

Pantomime

A resource pack



Welcome to Panto

Cambridge Arts Theatre has been producing pantomimes since 1939.

The Theatre's archive has some wonderful historic material that both speaks to the continuing traditions of the pantomime genre and the innovation of the wide range of creative voices involved in creating the pantomime over the years. We want to share this material with you.

There are a whole host of ways you can use this material with the National Curriculum, but we also hope that this resource will be of general interest. For those who are bringing children or young people to the Theatre, we are thrilled to welcome you, and we hope that learning a bit about the history of pantomime will help you to create excitement and anticipation about your visit to the Theatre and extend the magic of the experience when you get back to base.

Enjoy the show!

In 2021, we asked a group of work experience students at the Theatre, aged 14-18, to review this resource and devise a series of activities to encourage a greater engagement with the historic archive material. You will see these symbols throughout:



Something to discuss



Something to do



Something to make

History of Pantomime at Cambridge Arts Theatre

Pantomime – that most British of institutions – has its origins in the sixteenth century and the Italian street theatre called the **Commedia Dell'Arte**. Travelling groups of professional players created improvised stories, which contained many of the stock characters and themes we recognize in pantomime today.

By the early eighteenth century, Commedia characters began to appear on the London stage. The first pantomimes were based on classical stories, set to music but without speech. In 1843 a change in theatre licensing laws meant pantomimes began to be scripted.

Many of the features of the modern pantomime had developed by the late Victorian period. Large casts, extravagant costumes and sets were mainstays of the Victorian pantomime. Men playing women and women playing men was an accepted convention. Famous Music Hall stars were cast to help sell shows. Live animals and animal tricks frequently featured. It became customary for shows to open on Boxing Day which formed the link between Christmas and the family trip to the panto.

At Cambridge Arts Theatre, our annual pantomime developed from a tradition of a special Christmas production – ‘a play for children and grown-ups’ as one program from the 1950s put it. Over the years, favorite titles have emerged, with *Aladdin*, *Cinderella*, *Dick Whittington*, and *Jack and the Beanstalk* being performed regularly on rotation.

In the 1940s and 1950s, performing animals were stabled in the Theatre’s workshop, just over the road from the Theatre in St Edward’s Passage, when they were not on stage. A live pony was used to pull Cinderella’s carriage as late as the 1990s (but by then they were housed in rented stables outside the city!)

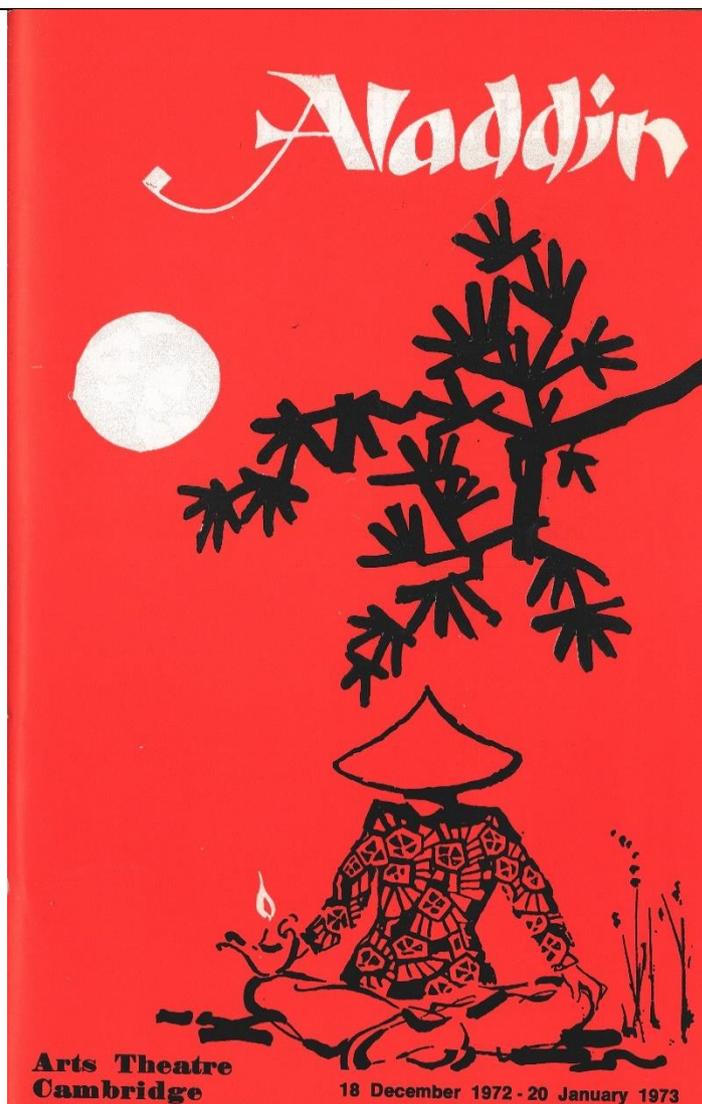
During the Second World War, Cambridge’s location - near to several military bases – meant that the Theatre stayed open and served an important role entertaining the troops.

In 2020, during the Coronavirus pandemic, Cambridge Arts Theatre was one of the few theatres in the UK to produce a pantomime, *Dame Trott’s Panto Palaver*, involved a reduced cast and rigorous Coronavirus testing regime, and played to a socially distanced audience. The production closed on Christmas Eve when Cambridge moved into Tier 4 restrictions.

Stars of radio and later television have replaced Music Hall performers. Over the years, dedicated panto-goers have been entertained by stars such as Cyril Fletcher, Christopher Biggins, Anneka Rice and Sheila Ferguson. Other regular performers, such as pantomime dame and associate writer Matt Crosby, have won many fans who come back to see them year after year.

Cambridge Arts Theatre Favourite Pantos

Aladdin



Programme, *Aladdin*, 1972
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
Bound programme collection

First performed as a pantomime:
Boxing Day, 1788

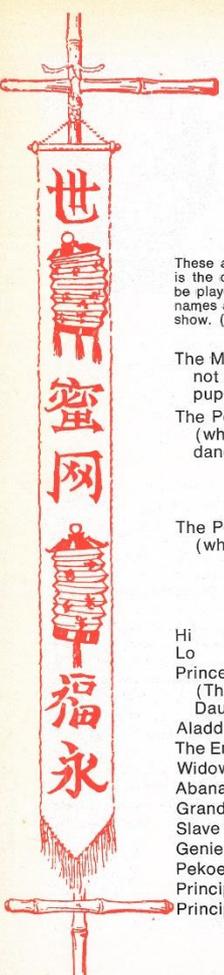
**First performed at Cambridge
Arts Theatre:** 1942

**Number of productions
performed at Cambridge Arts
Theatre:**
15

Origins:

Taken from a collection of stories called *The Arabian Nights* which originated in Syrian folklore, but which were made popular in the eighteenth century by the French writer Antoine Galland.

