

BECKMAN UNICORN
PRESENTS

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

CHARLES DICKENS

Adapted by JO CLIFFORD Directed by GRAHAM McLAREN

EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK



Paul Nivison (Adult Pip)
Taylor Jay-Davies (Young Pip)

CONTENTS

SECTION 1

Great Expectations: the production in context

- The universal nature of Great Expectations
- Creative Team
- Cast and characters, in order of appearance
- Synopses of scenes
- Exercise: Writing and staging dialogue

Great Expectations: adapting the novel for the medium of theatre

- A conversation with the playwright Jo Clifford
- Exercise: using memory as a stimulus for dramatic writing
- Further ideas for creative writing

SECTION 2

Great Expectations: the process of production

- A conversation with director Graham McLaren
- Exercise: a director prepares
- The importance of movement work in creating the world of the characters
- Exercise: working as an ensemble

Creating a setting for the play

- Exercise: utilising the dynamics of the performance space of Great Expectations
- A conversation with Annie Gosney, Costume Designer
- Exercise: using research as a creative stimulus for costume design
- The rôle of masks in the production
- The rôle of the sound designer
- A glimpse inside the rehearsal room

The rôle of the Commercial Production Company in the Performing Arts Industry

- A conversation with Bruce Athol MacKinnon, Producer, Beckman Unicorn
- Exercise: Casting Great Expectations
- Exercise: understanding the rôle of the production team
- Exercise: comparative analysis of the commercial and subsidised theatre

Exclusive Articles

- Jo Clifford – Adapting A Classic
- Lucinda Dickens Hawksley – Creating the Original Novel
- Simon Callow – Charles Dickens and His Love of The Theatre



DEAR TEACHERS



The primary aim of these resource materials is to support you in realising the learning potential of Beckman Unicorn's production of GREAT EXPECTATIONS by Charles Dickens adapted for the stage by Jo Clifford.

The resources are particularly relevant for preparing students for Theatre Studies and Performing Arts courses at key stages 4 and 5, and for writing schemes of work for Great Expectations as part of English Literature AS/A Level.

The combination of movement, music and acting in the production makes it ideal assignment material for all levels of BTEC Performing Arts courses.

The element of the resource pack examining Beckman Unicorn's role as a commercial production company supports mandatory BTEC units exploring the Performing Arts Industry.

The pack also offers practical ideas for using Drama as a tool to raise standards in English at key stage 3.

Also included are drama exercises that explore the original novel and are designed to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

We hope you find the resources useful and that you and your students enjoy the show which is available on DVD with extras including interviews with Graham McLaren, Jo Clifford, Lucinda Dickens Hawksley and Dickens aficionado, Simon Callow. Subtitled in German, Italian, Spanish and Swedish.

www.GreatExpectationsThePlay.com

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www.twitter.com/DickensGE

Pip.



DICKENS AS SOCIAL COMMENTATOR

“Such a very fine, new, and grotesque idea has opened upon me,” wrote Dickens on first conceiving his idea for what would become Great Expectations, published in 1860-61.

The story of Pip, Estella, Miss Havisham and Magwitch is a story of the social class system, of the judicial system, of misery and abuse – and of love, in many of its varied forms.”

Lucinda Dickens Hawksley¹



The Escape on The Thames

¹ Charles Dickens, Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, page 103.

² See *ibid*, page 5

³ “Phiz” is the pseudonym for the Victorian illustrator Hablot Knight Browne

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: THE PRODUCTION IN CONTEXT

The journey of Jo Clifford's adaptation of Dickens' GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Playwright Jo Clifford's first encounter with adapting Dickens' novel GREAT EXPECTATIONS for the stage was back in 1988. "It actually wasn't really supposed to be a play at all", says Jo. "I was working with a rather wonderful and rather small Glasgow touring theatre in education company called TAG. We wanted to create a new show where actors and dancers performed together and combined dance with the spoken word".⁴ This type of approach to performance was rare at the time, and to get the project off the ground Jo and the company thought it would help to attach it to a well-known classic text. She remembers reading various classics and turning them down before everyone finally agreed on GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

At this stage, it was never Jo's intention to dramatise the whole book; the plan was to create something around the character of Miss Havisham instead. Jo vividly remembers the initial creative process:

We started with a week's workshop with the cast. Most of the actors had never danced on stage; most of the dancers had never spoken on stage. Gregory Nash, the choreographer, would start the day with a dance session - which the actors hated - and then we would take turns to read the book aloud. Which the dancers hated. And then we might improvise a few scenes. Which everyone hated!⁵

Under the supportive and patient guidance of Ian Brown, the director, the project eventually started to gel. It was a special time for Jo, particularly because "a young, unknown and utterly wonderful actor called Alan Cumming read Pip with such sensitivity and passion that by the end of the week I knew it was Pip's story that had to be told".⁶ At this moment Jo knew she had to dramatise the whole book.

The play opened in Glasgow on May 10th 1988, and its success led to a British Council tour the following year, taking in cities such as Baghdad, Cairo, Alexandria, Colombo, Madras, Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Dhaka.

In 1996 the play was revived by Graham McLaren, the then artistic director of Perth Theatre Company; Graham also designed the costumes for this production, and co-designed the set. He is re-inventing his vision for the play as director of *Beckman Unicorn's* current production of GREAT EXPECTATIONS.



**PRIOR TO THIS PRODUCTION,
THE NOVEL HAD NEVER BEEN
PRESENTED AS A FULL-LENGTH
PLAY IN THE WEST END SINCE ITS
ORIGINAL PUBLICATION IN 1860.**

⁴ Jo Clifford cited in programme note for GREAT EXPECTATIONS, Autumn National Tour 2012.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

THE UNIVERSAL NATURE OF GREAT EXPECTATIONS

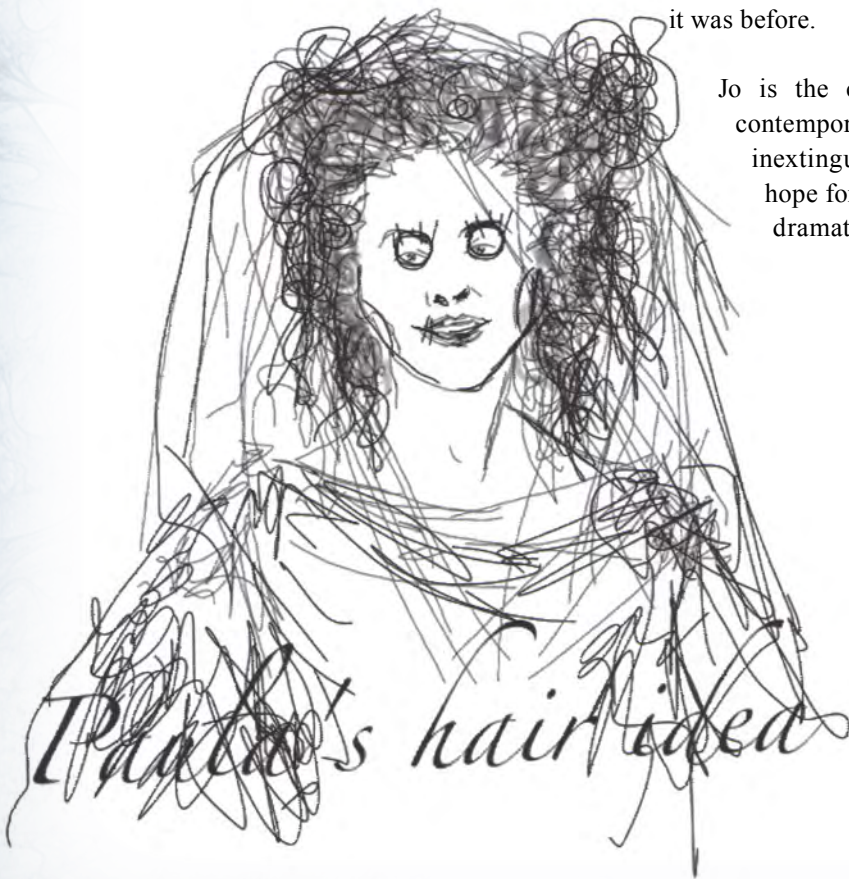
The capacity of Dickens' work to reach out to, and communicate with, people through culture and time became evident to all those involved in the first production of Jo's play. The play's journey to Bangladesh made a particularly deep impression on the playwright herself:

Dhaka is a cruel city. Its population is swollen by the hordes of the landless: people cut off from their earth, from their family and from their roots. People on the edge. People holding onto life with their fingernails. Side by side with cruel ostentation of the rich. Dickens must have known this, I thought. This is what he saw. This is what his London must have been like. Ours too, I suspect, as life gets harder for everybody. Perhaps his world is not so far away as we may wish to imagine⁷.

Dickens was writing at a time of inequality, and the shocking way in which societal injustice has grown since Jo wrote her first adaptation of GREAT EXPECTATIONS in the 1980s fills her with anger and indignation:

The class system we hoped we'd overcome has become more entrenched – and the novel is about these injustices – it is more relevant today than it was before.

Jo is the conduit in holding Dickens' mirror up to a contemporary audience, reflecting all of the novelist's inextinguishable vitality, his angry compassion, and his hope for a better world, through the medium of her own dramatic writing.



⁷ Ibid.

BILLING PAGE (West End Première)

BECKMAN UNICORN PRESENTS

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

CHARLES DICKENS

ADAPTATION
JO CLIFFORD

JACK ELLIS CHRIS ELLISON PAULA WILCOX

PAUL NIVISON GRACE ROWE TAYLOR JAY-DAVIES

KATY ALLEN JOSH ELWELL GARETH GLEN ISABELLE JOSS
SUZANNE ROBERTSON JAMES VAUGHAN RHYS WARRINGTON





CONCEIVED AND DIRECTED BY
GRAHAM McLAREN

SET ROBIN PEOPLES COSTUME ANNIE GOSNEY
GRAHAM McLAREN LIGHTING KAI FISCHER COUTURE GIOVANNI BEDIN
for HOUSE OF WORTH

ORIGINAL SCORE SIMON SLATER SOUND MATT MCKENZIE CASTING MORAG ARBUTHNOTT
for EH7 CASTING

MARKETING JHI PRESS AMANDA MALPASS PR GRAPHICS N9 DESIGN

GENERAL MANAGERS JULIAN STONEMAN ASSOCIATES PRODUCTION MANAGERS PAUL HENNESSY
for THE PRODUCTION DESK

 **VAUDEVILLE THEATRE** 
 

SECTION ONE



Rehearsal Photos for the UK Tour.
The Set arriving at Richmond Theatre.

CAST AND CHARACTERS

In order of appearance – West End. National Tour actors in brackets.

“There must be so many Miss Havishams in our cities and towns. So many Pips, a prey to vicious snobbery, so many Joes working hard, doing their best. So many abused children. So many abused adults abusing the next generation in turn”.

Jo Clifford⁸

Paul Nivison: ADULT PIP

“The past is something I’d rather forget.”

Scene One

The adult Pip is the narrator of the story. At the beginning of the play, he opens the door on his childhood memories, and throughout the action can be seen to be critically judgmental of his younger self.

Grace Rowe: ESTELLA

“You taught me to hate love
You praised me for my cruelty.”

Estella to Miss Havisham, Scene Thirty-one

Estella is Miss Havisham’s adopted daughter, brought up to live only in the darkened rooms of Satis House, and taught that “there is no such thing as daylight.” Ironically, her name means ‘star’ and she is indeed the star in Pip’s firmament.

Taylor Jay-Davies: YOUNG PIP

“I can never be comfortable. Never anything but miserable unless I lead a very different kind of life from the one that I lead now.”

Scene Fifteen

The orphaned young Pip lives with his abusive sister, Mrs Joe, and gentle brother-in-law, Joe Gargery. Deprived of maternal affection, the play shows the journey of an immature and insecure young boy, who subsequently loses his moral bearings as the events of his early adulthood unfold.

Chris Ellison: Magwitch

“I had a kind of face on me that scared folk.
They’d look at me and say, he’s a hard ‘un.”

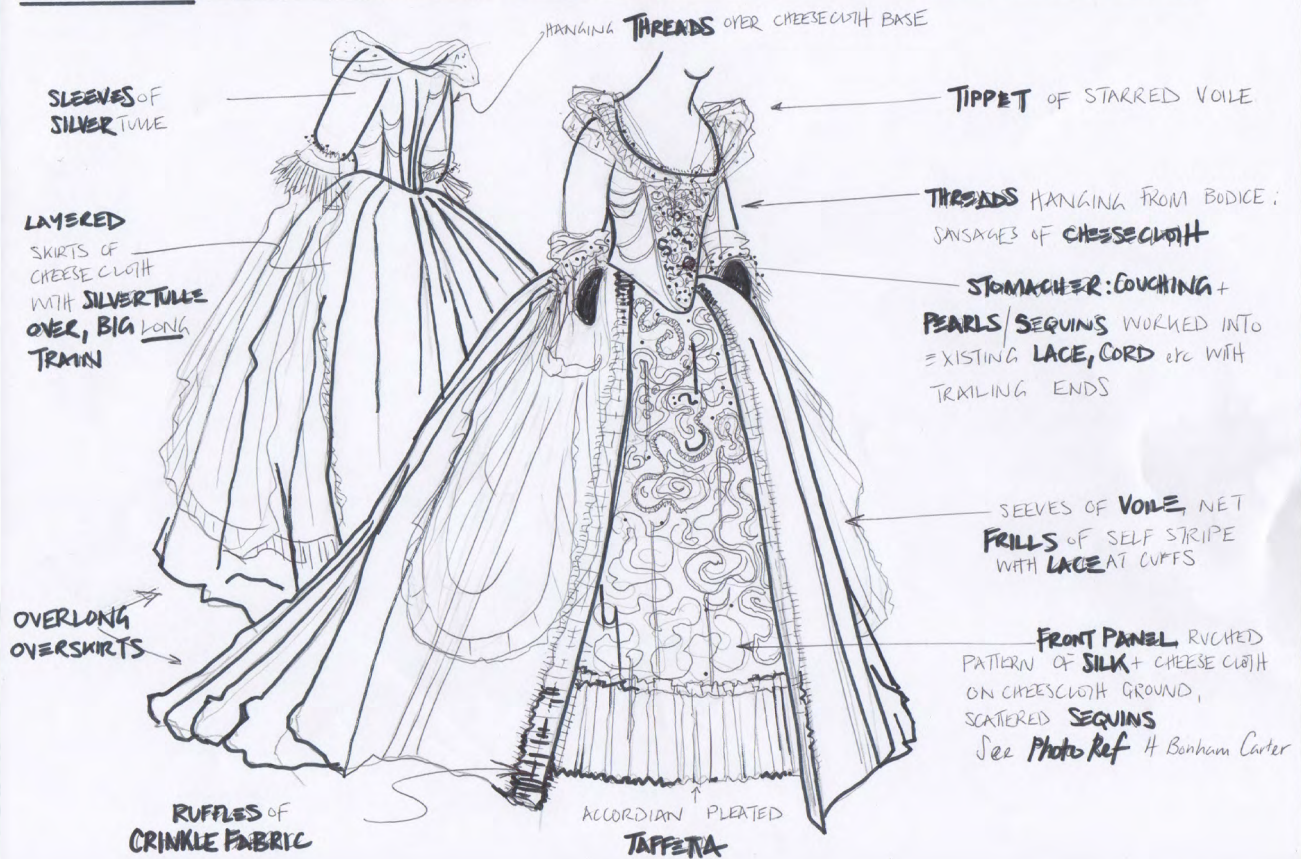
Scene Thirty

When we first meet Abel Magwitch in the play, he is an escaped convict, evading transportation in a desperate instinctive bid for survival. Pip’s act of generosity towards him is the catalyst for Magwitch’s undisclosed role as his benefactor as the play progresses.



⁸ Jo Clifford cited in programme note for GREAT EXPECTATIONS, Autumn National Tour 2012.

DIAGRAM OF MISS HAVISHAM GOWN : GREAT EXPECTATIONS



MISS HAVISHAM WEDDING DRESS DESIGN

© Annie Gosney

Josh Elwell (Steve North): JOE GARGERY

“And what larks, eh, Pip.

When you’re my regular ‘prentice. What larks”

Scene Seven

Joe is a Blacksmith to whom Pip is apprenticed, and his truest friend and protector: “Ever the best of friends. Ain’t us, Pip?” being his constant mantra. He sees the young Pip as his soul mate, and is truly devastated to lose Pip to his new life in London. When the lawyer Jaggers offers financial compensation for the loss of Pip as his apprentice, Joe’s response is heart-wrenching: “Do you think money can make compensation to me for the loss of the little child – what came to the forge – and ever the best of friends!” (*Scene Sixteen*).

Isabelle Joss: MRS JOE (doubled with Molly/Sarah Pocket)

“A wretched sniveling boy I brought up by hand.

I don’t know why. I’d never do it again.”

Mrs Joe on Pip, Scene One

Mrs Joe Gargery, Wife of the Blacksmith, is Pip’s elder sister, who has brought him up. The formal title that Dickens’ applies to her symbolises her emotional distance from both Pip and her husband, the former whom she subjects to a torrent of physical and verbal abuse on a daily basis, and the latter whom she treats with contempt.

CAST AND CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

James Vaughan: WOPSLE

“I can feel my muse shake and stir his wings.”

Scene Five.

Jo Clifford's Wopsle who we meet in the play is an amalgam of Dickens' Wopsle and Pumblechook from the original novel. Cornchandlier, tailor and would be playwright, Woplse is immediately recognisable by his physical presence, pompous speech and complete insensitivity.

Paula Wilcox: MISS HAVISHAM

**“Break their hearts, my pride and hope
Break their hearts and have no mercy.”**

Miss Havisham addressing Estella, Scene Eight.

A wealthy recluse, Miss Havisham was once a carefree young heiress who was jilted by her fiancé on the day of their wedding. She has remained frozen in time since this day; the clocks have all been stopped, the wedding breakfast still lies on the table and Miss Havisham remains in her now tattered wedding clothes.⁹

Isabelle Joss: SARAH POCKET (doubled with Mrs Joe Molly/)

Sarah Pocket: Dear Miss

Havisham, how well you look.

**Miss Havisham: I do not. I am
yellow skin and bone.**

Scene Ten

One of Miss Havisham's sycophantic relatives who hope to inherit her fortune.

