

Nottingham Playhouse presents

The Real & Imagined History of the Elephant Man



Visual Story

**NOTTINGHAM
PLAYHOUSE**

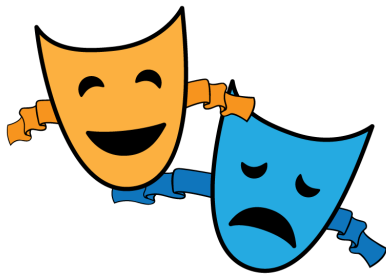


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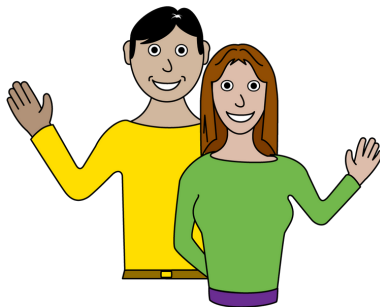


**Nottingham
City Council**

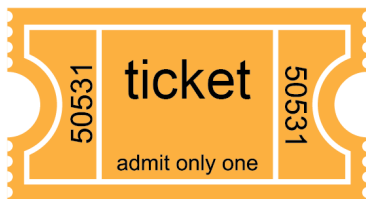
Welcome to The Real & Imagined History of the Elephant Man at Nottingham Playhouse



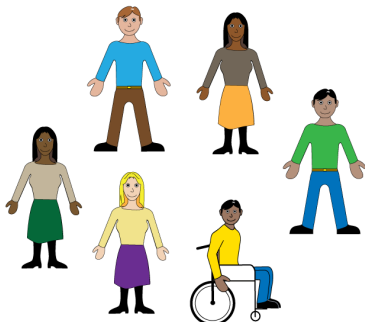
You are visiting a theatre called Nottingham Playhouse.



In the entrance you will see our Box Office.



This is where people buy or collect tickets.



Sometimes there are lots of people here.

The Foyer and chill-out space



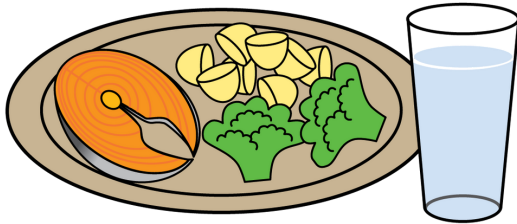
People wait to see the show in the foyers.

This is what the foyer looks like.



If you want to sit somewhere quiet before, during or after the show then you can use these foyers as a chill-out space.

Refreshments



There are bars on the upper and lower foyers. There is also a bar and seating area in the room next to Box Office. You can buy food and drinks here.



This is what the bars look like.

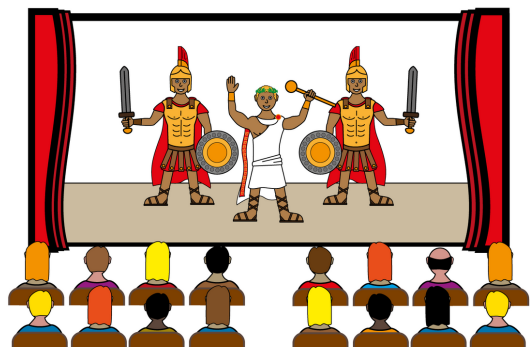
The Main Stage



The auditorium is where you will sit to watch The Real & Imagined History of the Elephant Man. The Welcome Team will help you find your seat.



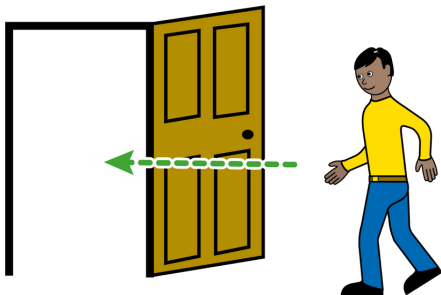
This is what the stage will look like.



When the show starts, the curtain will go up and you will see the characters performing on the stage.



It is okay to get up out of your seat if you need to move around. You can leave the room at any time and come back in when you are ready.



After the show has finished you can leave the auditorium when you are ready.

The Actors

Here are the actors in The Real & Imagined History of the Elephant Man.

Some of the actors play multiple characters. You can tell they are playing a different character, when they change their costume.

Here they are dressed in their costumes:



Zak

Zak plays Joseph Merrick



Annabelle

Annabelle plays Miss Fordham and other characters.



Daneka

Daneka plays Mrs Highfield and other characters.



Killian

Killian plays 'The Young Man', a musician and other characters.



Nadia

Nadia plays Nurse Willison and other characters.



Tim

Tim plays Joseph's father and other characters.