Characters:



ALADDIN

Produced, written and composed by
BETTY ASTELL



Characters

These are the characters you will see on the stage and this is the order you will first see them in. They will, of course, be played by Grown-ups—and we are putting their Grown-up names as well in case their Mothers and Fathers come to the show. (I'm sure your Mothers and Fathers would like us to.)

The Magician (No—he is not Abanaza—just a pupil perhaps)
The People of Old Pekin (who are also ballet dancers)
The People of Old Pekin (who are also singers)

Hi) Chinese
Lo) Policemen
Princess Balroubador (The Emperor's Daughter)
Aladdin
The Emperor of Old Pekin
Widow Twankey
Abanaza
Grand Vizier
Slave of the Ring
Genie of the Lamp
Pekoe
Principal Dancer
Principal Ballerina

Dennis Bonner
Abigail Higgins
Ann MacDonald
Ann-Marie Chown
Shona Macintosh
Elaine Gibbs
Marie Kaine
Jill Goode
Miranda Kark
Gillian May
Kevin Quarumby
Penny Thorn
Elton Bennet
Roger Neil
Ricky Reeves

Myra Sands
Des Farmer
Gerald Moon
CYRIL FLETCHER
David Hartley
Johnny Lee
Jill Fletcher
Simon Cuff
Jill Goode
Dennis Bonnor
Erica Knighton

Synopsis

of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1 The Chinese Lacquer Cabinet
Scene 2 The City of Old Pekin
Scene 3 Widow Twankey's Laundry
Scene 4 On the Way to the Cave
Scene 5 The Princess' Boudoir
Scene 6 Outside the Cave
Scene 7 The Magic Cave

INTERVAL

ACT II

Scene 8 Aladdin's Golden Palace
Scene 9 The Chinese Lighthouse
Scene 10 Princess' Room in the Palace
Scene 11 The Dance of the Lanterns
Scene 12 The Haunted Bedroom
Scene 13 In the African Palace
Scene 14 The Harlequinade
Scene 15 Aladdin's Palace Garden

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

The Overture	Betty Astell
The Magician	Betty Astell
A Market in Old Pekin	Betty Astell
Abanaza's Song	Betty Astell
Lovers' Meeting	Betty Astell
We're Going to be Rich	Betty Astell
Chin Chin Chinaman	Jones
Slave's Song	Betty Astell
Sing to me	Betty Astell
Mysterious March	Betty Astell
Ballet of the Jewels	Betty Astell

INTERVAL

ACT II

WEDDING MARCH	Betty Astell
Bangles and Baubles	Borodin
The Silver Boat Song	Betty Astell
You are My Heart's Delight	Franz Lehar
New Lamps for Old	Betty Astell
Song of the Lanterns	Betty Astell
Sunset and Evening Star	Betty Astell
This is My Beloved	Borodin
Why Does a Pekinese Sneeze	Betty Astell
Harlequinade	Betty Astell

Programme, *Aladdin*, 1972
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
Bound programme collection

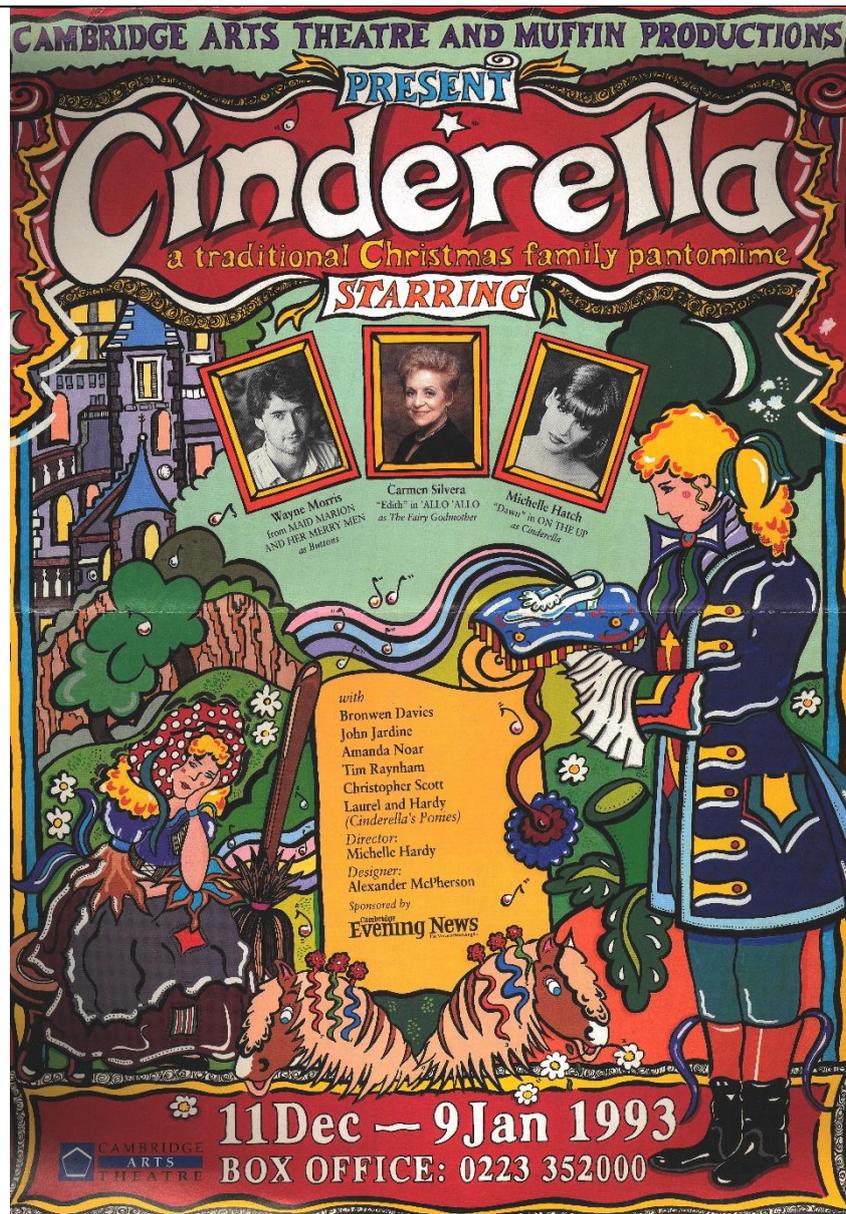


Discuss what your three wishes would be. Remember the 3 wishes rule - you can't wish for more wishes, make anyone love you or bring someone back from the dead. Would it always be good to have three wishes?