Katy Allen: Camilla

**“I think of you at night, dear
Miss Havisham, and Raymond
is my witness to the nervous
jerkings I have in my legs”.**

Scene Ten

Another of Miss Havisham's sycophantic relatives, who is of a nervous disposition.

Gareth Glenn: RAYMOND

“I have a low opinion of boys.”

Scene Ten

Camilla's pompous husband.



HERBERT POCKET
Character study

⁹ See Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, *ibid*, page 102.

Suzanne Robertson: BIDDY

“I’m glad of one thing, and that is that you felt you could tell me everything, Pip”.

Scene ??

Like Pip, Biddy is an orphan. We are told by Joe that she “helps around the house sometimes.” She is the ideal kind, loyal and dependable woman, and Pip’s refusal to take her advice and his feelings of superiority towards her all reflect badly on him.

Jack Ellis: JAGGERS

“I won’t have feelings in my office. Is that understood?”

Jaggers addressing Wemmick, Scene Twenty-two

Jaggers is a lawyer, representing crime and punishment in the play. His clients include both Miss Havisham and Magwitch, reinforcing Pip’s illusion as to the identity of his benefactor. His office is the symbolically named Little Britain, a microcosm for the ill-gotten gains to be made from crime, prison and death in Dickens’ London.

James Vaughan (Brian Pettifer): WEMMICK

“There’s one rule in life, Sir, I find it prudent to apply: always get hold of portable property.”

Scene Twenty-six.

Clerk to Jaggers, Wemmick is the living embodiment of the unscrupulous edicts of Little Britain: dressed and adorned in the possessions of dead clients.

Rhys Warrington (Nathan Guy): HERBERT POCKET

“...Try to cultivate a manly step.

An assured step....A step of authority...

The step of a gentleman of expectations.”

Scene Twenty-one.

On Pip’s arrival in London, Herbert Pocket is charged with tutoring him on the art of becoming a gentleman.

Gareth Glenn (Gordon Brandie): BENTLEY DRUMMLE

“Nice pile I have. In Gloucestershire. Four hundred and twenty rooms. Two thousand acres. Jolly decent hunting. Damn good shooting. Extremely good fishing.”

Scene Twenty-five

Estella’s aristocratic suitor, heir to a Dukedom, whose abusive treatment of Estella exemplifies the fact that money and social rank do not make a gentleman.



ADULT PIP

Character study

SYNOPSSES OF SCENES

Below is listed a synopsis of the scenes that make up Jo Clifford's adaptation of *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*. It is intended as a useful guide to identify the through-line of action that Jo has focused on when adapting the novel for the stage. It is also a useful tool for students who wish to analyse the structure the playwright has used to translate the narrative of Dickens' novel into dramatic form.

It should be noted that the intentions and actions of the characters that are communicated through the script are only one component used to convey meaning in the overall production; movement, music and visual signifiers such as costume and mask are all employed to create the overall language of the piece. This is discussed in further detail in Section Two.

PART 1

MOVEMENT 1

Scene One. Satis House.

Estella encourages Adult Pip to remember the past. They open the doors of the house and a procession of figures from Pip's past appears: Miss Havisham, Estella's adopted mother; the village Parish clerk, Mr Wopsle; Pip's elder sister, Mrs Joe, who raised him, and her husband Joe. Mrs Joe admonishes the young Pip for "always running off to the marshes", which conjures up the past in Adult Pip's imagination, leading him back onto the lonely marsh.

Scene Two. The Marsh

Magwitch the convict suddenly appears, grabs Pip and interrogates him. When he learns that Pip lives with his sister, who is married to the blacksmith, Magwitch threatens Pip and makes him promise to return with a file to sever his prisoner's irons.

Scene Three. The Forge

Pip runs back to the forge to find Joe. Joe comforts the frightened Pip. He attempts to hide Pip from Mrs Joe, who is 'after' him, but she finds Pip and beats him. She begrudgingly gives Joe and Pip their supper, complaining that feeding them wears her down to "skin and bone". Pip, remembering the convict, manages to hide his slice of bread. A distant gun goes off, indicating an escaped convict. Pip asks Joe and Mrs Joe what a convict is. As his questioning persists, Mrs Joe loses her patience and sends both Pip and Joe to bed. Pip gets out of bed and steals food.

Scene Four. The Marsh

Enter Magwitch. He is cold and hungry. Pip finds him and gives him the food and bread. He eats like a starving man. Magwitch challenges Pip's loyalty. Pip responds by declaring that he'd never tell on Magwitch; he offers Magwitch the file and hopes that he gets free. Magwitch thanks Pip and swears that he will never forget his actions.

Scene Five. The Forge

Enter Mr Wopsle, Joe and Mrs Joe. They have been having a meal. Mr Wopsle grabs Pip and cruelly mocks him for the good fortune to be born a boy, and not a pig, and undertakes a mock execution of Pip, cutting his throat as if he were a pig. This image is juxtaposed with Magwitch freeing himself from his irons, only to be pursued and imprisoned. The scene's focus returns to Mr Wopsle and his mock execution of Pip. Pip remains central to the scene as Mrs Joe opens a letter summoning him to Miss Havisham's. Mr Wopsle alludes to Miss Havisham's wealth, foreseeing "the tremulous hand of fate" swooping down on Pip's life, lifting him from the dirt and dust and grime.



MOVEMENT II

Scene Six. Satis House

Pip walks nervously to Miss Havisham's. Estella meets him and leads him into the house. They go on a complicated journey along dark and spooky corridors. Estella introduces Pip to its name, Satis House, which is Latin for 'enough', meaning whoever had the house could want for nothing else. The house is dark, empty and very old, and cold and full of dust. Estella leaves Pip alone. Miss Havisham appears. She demands that Pip play, which he finds he cannot do, as everything is so "strange" and "melancholy". She then commands him to call Estella, which he does.

Miss Havisham then commands Estella to play with the boy. Estella contests that he is "only a common laboring boy", to which Miss Havisham responds, "Well? You can break his heart". Estella refuses to play the common game Pip suggests, so Miss Havisham insists she dance with Pip instead, Pip is clumsy in his endeavours to do this, and embarrassed by his efforts. Estella admonishes Pip for his coarse hands and thick boots, and cruelly defies him to cry.



Scene Seven. The Forge

Enter Joe, Mrs Joe and Mr Wopsle. Mrs Joe quizzes Pip about his time with Miss Havisham. Pip makes up an elaborate story about Miss Havisham sitting in a black velvet coach, with Estella passing her wine and cake through the window. Mr Wopsle is transfixed, believing Miss Havisham will take Pip "to a higher sphere."

Joe and Pip are left alone onstage. Pip confesses that his story was "all lies". Joe reprimands him for lying. In return, Pip berates Joe for not teaching him to dance, expressing his self-realisation that he is "common", and this realisation was the genesis of his lie. Joe talks to Pip "as a true friend" telling him, "if you can't get to be uncommon through going straight, you'll never get to do it through being crooked." He tells him not to tell any more lies, and looks to the future with Pip as his apprentice. The scene closes with them singing and working happily together. Time passes.

Scene Eight. Satis House

After a while, Miss Havisham enters, beating time with her stick. Joe slips away. Pip sings alone until his voice fades away. Miss Havisham stands before him. They walk together through the house, and Miss Havisham shows Pip cobwebs under which lies her wedding cake, brought to the house on this day many years ago, long before Pip was born. She demands he call Estella. As Estella appears, Miss Havisham decks her with jewels, alerting Pip to her beauty. Estella invites Pip to kiss her. Hesitantly, Pip comes closer and closer; Estella hits him hard. Pip cries.

Scene Nine. The Forge

Enter Joe. Pip is in distress because of his ignorance; he wants to know why Joe wasn't educated and didn't go to school. Joe tells him the story of his childhood and the physical abuse he and his mother endured at the hand of his father, a blacksmith at the very same forge. Joe immersed himself in work until both his parents died. His loneliness was quelled when he met Pip's sister, who was caring for Pip at that time. When they married, Joe told her there was room for Pip at the forge, and here they are today, "ever the best of friends." They hug. Joe exits.

Scene Ten. Satis House

Estella and Pip are discovered on stage. There is a new outer coldness to Pip in his response to Estella. Miss Havisham appears and commands Pip to walk with her. She leans on his shoulder, walking at an impatient, fitful speed, showing him the table where she will be laid out when she's dead. Her relatives arrive, Sarah Pocket, Camilla and Raymond. They barely have time to answer Miss Havisham's enquiries about their health as she instructs them where they should take their

SYNOPSSES OF SCENES *continued*

places round the table when they come to “feast” upon her in death and summarily dismisses them. Left alone on stage, Miss Havisham tells Pip today is her birthday, but that she won’t suffer it being spoken of:

**“When the ruin is complete,
and they lay me dead, in my
bride’s dress, upon this
table, so much the better if it is
done this day!**

She concludes the scene by asking Pip to sing.

Scene Eleven. Satis House followed by the Forge

Enter Miss Havisham, again asking Pip to sing. He starts to sing “Old Clem” and Miss Havisham joins in. They walk together. It is to be Pip’s last visit to the house. She gives Pip money as his reward, telling him to “Expect no other and expect no more.”



Mrs Joe and Mr Wopsle enter the scene and take the money from Pip.

Pip and Joe work. A year has passed, and Pip puts the idea to Joe that he feels he ought to visit Miss Havisham. Joe knows it is Estella he really wishes to see.

Scene Twelve. Satis House

Pip receives a curt reception from Miss Havisham. He doesn’t get to see Estella, who is abroad.

MOVEMENT III

Scene Thirteen. The Forge

Pip sadly returns home. Joe offers him solace, suggesting Biddy, the girl who helps around the house, as a possible suitor to replace Estella. Pip rejects the idea: he perceives Biddy to be common. Biddy enters and greets Joe and Pip. Adult Pip closes the scene, describing how he ran from the forge at that moment, to stand outside Miss Havisham’s house, thinking of who he was, and who he might become.

Scene Fourteen. The Forge

Enter Joe carrying his wife’s body, accompanied by Biddy. Mrs Joe has been murdered for the money Miss Havisham gave to Pip. Biddy consoles Joe and offers to look after him.

Adult Pip concludes the scene, talking of the “grimy curtain” that fell down over his life at this point, as he settled into an apprentice’s routine.

Scene Fifteen. The Forge

Pip appears dissatisfied and uncomfortable; he confides in Biddy that he would like to be a gentleman on account of Estella, whom he admires dreadfully. Biddy challenges Pip to ask himself why he wants to be a gentleman, is it to spite Estella, or to win her over?

Scene Sixteen. The Forge

Jaggers, a lawyer from London, arrives at the forge with news that transforms Pip’s life, announcing that Pip has “great expectations”. He is to inherit a handsome property, and is to be brought up as a gentleman. The identity of his benefactor is to remain a secret until such time as they feel fit to reveal their identity to Pip personally. Jaggers turns his

attention to Joe, who is dumbfounded by the news. On enquiring whether Joe requires compensation for the loss of his apprentice, Jaggers is vehemently reprimanded; Joe makes it clear that money is no compensation for the loss of Pip. Jaggers leaves, and Pip contemplates his good fortune. Mr Wopsle enters, proffering thanks to Miss Havisham, only to be silenced by Pip, as his benefactor's identity is to remain a secret. Pip tries on his new clothes, showing off the effect to Mr Wopsle, but becoming self-conscious before Biddy and Joe. Left alone with Biddy, Pip asks her to support Joe in his learning and manners in his absence. She is aghast at Pip's arrogance, which Pip interprets as envy at his rise in fortune. He admonishes her for this, calling it "a bad side of human nature."

Scene Seventeen. Satis House

Pip expresses his gratitude for his good fortune to Miss Havisham. She confirms that Jaggers is her lawyer.

Scene Eighteen. The Forge

Pip is discovered finishing his packing. He is miserable. He declines Biddy's offer of breakfast. Pip, Biddy and Joe look at each other; they don't know what to say. It is a miserable, constrained farewell. Pip sets off. Joe throws a shoe after him.

PART TWO

MOVEMENT IV

Scene Nineteen. London

Pip struggles through a crowded London street. He enters Jaggers' office and is met by the clerk, Wemmick. When Jaggers' arrives, the first thing he does is harshly call out a demand, "Hands!", the cue for the silent Molly to bring him a basin, soap and towel so that he can go through his obsessive hand-washing ritual. His address to Pip is curt and brief, as he proffers him money, business cards to inform him of his address, his tailor and his cobbler.

Scene Twenty. Barnard's Inn

Wemmick accompanies Pip to his new lodgings. Wemmick is polite, but laconic. As they arrive at Barnard's Inn, he declines Pip's offer to shake hands, "I have got so out of it. Except at the last. Good day."

Scene Twenty-one. Barnard's Inn

Herbert Pocket, Pip's tutor, introduces himself and shows him his lodgings. His role as tutor commences swiftly, as he demonstrates how Pip should call the servant who has been engaged for him, and demonstrates how he should conduct himself in his servant's presence.

Scene Twenty-two. Jaggers' Office

Pip returns to Jaggers' office. As with their previous encounter, Jaggers' commands Pip to wait until he has gone through the ritual of his hand washing, again aided by the dutiful, silent Molly. When he finally responds to Pip, he does so in the third person, asking Wemmick to pay Pip his money, before making his exit.

As Wemmick counts the money, Pip observes that it is more than he needs when there are others in such distress. Wemmick warns him of this way of thinking, alluding to the multitude of poverty in London, "Use it to help, sir, and you'll know the end of it too."



SYNOPSIS OF SCENES *continued*

Scene Twenty-three. Barnard's Inn

The scene opens with Herbert Pocket tutoring Pip on the role of a gentleman, “a gentleman does not work. A gentleman lives off the work of others.” As he does this, Joe enters, timidly. Pip’s first impulse is to greet him warmly, but he is stopped short by Herbert. Herbert takes his leave, and Pip takes the advice to heart, behaving formally towards Joe. Joe, awkward and out of place, adopts false airs of speech and manner. He is here merely to deliver a message from Miss Havisham, that Estella has returned home and wishes to see Pip. As Joe makes to leave, Pip asks him to stay and have something to eat. Joe responds in his own voice and demeanor; he feels “wrong” here in these clothes, and asks Pip to think of him at the forge instead, “at the old anvil, in the old burnt apron, sticking to the old work.” Joe offers Pip a blessing as he makes his exit. Pip is left alone feeling sad; his new clothes feeling alien to him.

MOVEMENT V

Scene Twenty-four. Satis House

Pip greets Miss Havisham and the grown up Estella, trying to appear more confident. He is in awe of Estella, finding her much changed. She, in turn, responds to him with her characteristic coldness, finding him only a ‘little’ less coarse and common. She is going to London and tells Pip he is to accompany her. The scene comes to a distressing climax as Miss Havisham asks Estella to recite the cruel definition of love that she has taught her, which mirrors her own bitter experiences. Pip goes to comfort Miss Havisham in her distress, but Estella prevents him. Pip asks Estella if she has no heart, Estella warns him that she has “a thing that beats and if it stops I die”, but that she has not bestowed it anywhere, having “no such thing to give.”

Scene Twenty-five. Barnard's Inn and Richmond

Herbert tutors Pip, instructing him in how a gentleman does not “love”, but “bestows his affections”. The scene shifts to the Richmond Subscription Ball, where Estella flirts with Bentley Drummle. Pip suffers at what he witnesses, and is distraught when Estella tells him that she and Drummle might become engaged. She admits to Pip that she is deceiving Drummle and entrapping him, as she had been taught to do by Miss Havisham. She then admonishes Pip for being so wrapped up in himself, that he has never taken the trouble to know Miss Havisham’s story. As Estella begins to relate the story, Miss Havisham wanders through the ball like a ghost, and shares her perspective of the story as Estella narrates it, telling of how her heart was broken as her wedding was broken off on the day itself. Set on a path of revenge towards all men, she then engaged her lawyer, Jaggers, to find her a girl whom she could manipulate to hurt men who fall in love with her. The scene is enacted out as Jaggers detaches the baby Estella from Molly’s arms and hands her over to Miss Havisham. Estella draws a parallel between Pip and herself; neither of them knowing who they are. Despite learning that Miss Havisham’s objective in bringing up Estella to be admired, was for her own revenge, Pip still admits to loving Estella, against the deepest instincts of his soul.

Scene Twenty-six. Jaggers’ office

Pip is discovered alone musing over the casts of the heads of former clients on the shelf. When Wemmick enters, he questions him as to the strangeness of their features; Wemmick tells him it was because they were hanged. The clerk muses that they were “good clients” and the making of him and Jaggers. He talks of the worldly possessions that have come his way through the misfortune of clients, concluding to Pip that there is one rule in life that he finds it prudent to apply: always get hold of portable property. Pip is shocked by Wemmick’s philosophy of life. Jaggers enters, shortly followed by Molly with a basin for Jaggers’ hand cleaning. Jaggers observes Pip admiring Molly, he commands Molly to show her wrist – and talks of the animal strength in her wrist; “the strength of a beast that is torn from it’s young”. He dismisses Molly and Pip is left to explain the reason for the meeting: he is now twenty-one, and wants to know who his benefactor is. Jaggers’ refuses to be drawn into answering the question, although he concludes the scene by delivering a message to Pip; he is to go to Miss Havisham’s.



Scene Twenty-seven: Satis House

Miss Havisham appears to be soliciting affection from Estella, who in turn tries to detach herself from this as she finds Miss Havisham's behaviour hard to understand. Pip arrives, understanding Miss Havisham has news for him. Estella tells him the news, that the marriage is announced between herself and Bentley Drummle; it is not the news Pip expected to hear. Estella tells Pip to refrain from talking of love, a form of words that has no meaning for her. She closes the scene with a thread of consolation for Pip, "Do not fear I will be a blessing to him, Pip. There's is no chance of that".

MOVEMENT VI

Scene Twenty-eight. Barnard's Inn

It has become very dark, and there is the sound of wind. Pip hears a footstep on the stair. The convict, Magwitch appears. Pip recognizes him, but initially doesn't know what to say or do. Magwitch has never forgotten what Pip did for him; Pip makes it clear that his circumstances have changed, and he doesn't wish to renew his acquaintance with Magwitch. Magwitch reveals that he is Pip's benefactor, and stretches out his hands towards him; Pip is revolted by his touch, he never dreamt of Magwitch being his benefactor. Magwitch calls himself Pip's "second father", and has come to see the gentleman that he's made. He intends to stay with Pip.

