range of productions, including ballet, opera, drama, dance, comedy, music events and our traditional family pantomime, as well as many community projects, education workshops and youth theatre sessions. Whether you are coming to the Everyman for a show, a workshop or even to dine or drink in our café, bar or restaurant, we would like to warmly welcome you and hope you return many times.





Colour in this beautiful sketch of the Everyman Theatre drawn by maker and illustrator Emma Evans





# GROVE STREET APPEAL



THIS YEAR, OUR PANTO CHARITY IS CLOSE TO HOME...BUILDING ON OUR PROUD TRACK RECORD...A NEW EVERYMAN THEATRE EDUCATION CENTRE IN WEST CHELTENHAM OPENING IN 2026 THE EVERYMAN THEATRE IS EXCITED TO SHARE ITS PLANS TO CREATE A BRAND NEW DEDICATED CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY CENTRE. WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT OUR EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORK AND THE IMPACT THAT OUR AWARD-WINNING TEAM HAS MADE OVER 40 YEARS +. THIS EXPANSION IS PART OF OUR COMMITMENT TO GROWING THIS IMPACT AND ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THERE IS MORE WORK TO DO IN MAKING ARTS ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL.

