THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG

A FRENCH ROMANCE THAT JUST HAPPENS TO BE SUNG

NOTES FOR STUDENTS

DON’T WRITE NOTES - WATCH THE SHOW!
THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG

Directed and adapted by EMMA RICE

Music by MICHEL LEGRAND

Based on the film by JAQUES DEMY

English Translation by SHELDON HARNICH

In association with CHARLES BURR

Presented by:

DANIEL SPARROW
MIKE WALSH PRODUCTIONS
CURVE LEICESTER

in association with:

CITY LIGHTS PRODUCTIONS LTD
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After the success of Brief Encounter in the West End and on Broadway, Kneehigh’s new adaptation of Jacques Demy and Michel Legrand’s The Umbrellas of Cherbourg will arrive at the Gielgud Theatre following a limited run at Curve, Leicester. The Umbrellas of Cherbourg will begin previews on 5 March, with press night on 22 March and is booking until 1 October 2011. Directed and adapted by Emma Rice, with lyrics translated by Sheldon Harnick, designs by Lez Brotherston, lighting by Malcolm Rippeth, sound by Simon Baker and musical supervision by Nigel Lilley, The Umbrellas of Cherbourg will be produced in the West End by Daniel Sparrow and Mike Walsh Productions, Curve Leicester and City Lights International in association with Be Yu Productions.

**THE SHOW**

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg was originally a film released in 1964 by the French writer and director Jaques Demy.

The Director and Adapter of this new stage adaptation, Emma Rice, is Artistic Director of Kneehigh, one of the UKs most exciting touring theatre companies who specialise in visually stunning, adventurous theatre, ensemble playing and beautiful music; bringing a real sense of joy and spontaneity to everything they do.
EMMA RICE

As Artistic Director of Kneehigh Emma Rice has directed Brief Encounter (originally produced by David Pugh Ltd) at Studio 54 on Broadway, the Haymarket Cinema in the West End and successive national and international tours, The Red Shoes for which she won the Best Director 2002 Barclays TMA Awards, The Wooden Frock on tour in the UK, Don John as a co-production with the Royal Shakespeare Company, The Bacchae for which she won the TMA Best Touring Production 2005, Tristan & Yseult and Nights at the Circus for the Lyric Hammersmith, Cymbeline in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company for the Complete Works Festival and A Matter of Life and Death for the National Theatre.

KNEEHIGH

Kneehigh are a touring company based in Cornwall. Last year they launched a nomadic venue called the Asylum so are now in a position to create and host work in their own venue, as well as tour. Kneehigh productions include: Hansel & Gretel (UK tour 2008/9 & 2010/11) The Red Shoes (2000/2010 – National tour, USA, Australia)) Don John (National Tour 2008/9) Brief Encounter (West End 2008, National Tour and USA tour 2009, Broadway 2010); A Matter of Life and Death (National Theatre 2007); Rapunzel (BAC, National Tour and New York 2007/8); Cymbeline (National and International Tour 2007/2008); Tristan and Yseult (National Theatre and National Tour 2006)
**DANIEL SPARROW & MIKE WALSH PRODUCTIONS**

Daniel Sparrow and Mike Walsh theatrical producing partnership in late 2008. Mike Walsh is a long-established theatrical and television producer/performer and owns the Hayden Orpheum Theatre in Sydney, and Her Majesty’s Theatre in Melbourne. Also Australian, Daniel developed and produced the award-winning world premiere stage adaptation of Pedro Almodóvar’s *All About My Mother* at the Old Vic (co-production with the Old Vic and Neal Street) in 2007; there have since been 15 different productions in 12 different languages internationally.

They most recently transferred the hit Australian production of *Holding the Man* by young playwright Tommy Murphy to the Trafalgar Studios in the West End, for a successful 10-week season that garnered critical and audience acclaim, with standing ovations at nearly every performance. A broadcast of the West End production of *Holding the Man* will be released on cinema screens internationally in 2011-12.

As co-producers, in 2009 they were represented in the West End by *Three Days of Rain* starring James McAvoy, and on Broadway by *Exit the King* starring Geoffrey Rush and Susan Sarandon. They are currently developing a new original musical, *Only the Brave*, with score by composer Matthew Brind, book by Rachel Wagstaff.

**CITY LIGHTS**

City Lights Productions Limited and City Lights Entertainments are production and management companies based in the West-End of London – UK founded by Philippe Guiboust & Hervé Genriès in 1998. Since then City Lights has been developing, licensing and producing concerts, musicals, contemporary ballets, as well as shows in more than 20 countries. City Lights represented the late mime artist Marcel Marceau and currently represent, among others, Maurice Béjart's ballet company “Béjart Ballet Lausanne”, and the multi awarded, 3 times Oscar Winning composer Michel Legrand worldwide.
THE CURVE

Curve is one of Britain’s most distinctive, exciting and technologically advanced new theatres. Our vision is to delight and challenge audiences of all ages with creative experiences, and involve as many people as possible in enjoying and participating in theatre. We are proud supporters of new and emerging talent and actively participate in the development of the next generation of artists, writers and directors.