Scene Twenty-nine. Satis House House followed by Jaggers' Office

Pip accuses Miss Havisham of deceiving him.

He then solicits confirmation from Jaggers that Magwitch is his benefactor. Wemmick warns Pip to take care, as Magwitch is sentenced to life, and will be hanged if caught.

Scene Twenty-nine. Barnard's Inn, moving to the River, a Courtroom, and a Cell.

Pip returns to Magwitch, who wakes. Pip demands to know what crime he has committed. Magwitch tells his story, of how he's spent his life in and out of jail, of how he met a man, a 'smooth talker' called Compeyson, and they worked as a team to procure money. It was then that he was caught, but it was Jaggers who prevented him from being hung; he was transported for life instead. He had a newborn daughter at the time, but he "lost her for good".

There is a knock at the door, Wemmick appears. He informs Pip that there is money on Magwitch's head, that he should take his "portable property" and get him aboard a steamer leaving England as soon as possible. Wemmick advises Pip to trust no one, and row Magwitch out to the steamer himself.

The scene moves to the river, and Pip rows Magwitch to a steamer. As they pull closer to the shadow of the steamer, a galley boat approaches them, looking for Magwitch. As the steamer bears down on them, Pip is taken on board the galley, but Magwitch is gone. Then a dark object drifts towards them on the tide; it is Magwitch. He is brought on board, his right arm broken and horribly cut. The adult Pip describes what followed for Magwitch, how the sentence of death was passed on him.

The scene shifts to Magwitch lying in Pip's arms. The adult Pip describes how, from that day, a change came over Magwitch. He became weaker, "and the light drained away".

MOVEMENT VII

Scene Thirty-one. Satis House

Estella returns to Satis House. Miss Havisham is incredulous, and asks her why she has come back. Estella explains how Miss Havisham taught her nothing about suffering compared to the physical and mental abuse she has suffered at the hands of her husband, which is why she has returned. She cannot forgive Miss Havisham for taking away her heart and leaving her with one of ice. Miss Havisham is in torment at what she has done. She drops her lantern and is enveloped

SYNOPSSES OF SCENES *continued*

in flame. The adult Pip describes how there was a fire that burnt her up as she screamed, moaning in agony and distress. She disappears. Estella addresses the audience, saying how at that moment she pitied and forgave her, but it was too late.

Scene Thirty-two. Barnard's Inn

Threatening figures shadow Pip. He is in debt, and is ill and delirious. He suffers a nightmare where the characters from his life encroach him. As Pip moves back into consciousness, Joe is by his side.

Scene thirty-three. Barnard's Inn and The Forge

Pip gets better, and promises Joe that he will never forget the days he has spent with him during his recovery.

When Pip awakes in the morning, Joe is gone, leaving a letter saying that now Pip is better, he "can do better without Joe". Beside the letter was a receipt for the debt. Joe has paid it all. Pip resolves to go back to the forge to thank him, and to offer Biddy his hand in marriage.

As he returns to the forge, he sees Biddy arm-in-arm with Joe. It is her wedding day, and she has just married Joe. The adult Pip tells how, there and then, another poor dream was smashed to pieces, and the child in him "was dead and gone forever."

Scene Thirty-four. Satis House

An older Estella enters, asking Pip if he still knows her, as she is "greatly changed." The adult and boy Pip speak in unison, "My heart has not changed." They walk, not quite sure what to say.

Scene Thirty-five. Jaggers'

Pip returns to Jaggers to ask him who Estella is. He begs him to be open with him. Jaggers "puts the case", making no admissions, of a lawyer who saw children being destroyed by evil. So, when this lawyer came across a child, Estella, whose mother was his servant, and whose father had been transported for life, he knew of an eccentric old lady who wanted a child. He wanted to save one, just one, child from all those suffering around him.

The Adult Pip describes how "All the doors are open now/And the wind blows through the empty house", and the adult Estella, asks what will happen to the house, "When the sunlight breaks in on it?" She describes how Pip and her have been "bent and broken by suffering", and resolves to take a child, a little girl, to run laughing down the passages of the house, who she will keep safe, and preserve from what happened to her. She asks Pip to take her hand before they part forever, and she leaves. Pip is alone, as at the beginning.

HAPPY EVER AFTER.

Jo Clifford's ending for her stage adaptation of GREAT EXPECTATIONS follows the course of Dickens' original ending for his novel. Veering away from his usual practice by not permitting Pip and Estella a happy ending, Dickens had them meet unexpectedly, and glimpse their mutual unhappiness, powerless to change one another's lives. However, Dickens was persuaded by his friend and fellow novelist, Edward Bulwer Lytton, to give the couple a happy ending. The new ending sees Pip visiting Miss Havisham's destroyed home. By chance Estella is already there, as if waiting for him. They talk, then Pip takes Estella's hand and leads her away from the ruin of Satis house. The final words belong to Pip: "I saw no shadow of another parting from her."



EXERCISE: STAGING TRANSITIONS BETWEEN SCENES

- Although the play is divided into thirty-five scenes, set in multifarious locations, the action is intended to flow seamlessly, with the ending of one scene moving effortlessly into the next.
- Working in groups, ask your students to choose two consecutive scenes from the synopsis.
- Experiment with improvising the close of the first chosen scene, and the opening of the next. What techniques can they find to achieve a continuous flow in performance?
- Present the transitions as a class, and discuss what emerges from the exercise.
- Do any shifts in the rhythm and tempo of the action begin to appear?
- Discuss with your students how they think this approach would impact on the design of the production.
- Taking into consideration the continuous flow of action from scene to scene, ask your students if they can identify a natural break in the action where they could place the interval.



GREAT EXPECTATIONS: ADAPTING THE NOVEL FOR THE MEDIUM OF THEATRE

A CONVERSATION WITH PLAYWRIGHT JO CLIFFORD

When you saw your adaptation of GREAT EXPECTATIONS revived by the Perth Theatre Company in 2005, what was your response to the play that you had written 18 years earlier?

It was an agreeable surprise; the book had been difficult to adapt, and was lovely to see this production of it – it worked very well.

How did you reinvent the script for Beckman Unicorn's current touring production of the play?

It was originally written for a smaller Theatre in Education Company, and it's ironical that my efforts to par it down for them have been reversed for this larger company – I have now added extra scenes to populate the stage. In a discussion with the producer, Bruce Athol MacKinnon, we decided to write a new scene for Miss Havisham's relatives (Scene Ten), and bring in Estella's suitor, Bentley Drummle (Scene Twenty-five). I like both sets of new scenes. When we had the first read through of the revised script, I thought it worked very well. Every time the play gets put on, it has to be adapted – there have been so many different companies and size of companies working on it. We wrote an even smaller version of it with more doubling for the Unicorn Theatre for Children, which worked well for a younger audience.

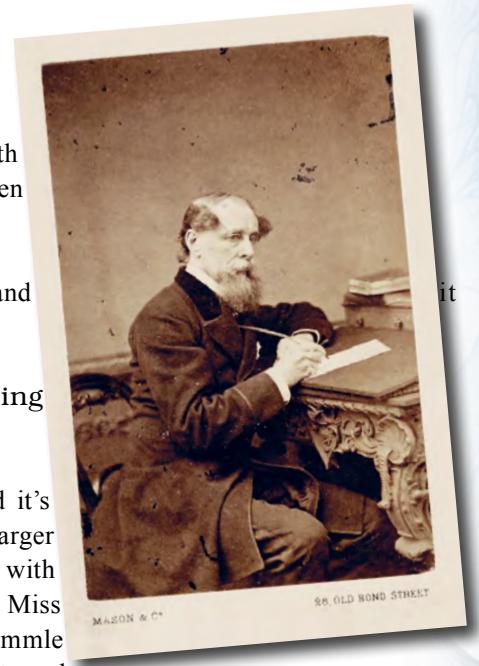
The play is recognisably Dickens' work - in terms of character and story - but you have made it very much your own in the way you have drawn out and exemplified certain themes and ideas from the novel. Can you talk about how you achieved this?

This was absolutely intrinsic to the whole process. People talk about being faithful to the book – but that's no good if it results in a crass play; it needs to be a wonderful play. I identified with the characters, they became part of myself, expressions of myself. That's my process for making a book work as a play. It must mean something to me – it has to hook into my preoccupations and concerns. Writing an original play, I have to trust what excites me, and what I think will excite an audience. So, the process of adapting a book is no different from this. The difference is I've got more material to process.

As a playwright, are there any specific techniques you employed in adapting the novel for the stage?

When I'm teaching playwriting, I explain that I work from the inside; I start from my own emotional and imaginative response. It is long and hard and risky, exposing yourself to all types of experiences. On another level, there are technical demands with playwriting. With the original script of GREAT EXPECTATIONS, it was not to run for more than two hours, and it had to be written for a cast of seven or eight actors. It was linguistically spare, as the actress playing Miss Havisham was a dancer, and hadn't spoken on stage before, therefore, her speeches had to be short and simple. This all had a profound effect on the adaptation. It's very focussed, with an incredible narrative drive; it covers a huge amount of ground in a short time. And I wrote it very fast, in five weeks.

You have taken some of the original character traits from the novel to use in the adaptation, for example, Jaggers' fanatical hand washing, a symbol of guilt borrowed from Macbeth. For those students who are unfamiliar with the original novel, are there any other physical character traits taken directly from the novel that they should look out for in performance?



The contrast between Pip and Joe. It is very important that Pip is uncommonly small, and Joe, a Blacksmith, is very big. Although in the first production, Joe was very thin, which made him very funny. Miss Havisham's appearance is also important; she hasn't washed for all those years, and must have stunk. Because I was thinking about the dance aspects of the production as I wrote, the fact that Molly never says anything made her silence very important. The appearance of Magwitch is crucial too. He is a frightening person to look at. The scene where Estella and Pip dance together is my invention, because I was working with dancers on the original production.

In your article for the GLASGOW HERALD, which focuses on the original production, you say that "sometimes, if you look carefully at the way people hold themselves you catch glimpses of a long, and often painful story." From the perspective of the playwright, how does this inform how you write your characters?

This aspect is really important for me as a writer. I taught myself to be a writer by observing people, whether waiting for bus, in a pub, or on the street. The body remembers, it has a memory, and this is expressed in the way people hold themselves - in everyone - and also in the way we talk. It's happening below conscious awareness. When we train actors, we try to encourage them to make this unconscious process conscious, and have a level of control to change the way they talk and walk. It comes about through the process of listening to what the characters say, and in those words, putting adequate information in there so actors can put enough into their interpretation, with total commitment and imagination. By themselves, they will find different ways of walking and talking - it is a profound process. For example, how does Magwitch slink away? How different is it to hold yourself as Jaggers? How does Miss Havisham sit? And because Dickens created such vivid and strong characters, the potential for actors in creating them on stage is massive.

You make the haunting presence of the house almost a character in its own right. Were you influenced by the novel in anchoring your play so powerfully in this setting?

It was a practical thing. When we met on the first day of rehearsals for the original production, the designer came up with set model for the house - all the action happened in and around house, and the other locations were imagined from within this space. Although I did actually grow up in a huge house in North Staffordshire. The family had fallen on hard times - but still inhabited the family home. There was an old nursery at the back of the house, and a huge drawing room that was never used and was covered in dustsheets. It was a very powerful place for a small boy to be brought up in. It was one of the reasons why I identified with Pip so strongly - my brothers were older than me and had left home, so it was just me and mum in this enormous, spooky house where the floorboards creaked.

Was this the genesis for the opening scene, where Pip opens the door on his memories and the house?

The crucial thing about my work is that I'm not interested in writing realistically or naturalistically - and anyway, this is not possible with a long book compressed into a short space of time. The play is written in the first person - through Pip's eyes. He opens



doors of memory – and if you try to remember your childhood, a procession of characters from the past very naturally come to mind. Once I'd decided that that's how I'd start the play, by opening the door on Pip's memory, I realised the audience would see the characters immediately, and get an instant idea of who everyone was, leaving them with a desire to see more of each of these characters.

What are the dramatic influences on your work?

The first to come to mind are the seventeenth century Spanish writers, such as Calderon. My initial involvement with drama was problematic. I started to act at school – and I was miserable at school. The one place I felt at home and happy was on stage. I was at a public school, and was given girls parts. It was through this experience that I discovered I'd rather be a girl; thoughts of unhappiness crystallised in me, and I became ashamed by this discovery. I had to conceal it, and so I had to lose acting. A love of theatre stayed with me, although it also became a place of terror to me. I needed an outlet, and found it in all these Spanish writers – Calderon, Lope de Vega. I chose to do research after university, before I became a writer, and became totally involved in the world of Madrid. I found my first voice as a playwright through translating Calderon. When I eventually had my first original play put on in 1985, I was really heavily influenced by these writers. Their presence is in *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*, in the sense that the dialogue works through conjuring up images. It is poetic drama – it works though the audience's imagination.

Can you talk about your role in the collaborative process of staging the adaptation, through your work with the rest of the creative team?

One thing I love about theatre is its collaborative process. I tend not to have many ideas about staging; when writing a script, I don't work with images – I focus on feeling. When I'm in the rehearsal room, I'm not there to tell actors how to act, or have ideas about staging. I'm there to check the words are working, and to change them if necessary – and to ensure what is going on stage is true to the character from their words. But how the actors move, the way the play is lit etc, I don't concern myself with. When I write, I use all my imagination and skill – and the play is a gift to the company and creative team. And they are using all their skill and creativity to pass this gift onto the audience. And what comes back to me is enriched and takes on a dimension I'm not aware of.

What advice would you give to teachers who want to support their students in adapting their favourite novel for the stage?

Teachers are in a really difficult situation, struggling to make education work under the current exam system. The key is to be subversive, to encourage students to trust in themselves, in their own perceptions, and value who they are. To become an artist, particularly a transgender artist like myself, you have to overcome a lack of our own self worth - this is the process of discovering yourself as an artist. So, I say to teachers, enable young people to get in touch with their own creativity, and to value it and value themselves. I passionately believe that this is a route that will help diminish anti-social behaviour and lack of self worth in our society.

EXERCISE: USING MEMORY AS A STIMULUS FOR DRAMATIC WRITING

Below is printed the opening scene of the play. It is followed by suggestions of how to use the scene as a stimulus for script work with your students.

Scene One

Adult Pip is alone in the dark house. Enter Estella.

Estella: This is the room, Pip.
 This is where she lived, remember?

Adult Pip I don't want to.

Estella How dark it is. How musty and old.
 Coming back here is like exploring a grave.
 I believe no light has entered here since before the day we
 were born.

Adult Pip I hate it. Let's go.

Estella No, Pip. You have to stay.

Adult Pip The past is something I'd rather forget.

Estella All you've done is close a door. But you can't wipe out what
 there is behind it.
 Pip, all our lives we walk in darkness. Not understanding
 who we are, where we come from, or where we are bound.
 Pip, I am tired of the dark. Tired of not knowing. Of not
 understanding. Let's open the doors.
 Open the doors and let in the light.

Adult Pip I'm frightened.

Estella Don't be afraid. Open them, Pip. Open them wide.

They open the doors of the house. Miss Havisham stands behind them. She
leads a procession of figures from Pip's past: Joe, Mrs Joe, Mr Wopsle.

Estella And there she is. Miss Havisham. My mother by adoption.

Adult Pip Whose death we mourn.

Estella Who made this house and formed our memories.

Adult Pip So very long ago.

Estella When I was just a girl, wandering about this great dark
 house lost and all alone.

SECTION ONE

Adult Pip	Estella.
Miss Havisham	A bright star.
Estella	Shining in the darkness!
Adult Pip	And Mr Wopsle.
Mr Wopsle	Cornchandler. Tailor. Thespian of renown. Famous throughout the Home Counties!
Adult Pip	And Joe.
Joe	Always the best of friends, eh, Pip?
Adult Pip	And Mrs Joe.
Mrs Joe	Worn down to skin and bone. Bringing you up by hand!
Adult Pip	But who was I? I never really knew. Life was always a mystery to me.
Mrs Joe	No mystery about you.
Mr Wopsle	You were just a boy.
Mrs Joe	A wretched snivelling boy I brought up by hand. I don't know why. I'd never do it again. Never there when you wanted him. Always thin and miserable and wretched. And always running off to the marshes.
Adult Pip	Where the churchyard was Where the dark flat wilderness was the lonely marsh Where the low leaden line was the river Where the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry was Pip.

From the above scene, we can see that the play is written in the first person, through Adult Pip's eyes, as he opens the doors to his memory.

Ask your students to open the doors to their own memories, and recall their childhood. What procession of characters naturally come to mind, emerging from the shadows of the past?

Ask them to write a short scene of dialogue, written in the first person, which shows this procession of characters emerging as they open the doors to their memory.

As a class, work on staging a selection of the scenes. How can the text be enriched through movement, music and visual signifiers such as costume and mask?

FURTHER IDEAS FOR CREATIVE WRITING

Jo Clifford has offered the following suggestions to develop creative writing with your students.

Imagine you're Pip. You're stuck in a job you find monotonous and dull. What sort of job do you dream of? What are your great expectations?

Imagine you're Estella. You live alone with your adopted mother in a spooky house. How do you spend your days?



Character sketch by Graham McLaren

Paul Nivison as Adult Pip
Promotional image for marketing
and advertising. © Jaap Buitendijk

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: THE PROCESS OF PRODUCTION

Beckman Unicorn's production of GREAT EXPECTATIONS was originally conceived and directed by Graham McLaren at the Perth Theatre, Scotland in 1996. Below Graham talks about his association with Jo Clifford's adaptation of Dickens' novel, and how he is both recreating and developing this vision of the play through a process of collaboration with the new company and creative team.

This conversation took place on the second day of the three-week rehearsal period.

A CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR GRAHAM MCLAREN

Can you talk about how your relationship began with Jo's adaptation of GREAT EXPECTATIONS?

It's straightforward, really. When I was a kid I saw the original production, and the show made a real impression on me. Then many years later, when I was running Perth Theatre in Scotland, it seemed a natural choice for my opening show as the new Artistic Director. It's a text that I've known for a long time.

How did you re-engage with the play?

I remembered the feeling it gave me; I was thrilled by its theatricality. My approach was to re-imagine it for myself and the audience.

Stylistically, what is the genre of the production, and how has this been influenced by the style of Dickens' original novel?