Imagine you find a flying carpet; where would you choose to go and why?



In a circle, pass an imaginary magic lamp around. Each person must mime holding the lamp (it can change size and weight if they want it to!) Then they must mime rubbing the lamp and mime what comes out of the lamp. It could be anything! The rest of the group must guess what it is.



Poster, *Cinderella*, 1990
 Cambridge Arts Theatre
 Archive THM/258/2/2/1

First performed as a pantomime:
 1804

First performed at Cambridge Arts Theatre
 1939

Number of productions performed at Cambridge Arts Theatre
 15

Origins:

The first version is believed to come from China, more than 1,100 years ago. In an Egyptian version from the 2nd Century AD an eagle takes the sandal of Rhodope while she is bathing. The eagle takes the sandal to the Pharaoh, who vows to marry whoever fits the sandal. He searches all of Egypt until he finds Rhodope. French author Charles Perrault wrote a version of the story first published in 1697 and called the heroine *Cendrillon* from which we get the name Cinderella. Perrault also introduced the pumpkin, the glass slippers, and the Fairy Godmother.

Characters

CINDERELLA

Cast, in order of appearance:

Baron Hardup	Norman Painting
Cinderella	Amanda Bairstow
Daisy	Brian Godfrey
Buttercup	Peter Sowerbutts
Buttons	Frazer Hines
Lord Chamberlain	Paul Ratcliffe
Dandini	Linda Hayden
Prince Charming	Katie Budd
Broker's Man	Ken Wood
Fairy Godmother	Vivien Stuart
Townsfolk/Courtiers/ Guests at Ball:	Bethan Hopkins
	Gioia Izquierdo
	Emma Kerr
	Dominic St. Clair
	Russell Sargeant

Orchestra:

Musical Director/Keyboards	Brian Farley
Trumpet	Ian Muncey
Tenor Sax/Flute	Neil Riddings
Bass	Ron Argyrou
Drums	Tony Ford

Designed by	Alan Miller-Bunford
Lighting by	Steve Hawkins

ACT ONE

Scene 1	..... The Village of Much Dawdling
Scene 2	..... A Room at the Palace
Scene 3	..... On the way to Hardup Hall
Scene 4	..... In the Woods
Scene 5	..... A Room at the Palace
Scene 6	..... Outside Hardup Hall
Scene 7	..... The Sisters' Boudoir
Scene 8	..... Outside Hardup Hall
Scene 9	..... The Kitchen at Hardup Hall
Scene 10	..... On the Way to the Ball

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

Scene 1	..... The Palace Ballroom
Scene 2	..... On the Way to Hardup Hall
Scene 3	..... The Kitchen at Hardup Hall
Scene 4	..... The Baron's Barn
Scene 5	..... The Sisters' Boudoir
Scene 6	..... Outside Hardup Hall
Scene 7	..... The Royal Wedding

Juveniles
The King Slocombe School

Team A:

Lucy Ainscow, Maita Cilia, Laura Clarke, Sophie Riches,
Michelle Rooker, Katherine Southerby,
Charlotte Yelton, Erika Zytynska

Team B:

Nicola Challis, Lottie Dean, Rachel Freer, Bianca Shevlin,
Tanya Sizer, Katie Vincent, Nicola Vincent, Anna Zytynska

Directed by **Brian Hewitt-Jones**
Choreographed by **Trudy Moffatt**



Programme, Cinderella, 1987
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
Bound Programme Collection



Design a poster for the pantomime you are studying. Review some historic posters in this pack and online. What features are common to all production posters? Posters tell people about the show and encourage them to buy tickets. What can you include in the design which ensures the poster achieves its aims?



Working in small groups, imagine you are ensemble characters observing the events of the play. Act out a short scene in which those characters reflect on what has just happened. Encourage the group to think outside the story and think how they would react in the situation. Possible characters include townspeople in the marketplace observing how Cinderella is treated by her step-sisters, courtiers at the ball watching Cinderella and the Prince dancing, or guests at the wedding of Cinderella and the Prince.

Dick Whittington

CYRIL FLETCHER
and
BETTY ASTELL
present
PETER GOODWRIGHT
as Idle Jack
in an entirely new production of
DICK WHITTINGTON
A traditional pantomime
in 14 lovely scenes
PRODUCED BY BETTY ASTELL
with
FRANKIE MURRAY
as Sarah the Cook

JOHNNY LEE as Alderman Fitzwarren & Harlequin Ballet
Singing Chorus and Full West-End Company
Scenery designed by John West

CYRIL FLETCHER & BETTY ASTELL presented this production of Dick Whittington at the Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon, last Xmas when it broke all records and we are confident that Cambridge will greatly enjoy this Spectacular production.

NEW: THIS PANTOMIME IS FULL OF GOOD FUN, POPULAR TUNES, UPROARIOUS COMEDY and WILL BE LAVISHLY BEAUTIFUL.

Flyer, *Dick Whittington*, 1969
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
THM/258/5/3/840

First performed as a pantomime:
1814

First performed at Cambridge Arts Theatre
1940

Number of productions performed at Cambridge Arts Theatre
11

Origins:

Based on the true story of Richard Whittington b.1354, who set out for London a poor man, before rising to the position of Mayor in 1397. The real Whittington was a popular Mayor and was re-elected in 1398, 1406, and 1419. The earliest written reference to the story is for a play version in 1604.