As well as presenting some of the world’s finest touring work, Curve produces a varied programme of diverse, exciting and inspiring theatre. Since opening in November 2008, highlights have included the European premiere of The Light in the Piazza, Martin McDonagh’s The Pillowman and, more recently, critically acclaimed revivals of two of Brian Friel’s greatest plays, Molly Sweeney and Translations, and Rodgers and Hammerstein’s The King and I starring Janie Dee.

Previous co-production partners include Headlong, New Perspectives and Akram Khan Company, with the world premieres of Akram Khan’s Vertical Road and In-I.
Overview...

It’s 1957 and we are in the French port of Cherbourg. Jazz, sailors and vin rouge dance deliciously in the air, and l’amour laps against the shores of the heart!

Boy (young auto mechanic Guy Fouchier) loves girl (umbrella shop sales assistant Geneviève Emery). They whisper “je t’aime” with the certainty of youth, but when war comes between them, Geneviève has to choose between waiting for her homespun hero or plumping for the dashing diamond dealer asking for her hand... quel dilemme! Oh, and did we mention the baby that’s on its way? Zut alors!

Based on the film by JACQUES DEMY, with the score of Grammy and Oscar-winning composer MICHEL LEGRAND (Yentl, Windmills of your Mind), featuring two of his greatest songs “Watch What Happens” and "I Will Wait for You", and lyrics translated by SHELDON HARNICK (Fiddler on the Roof), KNEEHIGH’S new production of THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG sails into the Gielgud Theatre following a limited run at Curve Leicester. The outstanding cast includes Olivier Award-winning Joanna Riding, and international cabaret sensation “Meow Meow”

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Twenty year old French auto mechanic Guy Fouchier has fallen in love with 17-year-old Geneviève Emery, an employee in her widowed mother’s chic umbrella shop. On the evening before Guy is to leave for a two-year tour of combat in Algeria, he and Geneviève vow to remain lovers. When he is gone, Geneviève discovers that she is carrying Guy’s child, but worries that Guy is not keeping their vow when she doesn’t hear from him very often. At her mother’s insistence, Geneviève marries a wealthy jeweller (Roland Cassard) who loves her despite the fact that she is carrying another man’s child.

On Guy’s return from war, he discovers that Geneviève is married and has left Cherbourg, and that the Umbrellas shop has closed. After going off the rails a bit, he settles down with his sickly aunt’s carer, Madeleine. She encourages him to clean up his act and he buys a garage. He asks her to marry him, although Madeleine worries that he is still in love with Geneviève.
Six years later, it’s Christmas Eve, and Guy is managing the Esso station and is still with Madeleine; they have a son, François. By chance, Geneviève turns up at the garage, with her (and Guy’s) daughter, Françoise. While their daughter remains in the car, Geneviève tells Guy that this is the first time she’s been in Cherbourg since her marriage. After talking, Geneviève asks Guy if he would like to see his daughter. He asks her to leave, and returns to his wife and son.

**MAKING THE SHOW**

Michael Legrand approached Emma Rice about making the first stage version of the film. He had seen and fallen in love with Emma’s previous show *Brief Encounter* and was determined that she should bring his film to the West End.

Research and Development for the show was done at the Battersea Arts Centre in London in April 2009 and also in the spring of 2011 at 3 Mills Studios in London.
TWENTY ASIDES ABOUT THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG

By Emma Rice – Artistic Director

1. I didn’t find The Umbrellas of Cherbourg, Umbrellas found me. Michel Legrand had been to see Brief Encounter and decided that I should direct the first version of The Umbrellas of Cherbourg in 30 years. The courtship started with a series of very passionate, charming and persuasive calls until I agreed to watch the film. And then, and then... The courtship was no more – the love affair had begun. I adored this piece from the moment I saw its colours, felt its heartbeat and recognised its characters. I said ‘yes’ with no questions or doubts, and the love affair continues.

2. I have always loved fairy tales, or Wonder Tales as I prefer to call them, and Umbrellas unexpectedly fits into this canon of work. Umbrellas is an unusual story structure – this is no simple ‘happily ever after’ tale. This fits into the best of grown-up tales, those of endurance. These tales are the ones I love most. They remind you that, whatever life throws at you, the chances are you will still wake up in the morning and still keep going. Geneviève has a line that says, ‘Why, if I would have died for him, am I still alive?’ This perfectly sums up endurance. Life goes on, and this alone is a wonder indeed.

3. Umbrellas is French from the tips of its painted fingers to its dancing toes. It smells of brie, tastes of vin rouge and smoulders like a Gitanes cigarette. It makes us long for romance, style and walks by the Seine. It is exotic yet familiar, sensuous and cool. Simply, Umbrellas is the definition of chic.

