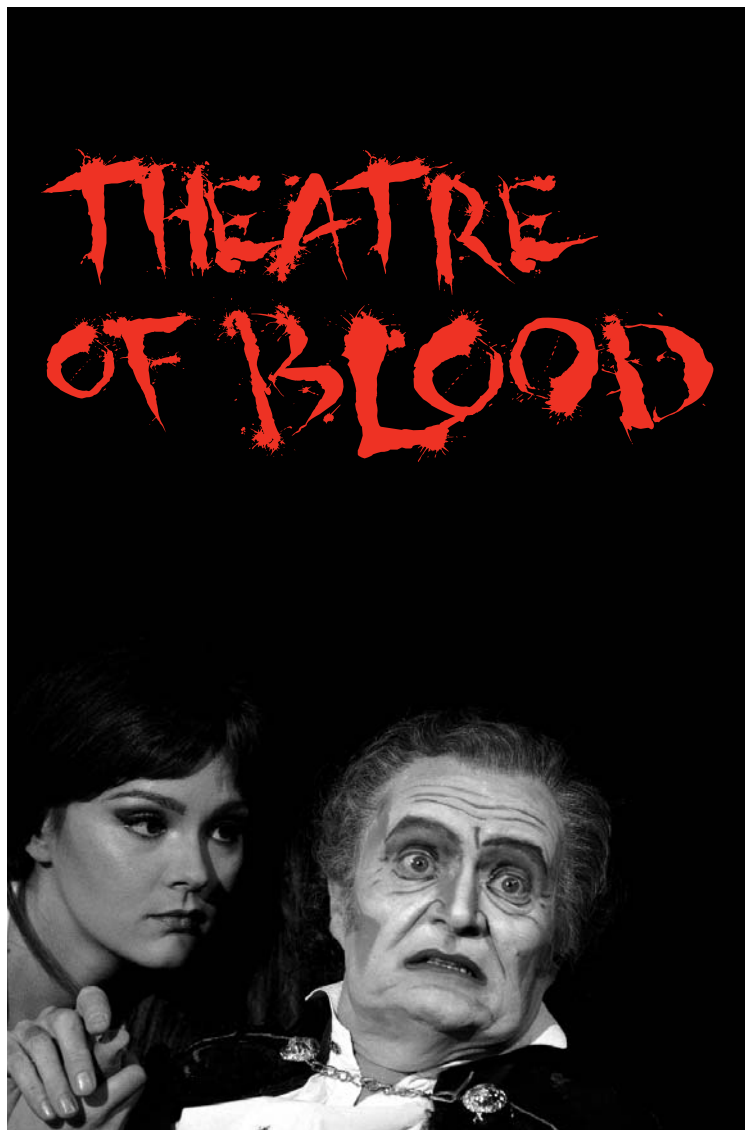




Theatre of Blood background pack

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A collaboration between the National Theatre and
Improbable



Theatre of Blood

By Lee Simpson and Phelim McDermott
Based on the MGM/Sam Jaffe/Harbor Productions film
An idea by Stanley Mann and John Kohn
And the screenplay by Anthony Greville-Bell
By special arrangement with MGM on Stage

Further production details
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

Background pack written by
Lucy Foster, Staff Director on this production

Editor
Emma Thirlwell

Design
Patrick Eley, Lisa Johnson

NT Education
National Theatre
South Bank
London SE1 9PX

T 020 7452 3388
F 020 7452 2280
E educationenquiries@nationaltheatre.org.uk

Improbable
www.improbable.co.uk
4th Floor
43 The Aldwych
London
WC2B 4DN
+44 (0) 20 7240 4556
office@improbable.co.uk

Background pack
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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Edward Lionheart **JIM BROADBENT**
Miranda Lionheart **RACHAEL STIRLING**

Peter Devlin (*The Times*)
MARK LOCKYER
George Maxwell (*The Daily Telegraph*)
PAUL BENTALL
Michael Merridew (*The Sunday Times*)
BETTE BOURNE
Sally Patterson (*The Guardian*)
HAYLEY CARMICHAEL
Chloe Moon (*The Observer*)
SALLY DEXTER
Trevor Dickens (*The Evening Standard*)
STEVE STEEN
Oliver Larding (*The Daily Mail*)
TIM McMULLAN

A Chorus of Tramps
GERARD BELL, STEPHEN HARPER,
NICK HAVERSON, RACHAEL SPENCE
VICTORIA WILLING, EDWARD WOODALL

Music played live by
Steven Edis (Music Director/piano/keyboards),
Mark Bousie (accordion), **Rob Farrer**
(percussion), **Emma Fowler**
(clarinet/saxophone), **Lucy Wilkins** (violin),
Christopher Worsey (cello)