Characters:

Dick Whittington and his cat

Written, directed and choreographed by:
Brad Pitt and Scott Ritchie

Cast in order of appearance:
Sarah the cook: Michael Fenton Stevens
King Rat: Gary Sefton
Fairy Bowbells: Maxine Gregory
Dick Whittington: Julie Buckfield
Tommy the cat: Ashlea Thomson
Alice Fitzwarren: Lorraine McLucas
Alderman Fitzwarren: James Hirst
Silly Billy: Matt Watkin
Sultan: James Hirst

The Chorus:
Ellie Cobb (Dance captain), Frances Park, Sarah George, James Cohen, Andy Hunt, Liam Bolton

The Children
Red Team: Emily Banner, Susannah Curran, Alice Elwood, Chloe Gibson, Florence Seabright, Mary Ferguson-Biggs, Christie Palmer, Alyssa Ralph, Suzanne Stankislawski
Blue Team: Helena Wilson, Alice Porter, Rachel Stonehouse, Morgan Roux, Kate James, Amelia Harwood, Abbie Godson, Jenny Bell, Madeline Bartick

The Band
Keyboards: Dominic Haslam, Ben Whites, Carrie Rawlings, Carl Pourmall, Marc Cecil
Bass: Simon Newlock
Percussion: Sarah Partridge, Lianne Rainbow, Brendan Murphy, Ray Tait

Production and Creative Team
Producer: Ian Ross
Direction & Choreography: Brad Pitt and Scott Ritchie
Musical Director: Dominic Haslam
Lighting Designer: Mike Robertson
Sound Designer: Ian Horrocks-Taylor
Production Manager: Raymond Cross
Company Stage Manager: Catriona Staley
Deputy Stage Manager: Helen Smith
Assistant Stage Manager: Caroline Reid
Technical Manager: Mark Passey
Sound operator: Rowan Pashley
Lighting operator: Alex Lynn
Production Electrician: Adam Jones
Flymen: David Smith, Lee Shepherd, Susie Peters, Tom Bradfield, Simon May
Stage Crew: Katy Kettleborough, Stephen Toulé, Kate Cauldwell, Beth Howard, Laura Thomas, Caroline Reid

Follow Spot operators:
Wardrobe Supervisor: Kate Cauldwell
Wardrobe assistants: Beth Howard, Laura Thomas, Caroline Reid

Scenic artist:

For the Arts Theatre
Executive Director: Dave Murphy
Head of Marketing: Nicky Hope
Press and PR Manager: Kate Flannery
Marketing and Design Officer: Claire Giannandrea
Marketing and Press Officer: Chris Chalk
Distribution Officer: Clive Jones
Education Manager: Roberta Hammond
Education Officer: Donna Young
Theatre Administrator: Kate Catcheodes
Technical Manager: Mark Passey
Deputy Technical Manager: Rowan Pashley
Technician: Dave Smith
Trainee Technician: Caroline Reid
Finance Manager: Lisa Winter
Front of House Manager: Alison Bigglestone
Front of House Supervisor: Sam Warboys
Box Office Manager: Emily James
Box Office Supervisor: Fran Broadhurst
Box Office Team: Ely Flower, David Jarvis, Hayley Pickering, Michael Roger, Juliet Sugg

Lighting Supplied by: White Light
Set Supplied by: Proscenium Ltd
Gallery set designed & built by: Dave & Sarah Holland
Costume made by: Carry on Costumes

Thank you:
Clare Wallace, District Manager of Disney Stores South
16th Cambridge Scout Group
Palmer & Harvey McLane Ltd

Sponsored by
Ashwell
Property Group PLC

20 21

Programme extract, *Dick Whittington and his Cat*, 2005
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
THM/258/5/5/10



Discuss Dick arriving in London for the first time. What can he see, hear and smell? What does he find unusual or different? How does he feel? Have you been to London? How did you feel the first time you arrived in the city?



Design a costume for Dick Whittington to wear as Mayor of London. Try to ensure your design tells the audience something about Dick at this point in the story.

Think about Dick's personality, is he shy or brave, young or old, rich or poor? How does he feel about becoming Mayor, happy or sad or excited? What can you include in your costume design which shows the audience quickly that he is Mayor?

Cambridge



Arts Theatre

Box Office 352000 (Mon to Sat 9.30 am to 8.00 pm)
Founded by Lord Keynes in 1936
Owned and controlled by the Cambridge Arts Theatre Trust
General Manager, Licensee, and Secretary of the Trustees: Andrew R Blackwood

Friday 14 December 1984 - Saturday 12 January 1985

PAUL ELLIOTT

presents

TONI ARTHUR

**PETER
BYRNE**

**RICHARD
MURDOCH**

and

MARK CURRY

in

The Glittering Family Pantomime

Jack *and the* Beanstalk

with

**DAVID CROSSE
ELLEN THOMAS
DAVID TUDOR**

and

LUCIE SKEAPING

as The Princess

Directed by

PETER BYRNE

Choreography by
CHRIS POWER

Designed by

ALAN MILLER BUNFORD

Musical Director
STEVE EDIS

Lighting by **STEVE HAWKINS**

Associate Producers: **BRIAN HEWITT-JONES & CHRIS MORENO**

Programme, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, 1984
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
Bound programmes collection

First performed as a
pantomime: 1819

First performed at Cambridge
Arts Theatre: 1941

Number of productions performed at
Cambridge Arts Theatre: 10

Origins:

The character 'Jack' was a hero of many English folk stories, including Jack Sprat, Little Jack Horner, Jack the Giant Killer, and Jack Frost. Jack and the Beanstalk was first performed as a pantomime at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in 1819. The original play is almost unrecognisable to the story we know today, except for the moment that Jack grows a beanstalk up to the sky.

Characters:

Jack and the Beanstalk

CAST

Jack TONI ARTHUR
Dame Trot RICHARD MURDOCH
Simple Simon MARK CURRY
Baron PETER BYRNE
Princess LUCIE SKEAPING
King DAVID CROSSE
The Fairy ELLEN THOMAS
Lord Chamberlain/Giant DAVID TUDOR

Villagers and Townsfolk JACQUIE BOANSEN
KELVIN CARTER
JULIE KEYS
AMANDA RICKETTS
MICHAEL SKYERS
DENNIE WILSON

Babes KING SLOCOMBE
SCHOOL OF DANCE

Group A: Christina Chapman, Hannah Dean, Rebecca Down, Emma Hanson,
Carol Meads, Julia Moore, Kia Page, Erika Zytynska.
Group B: Sara Biggs, Jennifer Challis, Susan Chandler, Irene Chandler,
Sarah Hall, Louise Harper, Benita Hayward, Katherine Southerby.