When I looked at it prior to first staging it, the piece felt like a scary clown show - a buffoon show. I was greatly influenced by the illustrations of Phiz10, which Dickens loved so much and put in his books. The energy of those illustrations is immense – scary, grotesque, people with spindly legs, large bellies, so extreme in movements. My departure point was Jo's script and those illustrations. They were my armoury going into the rehearsal room. There was an old costume store at Perth Theatre, and we pulled out costumes and dressed up and played - it's how we evolved the play to stage it, through play.

In relation to design, what are the key components of the play that you are accentuating to create a visual language for the production?

I want the set to feel like Satis House – that the room itself is breathing and decaying, full of cobwebs and mice and gnats. Central to this room, where I imagine Miss Havisham preparing the wedding feast that never happened, is that everything is still there, from the wedding cake to the cutlery. And the costumes are exaggerated, like clown costumes, ill fitting - either tight or baggy. It's like Pip's memory of the man with long legs, or the bulbous nose; Dickens portrays the world through the eyes of a child, like a fish lens. In this production, theatre logic is like dream logic. We are making no attempt to move location. As in a dream, or a Cocteau movie, it's fine to stand on a table and be on a marsh, or to be in a corner of the room that becomes the forge.



To what extent has Jo's style of language, and the poetic feel of the piece, influenced your aesthetic for the production?

The brilliant thing about working on a script like this, is that it's really succinct and economic. It's like a posh French meal; on the plate it doesn't look substantial, but you are fully satisfied when you've eaten it. On the surface, it's a short script, with brief scenes, but Jo has captured the heart of every moment, and has given me space to create. She has managed to weave a way through Dickens' story, and although things are missing, you don't feel it. My job, if I think it's useful, is to re-instate these things through the staging. Jo has managed to make it dramatically exciting, and in the space in between I'm making it theatrically exciting.



Jo attributes the divisions of the play into 'movements' as your idea. Can you say how this division came about?

It is a practical thing. If I'm doing Shakespeare or Racine, I look at the play without its scene and act structure, and read it as a text without divisions. And that's when I start to see a movement determined, in this instance by Pip and his journey – and the thirty-five scenes are divided into seven movements. A movement is a play within a play, it's how I divide the piece in rehearsals. I'll say, for instance, "we're going to do the movement where Pip learns that there's a better world that he's been excluded from". And then I'll title the scene, for example, "Estella and Miss Havisham humiliate Pip". These titles are only for work in progress; I try and encourage the actors to change and develop them.

How important is the role of movement in the production?

It is crucial. We are spending fifty per cent of rehearsal time on how to physically inhabit the world, and discover how those Phiz characters come to life. We have a large cast, larger than it's usual to have for a touring production, and it's great to have all those bodies creating a world.

As a director, what is your approach to creating an ensemble for a production such as GREAT EXPECTATIONS?

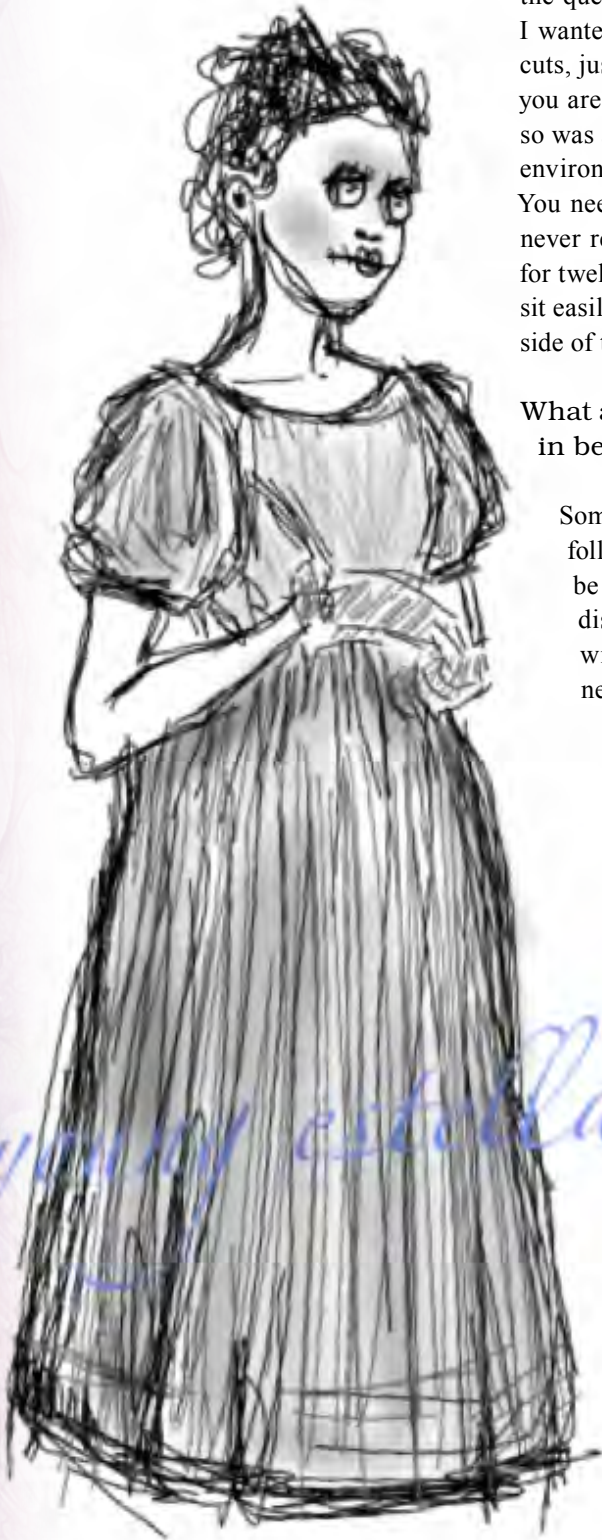
It's a mongrel approach – I use everything in my arsenal that I've accrued over twenty years of working in the theatre. It's about ownership, everyone's opinion is valued. If an actor only has two lines, such as Raymond, I still want to know what this actor feels about Pip at any given moment. There is nothing worse than going to see Hamlet and the actor playing Osrice is disengaged. It's crucial that Osrice is brilliant. You see it time and time again, other actors are not encouraged to have ownership of Hamlet in all his scenes. It's crucial for all the actors to be in rehearsals all the time to know what's going on. It's the truth of the teams at the Olympics. It's not necessarily the team with the most famous players who won – it's those rowers who were the best team that won. Everyone in the GREAT EXPECTATIONS company is called all the time, all day every day – they have to be in on all the rehearsals. Just as Osrice has to be called for Hamlet's "To be or not to be" speech. It's a lot of work, but it's the only way.

What was the career path you took to becoming a director?

I trained as an actor, and found the quality of the work in the rehearsal room, the questions being asked and the atmosphere were all lacking in something. I wanted to create an environment where excellence was expected. No short cuts, just hard work, good fun and an open heart. You can't do that as an actor, you are not in control. I started a company, and was an actor in the company, so was able to control the rehearsal process to a degree. But to create the right environment for playfulness is to direct it, and divest yourself of the power. You need to take power to divest it. I'm in no sense an autocratic director. I never really thought I'd have a career as a director – but I've been directing for twelve years now. I still find it difficult to call myself a director– it doesn't sit easily. The screenwriter Linda La Plante calls herself “an actor on the other side of the table”, and this chimes with me.

What advice would you give to a young person who was interested in becoming a director?

Something I've learned recently is to trust my instincts and tastes and not follow trends – not to try to be cool, funny, sexy, interesting – to find and be yourself. If you like it, maybe other people will like it. If want to put disco musicians in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, do it. If you think it will liberate it, do it. We quash instincts, and see our ideas as trivial. We need to trust and value our ideas.



Character sketch by Graham McLaren

Grace Rowe as Estella

Still from *West End*. © Jaap Buitendijk



EXERCISE: A DIRECTOR PREPARES

There is an extensive amount of preparatory work that a director needs to undertake prior to the rehearsal period beginning. One of the tasks he or she needs to complete is a draft rehearsal schedule. This gives an overview of how the play is going to be broken down into manageable sections to rehearse, and then addresses how the sections are going to be put back together into a holistic whole. When preparing *GREAT EXPECTATIONS* for rehearsal, Graham divided Jo's script into seven movements, each being what he called "a play within a play". This helped him to devise a rehearsal schedule.

Set the following task for your students:

Imagine you are a director who has a three-week period to rehearse *GREAT EXPECTATIONS* for performance. Using a spread sheet, devise a rehearsal schedule for the duration. Here is a list of guidelines to support you.

- The rehearsal day runs from 10 am to 6 pm.
- Equity rulings state that you must allow your actors a twenty-minute break in both the morning and afternoon, and an hour's lunch break. When actors are contracted by a Producer, they can work 46 hours per week – anything more than that and they are paid overtime.
- You will need to consider your approach to building the ensemble, for example, will you call the entire company to each rehearsal like Graham did?
- You will need to allow time for other creative professionals to rehearse their elements of the show, i.e. movement and sound.
- You will need to accommodate other preparations into your schedule, i.e. costume and mask fittings, photo calls.
- As the director, you will need to be available to attend production meetings.

The importance of movement work in creating the world of the characters

As Graham emphasises above, fifty per cent of rehearsal time is being dedicated to discovering how the actors can physically inhabit the world of the play. This is being achieved through exploring how the characters drawn by Phiz can be brought to life. To support this process, Marcello Magni has been working with the company. Marcello is a founding member of Complicite (formerly Théâtre de Complicité), whose incomparable style of visual and devised theatre has an emphasis on developing a strong, physical language to support text.

Marcello's collaboration with Graham began two years ago, when they worked on a Molière play together. Graham liked the way that Marcello created a world of grotesque, closely aligned to the language of buffoonery, recreating a deformed world of Paris and Notre-Dame. He invited Marcello to collaborate with him again on *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*. "Graham wants to bring a colour to the piece, where the body is going to highlight the society that Dickens is commenting on – expressing the diseases of that society", says Marcello. "I'm here to stimulate the actors to move and be playful; to encourage them to go a little further than they would wish or expect. My role is that of "provocateur", to stimulate ideas." Marcello finds the behaviour of the Victorians towards children, and societal climbing – two themes contained within the play - particularly disturbing.

Marcello's initial approach in the first week of rehearsals was to encourage the actors to have an awareness of their own bodies, as well as to bind them as an ensemble, making them physically reactive and responsive – and playful. As the company begin their second week of rehearsals, Marcello is allowing a larger physical language to develop which has more nuances. The brevity of the three-week rehearsal period is making this a daunting task for him, "It is usual to find that level beyond one month of exploration – to be able to sustain character with physical extensions, without making them imposed, is a lengthy process". He cites Mark Rylance's performance as Rooster Byron in Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem* as an exemplar of the process. "People in the theatre bring bodies close to their own to performances" says Marcello, "I want them to embrace, rather than impose, a new physical language, one that is not caricature or manufactured."

Marcello starting point with the actors was finding inspiration from the illustrations created by Phiz; he hopes the process will culminate with the initial inspiration merging with their characters.

EXERCISE: WORKING AS AN ENSEMBLE

Part Two of the play opens with Pip's arrival in London. The stage direction reads, "Pip struggles through a crowd – full company."

Behind this simple stage direction lies a lengthy rehearsal process where Graham, Marcello and the company set up a movement sequence communicating Pip's overwhelming awe of the crowded city streets.

The exercise below is designed to guide your students through a similar process, using some of the ideas employed in the GREAT EXPECTATIONS rehearsal room.

Warm-up

Set up the elevated stage area of a table. You are going to recreate the London streets around this playing area.

Form a compact group, and march, in time, along the contour edge of the table which brings you downstage. Turn sharply together and march along the upstage contour edge of the table.

Repeat this, varying the pace of the march, i.e. march faster, then faster still, now march slowly, and then slower still, so that you are almost marching on the spot.

Once your students have mastered a rhythm as an ensemble, ask them to position the grouping so that nobody is standing directly behind another person; they should be just off-centre of the person in front of them so that the audience can observe the individuals that make up the group.

Begin moving, walking side-to-side, by swaying your weight from one side of the body to the other (not like a penguin, though, as Marcello would advise).

Make sure that the entire group follows this instruction; if only half of them are doing it, the overall effect will be lost to the audience.

Now add the turns, making them pronounced. (And bear in mind what Marcello told the company, people don't bang their feet when they take sharp turns).

Character work

Working in your own space, begin to travel around the table area, experimenting with leading with different parts of the body. What does it feel like to lead with the nose, the elbow, the knees, the little finger? What status of character emerges from the movement?

Split the group into two, and take it in turns to observe the other group. Comment on what you see, and the type of characters that come across from the movement work.

Adding character to the ensemble work

When the group feel confident with their character work, incorporate it into the warm-up work above.

Repeat, still travelling along the contours of the table, but now each person can chose when to turn.

Establish a pattern. Travel two contours with a fast rhythm, followed by travelling one contour with a slow rhythm. It is important that you only take on your character during the slow phase.

So, the pattern goes:

Fast, fast, slow

Fast, fast, slow

Try and add in backwards turns, too, for variety.

It's important to feel the transition when you are about to turn, to keep the flow; don't wait on the corners.

Adding Pip into the scene

Establish the fast, fast, slow rhythm, employing the character work on the slow phase.

Once this is established, the actor playing Pip should enter the performance space. The ensemble needs to avoid him as he enters into their space.

Pip, you are pulled and cornered by the group, but it is up to you, not the group, to convey this mood. You need to walk backwards when you are amongst them, in order to show how they engulf you. It should appear that they are sucking you back – they push you, but you are doing the work. It is like negotiating your way through rush hour on the underground or train station in a big city or on a busy high street. Allow yourself to be deposited by the group as they swarm through you; then they will pick up on you again.

Marcello's note to Taylor (Pip) when they were rehearsing this was, "you have to play a leaf in the wind; the ensemble doesn't hit you, you have to play being hit." His note to the ensemble at this point was "You need to build the rhythm, being slowly, like a train, and then build as the city comes to life. It should have the quality of a dream, and you can initially emerge from different places.

Adding text to the ensemble work.

Once your students have established the sequence of movement that establishes Pip's arrival in London, they may want to experiment with merging the scene into Pip's arrival at Jaggers' office. In this production, The Londoners become the supplicants who besiege Jaggers, who is positioned on the elevated playing area of the table. Your students could either use this idea, or experiment with their own.

Scene Nineteen

Movement IV

Pip struggles through a crowd – full company.

Adult Pip And so I came to London.

A sinister Man approaches him.

Man Do you want to see a hanging?

Pip No thank you very much.

Man I can show you a judge.

Adult Pip And he did. And there he was. Like a waxwork.
In his robes. Sentencing a man to death.

SECTION TWO

I ran out and stumbled into Smithfield. They were cutting the throats of cows. It was all a smear with filth and fat and foam, and it seemed to stick to me.

He enters Jaggers' office.

Pip Is Mr Jaggers in?

Wemmick No.

Pip When will he be back?

Wemmick Presently.
Do wait.

James Vaughan as Wemmick

© Jaap Buitendijk

Adult Pip The room was very small and
hot and close.

Wemmick The clients have the habit of
leaning against the wall.

Adult Pip It was greasy with shoulders.
There were two dreadful casts
on a shelf;
Of faces oddly swollen, and
twitchy about the nose.
And they seemed to laugh at
me.

Enter Jaggers. He is besieged by
supplicants.

Supplicants Mr Jaggers! A moment
please! Half a moment, Mr
Jaggers! Half a quarter of
a moment! Mr Jaggers!
Mr Jaggers!

Jaggers Silence!
Have you paid Wemmick? If
you've paid him, you've done
all you have to. And don't
think. I think for you. And as
for you. I'm against you.
Get them out, Wemmick.
Get rid of them.

Wemmick drives out the supplicants.



CREATING A SETTING FOR THE PLAY

“Look, Pip, where the cobwebs are.
It’s a bride cake. Mine.
On this day, Pip long before you were born,
They brought here this heap of decay.
It and I have worn away together.
The mice have gnawed at it, and sharper teeth
than mice have gnawed at me.”

Miss Havisham, Scene Eight

The cast have been rehearsing for a week, and today is the opportunity for them to see the model box of the set. It is presented to them by set designer Robin Peoples; they are absorbed by the haunting performance space that unfolds as he speaks.

The set is Miss Havisham’s room in Satis house, 50 years after she was supposed to have been married; this is the time-line the creative team has decided applies to the starting point of the play, after half a century of decay and decrepitude. There are remnants of the disintegrated wedding feast strewn across the centrally positioned table; vases of decayed flowers, and the skeletons of floral decorations tied to the back of chairs. The room should embody the remnants of someone quite wealthy.

The table itself is key: it embodies the performance space; most of the action will be set on, or around the table, with entrances being able to be made from underneath it. It has six legs, and every space will be accessible from behind the tablecloth. The dressing on the table will be set according to the needs of the performances staged there.

We are glimpsing only a section of a room, a corner of two walls, set at an angle, yet it’s an imposing place; the height of the walls are 6.5 metres, and the scale model of a person stands dwarfed in the space.

The main entrances to the space are through upstage French windows, set slightly stage right of where the two walls meet; there will be mist rising from the exterior space beyond the panes of glass. The doors are swagged with a large pair of velvet curtains, secured by Velcro tags, so the 5 metres of fabric can be pulled down to cover the blazing Miss Havisham.

Stage right of the doors, high into the decorative moulding is a hole in the wall’s plaster. A symbol of the decrepitude, it is also a carefully situated spot from where lighting designer Kai Fischer can illuminate the wedding cake.



SECTION TWO

On the central section of the wall positioned stage left is a fireplace with a metal fire-grate; there will be an entrance through the fireplace. The mantle-piece above doubles as a performance space. The fire, which in this production is real, will originate through a trough running alongside the upstage edge of the grate.

Above the mantle-piece hangs a large gilded mirror. When back-lit, the hanged men will appear in this space, with two nooses – without mechanisms - around their necks.

The Forge will be represented downstage left, with red lights positioned under the slated wooden floor to symbolise Joe Gargery's furnace.

The entire set sits on a 1 in 24 rake, to give the impression that the room is falling towards the audience. This is an additional challenge for the actors, who will feel that they are walking on a slanting hillside.

The set will be constructed to take the different dimensions of the stages of the touring venues into account; the largest proscenium arch opening is ten metres wide, so the walls are designed to be opened up, or brought in, accordingly.