4. Wallpaper will always be a disappointment for me now.

5. Cherbourg is a port. People come and go here, passing through. And yet our heroes and heroines live bang in the middle of these shifting stories. They look out, sometimes dreaming of being somewhere else, sometimes just wishing to stay still forever. But the port carries on working. It is industrial and heavy but there is great romance in this. A port is the gateway to the world. Cranes swing out across the oily shore as if reaching for a different life, and sailors – dreamboats in crisp blue and white – sail to places we long to go. They reek of Jean Paul Gaultier and Pierre et Gilles. Strong, sexy and ephemeral, these sailors are watery angels, guardians of this transitory world.
6. Surely, the most eccentric shot in film history is the magic moving bike shot?

7. Music is the beating heart of this beauty. The rolling score is like the lapping waters at the edge of the stinky harbour. I love the fact that the music never ends, that there are no numbers and no big finishes. This score doesn't break the rules, it doesn't even acknowledge they exist. This is a whole new world where conversations just happen to be sung and tunes bubble up through the intricate layers of rhythm and harmony. Howard Barker once remarked that there is no sound more hollow than that of an audience clapping in unison. There are no such invitations in this complex and meaningful score. The beat is deeper, darker and more personal as the themes tap each human heart differently. We are joined together in a much more satisfying way: that of recognition.

8. ‘I Will Wait for You’ is the best tune, ever.

9. This is a love story. We have our young lovers, and everybody loves first love. But what of the other love stories? Madeleine with her consistent care for Guy; Cassard with his acceptance and unconditional love of Geneviève; Mme Emery with her girlish infatuation with Cassard? Not to mention Guy’s growing, mature love for Madeleine, and Geneviève’s practical, business-like acceptance of Cassard. All of human frailty, hope and foolishness
are here. But, perhaps, my favourite love story of them all is that one between mother and daughter – one of such deep knowledge, practicality and comfort.

10. Our lovers are very ordinary. They don’t ask for much. All they want is an umbrella shop, or a petrol, or a baby. It is one of the most moving parts of this story that it is so domestic. Can’t we give these undamaged young people what they ask for? No, no, no. Nothing is gained if you achieve your dreams too easily. Like all heroes and heroines of Wonder Tales, these fresh babies, pink and shiny, need to feel some grub and grit to endure. As we all do. None of us are exempt.

11. Umbrellas protect us from the elements, shield us from the cold and wet. Guy and Geneviève never appear under an umbrella at any point in the film.

12. Madeleine is a delicious surprise. It is her constancy, patience and generosity that ultimately get the guy. On the surface, Umbrellas is a love story between Guy and Geneviève and, yet, this expectation is subverted. We see their love dissolve and find another path. Narratively, we want to mourn this first love. We are heartbroken at the loss; we want to believe that first love is the strongest love and, yet, there is Madeleine. Quiet, gentle and strong, the girl we have taken for granted finds a voice and displays a devastating emotional intelligence. She sings of her grief, and of her love, and of her self. And we see her afresh and Guy sees her afresh. One of my favourite moments in the film is when Madeleine and Guy are in the garage and he kisses her neck and rubs her tummy. This couple have sex, have intimacy, have knowledge. I believe they will make it. She is the romantic lead now and life goes on.

13. Did young French mechanics really go to the opera?

14. Mme Emery is my hero. Glamorous, complex, vulnerable and loving, she is nothing we expect her to be. She is so chic and so controlling and, yet, she doesn’t steal letters or judge her daughter for having sex. She comes alive with the twinkle of anticipation that Cassard may love her, but does nothing to prevent her daughter from finding security and happiness. She has endured, she understands and yet she shows no bitterness or cruelty. When Cassard sings of Geneviève, my heart breaks for her...she is now in the shadow of the daughter she raised and she conceals her disappointment with dignity and compassion. She is me, and you, and any woman who has known love and the opposite. She, for me, is womanhood at its most complex, most tragic and most brilliant. I cheer her from the tops of
her stockings to the tears on her floral pillow. She is the adult, knowing, generous heart of the story.

15. Lola is my mystery guest. She doesn’t appear in the film of *Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, she is only described by Cassard. However, the character of Lola appears in the earlier Jacques Demy film of the same name (*Lola*, music by Michel Legrand) in 1961. In this film, we follow Roland Cassard before he reaches Cherbourg. We see his heart broken and his interest in diamonds spark. Lola makes a final appearance in Demy’s later film *Model Shop* in 1969. This ‘guest slot’ in *Umbrellas* continues the tradition of unannounced appearances by Lola. I think that I may be a little in love with Lola, as I suspect Jacques Demy was.

16. There is a war on. Never forget the backdrop of conflict and something far more damaging than the quest for love. This is the reminder of what we humans are also capable of; the desire for power, independence and violence. It is so in keeping with this work of gentle, domestic art that Guy receives a wound in training. Nothing too bad and nothing too dramatic. Simply, he wears the scars of human hatred. He is, in Wonder Tale terms, becoming a man: a man who has seen the dark and chooses the light. For light is worthless without the knowledge of the opposite.
17. After an overwhelming turnout and a nearly unanimous vote, Algeria’s independence was announced on 3 July 1962.