Directed by PETER BYRNE
Choreographed by CHRIS POWER
Musical Director STEVE EDIS

ORCHESTRA

Keyboard STEVE EDIS
Bass Guitar RON ARGHYROU
Trumpet MALCOLM GOSDEN
Drums MARTIN LAYZELL
Tenor Sax NEIL RIDDING

SCENES

Prologue

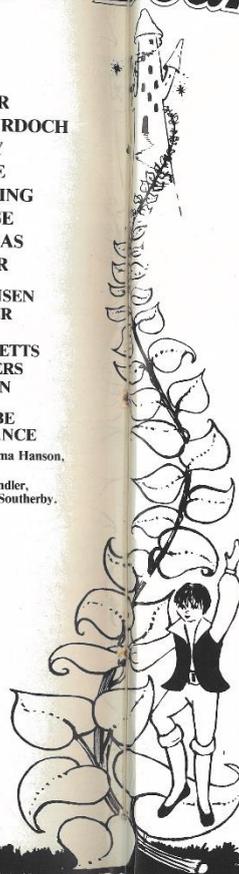
Act One

Scene 1: The Town of Illyria
Scene 2: Outskirts of Town
Scene 3: Outside Dame Trot's Cottage
Scene 4: On the way to the Fair
Scene 5: The Fair
Scene 6: Outskirts of Town
Scene 7: Inside Dame Trot's Cottage
Scene 8: Outside Dame Trot's Cottage
Scene 9: The Highlands of Chivalry

INTERVAL

Act Two

Scene 1: A Gypsy Encampment
Scene 2: The Battlements of the Giant's Castle
Scene 3: A Corridor in the Giant's Castle
Scene 4: The Kitchen in the Giant's Castle
Scene 5: A Corridor in the Giant's Castle
Scene 6: The Giant's Dining Room
Scene 7: A Corridor in the Giant's Castle
Scene 8: Outside Dame Trot's Cottage
Scene 9: Outside the Village
Scene 10: The King's Palace



Jack and the Beanstalk, 1984
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
Bound programmes collection



Imagine you are Jack. Write a diary entry for the day when...

- * You exchange the family cow for some magic beans
- * The bean you planted grows into a giant beanstalk
- * You first encounter the Giant



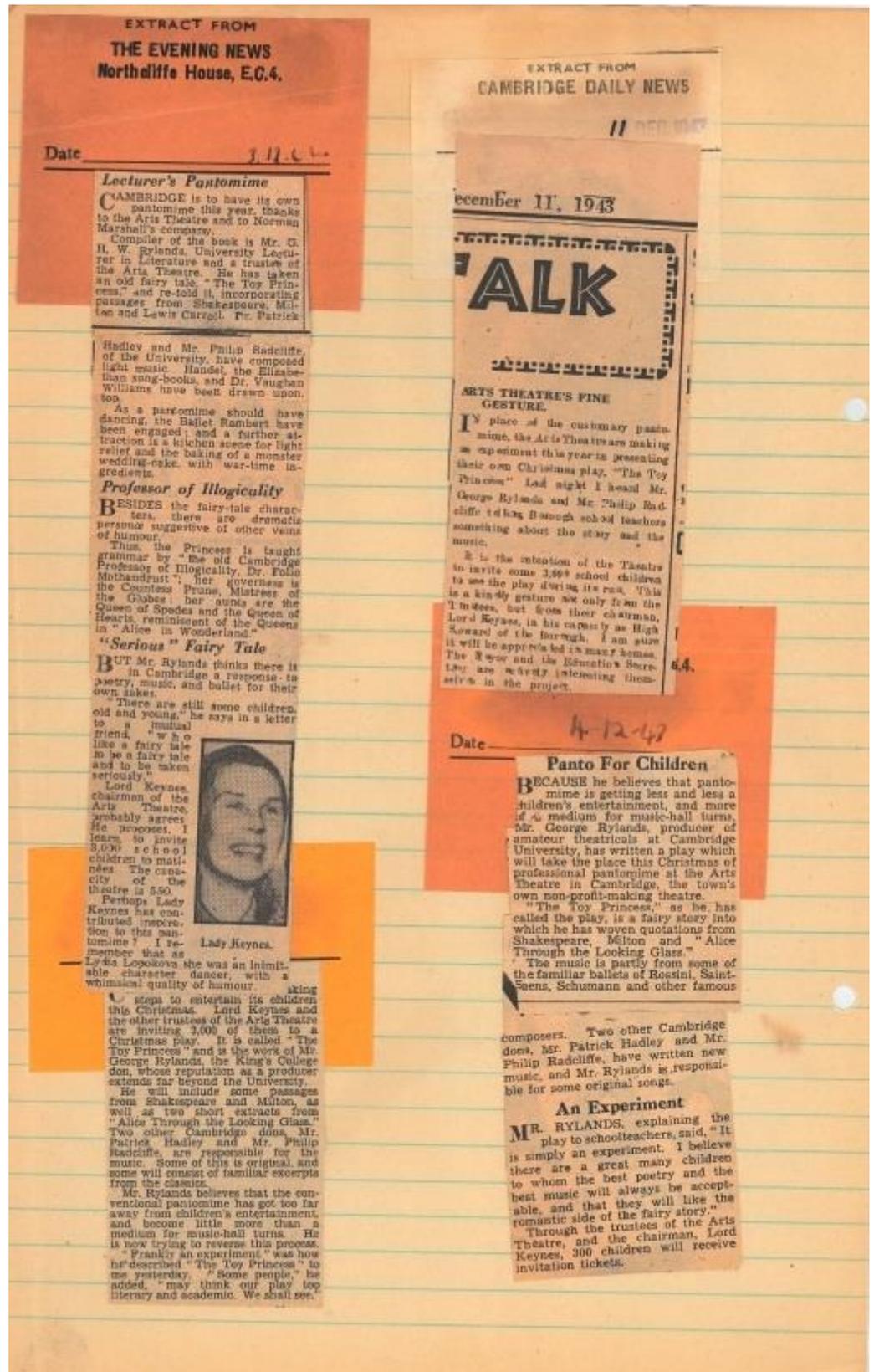
Working in a small group, ask the group to create a still image for each of these points in the story. Review the work of other groups and discuss how the same moment can be shown in different ways.

The Toy Princess – a debate on the future of pantomime at Cambridge Arts Theatre

In 1943, the Cambridge Arts Theatre staged a unique take on the traditional Christmas pantomime. The Toy Princess was a show inspired by the Theatre's founder John Maynard Keynes' belief that 'the conventional pantomime [had moved] too far away from children's entertainment'. It was his attempt to raise the calibre of Christmas shows. The book and music were compiled by three University dons – George Rylands, literary scholar and English fellow at Kings' College, Patrick Radley, music fellow at Kings', and Philip Radcliffe, music fellow at Gonville and Caius. They used passages from Milton, Shakespeare, and Lewis Carroll and music by Rossini, Handel, Schumann and Vaughan Williams as well as incorporating some of their own work. Keynes said of the show: 'it is frankly an experiment. Some people may think our play too literary and academic. We shall see'.

Reviews, 1943

Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
THM/258/8/1/1



Debate. This house believes that pantomime should be for everyone.

Arts Theatre
"THE TOY PRINCESS"

Charming and Colourful Fairy Romance

THIS year's Christmas offering to the public of Cambridge by the management of the Arts Theatre is a very beautiful and elaborately decorated fairy romance which will please a great many if it does not quite win the entire approval of that particular section for whom, one supposed, it is primarily intended—the children.