Robin's presentation is mostly focused on communicating the practicalities of the set for the actor's benefit. Catching up with him after the presentation, he discusses the concept for design. The starting point for both himself and Graham was the fact that Jo has written a memory play, so the action can be quite naturalistic, and also un-naturalistic and dream-like. The room is very real when it first appears; a naturalist setting of a decayed building. As the action proceeds, the room allows itself to become more unreal, more dreamlike, with characters coming through the walls, and appearing from under the table. "When we begin the action", relates Robin, "Pip is remembering the past. Pip is a real person walking into a real house, and as the room reminds him of the past, we travel with him inside his mind." The decrepitude of the room reflects the overarching physical presence of Miss Havisham, and her looming influence over Pip's life; a generally stark, unforgiving, negative one. This ambience is reflected in the mood of the room.

Robin explains how the set is the world in which the characters live, and at the same time the space where the actors work.



Robin Peoples presents the 1:25 scale set model to the cast, creative and stage management team

“As a designer, I need to create an aesthetic truth for the play, but also a practical working space for the actors. The set is a giant tool for the performers to use, as well as an artistic statement.” Creating this duality is the result of long discussions between the director and designer. “We sat down at the early stages of the production and Graham gave me an indication of how the action might flow, and areas of the performance space he might require for this. You can determine basic things, like exits and entrances and the elevated playing levels - with the table, the top of the harmonium and the mantle-piece all acting as small stages. We also developed the acting area behind the two-way mirror. So, it’s a constant mixture of aesthetics and practicalities; marrying your image as a designer with the requirements of the flow of action.”

In terms of physically realising the design, the set has been built, painted and finished by the company Visualscene. It has been constructed out of a number of studio flats, faced with twin wall cladding that have been canvased over. This is the basic surface for the scenic artists to work on to apply texture. There is a lot of decorative wooden moulding and plasterwork on the walls, which have been made out of vacuum formed mouldings. “We created the room to look as it would when newly decorated, and then broke it down,” explains Robin. “For example, we made holes where the plasterwork has fallen in on itself; water from a leaking room above has caused a cornice to collapse; and so you show the dislocated and dilapidated parts by breaking into the surfaces you’ve created”.

Very often, the set designer is also responsible for costume design. However, because GREAT EXPECTATIONS is being recreated from an original production at Perth Theatre – where Robin designed the set and Graham designed the costumes – this pattern has been retained for the new production of the show. “A rather grand decayed room” concludes Robin, “with fungus growing out of walls, and detritus on the floor, ties in with the grotesque costumes that are being recreated for the production.

”EXERCISE: UTILISING THE DYNAMICS OF THE PERFORMANCE SPACE OF GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Using the images of the set printed in this section as a reference, set up the elevated playing levels with rostra, i.e. the table, the top of the harmonium and the mantle-piece.

Work with your students on staging Scene Twenty-one, printed below, where Herbert Pocket instructs Pip on how a gentleman should interact with his servant. By utilising the various elevated playing levels, how can you visually communicate Dickens’ abhorrence of the social class system, exemplified by Jo Clifford in this scene?

Scene Twenty-one

Enter Herbert Pocket.

Herbert (*introducing himself*) Herbert Pocket. Your tutor. Your lodgings.

Pip There’s not much furniture.

Herbert Gentlemen don’t need furniture. It’s not considered essential.

Pip I see.

Herbert I did however take the liberty of engaging a servant.
Quite essential. We’d better call him.

He claps his hands.

That’s how you call for a servant. Not imperiously – the lower orders do that – but with the absolute certainty, the absolute certainty, that your orders will be obeyed.

Enter a Servant. He is surly and intimidating.

Herbert Ah! You see? Absolutely indispensable.

Pause

Pip Could he get us something to eat, do you think? I haven't eaten all day.

Herbert Raspberry or strawberry?

Pip Sorry?

Herbert Jam. No-one eats anything but jam.

Pip Raspberry, I think.

Herbert Don't think, Mr Pip. Gentlemen never think.
Now go up to him and ask. He's your boy.
No, dear boy, not like that. Try to cultivate a manly step. An assured step. No. Not that. A step of authority. Like this.
The step of a gentleman of expectations.
There. That's better.

Pip Um. Er.

Herbert Remember: absolute certainty.

Pip Absolute . . . would you . . . would you mind very much . . .

Herbert No no. my dear Pip. Try this. Boy.

Pip Boy

Herbert Be so good.

Pip Be so good . . .

Herbert No. not like that. Be lordly. Be so good. . .

Pip Be so good . . .

Herbert That's it. That's it. Capital. Capital. What was it?

Pip What was it what?

Herbert What were we going to ask him to do?

Pip Give us some jam.

Herbert Serve us with jam. Gentlemen are not given anything, Pip.
Gentlemen are served. Try again.

Pip Be so good as to serve us with jam.

Herbert There's a good fellow.

Pip There's a good fellow.

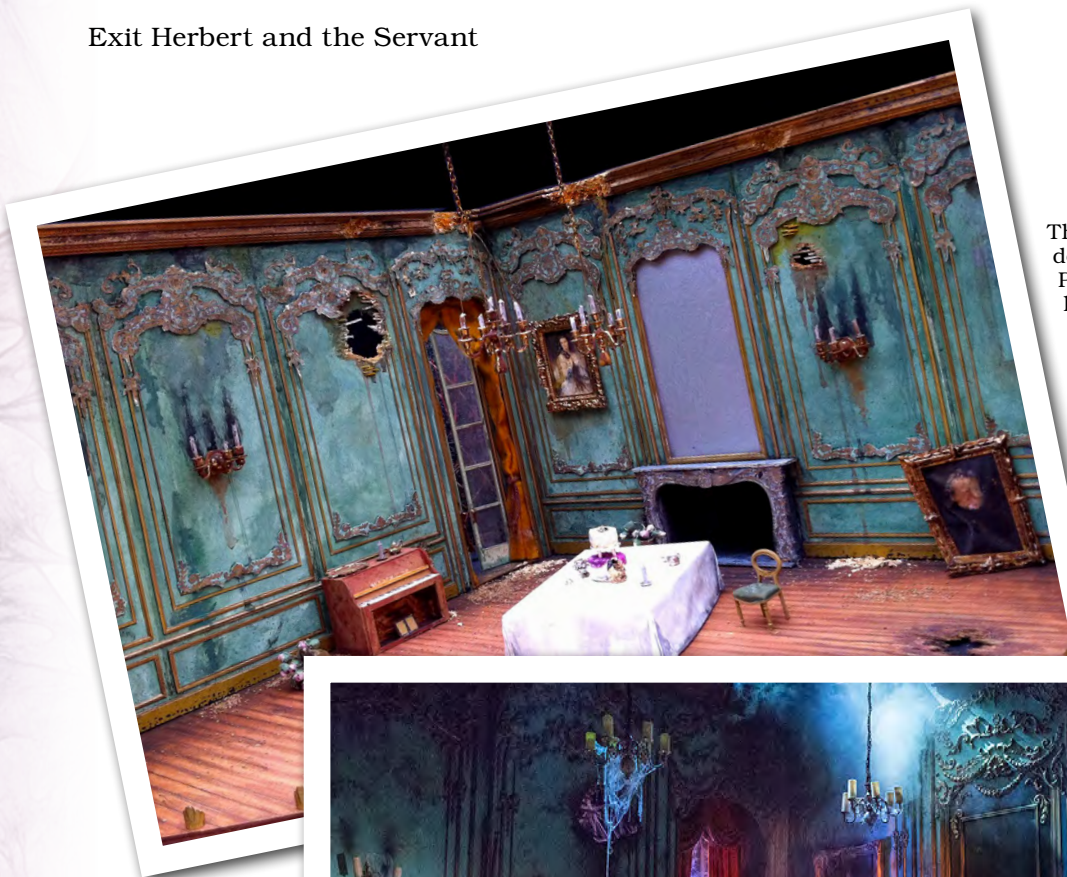
Herbert That's the way.
 That's the way to treat them.

Servant serves jam.

Herbert Jam – forgive me for saying – is eaten with a fork. Never with
 the finger. With a fork. And you hold it upside down. Like
 this.

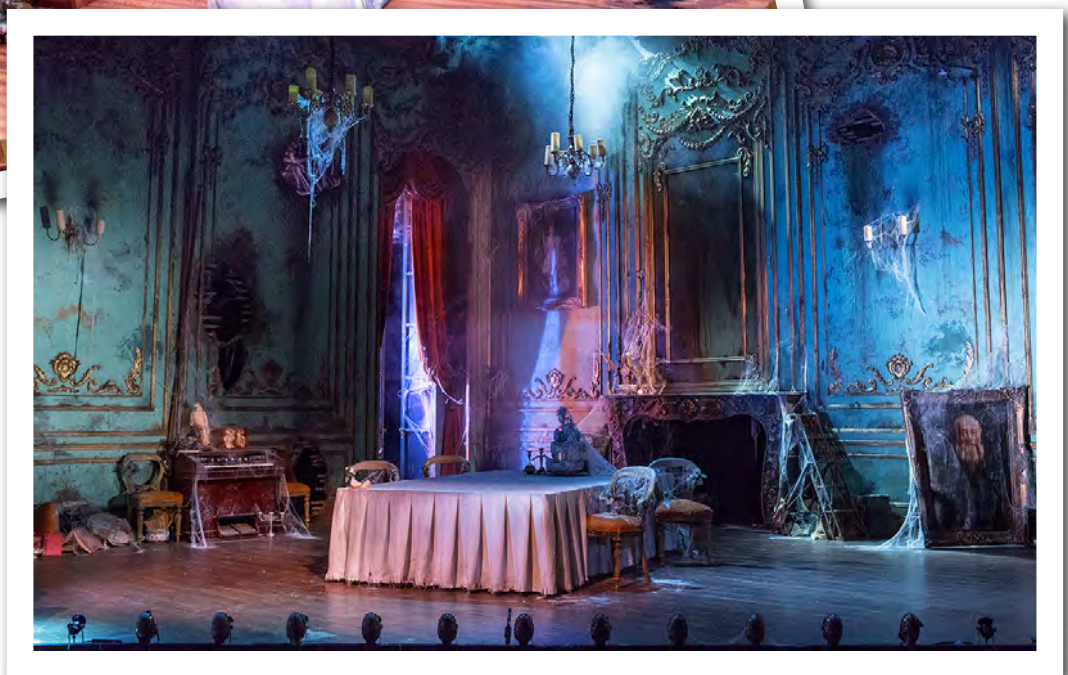
Good. That's all. Good day.

Exit Herbert and the Servant



The scale model of the set design created by Robin Peoples. You will see the level of detail required as this is used by the director and the set builders as reference.

The final set at
The Vaudeville
Theatre in the
West End



SECTION TWO

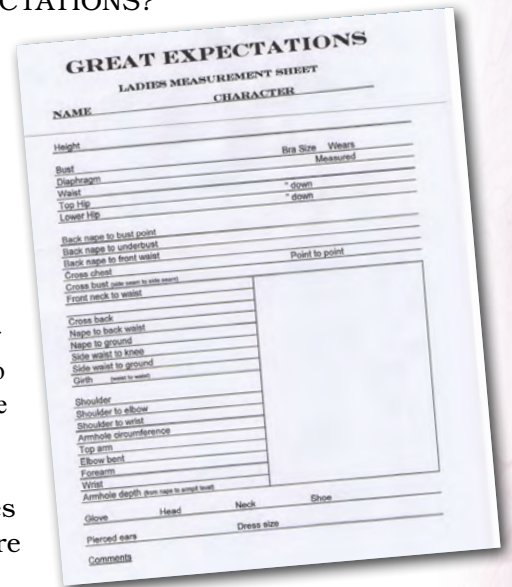


Paula Wilcox as Miss Havisham
Costume designed by Annie Gosney

A CONVERSATION WITH ANNIE GOSNEY, COSTUME DESIGNER.

How did you approach designing the costumes for GREAT EXPECTATIONS?

We used what had been made for the previous incarnation of the show as a tool. There were a few stills from the production at Perth Theatre, and some drawings from the director, Graham, who designed the costumes for the first show. We created a wall of images. One of the production's sponsors, House of Worth, is making a basic costume for Adult Estella, her Richmond Ballgown, and a funeral gown for when she returns after Bentley Drummle's death. We are making the costume for the young Estella, when Pip first meets her, because it doesn't require couture treatment. It's interesting working with a fashion house on a theatre production: their whole ethos is about concealing how you fasten a garment, ours is also about concealing, but what is sometimes key is an actor being able to change a costume in the dark, and very fast!



That's an interesting point in itself, looking at the differences between a couture dress and what you would design for a theatre costume?

Construction is absolutely imperative. Estella has quick changes, and huge shifts in appearance. I've explained to The House of Worth about the quick changes. It will be interesting to see a fashion house working with this idea.

Could you talk a bit about the construction techniques used for making costumes for the theatre?

I should imagine that the theatrical and couture approach is probably the same, in that you start by making a calico twirl of the garment. All this time, rehearsals notes will be coming through from stage management, with requirements of the costumes. Then the garment will be made, and consideration needs to be made about the look that you want, and things like quick changes. For example, this play has a very heightened theatricality; it is absolutely not authentic period clothing. It will be very much more of a caricature look, which will accentuate elements of Victorian clothing, like very tight trousers. Also, any costume for any character needs to convey elements of that character within it, because it's another means of communication with the audience. We can exaggerate characteristics. For example, for a gluttonous person, we can make the costume small, so the character looks like they are bursting out of it. You can alter the shoulder line of a costume to make a character appear heavier, or older than they are. You can change where people's waistlines fall, by using padding, or 'nipping in', in a different place. The artifice is more extreme for this show.

We are recreating an extant show, and because of the time constraints, we've already started making Magwitch's costume, which is a wonderful oilskin affair. His convict's trousers will be painted with a bold stripe, because that is the only way to really achieve the effect visually. We are also going to paint Joe's London costume – he is going to be a riot of ridiculous stripes to represent how awkward and out of place he is when he meets Pip again. Miss Havisham's dress is already on the stand – a real size mannequin that the makers use to pin the costume. It's basically going to be one big cobweb. We are using eight different textures of fabric, which will be shredded to get an ethereal look. We've also started making the shirts, because, in theory, everyone has to have three shirts; one on, one clean, and one in the wash. There is quite a lot of work involved in making them, as they have large, exaggerated collars. The costume store at Bristol Old Vic is also a fabulous resource for us to use on this production.

As a designer, what was it about Jo Clifford's adaptation of GREAT EXPECTATIONS that inspired you to work on the production?

Graham describes it as a clown show, and I think that's just brilliant. I think that so much of the spirit of the Dickens novel is in this adaptation, without it being slavishly recreating the words by rote. So much is visual rather than vocal. That's going to facilitate the design process, and be enhanced by Marcello Magni who is doing the movement. There is a mask element in the play as well.

How are the masks being used, and what is your rôle in developing supporting costume ideas?

The mask maker is Gavin Glover, and he worked on a show with Graham last year, making the puppets and masks for a production of *A Christmas Carol*. He's been asked to create masks for the nightmare ball, where multiple Miss Havisham's arrive - which will be the entire company dressed as Miss Havisham's. It's part of the Pip's feverish dream.¹¹ The impact of multiples will be very exciting. The gown for Paula Wilcox as Miss Havisham is very detailed, and although it is not being made of expensive fabric, it will be a lot of work, being made out of several types and textures of fabric. The multiple Miss Havisham costumes will be made out of cheaper fabric, because the impact will be of quantity rather than quality. And they will have to be strapped over their regular costumes. They will don a mask, and I will make either raffia or string hair for them. They will have an elasticated cap that goes on with the hair, and I'll fix a veil on over that. We are using some throws from IKEA to make the gowns - because they've got such a fantastic quality about them; in theatre, we are always looking for interesting fabrics from all kinds of places. Then there is the scene where Pip arrives in London for the first time, and the company will play the crowd. Graham has asked for one mask, one image, to be recreated on every person. Although the part I'm doing, which will be silhouettes of the bodies, will all be specifically different. So, there will be men and women of all stations in life. There will be tradesmen, gentlemen and ladies that sort of thing - very much a snapshot of Dickensian London life.

Dickens' offers us such strong visual images of his characters, to what extent does this act as both an opportunity and a challenge in terms of costume design?

Because we are recreating an existing production, my approach when I first met Graham was to photocopy any part of the book that described any of the characters, just so that we had a starting point from which to discuss. Some of that is useful, some isn't for this version. Parts that are useful is the extract where Wemmick is described wearing dead men's clothes and jewellery, which is written in detail in the book, and that's something that we are keen to survive. The description of Molly, that she has masses of hair, is not useful to us at this point. Other qualities are much more relevant, like the fact that she is the housekeeper, and her status. We did discuss having her scars on her wrists at one point, but we decided it was too specific. There are other ways of saying that she has a past other than being quite so literal. After all, this is not a literal telling of the story. Graham is very clear about things, and it's very handy for me that he designed it first time round.

What are the considerations for developing costumes for a touring production, such as this?

They get the same use as if they were in the West End. It's eight shows a week. Obviously on matinee days, anything that touches the skin needs to be changed for the evening performance - that goes for shirts, undergarments, probably corsets. They are going to be very physical in this show, so we've got to make sure that things are very well constructed. We've got stretchy trousers, which accentuate the shape and length of leg on the men, and we'll probably make two sets of those for each actor because they will get a lot of wear. We use natural fabrics because they can be dyed and broken down and treated, also, man made fibres don't light very well, they change colour. You can always tell if someone has got nylon lace on their costume because it looks weird under the lights.

Could you talk about the trajectory of your career, and how you became a costume designer?

I went to university and studied Drama and Theatre Studies, but I didn't really spend much time on the course - I was busy designing plays all the time. After three years I left with a degree, but I also had a huge portfolio of work that showed that I could design. Then I did a post-graduate year at Bristol Old Vic in Theatre Design, after which I went straight into work for the Old Vic Company. Then, I got a job in Pitlochry in Scotland, and very quickly became a designer in my own right. The theatre ethos in Scotland is fabulous, quite European, and I was lucky to work on a huge range of productions. Then I got a job at the National Theatre and became production manager of the Olivier. The rôle of the production manager at this level, is to be the eyes and ears of the freelance designers when they are away from the

¹¹ See Scene Thirty-two, *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*, by Charles Dickens, adapted by Jo Clifford, Nick Hern Books (September 2012).

building, because, being freelance, they could be working on several productions simultaneously. In most theatres in this country, the designer is their own production manager, so, it was a natural progression for me to take on this rôle for the Olivier. Certainly, when I've been working in regional rep, I've been costing and doing my own construction drawings. All the while I was at the National, I was designing as well. When I left, I took up a freelance career.