18. At the end of *Umbrellas*, we are given back to the world, back to Cherbourg with all its glistening greyness, and back to ourselves. The fairy dust is finished and we have all survived the storm. If only the back of the theatre could crumble and reveal the street behind. We could feel the cool breeze on our faces, and breathe in real life, sweet and heavy.

19. Life goes on

20. We have endured.

*Emma Rice*

*Artistic Director*
The critically acclaimed classic film *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, directed by Jacques Demy, was released in 1964 starring a 19 year old Catherine Deneuve. The film went on to be nominated for five Academy Awards and then won the 1964 Palme d'Or at Cannes Film Festival. The Academy Award nominated *I Will Wait for You*, one of the songs featured in the film, has subsequently been recorded by many artists including Frank Sinatra, Bobby Darin, Tony Bennett and Liza Minnelli.

**QUICK FILM FACTS**

**Director:** Jacques Demy  
**Writer:** Jacques Demy (scenario and dialogue)  
**French Title:** *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*  
**Release Date:** 20 December 1996 (UK)  
**Genres:** Drama, Musical, Romance  
**Tagline:** "For all the young lovers of the wide, wide world…"  
**Awards:** Prix Louis-Delluc, 1963; Palme d'Or at the 1964 Cannes Film Festival; Critics' prize for Best Film, by the French Syndicate of Film Critics, 1965; Nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 1964; Nominated for four more Academy Awards in 1966, three for Legrand and Demy, though it did not win any: "Best Song" (for "I Will Wait For You"), "Best Original Score", "Best Scoring - Adaptation or Treatment" and "Best Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen"
Cherbourg (now Cherbourg-Octeville) is a city on the north-western coast of France. It was the first territory in France captured by the Vikings in the 9th Century and has been an important and busy port since. Perhaps because of its position, jutting out into the English Channel, its history is peppered with conflict. During the 100 Years War, it changed hands between France and Britain several times. Cherbourg was also integral to the success of the Normandy landings of 1944: When the city was successfully taken by the Allies they used the port as a safe harbour for their fleet.

The Titanic called in at Cherbourg to pick up 274 passengers on its famously tragic maiden voyage

French Military Service

In 1798 the Jourdain Act established conscription in France, saying that every Frenchman was “a soldier [who] owes himself in defence of the nation”. The French government abolished National Service in 1996 after the then president Jaques Chiraq deemed the half a million strong military as “excessive” in post-war Europe. However, a 2008 poll saw almost 60% of French people regretting the suspension of mandatory military service.
**THE ALGERIAN WAR**

The Algerian War was fought in France and Algeria between 1954 and 1962, and resulted in Algeria’s independence from France. As well as the decolonization war, there was also a civil war going on between loyalist Algerian Muslims who believed in a French Algeria (the MNA) and the separatist FLN group. The war was characterized by guerilla warfare, torture and terrorism: bomb attacks and assassinations in French bars and restaurants gave rise to the term ‘Café Wars’.

There are parallels between the Algerian war and the current conflicts in the Middle East. British soldiers are deployed in Afghanistan but the war isn’t popular with many people in the UK. The Algerian war was similarly unpopular with the majority of French citizens, even though (because of conscription) many of those citizens were required to go and fight.

As of January 2011, several countries in Africa and the Middle East have seen uprisings against the dictatorships that have been ruling them. People are once again demanding freedom from their rulers, just as Algerians were doing back in the 1950s.

French soldiers at a barricade in 1960 in Algiers, Algeria, during the War of Algeria. From www.digitaljournal.com
Show Credits...

Madame Emery Joanna Riding
La Maitresse Meow Meow
Genevieve Carly Bawden
Sailor Gareth Charlton
Guy Andrew Durand
Madelaine Cynthia Erivo
Cassard Dominic Marsh
Sailor Aki Omoshaybi
Ensemble Members Laura Brydon

Producers Daniel Sparrow
Associate Producer Mike Walsh
Co-producers Paul Crewes
City Lights Productions
Curve

Director/Adaptor Emma Rice
Composer & Orchestrator Michael Legrand
English Lyrics Translation Sheldon Harnick
Additional Lyrics Charles Burr Estate
Additional Script Material Carl Grose

Design Lez Brotherston
Lighting Designer Malcolm Rippeth
Sound Designer Simon Baker
Video & Projections Designer Mark Jenkin

Musical Supervisor Nigel Lilley
Assistant Musical Director Ros Jones
Assistant Choreographer Etta Murfitt
Keyboard Programmer Phil Adams
Orchestral Fixer Sylvia Addison

Assistant Director Kezziah Serreau
Production Manager          Dominic Fraser
Company Stage Manager      Jane Semark
Assistant Stage Manager     Lindsey Knight