A vast amount of literary knowledge, with creative and artistic skill, have gone to the making of "The Toy Princess," a Christmas romance founded by Mr. George Rylands on an old fairy tale. Using familiar passages from Shakespeare, Milton, Lewis Carroll and others, he tells the story of Amanda, an unhappy Princess, betrothed in youth to her cousin, Prince Sarczarine. This young man is a vain and elegant dandy, and the tale reveals how Amanda, falling in love with a disguised Prince Florisel, becomes the victim of the evil magician, Merlin, but is rescued by the ingenious schemes of her fairy godmother, Titania, by which there is created a toy princess which is the exact replica of Amanda.

CHARMING AND FANCIFUL.

The fairy element is very largely paramount, and the passages of verse by the masters are well-matched by songs from Handel, Vaughan Williams and the Elizabethan Song Books, and ballets to music by Rossini, Schumann, Saint-Saëns, and Chopin. It is all very charming and fanciful, but lacks the punch of the common touch, the actuality of everyday life, and those high-spirited slapstick dialogues close to the experience of youth that would make its appeal sure with the children. Indeed, one may say that in choosing to replace the usual pantomime with this present production (with all its admirable qualities) the management have rather played into the hands of those who have complained that modern Christmas shows cater more for adults than children.

WHAT CHILDREN LIKE.

Strangely enough, Mr. Ivor Brown dismissed the point a few weeks ago when in making the plea that children should be saved "from fanciful elders who want to plug healthy youngsters with fairy stories," went on:

My pet aversions in my first theatre-going were "Alice in Wonderland," "Peter Pan," and "Treasure Island," all entertainments perfectly designed for whimsical or romantic adults. Lewis Carroll's form of fun only became intelligible years after one had become accustomed to Rosen and Spaw. Pantomime I doted on from the age of six; the feilias only took up a few minutes; the rest was a heaven of red noses.

Well, there is one red nose in "The Toy Princess," but since his humour is rather academic, we doubt whether it would qualify for young Ivor's verdict. Indeed, the whole of the fun here is on the gentle side, which, in our view, is as much of a mistake as if the author had deeded a stately gaitie under the impression that he was doing a rumba!

SUPERBLY DONE.

Not enough of this crying. While both Rylands and producer Norman Marshall have attempted has been wisely done, and they may well regret that it is not their fault if we expected plain milk instead of choice cream.

The Norman Marshall Company always serve their audience well, and in the present production they lavish skill and a most generous humour upon the many good things provided for them. They are a good team, and the result is a gas, coherent performance, romantic and amusing by turns. Miss Virginia Bennett, who has yet to give an indignant performance, is admirably cast as Amanda, investing the part with a charming simplicity and pathos that will win the sympathy and interest of all. She is admirably partnered by that experienced Shakespearean actor, Mr. Herbert Langley, whose Prince Florisel is cast in a charming romantic mould, and who adds for good measure a delightful singing voice well suited to the music provided. They are particularly charming in a love scene from "Romeo and Juliet" deftly allied to the play's story.

Miss Edie Lindsay handles roundly as the Fairy Governess, Royal and Mistress of the Globe, and Mr. Harold Scott, renowned for his sardonic, makes, as was to be expected, the wisest of the dry humour of the Cambridge Professor of Illegality. Appearing in a quiet way, too, is the dandy Prince Sarczarine of Mr. Fitch Haskbury.

A perfect couple in comedy are Miss Jean Weinstein and Miss Nadina March as Queen of Spades and Queen of Hearts, respectively. Most of their fun is borrowed from Lewis Carroll's "Alice Through the Looking Glass," and it is "put over" with great skill and laughter-provoking results. Comedy of a broader character is provided by a kitchen scene, in which wartime cake making is demonstrated—with a surprising sequel!

To the part of Merlin, the Magician, Mr. Frederick Woodhouse lends an impressive show presence, and his well-known superb singing voice, whilst Miss Dorothy Boyd is a height and attractive Fairy Queen.

Mention must also be made of Miss Heather Dunkley as Agnastina, and of Champ, the donkey (played by Miss Manderson and Peter Wawwick).

Ballet has a large share in providing visual delight, and to this the Ballet Master bring the skill and artistic charm of experts. Saint-Saëns' well-known Carnival of Animals is a delightful interpolation that well suits the play's general scheme, and it is attractively danced in gay and colourful costumes, with fun coming from the antics of the hen and the bantam and the two lumbering tortoises. Dances that delight for another reason are those taken from the famous ballet "Les Sylphides," and here again the Ballet Master are at their best.

The music, which also includes specially composed items by two well-known Cambridge men, Dr. Patrick Hadley and Mr. Philip Radcliffe, is admirably played by a highly competent orchestra, directed by Rosebel Watson, and both the settings designed by Joan Jefferson Parison and the dresses are amazingly bright and fresh, ensuring pleasure for the eye to match that rendered for the ear by music and "book."

H. H. H.

Pantomime traditions

The Slosh Scene

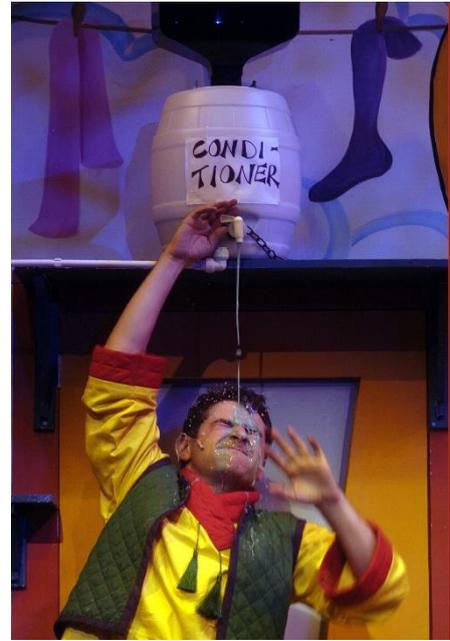
During the pantomime, there is usually a very messy scene called the 'Slosh' scene. This is a scene where the Dame and the Comic character, and maybe one or two others, make a lot of mess on stage – usually making a cake, or decorating, or doing the washing. The scene can take any form, but the aim is to get as messy as possible!

Audience Participation

The audience is encouraged to shout out responses to lines from the show. These can include "He's behind you!", "Oh yes it is/Oh no it isn't" and often shouting the name of the Comic Character to get their attention. The audience is also encouraged to boo the Villain whenever they enter, exit or do something bad.