The Story



Joseph is a child. His father is drunk and angry. He warns Joseph that his future will be difficult because he is different to other people. He tells him to hide his limp.



Joseph's mother remembers the circus coming to Leicester when she was pregnant. The circus elephant escaped. It trapped her but did not crush her. She touches Joseph's head and asks what some growths on his flesh are.



Young Joseph is working in a cigar factory, rolling cigars. Joseph stops working. His hand won't close so he keeps dropping the cigars. He remembers being able to do this last week. Joseph cries and worries that his father will be angry if he can't work.



Joseph's mother dies. He must leave home. He talks to a young man who is watching him about the growths on Joseph's skin. The man warns Joseph that they will keep growing. Joseph is in pain.



Joseph is hungry and in pain. Some local girls think he is drunk because he is stumbling. They notice the growths on his skin and surround him. One girl offers him money to let her touch his skin. One girl calls him a monster. He takes one of the girls' hands and makes her touch his skin. The girls run away.



Joseph goes to see a woman who helps other women with abortions. He cannot speak. He wants her to do an operation on his throat. She warns him that it might kill him. She starts her operation and Joseph screams.



Joseph is displayed as an exhibit on the street. A man and a woman come to see him. They are disgusted by him. They exit and the woman who runs the exhibition tells Joseph to leave. She doesn't pay him the money he has earned.



Joseph is taken into hospital. Two people decide that Joseph should stay in a private room in the attic of the hospital. Scientists examine Joseph's body and describe it in medical terms.



Nurse Willison washes Joseph. Joseph talks to her. She is surprised. No one knows he can speak.



Joseph and Nurse Willison go to the hospital courtyard. He is introduced to Miss Fordham, a young woman. She is another patient at the hospital. She encourages Joseph to leave the hospital and go into the city.



An actress called Mrs Highfield visits Joseph in the hospital. She is playing Esmerelda in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Nurse Glyndon tells Joseph that she has seen Mrs Highfield's play. She also tells Joseph about a hospital ball. She dances with Joseph but then tells him he is not invited to the ball.



Joseph finds out that Miss Fordham has died. He talks to the morgue porter about what will happen to her body. The porter tells him that her skeleton will be donated to science.



Joseph watches the ball from outside. He sees three nurses including Nurse Willison. She is dressed as Quasimodo from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

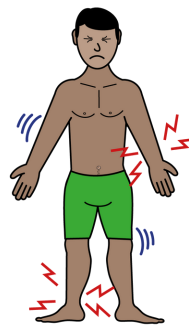


Joseph leaves the hospital. He stands in the snow. He talks to the Young Man from earlier in the play as he dies. The nurses find him buried in the snow.

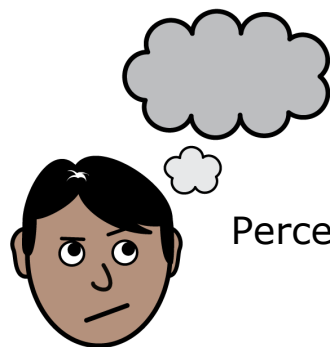
Key Words and Symbols



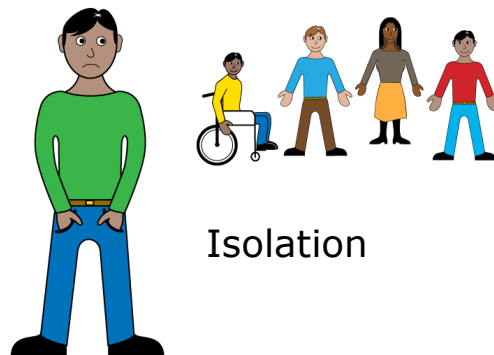
Hospital



Pain

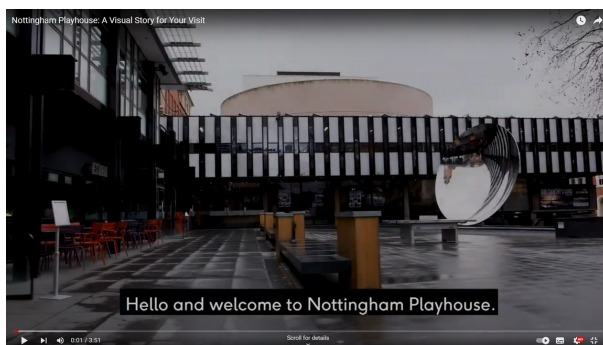


Perception



Isolation

A Video Visual Story for Your Visit



A video visual story is available on our website.

Here you can see the auditorium, foyer spaces and Box Office area. Visit the Relaxed Performances webpage to see it.

<https://nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk/your-visit/access/relaxed-performances/>

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