Costume Supervisor          Sarah Bowern
Props Supervisor            Lily Mollgaard
Wigs, Hair & Make-up Supervisor  Darren Ware

Casting Director            Gabrielle Dawes CDG

Photography                Steve Tanner
Illustrations               Daryl Waller
## Scene Structure...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene No.</th>
<th>Location/Action</th>
<th>Characters Involved</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre Show</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La Maitresse Interlude</td>
<td>La Maitresse, Sailors</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Act One, The Departure, November 1957</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>Aubin’s Garage</td>
<td>Cassard, Guy, Aubin, Pierre, Bernard, Jean</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>In front of umbrella shop</td>
<td>Genevieve, Guy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>Inside umbrella shop</td>
<td>Mme Emery, Customer, Genevieve</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1,4</td>
<td>Aunt Elise’s apartment</td>
<td>Elise, Guy, Madeleine</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>Outside umbrella shop</td>
<td>Genevieve, Guy</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,6</td>
<td>Dance hall</td>
<td>Genevieve, Guy, Waiter</td>
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<td>1,7</td>
<td>The waterfront</td>
<td>Guy, Genevieve</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,8</td>
<td>Inside the umbrella shop</td>
<td>Mme Emery, Genevieve, Passerby, Postman</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,9</td>
<td>Apartment above umbrella shop</td>
<td>Mme Emery, Genevieve</td>
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<td>Scene 1,10</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Characters</td>
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<td>At M Dubourg's, the jeweller</td>
<td>Dubourg, Cassard, Mme Emery, Genevieve</td>
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<td>In the umbrella shop</td>
<td>Mme Emery, Genevieve, Cassard</td>
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<th>Scene 1,12</th>
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<td>In a café</td>
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<td>Elise's apartment</td>
<td>Elise, Guy, Genevieve</td>
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<td>Emery's apartment</td>
<td>Mme Emery, Genevieve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elise's apartment</td>
<td>Elise, Guy, Madeleine</td>
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<td>At the railway station</td>
<td>Genevieve, Guy</td>
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<td>La Maitresse Interlude</td>
<td>La Maitresse, Sailors</td>
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**Act Two, The Absence, January 1958**

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<tr>
<th>Scene 2,1</th>
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<td>In the umbrella shop</td>
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<td>The Emery apartment, that night, dinner</td>
<td>Cassard, Mme Emery, Genevieve</td>
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<td>Cassard's story Insert</td>
<td>La Maitresse, Sailors, Cassard</td>
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<td>Lighted area, Guy in uniform</td>
<td>Guy, Mme Emery</td>
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<th>Scene 2,5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Two lovers in street walking past</td>
<td>Two Lovers, Cassard</td>
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<th>Scene 2,6</th>
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<tr>
<td>THE WEDDING</td>
<td>Cassard, Genevieve, Minister</td>
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<td>Scene</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Characters</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>Elise’s apartment</td>
<td>Elise</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Madeleine</td>
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<td>3,2</td>
<td>In the garage</td>
<td>Aubin</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jean</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Client</td>
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<td>3,3</td>
<td>Another part of the garage</td>
<td>Jean</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>A café</td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Café owner</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>Outside launderette</td>
<td>Two workers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>Sailor’s nightclub</td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jenny</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mme Germaine</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>Jenny’s room</td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jenny</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>Elise’s apartment</td>
<td>Madeleine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>Café terrace – June 1959</td>
<td>Guy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Madeleine</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,10</td>
<td>Guy’s service station – December 1963</td>
<td>Madeleine</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy (François)</td>
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<td>Genevieve (Françoise)</td>
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<td>Guy (Attendant)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guy (Madeleine) (François)</td>
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<td>La Maitresse Interlude</td>
<td>La Maitresse</td>
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<td>Genevieve</td>
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<td>Cassard</td>
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End
Producing the show...

Most of Kneehigh’s shows are produced ‘in-house’ meaning that Kneehigh is responsible for making the show, booking the venues, producing the marketing material, and funding all elements of the production. The Umbrellas of Cherbourg differs: although Emma (our Joint Artistic Director and C.E.O.) is leading the production artistically, and Paul Crewes, our Producer, has lent support to the creative process, and brokered commercial support, the show is being produced by commercial producers, with the support of a regional producing theatre. Brief Encounter (2007-10) was similar: the show was originally produced by David Pugh Ltd with support from Birmingham Rep and West Yorkshire Playhouse.

Daniel Sparrow is the main commercial producer for Umbrellas. His company, Umbrellas of Cherbourg Ltd, has raised the money needed to make the show. They also have responsibility for booking the venues, producing the marketing material, and contracting all individuals and organisations involved in the production.

The production process for the show has been led by a creative team employed by Daniel Sparrow, and has been supported by Curve Leicester. Curve is a regional producing theatre. They present touring shows but also in their remit is a requirement to produce new work as well. This means they have production resources that other (non-producing) regional venues don’t. The show rehearsed for two weeks at Curve, and there were two weeks of performances there before its transfer to the West End. Being linked to a show like this is beneficial for Curve as it furthers their reputation as a producing theatre. They will also get a financial boost from a cut of the West End box office sales if the production is a success.