Young Performers

Pantomime traditionally use child performers in their ensemble cast. At Cambridge Arts Theatre this group of young performers has been traditionally known as the 'Panto Babes', a reference to another popular pantomime 'the Babes in the Wood'. Every year a group of twenty local children aged 7-14 are selected by open audition, they form two teams, and join the professional company for the duration of the production's run.



Photo, Slosh scene, *Aladdin*, 2006
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
THM/258/5/5/11



Photo, child performers, *Mother Goose*, 1950
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/5/3/96



Above: Photo, child performers, *Cinderella*, 2011
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/5/5/16

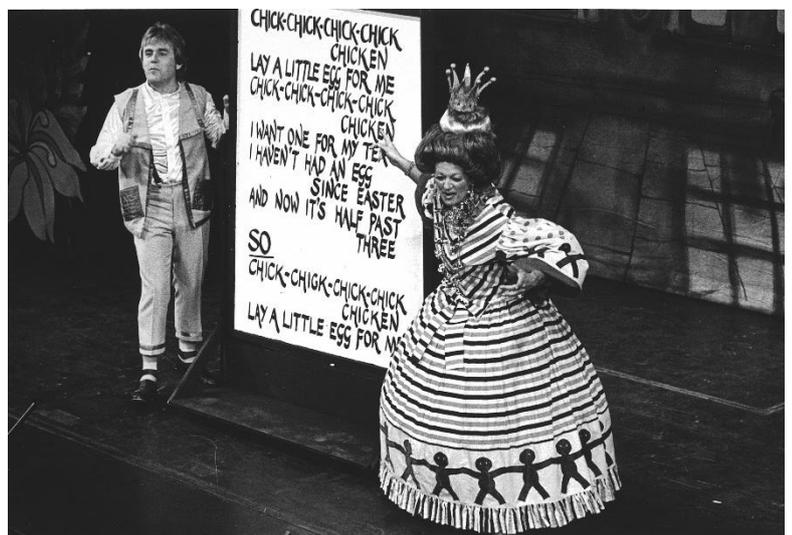
Below: Photo, sing-a-long, date unknown
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/9/1/4

Sing-along Song

At the end of the play, the Dame and the Comic Character will come out and sing a short section of one of the songs from the pantomime. They will encourage the audience to sing along and join in with the actions. Often this song will lead to a competition to see which half of the audience is the loudest.

The Walk Down

When the pantomime has finished, the actors will perform a walk down and take a bow to show that the show has reached its conclusion. The characters



will then say a short conclusion before reprising a few numbers from the show. Sometimes the walk down tells the story of the wedding of the Hero and Heroine, so expect lavish, colourful costumes and lots of smiles.

Animals

Every pantomime has a lot of animal characters – *Jack and the Beanstalk* has the cow, *Dick Whittington* has many rats, *Cinderella* has horses, mice, rats and a lizard. It is rare for a modern pantomime to include real animals, so these characters are a good opportunity to showcase the abilities of the younger dancers in the pantomime.

The Spectacle Scene

Cinderella transforming from her ragged clothes into a ball gown, Aladdin taking Princess Jasmine for a magic carpet ride or Dick Whittington diving into the sea to fight a Giant Squid, every panto includes a scene which is spectacular to watch and designed to make the audience gasp!



Photo, *Dick Whittington and his Cat*, 1996
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
THM/258/5/5/1



Think about the panto you are studying. Discuss where in the story you think each of these panto traditions might occur.



Create a game of Panto Bingo. Fill your Bingo card with panto traditions and Characters. Take the card below to the Theatre and tick off the panto traditions as they appear on stage.

Pantomime Characters

Some common characters appear in every panto.

The Principal Boy



Photo, *Dick Whittington*, 1979
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/9/1/3



Photo, *Cinderella*, 2002
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive
THM/258/5/5/7

Sometimes the title character of the show, as in *Aladdin* or *Jack and the Beanstalk*, the Principal boy character drives the plot of the pantomime forward. The role can be played by an actor of any gender. Traditionally, the Principal Boy was the love interest of the heroine character, and the two frequently appear in scenes together.

The Pantomime Dame



Photo, *Queen of Hearts*, 1961
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/5/3/567



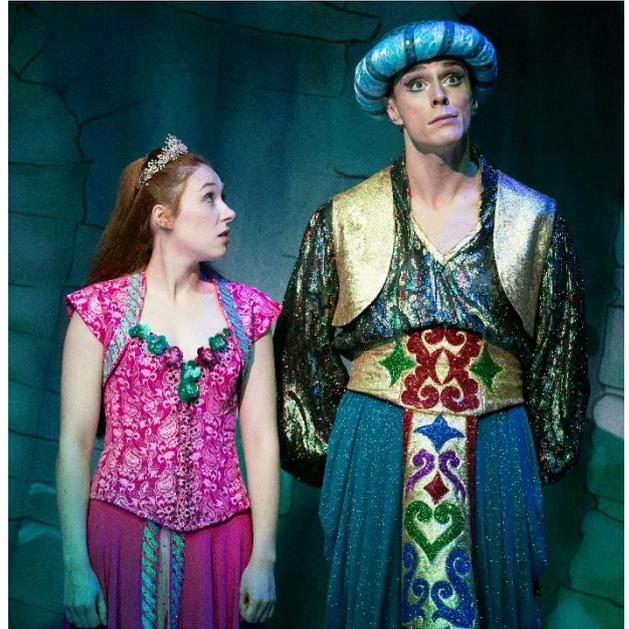
Photo, *Cinderella*, 1987
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/9/1/3

The loveable 'everyman' and the comedic heart of the panto, full of puns and dressed in flamboyant costumes. This character is usually an older male actor, playing an older female character. The Dame is usually cast as the mother of another character, they also help the audience find their way through the story.