What are the skills a young person needs to develop in order to become a costume designer?

If you are going to be a designer of set and costume, you just can't be afraid of hard work. It's quite physically demanding because you are picking up lots of costumes, and going through rails of costumes. When you start out and you're getting experience, you are going to be handling scenery, so there's a physical requirement as well. Shopping alone is a task. We went out on a Miss Havisham shopping spree last week on Goldhawk Road¹², and we spent £600, and had more than two of us could carry, because it was so heavy. Also, just being a magpie for visual stimuli. For example, I go to the Chelsea Flower Show each year, because it's infinitely valuable to know what's fashionable in that aspect of design. It's such a visual treat to see what people are doing in three dimensions. So, that has absolute relevance to me as a theatre designer, and also, I'd say once every two years I'm asked to design a garden on stage, so I need to know what gardens look like. I need to know what everything looks like. And if you are asked to design something and you don't know what it looks like, you have to find out. For example, this morning I've been researching leg irons for Magwitch. I spoke to a maker yesterday, who said that they often have a false link in them for the stage, so that if you trip up, they break, which is obviously sensible. I've found some to hire for rehearsals, so that we can develop what needs to be made with the actor.

As a costume designer, to what extent are you responsible for personal props, and other props? Where does the dividing line fall between you and the set designer?

I would assume that I'd have a responsibility for costume props, and that includes anything that's worn. It gets to be a little grey with things like walking sticks and parasols, but they usually fall to wardrobe. So, certainly with something like leg irons, I would expect to supply those – although stage management would probably make them, they would be commissioned by me rather than the set designer. So, personal props are the responsibility of wardrobe, whereas hand-held props are the responsibility of the set designer.

Lucy Johnston's book, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail*, was crucial for Annie's research. On page 83 you will find a photograph of a figured velvet and moleskin coat, which was the inspiration for Jaggers' coat.

Akiki Fukai's book, *Fashion History: A History from the 18th to the 20th Century*, Taschen (2006) was another important source for Annie's research. She drew inspiration for designing Estella's gloves from this book.

¹² Goldhawk Road, Shepherds Bush in Greater London, is known for its plethora of fabric shops.

EXERCISE: USING RESEARCH AS A CREATIVE STIMULUS FOR COSTUME DESIGN

Listed below are some of the extracts from Dickens' novel that Annie used as inspiration when designing the costumes for the production. The headings are hers that she used for reference.

Read through the extracts with your students and set them this accompanying task:

As a costume designer, what ideas do the extracts offer you for creating costumes for Magwitch and Miss Havisham?

What are the key visual images for you in the extracts? How do they help you to conjure up an overall concept for how you can communicate character through costume?

Choose one costume that you would like to take through to the design stage. Undertake picture research to feed into your design, i.e. looking at period detail, style, textures and the overall look you'd like to achieve.

Collate a mood-board of fabric swatches and other materials that you can envisage using for your costume. For example, think of how Annie experimented with painting stripes onto fabric for Magwitch's convict costume in order to achieve a bold effect.

Prepare a ten-minute presentation to communicate your ideas to the rest of the class. Note: a costume designer always needs to be able to communicate his or her ideas to other members of the creative team, and to the actors.



THE EXTRACTS

Magwitch. At first a convict.

"A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied around his head. A man who has been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars..." Page 2.13

And then returned an exile.

"Moving the lamp as the man moved, I made out that he was substantially dressed, but roughly; like a voyager at sea. That he had long iron-grey hair. That his age was about sixty. That he was a muscular man, strong on his legs, and that he was browned and hardened by exposure to weather." Page 229.

"Next day the clothes I had ordered all came home, and he put them on. Whatever he put on, became him less (it dismally seemed to me) than what he had worn before. To my thinking there was something in him that made it hopeless to attempt to disguise him. The more I dressed him, and the better I dressed him, the more he looked like the slouching fugitive on the marshes. Page 318.

Chris Ellison as Magwitch
Still from West End. © Jaap Buitendijk

Miss Havisham

“In an arm-chair, with an elbow resting on the table and her head leaning on that hand, sat the strangest lady I have ever seen, or shall ever see.

She was dressed in rich materials – satins and lace, and silk – all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses, less splendid than the dress she wore, and half-packed trunks, were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had put one shoe on – the other was on the table near her hand – her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a prayer-book, all confusedly heaped about the looking glass.” Page 52

“I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its lustre, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon a rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose, had shrunk to skin and bone.” Page 53

“It was then I began to understand that everything in the room had stopped, like the watch and the clock, a long time ago. I noticed that Miss Havisham put down the jewel exactly on the spot from which she had taken it up. As Estella dealt the cards, I glanced at the dressing-table again, and saw that the shoe was on it, once white, now yellow, had never been worn. I glanced down at the foot from which the shoe was absent, and saw that the silk stocking on it, once white, now yellow, had been trodden ragged. Without this arrest of everything, this standing still of all the pale decayed, not even the withered bridal dress on the



collapsed form could have looked so like grave-clothes, or the long veil like a shroud. So she sat, corpse-like, as we played at cards; the frillings and trimmings on her bridal dress, looking like earthy paper. I knew nothing then of the discoveries that are occasionally made of bodies buried in ancient times, which fall to powder in the moment of being distinctly seen; but, I have often thought since, that she must have looked as if the admission of the natural light of day would have struck her to dust.” Page 55.

THE RÔLE OF MASKS IN THE PRODUCTION

Puppeteer and mask-maker Gavin Glover has created the two sets of masks being used in the production. The first set is for the multiple Miss Havisham’s, which Gavin has made hollow eyed and tight-lipped. Her grey hair is braided and spills from her skull, medusa like. The London life “geezer” masks have been formed with frown lines and a turned down mouth. “Graham initially gave me the characteristics that he wanted the masks to embody”, says Gavin. “Miss Havisham was to be elderly, sad and heart broken; the London geezers aggressive and assertive.”

The practical process of making the masks was to make a clay sculpture of the mask based on a plaster cast of a generic face, so that the features of the mask, eyes, nose etc, have the correct proportions. When Graham had agreed the designs, Gavin went ahead and made the amount of identical masks that were required. The masks are made of renoflex, a malleable material that he can use a heat gun on in the mould. When this process is complete, he pulls the mask out of the mould and cuts out the identical faces. He covers them in a skin of leather to make them look more realistic.

THE RÔLE OF THE SOUND DESIGNER

Composer Simon Slater introduces his original compositions to the cast,

“What you are going to hear is the ‘concept album’ version of the music we are using in the production; it will be edited down for performance.”

The first theme he plays is for Satis House. The haunting, hollow sound of a single note strikes the ear; it builds with layers of percussion instruments replicating the spirit of the house, “This section will open the doors of the house” says Simon, as the music reaches a crescendo.

The theme that follows is for the discovery of Magwitch on the marshes. It begins with a strikingly bold drum beat, and develops with sounds of clanking irons to replicate Magwitch’s chains; echoes of metal being forged drift into the background to indicate the presence of the Forge.

Estella has her own theme, a lullaby, played as a musical box motif, with jewel like sounds of crystal and glass, which builds orchestrally with a sinister undertone.

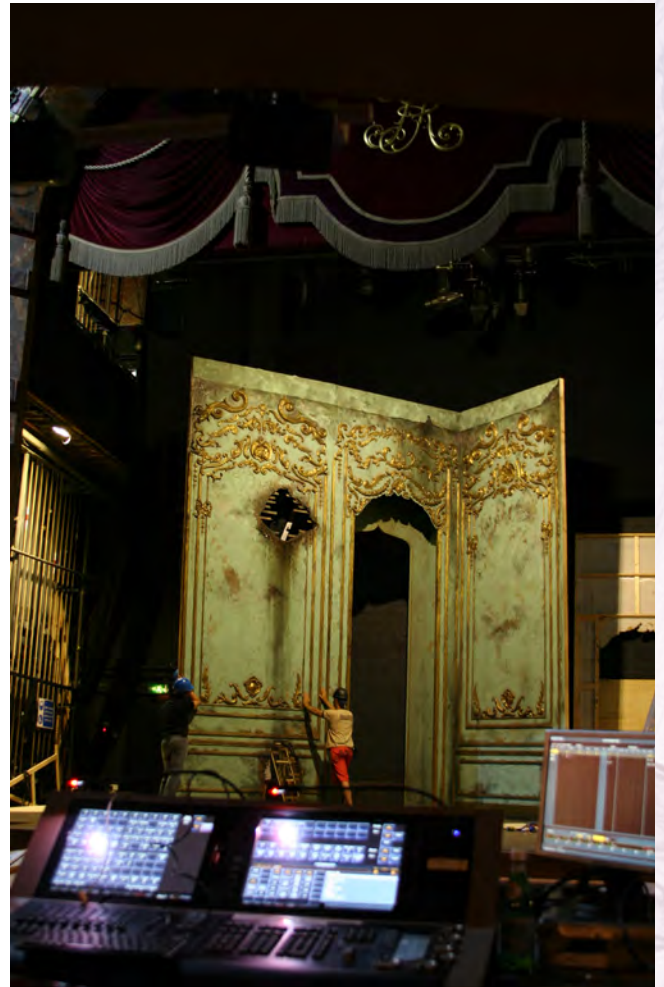
The start of Act Two has a musical theme for the bustle of London; busy brass instruments make the signature sounds of the city, layered with strings and percussion to indicate the different components of the bustling streets.

The next theme is for Jaggers, which has a single cord striking against dark components of sound; the motif shifts depending on whether it is used for Jaggers office, or to underscore Jaggers talking to Pip.

The music for the Richmond Ball is Estella’s lullaby played in a grotesque waltz time. As Miss Havisham arrives, a haunting motif of rushing wind combines with the Satis House theme – underscored by the waltz theme.

Finally, comes Simon’s favourite motif: Magwitch’s return and his escape on the Thames. Magwitch’s original motif of irons and chains has an added insistency and urgency about it as it builds towards the escape.

Simon’s rationale behind his compositions is not to replicate what the cast is doing, but to underscore it with a motif that’s contrary to what is going on. For example, the frivolity of the ball is contrary to the grotesqueness of the waltz music.



A GLIMPSE INSIDE THE REHEARSAL ROOM

It's the second week of rehearsals, and the cast has had the luxury of a long weekend courtesy of the August bank holiday. Graham spent the first week of rehearsals immersing the cast in the rehearsal process, and it is only this morning that he affords them the opportunity to assemble for a read-through of the play. By leaving the read-through - which many directors designate to the first morning of rehearsals - to this moment, the occasion is enriched with all the nuances of the previous week's work.

Seated in a circle, the actors have carefully positioned themselves to replicate the relationships between characters in the play: Grace Rowe (Estella) sits next to Paula Wilcox (Miss Havisham), accentuating the toxic relationship that the two women are locked into as they fix each other's gaze; Steve North (Joe) sits beside Taylor Jay-Davies (Young Pip) within easy reach of ruffling his hair to support his repeated declaration that they are "ever the best of friends". Isabelle Joss (Mrs Joe) is beside James Vaughan (Wopsle). Their characters are already the living embodiment of a Phiz illustration as they engage in a grotesque flirtation, which has the potency to make the observer cringe with embarrassment as it is conducted in front of Mrs Joe's husband; a wide-eyed, impressionable young Pip looks on, and we can see a distortedly grotesque Wopsle through his child-like gaze.

A commitment to the doubling of rôles is evidenced as Isabelle moves imperceptibly across the circle to take her place next to Jack Ellis (Jaggers), to carry out her silent, yet active, rôle as Molly, as she motions the proffering of bowl and towel for his hand-washing ritual. The cruel lyricism of Jo's script is conveyed by Paul Nivison (Adult Pip), as he narrates Magwitch's imprisonment in Scene Five, upon "a wicked Noah's Ark."

Dickens' central idea of the play, Pip's great expectations to rise to the status of gentleman through the ranks of the social class system, is highlighted by his frank exchange with Bidley (Suzanne Robertson), as she cautions him against his ambitions: "I wouldn't if I were you". The potency of symbolism in the play is evident, as Joe passes Miss Havisham's gift of money to Pip.

The shift in tone and energy as Pip arrives in London lifts from the page; the comedy in Herbert Pocket's coaching of Pip in the manners and demeanour of a gentleman already has the room echo with laughter. The coldness of Jaggers is conveyed in Jack Ellis's turn of phrase, as he refuses to endure "women leaking like a cheap pen" in his office; the distorted sentiments of Wemmick (Brian Pettifer) exude from the actor's lips as he describes the "portable property" he dons from his dead clients.

The poignancy of the play's denouement lives through Magwitch's (Chris Ellison) enrapture at Pip's transformation, "It's me what's done it. Made you a gentleman", and Jaggers' peeling off the hardened layers of his lawyer self in the final scene to warn Pip, "don't talk to me of broken dreams."

The read-though complete, the small audience - made up of those involved in all areas of the production process - applaud in sheer delight at this special sharing of the work in progress. A thank you is proffered to the company and to Jo Clifford, who has just received the latest incarnation of her play through the energy of this newly bonded ensemble.

The excitement in the room is tangible: if the mercurial force of the work can be felt at this early stage in the rehearsal process, what will the full-scale production have in store for its audiences?

THE RÔLE OF THE COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION COMPANY IN THE PERFORMING ARTS INDUSTRY

As a production company operating within the commercial theatre, Beckman Unicorn is unique in the respect that it has developed a business practice underpinned by a strong political and social code. This can be seen through the new model of “giving” that producer Bruce Athol MacKinnon has set up as part of the GREAT EXPECTATIONS project. As cited in the introduction, Charles Dickens was a ferocious advocate for social reform, and Bruce believes that his ambitions sit with the politics of our own time. It is with this in mind that Bruce and Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, author and great-great-great granddaughter of Charles Dickens, have set up the Dickens Trust. A percentage of the box office takings from GREAT EXPECTATIONS will be donated to the trust, which will support social projects close to Dickens’ heart.

A CONVERSATION WITH BRUCE ATHOL MACKINNON, PRODUCER

Can you talk about your background as a theatre professional, and the career pathway that led you to set up your company, Beckman Unicorn?

I trained as a theatre designer, and once I graduated became an assistant designer to Anthony Ward from whom I learnt a huge amount about what’s possible in theatre. Through working with him I worked for various companies, including the Royal Shakespeare Company, Opera North, and Matthew Bourne – working on the original Nutcracker! Then I started freelancing as a theatre designer and in 1995 I met a director and we put a show on together, which did very well, and we decided that perhaps we should start producing. We commissioned a play, called Darktales from Tim Arthur, a thriller which we launched at the Edinburgh festival, and we sold out. We then brought it in to the West End for a short run, and that was that really – I’d got the producing bug.

What is the rôle of the commercial producer?

Commercial producers are funny beasts. I think there are probably three styles of commercial producer – all of whom keep the business alive and healthy. One is a producer who creates a production that is solely about making money back for his investors. So, there may be a show that has a title that appeals to people very easily, maybe with a cast of actors from television – easily recognisable faces - and it’s about making a quick profit. Producers at the other extreme could be termed ‘creative producers’, who want to explore and create new work from scratch; they are approaching it from much more of an artistic side. The industry is also obviously split between the commercial and subsidised sector, and within those two sectors both these types of producers work. In the subsidised sector it’s about public subsidy, such as Arts Council funding, that allows the creative producer to explore new work, maybe more than a commercial producer might be able to do. I hope that I straddle both, very much the production comes out of commissioning, or seeing a piece of theatre whatever form it takes, and then working out how to give the show the best chance for the investors to get their money back, rather than having a pot of money, and wondering what am I going to put on?

Can you talk me through the stages of managing a project such as GREAT EXPECTATIONS?

In this instance, it was a production that I saw, and enjoyed very much. Then I looked to see if it was commercially viable, i.e. if I raised money from private individuals and companies, was I going to be able to sell enough tickets to be able to make a profit? Then it was a matter of sitting down at a desk with spread sheets, working out how many actors are required and out of that springs everything, because the number of actors are driven by the script. Then you have to pay the author, and the director, set designer, costume designer, lighting designer etc. So, from the initial module of

SECTION TWO

the story, everything else springs. And all of these people need support, from stage manager to production manager, and slowly the pebble in the middle of the lake - which is the idea to put on a show - gets bigger, and bigger and bigger, and the producer's job is to then make sure that the ripples don't reach the edge of the lake, so that it doesn't get so big that it becomes commercially unviable.

When Jo Clifford originally wrote the script, she was constrained to working with eight actors. She's expanded the script for this production to accommodate more actors. How does this fit into the creative and economic constraints and possibilities of a commercial production of the play?

I think that raises an interesting point about the journey of this play. It was first staged as a T.I.E. production in the 1980s, with several constraints on the production, such as doubling of rôles. Then, when it was staged in Perth - a subsidised theatre - the budget was increased and so the production values expanded. From there, it's being taken into a commercial production, where you are targeting an audience who will be paying more money, so you have to give them a larger, longer, show. So, at each stage of the journey, the show has got bigger. I think the trajectory of this show is quite unusual in that respect. I don't know how many other T.I.E. shows have developed in this way. The irony here is, while you are having to look really carefully at the budget, and minimise it as much as possible, having a bit more money gives the production a bigger opportunity. As a commercial producer, you are trying to balance the two things: having more opportunity, without blowing the budget.

How have you gone about arranging the tour for the production?

With a commercial show of this scale, which is a number one national tour, (number one means that it goes to the biggest theatres, around 1000 seats plus) we've employed a company called The Booking Office, who liaise with all the theatres across the country, and see what the availability is, and they pull together a giant matrix. There are lots and lots of shows that go out on tour every year - there might be an Agatha Christie, an opera, a ballet, new plays, 'standards' etc - and they have a giant matrix where they try and fit these different shows in, so each theatre has a different range of projects for the audience to see, and get a real sense of what is great about British theatre.

So, ultimately, the decision as to where the production tours to is taken out of the producer's hands?

Yes - you are in the lap of the Gods! And it is also down to the theatre owners deciding what they think their audiences would like to see.

How many permanent staff does the company have, and how many other people do you need to contract for each specific production?