Production and marketing costs for a commercial show of this scale are usually far greater than those incurred when producing a production in the subsidised sector, this means that there are greater financial risks, as well as potential reward. It is very unusual for a subsidised company to produce a production by itself in the West End because of these risks, which is why Kneehigh collaborates in this way with other producing companies.

The benefits to Kneehigh of working with partners on associated projects like these include: exposure to different kinds of audiences; the opportunity for our regular creative team to work on projects which Kneehigh could not fund themselves; the opportunity for the creative team to experience different processes which will ultimately enrich Kneehigh’s production process; and the possibility of financial benefits if the production is a commercial success.
The dialogue in The Umbrellas of Cherbourg is entirely sung. The liberetto (that is, the words of the show) were written originally by Jaques Demy, and the English translation was done by Sheldon Harnick.

Some of the dialogue is in a conversational style. The section below is taken from beginning of the show:

**ACT I**

**PART I - THE DEPARTURE**

**(AUBIN’S GARAGE -- NOVEMBER 1957)**

CUSTOMER: (Possibly CASSARD)

Is it all fixed?

GUY: Yes. It may knock a little when it’s warming up but that’s okay.

CUSTOMER: (Tips him, exits) Merci.

GUY: Merci.

AUBIN: Foucher! Can you spare an hour tonight

GUY: I’m afraid I can’t tonight but I think that Pierre is free. Pierre! Can you stay and work tonight?

PIERRE: Yeah.

AUBIN: Take the Mercedes parked in front -- check the ignition -- the spark plugs.

Sometimes the dialogue is more poetic, such as at the end of Act one, and for these sections the music is accordingly different:

GUY: Oh my love I promise I’ll come back to you
And the life we live will be a dream come true,

BOTH: We will be together for our whole life through
‘till you’re back once more,
I’ll wait for you

On the following page you can see how parts of these sections of dialogue are represented musically in the score.
Knee high's Notes for Students

---

Can you stay and work tonight? Yeah

---

Take the Marconi's parked in Som. check the ignition. The

be to ge there for our whole life through, til you're back once more.

---

Page 25
New sections of script (which are NOT in the original film but added for the stage adaptation) were written by Carl Grose for a character (Le Maitresse) who appears as a sort of chorus character in ‘interludes’ between the acts:

**Pre-show to Act I:**

> MAITRESSE, our guide, arrives through the theatre on her bicycle.

MAITRESSE
J’arrive! J’arrive!
Oh, what weather! What traffic! But I’m here now, and that’s all that matters.
Is everyone in? Good. Then let’s start.

*Bonsoir.* That is French.
Welcome to Cherbourg. That is English.
I am your guide for this evening! That is magnificent.
I know Cherbourg’s cobbled streets well
From her ocean-battered ‘arbouw walls
to her petit bourgeois dining rooms,
To her dark and dingy bars, ‘idden from view
So feel free to ask me anything you like about the place -
Any questions?
*Non? Non? Non?*
*Merde! I love you English – so polite!*
You sip your tea, you ‘unt your foxes
And you keep your feelings under your bowler hat, eh monsieur?
*Qu’es-ce que tu veux? (qu’es-ce que vous voulez? Non? BAH! CA MARCHE?)*
The dialogue in the Umbrellas of Cherbourg is entirely sung. The music is composed by Oscar-winning composer, arranger, conductor and pianist Michel Legrand, who has composed over 200 film scores including *The Thomas Crown Affair* (1968) and *Summer of ’42* (1971) as well as several musicals including *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* and *Yentl* which have won him three Oscars and five Grammys. He was 22 when his first album, *I Love Paris* (1954), became one of the best-selling instrumental albums ever released. His albums now number over 100 spanning jazz, musical theatre, variety and classical styles on which he has worked with Frank Sinatra, Sarah Vaughan, Jack Jones, Regine Velasquez, Ella Fitzgerald, Perry Como, Lena Horne, Dame Kiri te Kanawa, James Ingram, Johnny Mathis, Barbra Streisand and many other leading musicians. In this production, the music is played by a small orchestra of musicians who are on stage.
The set has been designed by Lez Brotherston, and is flexible so that it can show different situations easily. It is representative rather than trying to be lifelike: Small models of buildings hang in the space and the rigging is exposed. Neon signs also help to differentiate between places. Below is a model box of the set for the Jewellery Shop.

The design team has had to design the show for two very different spaces. The Curve is a modern, architect-designed space, whereas the Gielgud is designed in Louis XVI style, and opened over 100 years ago. The Curve seats 750 whilst the Gielgud's capacity is almost 1000.