The Heroine



Photo, *Sleeping Beauty*, 1951
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/5/3/140



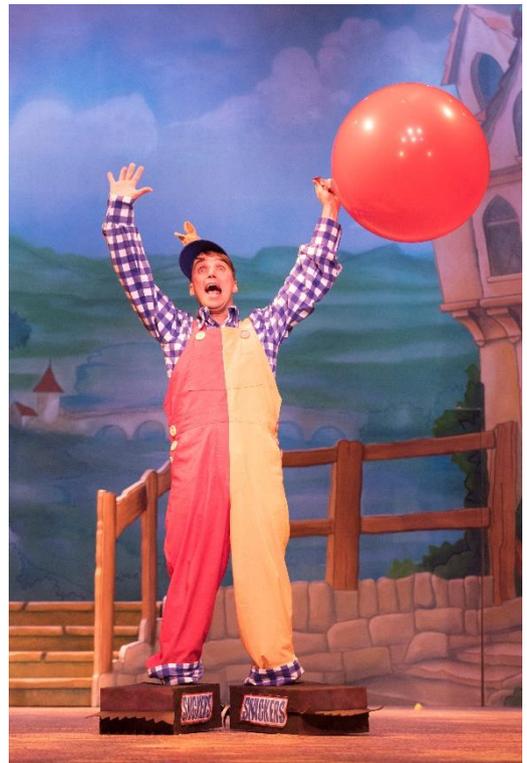
Photo, *Aladdin*, 2021
© Richard Hubert Smith

Or Principal Girl, was traditionally the love interest in the panto, but today you are just as likely to find her leading the action, working alongside the Principal Boy to drive the story forward or even coming to their rescue.

The Comic or 'the Silly Billy'



Above: Photo, *Dick Whittington*, 1996
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/5/5/1
Right: Photo, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, 2017
Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/9/1/3



The voice of the children in the audience, the Comic, is bold and full of energy. They will often have a catch phrase and lead the audience participation. Something of a training ground for future panto Dames the two characters often appear on stage together.

The Villain



Photo, *Jack and the Beanstalk*

Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/9/1/3

The character that everyone loves to hate. Their appearance on stage is usually accompanied by 'boos' and 'hisses'. A good villain is evil enough to be a threat, but not so completely bad that they terrify the younger members of the audience.

The Good Fairy/Genie/ Sprit of the Ring



Photo, *Dick Whittington*, 1996

Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/5/5/1



Photo, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, 2012

Cambridge Arts Theatre Archive THM/258/9/1/3

The Panto Fairy is responsible for ensuring that everything works out in the end for the Principal Boy and Girl. You can find them lending a hand with a little bit of magic. They play an important role in setting the scene for the story. Traditionally, this character's lines are written in rhyme (see below).

CINDERELLA
By
Jeanette Ranger
&
Christopher Lillicrap

OVERTURE

Act 1 Scene 1
SCENE ONE. A FAIRY GLADE.

FAIRY DANCING MUSIC.
FAIRIES DANCING HAPPILY. SMALL FAIRY
DASHES AROUND EACH ONE IN AN EXCITED
STATE TRYING TO CATCH THEIR ATTENTION,
AND POINTING FRANTICALLY STAGE LEFT..
SHE IS IGNORED AND GETS PUSHED ASIDE AND
BUFFETED AROUND. EVENTUALLY, THOROUGHLY
FED UP SHE STOMPS IN A VERY UNFAIRYLIKE
MANNER TO CENTRE STAGE AND WHISTLES
REALLY LOUDLY, FINGERS IN MOUTH, (IT
DOES NOT HAVE TO BE THE CHILD WHO
ACTUALLY WHISTLES). EVERYTHING STOPS IN
MID FLIGHT AND SHE HAS THEIR FULL
ATTENTION.

LITTLE FAIRY: She's here. She's here! At last she's
here!

FAIRIES: Hooray! Hooray! She's here! She's here!
At last she's here! (THEY ALL LOOK AT
THE SMALL FAIRY) WHO'S HERE?

LITTLE FAIRY: Fairy Godmother! She's arrived!
(POINTING OFF STAGE LEFT)

FAIRIES: Fairy Godmother? HOORAY! (THEY RUSH TO
STAGE LEFT AND LOOK OFF IN EAGER
ANTICIPATION).

THERE IS A PUFF OF PINK SMOKE AND FAIRY
GODMOTHER ENTERS STAGE RIGHT. COUGHING
AND SPLUTTERING. THEY ALL TURN AND
CROWD ROUND HER WITH ENTHUSIASTIC
GREETINGS.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: On starlight's wing and Angels fleeting,
Fairies all I bid you greeting,
By all that's good and kind and best,
I've hastened here at your request.

(TO AUDIENCE)
Oh hello, sorry about all the smoke but
the truth is I haven't done this magic

lark for a bit. You see I'm sort of semi retired. Now where was I, oh yes.

(TO FAIRIES)

Summoned here from my abode,
To honour well the Fairy code,
The search for truth and love for all,
Now Fairies harken to my call...

(TO AUDIENCE)

You see I was really lucky as Fairy Godmothers go, I was given a lovely little girl to watch over. Cinderella. She was such a lovely child, so good and kind, never put a foot wrong.

(TO FAIRIES)

My crown and wand is what I bid,
Within a casket long since hid
In the crook of yonder tree,
Bring the casket now to me.

(TO AUDIENCE)

So after a while there wasn't anything for me to do. I haven't been needed around here for ages. And as for magic, well I can't remember the last time I waved a wand.

(LITTLE FAIRY PRESENTS HER WITH CASKET. SHE LOOKS IN AND TAKES OUT RATHER BATTERED WAND AND TIARA)

Oh dear look at these.

My crown's all bent,

My wand's all duff,

Who called this meeting?

FAIRIES: (POINTING AT LITTLE ONE) Fairy Nuff!.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: So who's in trouble girl or fella?

FAIRIES: Go on Nuff you'd better tell her.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: I said who's in trouble girl or fella?

FAIRIES: Spit it out Nuff.

LITTLE FAIRY: Cinderella.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Cinderella? Oh no this is more serious than I thought. Still I shouldn't think it's anything a little fairy magic can't sort out. (LOOKS AT WAND) Mind you I don't think this will be much help, it's definitely well past it's spell by date. Hey ho, better get down to work, now

first things first. I can't go walking
about the forest dressed like this.

I'll shield myself from mortal eyes,
A frail old woman my disguise,
Come with me then if you be bold
And watch our magic tale unfold.
Thence through the woods this very day,
To Cinderella make our way.



Discuss the key characters in the panto you are studying. Think about the character's physical characteristics, voice, and clothing. Pick one character and write some words to describe them. Do you like the other characters? What are your hopes and fears for the future? How do you feel at the end of the story?



Use a large, soft dice. Mark each side with the name or picture of a character from the panto you are studying. Roll the dice. Everyone must walk around the space as that character.

Using the dice again, sit in a circle and choose two people to stand in the centre. Roll the dice twice. Whichever two characters it lands on, the two people in the middle must improvise a scene between those two characters.

We welcome your feedback

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development@cambridgeartstheatre.com

These resources were produced with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of a project exploring the theatre's archive called 'Behind the Scenes'. We would like to express our thanks to the teachers and students who piloted activities and content in this pack.

We continue to welcome further feedback from users on the email above.