What you try and do is keep your office as small as possible in order to maximise the opportunity, not just financially for you and the investors, but also you might want to employ a particular marketing company to do one type of show, and another one for a different type of show. The same could be said for the general managers and production managers. For example, if you were doing a big musical, you'd want a production manager with musical theatre experience. So, you try to keep your permanent team down to a minimum, and use the best in the business for the various elements you require for that particular production. If you've got a five, six million pound musical to put on, the requirements are obviously very different from a three quarters of a million pound play.

What is the rôle of the sponsors within the production process?

One of the exciting openings that theatre has is to offer private companies the opportunity to sponsor a production. They don't get a financial return from what they've invested in the show, but what it allows them to do is expose their brand to a particular target market - in our case a theatre audience. They would look at what type of audience that would be, whether a younger or older audience etc., and how that will could attract sales to their target market.

We are delighted to have two lead sponsors. One is a creative sponsor, House of Worth, who have come on board and contributed creatively to the process. The Head Designer at the House of Worth, Giovanni Bedin, is designing and making the costumes for Estella and the couture version of Miss Havisham's wedding dress for publicity shots.

The founder of House of Worth, Charles Frederic Worth, was a contemporary of Charles Dickens and was actually a costume designer, and the ladies who had lots of money and were watching the shows thought they would very much like to wear what he was designing for the stage, and he realised he could make more money out of doing that than being a costume designer. He then went to Paris, where all the best fabrics were at the time, and set up a couture house – and that's why couture houses are called 'houses', because you literally went to 'the House' of Worth in order to get your new ball gown fitted. Dickens thought that Worth had slightly 'sold out' because Dickens loved the theatre so much, he couldn't imagine anyone not wanting to be in it.

What responsibilities does the commercial producer have towards their sponsors?

To make sure they're happy! And to ensure that they can visibly see either the creative or commercial benefits the production affords them. In a good relationship between a sponsor and a producer, both parties work hand in glove to ensure that both sides are getting the benefits of the association.

For example, our other sponsor is *Rocco Venezia* have worked with us by providing Prosecco Superiore for our Investment Presentations, Receptions and First Night Party which helps them get their brand exposed to a new adult audience which they are targeting for their up-market product.

It is the first time both of our sponsors have been involved in a theatre production and I hope not the last! In summary, a sponsor can either offer money, creative support or services-in-kind in order to have a public brand association.

How do you go about planning a production budget; what headings do you use?

For *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*, we've split the budget into two sections. One is the cost to take the show on the road – the 'Weekly Running'. The other budget is how much it will cost to create the production from scratch. The main heading would be "Critical Production", which includes scenery construction, painting, props, costumes, shoes and wigs. Then there is a heading for "Creative Fees", that would be the author of the play, director, costume designer, lighting designer etc, and in our case we have a new score being written, so the composer is included, and the sound designer. Also under this heading comes the production team - the people who build the set in the theatre, put up the lights, install and check the sound, wardrobe. Advertising and publicity also comes under this heading, everything you see on the walls – posters on the street, underground etc - any articles you see in newspapers or online. Another cost is obviously rehearsal salaries, including the stage managers who look after rehearsals and make sure nothing gets missed like a new prop or costume that is required. The Company Manager is also responsible for making sure everyone knows where they need to be and when i.e. in a costume fitting, the rehearsal room, doing a press interview etc. Then there is the Producer's office and the salaries of people who support him or her - the General Managers and Accountants who look after the budgets and the Lawyers who make sure all the correct contracts are in place. It's an army of people that create 2 hours of entertainment!

For the tour, there is what is called a "Weekly Running". This is what the show costs to run before anyone walks in to the theatre foyer. It includes payment for the actors; the fee to hire or rent the theatre, lighting and sound kit; the stage managers, marketing, Press & PR and so forth.

The people who created the work (Author, Director, Set Lighting and Sound Designers, Composer etc) get paid a royalty, which is a percentage of the money that the box office takes – obviously the more successful the show, the more money they can make from their original creative work.

The Producer's aim is to have the Weekly Running as low as is reasonable so that the investors can get their money back as quickly as possible.

What would be the career pathway for a young person who wanted to work for a commercial production company?

You really need business, IT and communication skills. If you want to specialise, it's really a case of getting a foot in the door somewhere. For example Morag, the Executive to the Producer, was the casting director for GREAT EXPECTATIONS. She began her career in theatre by working for a theatrical agent, and then she became a casting director from there. But the crucial element is that you need business experience. It's not called show 'nice', it's not called show 'fair', it's called show 'business'!



Bruce Athol MacKinnon (Producer) with Graham McLaren (Director) on the West End stage

EXERCISE: CASTING GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Morag Arbuthnott, casting director for GREAT EXPECTATIONS, explains that casting usually begins with the director drawing up a "wish list": in an ideal world, if they had all the money they wanted and a choice of any actors, who would they want to cast? This exercise gives the casting director a visual picture of the type of character that the director is looking for. From there, the casting director would consider actors the director has worked with before, or would like to work with. Then it would be a matter of contacting actors' agents to see if they are available and interested in the job. Because for the age of characters like Estella and the young Pip, the actors for those parts are going to be new to the profession, actors who have just graduated, so there will be an audition process for that.

Ask your students to draw up their own "wish list" of the actors they would like to cast for the rôles on GREAT EXPECTATIONS. Ask them to justify their choices in relation to:

The skills and previous experience of the actors they have chosen, and how these correlate with the skills base they would need to play the given character.

The age range of the characters and the physical attributes of the rôle. (They could cast "against type" but would need to justify their creative choice for this).

In terms of the younger characters, such as Young Pip and Estella, your students might like to make suggestions for casting aspiring young actors from within their own class, or other year groups.

EXERCISE: UNDERSTANDING THE RÔLE OF THE PRODUCTION TEAM.

In the conversation printed above, Bruce talks about the support network the creative team needs during the rehearsal and production phases. Ask your students to research the rôles and responsibilities of the following members of the production team, and who they are required to support.

Production Manager
Company Stage Manager
Deputy Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Managers

EXERCISE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE COMMERCIAL AND SUBSIDISED THEATRE

Using Bruce's definitions as a starting point, ask your students to research the similarities and differences between the commercial and subsidised theatre.

Prior to them seeing the production of GREAT EXPECTATIONS, ask them to research who owns and manages the theatre that is hosting the production and present their findings the group.

In groups, ask them to compare and contrast their findings by undertaking similar research for the other venues on the tour.

The complete list of touring venues is:

Richmond Theatre	New Victoria Theatre, Woking
Malvern Theatre	Theatre Royal, Brighton
Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham	Darlington Civic Theatre
The Mayflower, Southampton	The Waterside, Aylesbury
His Majesty's, Aberdeen	



Mrs Joe (Isabelle Joss) and Mr Wopsle (James Vaughan) celebrate Pip's new found wealth

A CONVERSATION WITH NICK WARREN AT N9DESIGN ABOUT DESIGNING THE BRAND AND MARKETING

How did you approach creating the logo for GREAT EXPECTATIONS?

We approach every design project with the same unusual posture - ears first! I've been fortunate to work with many producers, writers and directors and the first lesson to learn is they (usually) know what they are trying to achieve with their production, so listen to them first - remember, they will be the ones saying yes or no to your ideas! - Not necessarily a design direction, but overall themes and moods. Great Expectations producer Bruce Athol MacKinnon was an ideal client in this respect. He knew what he wanted to achieve but gave us the freedom to create and use our experience.

So, armed with this insight of what we have to represent within the logo or show image we need to understand who we are trying to appeal to. So, ideally will have conversations with the creative team to gauge the look and mood of the set and costume designs and crucially the marketing team who have to sell the play to the many people required to make the production a success. It is wise to see your rôle as a translator between all these parties. By all means push the design as far as you can, but don't lose sight of what you're representing and who you're trying to appeal to.

Great Expectations is a fine example of this, and in many ways we had to reign ourselves in not to over-design the image. The title is so well known you don't need to tell too much of the story within the poster design. Viewers will hopefully have a positive mental picture of Dickens and Great Expectations - this is a powerful trigger to engage with - you just need to fire their imaginations.

You should either read or watch any play you are designing to grab visual clues. After reading the book again, there were many visual points that we explored early in our thinking at N9 Design. Satis House, it's building and gates, the marshes, 18C London, Dickens 'the writer' but we felt that fire, the forge and cobwebs, were major visual tools that represented the story's roots, but weren't too specific; Pip and Joe using that heat moulding their iron and relationship, Miss Havisham moulding Estella's personality. Pip transforming himself to fit a world of expectations, and obviously fire, playing a more grizzly role later in the story...

Some of the initial title treatment visuals



...and colour developments



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The title itself has good and bad points design wise. It's very well known and 'Great' is a very positive, punchy word to have large, Expectations is simply very long and awkward so needs some thought. We used a traditional font for 'GREAT' that echoed Dickens' era (ITC Bookman for you typographers), but also had some 'weight' to let the viewer know this was an epic story and well worth spending their money on. Unfortunately this has no condensed version, so we created 'Expectations' from scratch using Bookman as a base. This is well worth doing to make your logo unique.

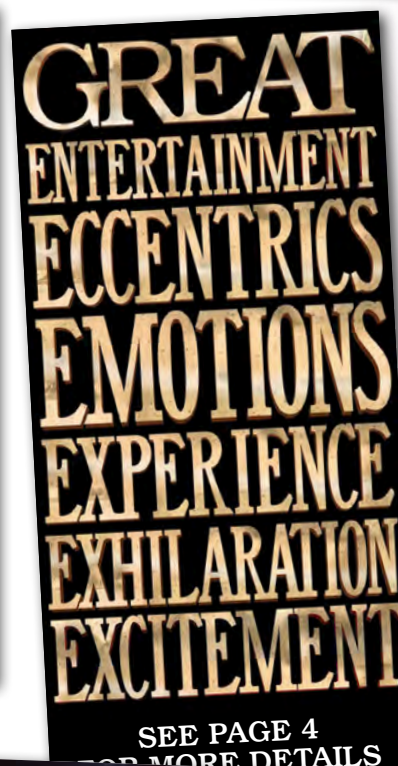
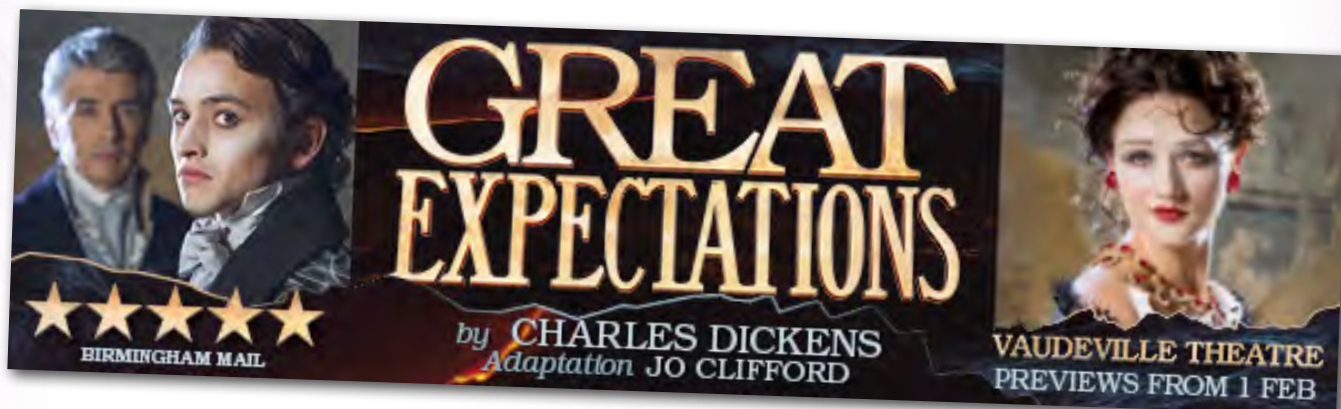
Again, to continue the 'epic' theme and using the thoughts we mentioned earlier. We thought of the title as something that may have been placed on Satis House's gate or any of the grand addresses Pip aspired to. Under this a contrasting base that hints at the forge, an anvil, spitting coals hinting at danger and the obligatory cobwebs we believed we had something. This needs to be strong enough to represent the production in all the environments in print and online it needs to be. Fortunately, after some experimenting and tweaking Bruce agreed and we had the magic word 'approval'.

Later on, we were fortunate enough to work with photographer Jaap Buitendijk on a shoot with four of the Great Expectations cast. His skills brought an extra dimension to the resources we have and now we're confident we have a strong brand that can last and, importantly, compete in the West End.

Since working on Great Expectations we have produced many items from bookmarks to billboards as well as a website and all manner of collateral (some you can see on the following pages). And although deadlines and pressure are all part of the process, seeing the play for the first time and feeling a sense of involvement with such a fine production is a very good feeling..

Here are some examples of the finished print...





EXERCISE: CREATE A NEW LOGO FOR ANOTHER DICKENS NOVEL.

Pick another Dickens novel (e.g. The Old Curiosity Shop or Christmas Carol) and see how you can interpret the title to inspire the viewer to look at a classic title in a new and fresh way.



ADAPTING A CLASSIC

Jo Clifford

Looking back, it seems like a miracle this play ever came into being.

It actually wasn't really supposed to be a play at all. I was working with a rather wonderful and rather small Glasgow touring theatre in education company called TAG. We wanted to create a new show where actors and dancers performed together and combined dance with the spoken word.

That sort of thing was unheard of in 1988, and to get the project off the ground we thought it would help to attach it to a well-known classic text. I remember reading various classics and turning them down before we all agreed on GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

I never meant to dramatise the whole book. That seemed far too difficult. The plan was to create something around the character of Miss Havisham instead.

We started with a week's workshop with the cast. Most of the actors had never danced on stage; most of the dancers had never spoken on stage. Gregory Nash, the choreographer, would start with a dance session - which the actors hated - and then we would take turns to read the book aloud. Which the dancers hated. And then we might improvise a few scenes. Which everyone hated!

But Ian Brown, the director, was supportive and patient and really rather wonderful and eventually things started to gel.

Dickens wrote the book in instalments, which was how we read it to each other; and because many of his first audience were illiterate, that was how they would have experienced it too - a father often reading the latest thrilling instalment to his enthralled family.

That made it very special. All the more special because a young, unknown and utterly wonderful actor called Alan Cumming read Pip with such sensitivity and passion that by the end of the week I knew it was Pip's story that had to be told.

I knew I had to dramatise the whole book. Impossible or not.

And there were plenty of challenges: I had to make it work for a cast of 8; the show couldn't last for more than two hours; some of the cast had never acted before; there was going to be a strong element of dance; I'd never worked with dancers before; I'd never adapted a novel before; and I had five weeks before rehearsals began.

No pressure then.



I started the process the same way I treated all my writing: imagining myself to be the characters and the actors portraying them and trying to feel what the characters feel and listen to what they say. And then write it down.

To begin with, it all felt very easy. *GREAT EXPECTATIONS* is full of the most amazing characters who all say the most wonderful things that, with a bit of clever editing, work wonderfully well on stage.

But as the weeks went on, and the play got longer and longer and never seemed anywhere near coming to an end, it began to dawn on me that the problem was there was just too much – too much story, too many characters, too many subplots, too many themes.

I had to leave out much of what I wanted to put in; I couldn't have the wonderful tender friendship between Pip and Herbert Pocket; I couldn't have Wemmick's wonderful Aged P. In fact I couldn't have all kinds of things that seemed to hold the story together and on the day before rehearsals began I was well and truly stuck.

Those days we lived in a rented cottage close to Rosslynn Chapel, just on the edge of the woods. I used to go out each morning with my notebook and my dog and type it all up in the afternoon.

That particular day I remember stopping under a certain tree and sinking down to the ground in utter despair. And then suddenly Jagers' last speech popped into my head, apparently from nowhere, and the ragged jaggy pieces of the script fell into place.

So I did go to rehearsals. And I did have a finished script. And every time I go to Rosslynn I say thank you to that tree.

I couldn't pretend rehearsals were easy. There was a lot I got wrong and had to change. It was hard to figure out what could be said through

movement and what needed to be said through words. Liz Ingram, the amazing young dancer playing Miss Havisham, kept saying things with a single gesture that would have taken me a whole page to put into words. Peter Salem, the composer, was writing music as rehearsals went along and Lucy Weller, the designer, was doing the same with the set and everything kept changing. Everybody, except Pip, had to play several parts and I got into a terrible muddle with the doubling. But then one day Jane Macfarlane, our wonderful cellist, put down her instrument and started to play Biddy. Beautifully. And everything started to fall into place.

Perhaps we were helped by our 'angels'. We were certainly helped by the cast. Text, choreography, music, acting and design all came together in the most miraculous manner and when the play opened in Glasgow (on May 10th 1988) it went incredibly well.

So well that in the following year (thanks to the British Council) it toured to Baghdad, Cairo, Alexandria, Colombo, Madras, Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Dhaka in Bangladesh. Since then the play has been to Salisbury, Belfast, Newcastle, Sydney, Chicago, Winnipeg, Perth, Pitlochry and all round Scotland (twice) and who knows where else besides.

I've rewritten it for larger theatres, and rewritten it for smaller ones. I've rewritten it for children, and I've rewritten it so part of it could be filmed.

And now I've rewritten it all over again for this production, so it can travel to London. Which is the one place where it's never really been – amazingly, the novel has never been presented as a full length play in the West End since its original publication.



On all its journeys, the story has always moved people. This is what we must mean, I think, when we talk about ‘genius’: the capacity to reach out and communicate with people through all the barriers of space, culture and time. And Dickens possessed it to an amazing degree.

When I travelled with the play to the Near and Far East, I was constantly amazed by how well informed audiences there were about his work. They seemed to know it better than we do ourselves.

I remember being particularly nervous when I met the matriarch who ran the Dickens Society in Alexandria. And so relieved when it became clear She Approved.

It impressed me particularly deeply in Bangladesh. Dhaka is a cruel city. Its population is swollen by the hordes of the landless: people cut off from their earth, from their family and from their roots. People on the edge. People holding onto life with their fingernails. Side by side with cruel ostentation of the rich.

Dickens must have known this, I thought. This is what he saw. This is what his London must have been like.

Ours too, I suspect, as life gets harder for everybody.

Perhaps his world is not so far away as we may wish to imagine.