With this in mind, the designers and artistic team have made a show that will fit just as well in a modern regional theatre as it will in an older-style, West End venue.
The following pages show the layout of the set from the side view and from above. These drawings are for the Leicester Curve.
Lighting was designed by Malcolm Rippeth. He’s written these notes about the design:

“I started work on this show in mid-2009, looking with the rest of the creative team at the film and finding everything we loved about it. It quickly became clear how much we enjoyed the night time world of Cherbourg, with its wet cobbled streets, angular streetlights, neon signs and jewelbox shopfronts. Lez Brotherston’s set became full of illuminated signage and developed a wet looking cobbled floor, which reflects light in a really pleasing way. A great playground for Director, actors and for light.

“The bulk of the lighting rig came together much later, around the middle of the rehearsal process in January 2011. The neon signs and illuminated buildings defined the space, and the rest of the light was motivated by them, and served to create the larger theatrical world of the town. The piece is mainly sung in duets, and we decided to make heavy use of two followspots to pull the main singers into focus as they took their turns in the story. The rest of the stage is always busy though, with our hostess and her chorus of sailors animating the set and keeping everything both moving and focused. So I created locations for each scene,
with lead characters in sharp focus, but surrounded by a chorus of supportive onlookers, often in deep cross-light to give them a distant beauty and the freedom to move.

“The vivid colour in the show comes mainly from the neon and the costumes, so the bulk of the theatrical lighting is relatively monochrome to allow these colours to speak for themselves. Act 1 is the most colourful and magical, with key lights varying from romantic blue moonlight to baby pink neon. Act 2 becomes a little more ordinary, the colours more muted and the world having less sparkle. Act 3 veers between an almost black and white aesthetic and drunken scenes in saturated Technicolor, ending with the final location being as real and grounded as possible.

“The overhead rig is dominated by moving lights, allowing me – with the assistance of a brilliant lighting programmer – to develop looks quickly in response to changes in staging, and to play with new ideas throughout the technical rehearsal process. What you see on stage is a mix of careful planning, happy accidents, and the developing ideas of the whole team.”
**SOUND**

Sound was designed by Simon Baker. The sound design process involves deciding on technical equipment required for the space and where to put it, and also what comes through that equipment. There is a combination of live music and pre-recorded sounds in the show, which all have to be perfectly balanced with the sung voices. The sound, like the set, had to be designed to work perfectly both in Curve and at the Gielgud, two completely different spaces.

**COSTUME**

The costume were designed by Lez Brotherston, whose drawings are on the following two pages (© Lez Brotherston). The costume design is faithful to the period in which the original film was produced: the 1960s.
Kneehigh now finds itself celebrated as one of Britain’s most innovative theatre companies. For 30 years the company has created vigorous, popular and challenging theatre for audiences throughout the UK and beyond. Using a multi-talented team of performers, directors, designers, sculptors, administrators, engineers, musicians and writers, Kneehigh perform with the joyful anarchy that audiences have come to expect from this groundbreaking theatre company.

**THE KNEEHIGH STATEMENT**

Kneehigh tell stories. We make world-class theatre. We are based in Cornwall in our breathtaking barns on the south coast and create theatre of humanity on an epic and tiny scale. We work with an ever-changing ensemble of performers, musicians, artists, technicians and administrators and are passionate about our multi-disciplined creative process. We push the boundaries of our art and our business, and strive to surprise and challenge ourselves, and our audiences alike.

**THE KNEEHIGH MISSION**

We have a commitment to the ongoing spiritual health of ourselves, our community and the theatre. We want to collaborate with our fellow human beings, whether they are adults or children, professionals or outsiders and are hungry to meet and work with new and vivid people from different backgrounds. We want to create event and offer experiences that can profoundly change people’s lives. We want to create relevant, innovative and emotionally charged work, to reach out in meaningful ways to the non-theatre going community, to build a non-elite audience and to celebrate our delicious time on the planet.

**THE KNEEHIGH MANIFESTO**

We choose to be based and work in Cornwall, within a community but outside the ‘business’. We are inspired by Cornwall and calmed by Cornwall. Here, we dedicate ourselves to thinking outside the constraints of fear and neurosis. We fight for our process and each
other. We believe in the principles of play, generosity, vulnerability, ambition, bravery, anarchy and instinct. We profoundly believe that human beings are capable of anything and push ourselves to find new depths, new joys and new excitements in our relationship to our work and our audience.

**THE BARN**

We are based in a collection of barns on the south Cornish coast, they are at the top of a hill where the road ends and a vast horizon stretches far beyond Dodman Point. By their very nature the barns let the weather in and out again. A large multi-fuel burner needs to be stoked and fed for rehearsals; there is no mobile phone reception and nowhere to pop out for a cappuccino or a snack. The isolation of the barns, and the need to cook and keep warm provides a real and natural focus for our flights of imagination. This is not a conceit; it is a radical choice that informs all aspects of our work. Although much of our work is now co-produced with larger theatres, we always try to start the creative process at these barns, to be inspired by our environment and where we work. This creative space is at the heart of how we create and conceive our work.

**THE ASYLUM**

The Asylum is Kneehigh’s future. We have wanted a home for a long time. Somewhere we can relax, be ourselves, entertain our friends and make glorious Kneehigh whoopee!

So in 2010, with the help and support of friends and allies, without whom this would not be possible, we launched The Asylum. Kneehigh’s Asylum.
Asylum means shelter, sanctuary or refuge. To us, it’s that and more. Kneehigh’s Asylum is a tent. It is our future. It is the best tent in the world. This jaw dropping, sprit lifting space is a place for world class performance that you could just as easily see perched on a Cornish cliff top as you might see pitched in a day on Trafalgar Square. It is shelter, sanctuary and refuge. It is also inspiring, heart-warming and bold. It embodies all that we are and represents an exciting new future for us. A future that will ensure we remain as brilliant, big-hearted and ground-breaking as people have come to expect. Each summer we will pitch our tent and we shall play. For more information about the Asylum visit www.thekneehighasylum.co.uk

**PREVIOUS SHOWS**


**KNEEHIGH SHOWS 2000-2011**

**The Red Shoes** 2000 & 2010

Winner of the TMS Award for Best Director 2002
Directed by Emma Rice
Poems by Anna Maria Murphy

**Pandora’s Box** 2002

Co-Produced with Northern Stage
Conceived & Created by Emma Rice & Neil Murray
Text by Margaret Wilkinson

**The Wooden Frock** 2003

Co-produced with West Yorkshire Playhouse in association with Battersea Arts Centre
Directed by Emma Rice
Adapted by Emma Rice and Tom Morris
_Nominated for the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2004_
Tristan & Yseult 2003 –2006
Directed & adapted by Emma Rice
Written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy
_Nominated for the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2004_

The Bacchae 2004
Co-produced with West Yorkshire Playhouse
Directed By Emma Rice
Written by Carl Grose and Anna Maria Murphy
_Winner of the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2004_

Nights at the Circus 2005
Lyric Hammersmith, Bristol Old Vic in association with Knee high Theatre
Based on the novel by Angela Carter
A new adaptation by Tom Morris and Emma Rice

Rapunzel 2006
A Knee high Theatre and BAC Co-Production
By Annie Siddons
Directed by Emma Rice

Cymbeline 2006
Knee high Theatre in association with the RSC
Co-commissioned by Nottingham County Council STAGES
Directed and freely adapted by Emma Rice, written by Carl Grose
Inspired by William Shakespeare

A Matter of Life & Death 2007
Based on the film by Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger
A Royal National Theatre Production
Directed by Emma Rice
Written by Tom Morris & Emma Rice

Brief Encounter 2007 –2010/11
Originally produced by David Pugh & Dafydd Rogers and Cineworld
By Noel Coward
Adapted & directed by Emma Rice
_Winner of the TMA Award for Best Touring Production 2009_

Don John 2008 –2009
Kneehigh Theatre in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company and Bristol Old Vic
Directed & adapted by Emma Rice
Written by Anna Murphy

**Hansel & Gretel** 2009 -2010/11

Co-produced with Bristol Old Vic
Directed & Adapted by Mike Shepherd
Written by Carl Grose

**THE KNEEHIGH TEAM**

Chief Executive /Co-Artistic Director  
Emma Rice

Co-Artistic Director  
Mike Shepherd

Producer  
Paul Crewes

General Manager  
Charlotte Bond

Company Stage Manager  
Steph Curtis

Communications Manager  
Anna Mansell

Assistant Director  
Simon Harvey

Finance Officer  
Sarah Comacchio

Administrator  
Liz King

Development Officer  
Matt Armstrong

Office Administrator  
Chloe Rickard
Further Information...

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg Tour Programme
Available from tour venues. Contains programme notes by Emma Rice and company biographies

The Kneehigh Website (www.kneehigh.co.uk)
Our website has lots of information about past shows, including rehearsal notes, directors’ comments, photos and lots more. Kneehigh Friends can access the member’s area which contains even more exclusive treats! Information about the Asylum can be found at www.thekneehighasylum.co.uk

The Book
Created for Kneehigh’s 30th anniversary, The Book is lovingly researched and beautifully produced, and chronicles three decades of inspiring and groundbreaking work in sections including Home, Story, Wonder, Love, Bravery, Naughtiness, and Imagine. It is available to buy on our website, or by calling the office on +44 (0)1872 267910

Kneehigh Scripts


Cymbeline - produced in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company for the Complete Works Festival.

Rapunzel - A BAC & Kneehigh co-production, written by Annie Siddons.

Nights at the Circus - A Lyric Hammersmith & Bristol Old Vic production in association with Kneehigh.

Hansel & Gretel – A Bristol Old Vic & Kneehigh co-production, written by Carl Grose

If you would like to buy a copy of any of these scripts please contact Oberon Books Ltd www.oberonbooks.com; +44 (0)20 7607 3637; info@oberonbooks.com