I remember when I was a student we made friends with a solitary lady who lived in the flat below. She worked in a posh hotel kitchen and used to feed us from the leftovers. Us and a huge colony of cats that would gather on her garden wall each day for their afternoon tea. Until the day they never appeared, and we discovered she had died.

She lived alone in a squalid room; after her death it was discovered that the back room of her flat was full of wedding presents, still in their wrapping, that she’d left there since she’d been jilted on the day of her marriage.

There must be so many Miss Havishams in our cities and towns. So many Pips, a prey to vicious snobbery, so many Joes working hard, doing their best. So many abused children. So many abused adults abusing the next generation in turn.

Dickens holds up the mirror for us, in all his inextinguishable vitality, his angry compassion, and his never altogether lost hope for a better world. I hope I never lose that hope; and I hope my children never lose theirs either.

I hope they keep their great expectations of what the world can offer them. The expectations they had when they were children, and I first dedicated this play to them, and it moves me that now they are adults that they have them still.

So I want to dedicate the play to them again.

And to my first grandchild who, as I write these words, is getting ready to come into the world.

To you too, wherever you are. Whoever you are. I hope I’ve done justice to the wonderful Mr. Dickens. And in doing so help strengthen all our personal hopes and expectations of a better world.

Jo Clifford



CREATING THE ORIGINAL NOVEL

Lucinda Dickens Hawksley

"Such a very fine, new, and grotesque idea has opened upon me," wrote Charles Dickens on first conceiving his idea for what would become *Great Expectations*. The story of Pip, Estella, Miss Havisham and Magwitch is a story of the social class system, of the judicial system, of misery and abuse – and of love, in many of its varied forms.

As with all Dickens' novels, *Great Expectations* was published in instalments. As soon as Miss Havisham made her debut she was set to become one of Dickens' most memorable characters. Ever since the 1860s, readers and psychology students have speculated about how the author imagined such an unusual character. Although the finished character of Miss Havisham is pure Dickens, there are several possible sources of inspiration. One of these was a popular London story about an 18th-century merchant Nathaniel Bentley, better known by his nickname of "Dirty Dick". After his fiancée died the night before their wedding, Nathaniel suffered a mental breakdown. He closed off most of the rooms in his home, including that in which the wedding breakfast was laid out, and refused ever to wash again, famously declaring that there was no point in washing when he would simply get dirty again.

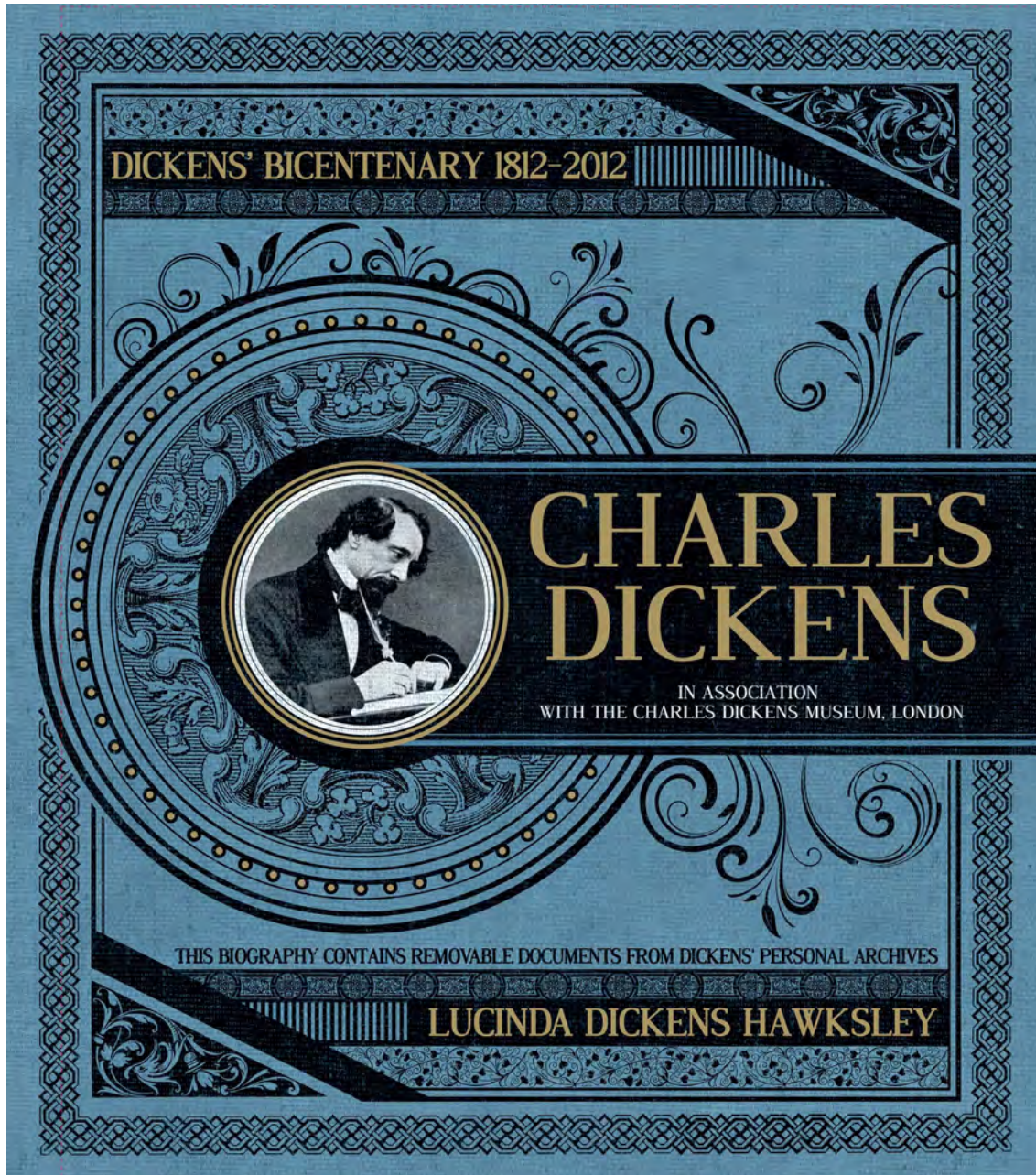
Another inspiration for the character of Miss Havisham was the legendary "White Woman", always dressed as a bride, who was a well-known sight around Berners Street in London's Soho. Dickens wrote about the White Woman in 1853, in his magazine *Household Words*; the article was entitled "Where We Stopped Growing". A third possible inspiration comes via an intriguing story from Australia. Miss Eliza Emily Donnithorne was jilted at the altar in 1856, after which she became a famous recluse, wearing her wedding dress until her death in 1886 (she outlived Charles Dickens by sixteen years).

Whether Dickens could have heard the story, perhaps via English newspapers, has long been debated. It could simply have been an extraordinary coincidence that Dickens described such a similar character as a woman then living on the other side of the world – the type of coincidental plot device Dickens might have used in one of his novels.

From the very start of the novel, the reader is gripped with a sense of fear. *Great Expectations* begins with Pip in a graveyard, crying over the graves of his parents and siblings. Suddenly he encounters a terrifying apparition, a yelling fury of a man with a convict's iron attached to his leg, who threatens to cut Pip's throat and eat him piece by piece. Magwitch has burst into the novel, an almost inhuman figure at this first meeting, yet one who will orchestrate much of the action from behind the scenes. The theme of abuse runs all the way through the book. Magwitch has been abused by life and the legal system. Miss Havisham was bullied and abused by the men in her life, so she trains her adopted daughter Estella to treat others with cruelty and contempt. As Estella breaks Pip's heart, she is only paving the way for her own unpleasant fate at the hands of a sadistic husband.

Dickens was renowned for tackling controversial subjects in his fiction as well as in his journalism – including illegitimacy, prostitution, prison reform, paedophilia and domestic abuse. In *Great Expectations* not only did he address the usually taboo subject of domestic violence (as he had already done so chillingly with Sikes and Nancy in *Oliver Twist*) – he made it even more controversial by looking at the situation from the unusual standpoint of a man (Joe Gargery) being abused and





intimidated by his wife.

Throughout his life, Dickens suffered regular bouts of depression. His moods veered wildly between joy and depression and his plots and writing style often reflect his own emotions during the creation of the novels. At the time of writing *Great Expectations*, the author was dealing with his own personal demons. A couple of years previously, he had separated from his wife acrimoniously and publicly and, although most of his children remained living with him, he was dealing with the guilt (which he also refused to acknowledge, except, perhaps, to himself) of the chaos and unhappiness he had brought into their lives. It was not only Catherine Dickens who found her husband so altered, several of the author's oldest friends also found themselves banished from his world following inexplicable arguments. Dickens wrote *Great Expectations* during his affair with the young actress Ellen Ternan (who was the same age as his younger daughter, Katey). Ellen is often cited as one of the inspirations for Estella, as is Maria Beadnell, the woman who broke Dickens' heart when he was a young man and dismissed his declarations of love by calling him a "boy" – the same cutting insult that Estella uses to wound Pip. (In an ironic twist of fate and coincidence, both Ellen and Maria would end up being interred in the same small graveyard, just a short distance from the house in which Charles Dickens was born.)

The very first conclusion of *Great Expectations* was different from the one most usually known. When he completed the story, Dickens tried to change his usual practice of pleasing the public by not permitting Pip and Estella a happy ending. In his first ending to the novel, the couple meet unexpectedly and glimpse their mutual unhappiness, yet they are powerless to change one another's lives.

It was Dickens's friend Edward Bulwer Lytton (1803–73), a fellow novelist, who persuaded the author to change it. In a letter to John Forster, Dickens wrote, "I have put in as pretty a little piece of writing as I could, and I have no doubt that the story will be more acceptable through the alteration." This new ending sees Pip visiting Miss Havisham's destroyed home. By chance Estella is already there, as if waiting for him. They talk, then Pip takes Estella's hand and leads her away from the ruin of Satis House.

The final words belong to Pip: "I saw no shadow of another parting from her."

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Lucinda Dickens Hawksley is the great-great-great grand-daughter of Charles Dickens. Her definitive illustrated biography to the man and his works, *Charles Dickens*, is published by Andre Deutsch available at all good bookstores and online via the official website www.GreatExpectationsThePlay.com.



The Final Scene.

CHARLES DICKENS

AND HIS LOVE OF THEATRE

Simon Callow

It is a curious and interesting fact that as Dickens got older, his books got less theatrical. To begin with they were hugely influenced by the stage. He was obsessed by it from an early age: everything about it enchanted him. He even liked attending rehearsals of his cousin's amateur group. He was just nine when he wrote his first play, *Misnar, Sultan of India* (A Tragedy). It featured his sister and friends from neighbouring families; he designed the play, directed it and – naturally – starred in it. After a brief and successful run in the kitchen of his house in Chatham, it disappeared without trace. If his other attempts at playwriting, written in his early twenties, are anything to go by, it may not too grievous a loss. They are remarkable in Dickens's output for containing not a single line that bears his stamp. This from a man whose notes to the grocer invariably contain some individual touch, some tell-tale flourish.

The problem with the plays is that Dickens was head over heels in love with the theatre of his own time, and he simply tried to reproduce it. He went to the theatre, he said, every day of his life for three years; he memorized large chunks of the plays he saw; he diverted his fellow clerks in the law office where he worked with impersonations of the leading

actors of the day. His ear was flawless, and he had real flair, especially for grotesque comedy. His idol was Charles Mathews, an actor-writer who developed a form of theatre that he called monopolylogues, in which he played many different characters in dialogue with each other. Dickens adored these, and learned many of them by heart. Eventually, frustrated by his work in the solicitor's office, he learned shorthand and worked in the law courts, but this proved even more depressing, and he conceived the idea of becoming an actor.

He secured an audition at the Covent Garden Theatre and prepared very carefully for it, choosing his favourite Mathews monopolylogue and working up a couple of songs. In the event, he got a terrible cold the day before, plus neuralgia in the cheek, and deferred the audition to the start of the new season. But by then destiny had intervened decisively in his life. His uncle offered him a job as a parliamentary reporter, which led to his becoming a political reporter at large, which led to his writing sketches for the newspapers, which led in remarkably short order to the extraordinary and unprecedented career of Charles Dickens the novelist. But he never stopped writing about the theatre, and it was immediately spotted by critics that many of his characters had theatrical antecedents. The theatrical potential of his work was equally swiftly spotted by managers, to the extent that *The Peregrinations of Pickwick*, a pirate version of *The Pickwick Papers* appeared at the Adelphi Theatre in October 1836, only

six months after the first instalment and some months before the last. This pattern was repeated, as the first episodes of each novel appeared; the Christmas Books especially were wildly popular.

But from *David Copperfield* onwards, and with one or two exceptions like *A Tale of Two Cities*, the increasingly dark tone and dense and subtle plotting of the novels made them less immediately attractive to theatrical managements. Moreover, Dickens had become exasperated by the poor quality of most of the adaptations, and the fact that he received nothing from them. With *Great Expectations*, he pre-empted the managers (as he had with some of the Christmas Books), and made his own stage version, duly registered at Stationer's Hall. Curiously, it lacks action or forward movement, and it was never performed.





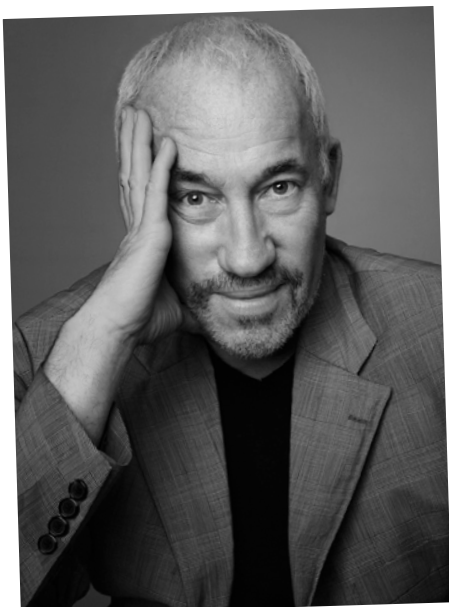
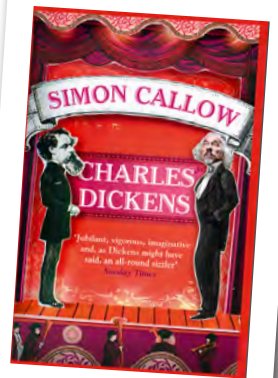
Interestingly enough, though, Dickens told his friend biographer John Forster, that while he was writing the character of Joe Gargery, he had kept the image of the actor J L Toole in mind. But no adaptation of the novel was seen till after Dickens's death, and that, astonishingly, was by W S Gilbert of G & S fame, and made no great impact.

My suspicion is that his ever-increasing refinement as a writer led him to create characters of such depth, subtlety and power that they were not to the broader taste of the Victorian theatregoer, harrowing in too profound a degree. The thrills and the spills of the late nineteenth-century theatre were of a more obvious kind. But the novel that many people consider Dickens's masterpiece is very well suited to our age with its vivid awareness of the complex and terrible turns that life can take and to our theatre which has acquired a flexibility and fluidity that the stagecraft of Dickens's time could not muster.

The novel's characters are theatrical, all right, but they belong to a visionary theatre that simply did not exist in Dickens's day.

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Simon Callow's biography 'Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World' published by Harper Press is available at all good bookstores and online via the official website www.GreatExpectationsThePlay.com.



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INTERACTION WITH A MODERN AUDIENCE.

The Producers of the West End production are passionate about interacting with a new audience as much as possible. They have consequently partnered up with a number of partners to create new, engaging and entertaining ways in which young people can participate well after having seen GREAT EXPECTATIONS on the stage or the DVD of the live broadcast from The Dickens Legacy Gala Night in the West End.

All of these are available from the official site www.GreatExpectationsThePlay.com

'GREAT EXPECTATIONS' DVD £12.99/\$19.99

Recording of live broadcast from The Dickens Legacy Gala Night from London's West End.

Extras include interviews with Graham McLaren, Jo Clifford, Lucinda Dickens Hawksley and Dickens aficionado, Simon Callow.

Subtitled in German, Italian, Spanish and Swedish.



'GREAT EXPECTATIONS' POLLOCKS TOY THEATRE £15.00

Beckman Unicorn is delighted to release the first ever toy theatre version of the classic novel as part of the international celebrations of the Charles Dickens bicentenary.

With beautiful original illustrations by Robin Peoples, the pop-out book publication also contains a simple script adaptation allowing children and adults alike to create their own theatre productions. No glue or scissors required!



'GREAT EXPECTATIONS' TOY THEATRE FOR IPAD £2.99

One of Gwyneth Paltrow's 'can't-live-without iPad apps' we bring the much beloved Pollock's toy theatres of the Victorian era to the digital format. We have remained authentic to the original Pollocks toys, and used the newly commissioned illustrations from the 3D version shown above. The app allows you to create your own theatre production: choose characters, scenery and then record and edit your very own plays, complete with audio and impress your friends. The graphics bring the magic of creating your own show to life providing hours of enjoyment for any budding director or actor.



THE DICKENS LEGACY

INSPIRED BY THE POLITICAL AND SOCIETAL PASSIONS OF CHARLES DICKENS

Registered Charity No: 1150975

The Dickens Legacy, a UK registered charity was officially launched on 07 February 2013 at the Gala Night of the West End Première of **Great Expectations**.

'Dedicated to the advocacy of all rational and honest means
by which wrong might be redressed, just rights maintained,
and the happiness and welfare of society promoted'
Charles Dickens

Funds will be distributed to organisations and bodies that seek to fulfil Charles Dickens's legacy by supporting those less fortunate in society and challenging the status quo. This includes supporting access to the Arts, Theatre and Literature.

'He had a large loving mind and the strongest sympathy.
He felt sure a better feeling, and much greater union of classes,
would take place in time... and I pray earnestly it may.'
Queen Victoria's Diary (11 June 1870)

Our Work

The Dickens Legacy proudly supported access to educational talks and theatre tickets for the UK Tour of *Great Expectations*.

'Dickens Legacy Tuesdays' attracted a new, diverse audience to the West End production, allowing young people to attend the production for free.

The charity also distributed copies of the original novel, toy theatres, Simon Callow's 'Dickens and The Great Theatre of the World' and Lucinda Hawksley's pictorial history of Dickens' life to a range of schools and colleges in London and across the UK.

www.DickensLegacy.org

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Young Pip (Taylor Jay-Davies), Paul Nivison (Adult Pip)
VAUDEVILLE THEATRE 2013