Jim Broadbent
photo: Keith Pattison

Director **PHELIM MCDERMOTT**
Designer **RAE SMITH**
Associate Director **LEE SIMPSON**
Lighting Designer **COLIN GRENFELL**
Music **JOBY TALBOT**
Published by Chester Music Ltd.
Illusionist **PAUL KIEVE**
Fight Director **TERRY KING**
Music Arrangements **CHRISTOPHER AUSTIN**
Sound Designer **GARETH FRY**
Company Voice Work **PATSY RODENBURG**
Staff Director **LUCY FOSTER**

Rehearsal diary

Week 1

For the first two days of rehearsal we do not look at or begin work on the script. Phelim [McDermott, director] uses this time to explore ways of working and to begin to form a shared company language, which will feed into the next seven weeks of rehearsal. This work includes improvisation exercises, exploring atmospheres and qualities, physical and emotional work on melodrama, and games which encourage the actors to notice and follow their impulses (see the exercises page for more details). Rae Smith, the set and costume designer, shows the model of the design and talks the company through her ideas for each of the scenes. She discusses her collaborative approach to costume design, whereby she provides the actors with a selection of costumes which they can explore as part of the rehearsal process.

On the third day, Phelim talks to the actors about Jeremy Whelan's "Recording Technique" which we will use to rehearse the play (see the section on Instant Acting). We make our first taping of the whole play. This is very clearly not

a read-through, but rather a straightforward recording of the actors' voices, reading the words slowly and neutrally. This neutrality is important because when the tape is played back it allows the actors to explore the text without getting stuck with an initial reaction to the play and their character from a first reading. The next day we do a run-through, with the actors physically acting out the scenes while the recording is playing. Phelim stresses this is for the actors' benefit: it is research rather than a performance and it does not have to be interesting, although interesting things may happen. With no scripts in their hands, the actors can get an overview of the play and explore emotions and interactions very early on. What is key in this run-through is that the actors on stage maintain eye contact throughout their scenes, even when their first impulse is sometimes to turn away from each other. In this way they will remain connected, responding emotionally and physically to what the other is doing. What happens between actors in the space will almost always be more interesting than what they can do individually. At the end



The Whelan Recording Technique in rehearsal:
(from left)
Stephen Harper, Gerard Bell,
Edward Woodall,
Nick Haverson,
Rachael Spence and
Victoria Willing
photo: Keith Pattison

Rehearsal diary

of the week we make our second recording.

Week 2

The actors are invited to bring in bad reviews that they have received for their past performances. The atmosphere created by this sharing is celebratory, and leads to a discussion among the company about the strange relationship between actors and critics.

An exercise (*'I see, I wonder'*) to explore and encourage the actors' impulses, leads to a large improvisation with the whole company, during which they collectively create a great storm, linking us back to the storms in the play.

In our second run-through to the taped recording, the work so far on impulses, atmospheres and movement qualities is already visible. During these early exploratory runs of the play the actors are encouraged to follow emotional impulses, even if those impulses do not lead them to tell the story in a literal manner, but to tell it through their hidden desires. Devlin, for example, stabs the other critics as he tells them of Patterson's death, while Miranda and Lionheart celebrate over Moon's body before playing their argument for Devlin to witness.

Having completed two recordings and run-throughs of the whole play, we begin to use the



Jim Broadbent
(Edward Lionheart)
in rehearsal
photo: Keith Pattison

Recording Technique to explore and play with individual scenes. Beginning with the Prologue – scenes 1 and 2 – the actors have their first opportunity to do the six recordings and runs that the Instant Acting technique prescribes. The actors are amazed that by the sixth run-through the lines have largely sunk in and they are able to play the scenes together, speaking the lines, without having tried to learn them.

On day three of this week, we explore the tramps' and the critics' characters. Phelim leads a character-building exercise, using movement and interactions. In character, they are introduced to the costume rails, on which a number of outfits have been set. A playful dressing-up session follows, which Rae Smith photographs to keep a record of the clothing combinations people choose. Many of these will become the costumes that the actors wear for the production.

Our first production meeting of the rehearsal period begins to sketch out a timetable and the deadlines by which each of the murders need to be workshopped, so as to allow enough time for the prop-makers to build the different contraptions that will be used.

Week 3

At the start of the week Terry King, the fight director, begins to work with Jim Broadbent (Edward Lionheart) and Mark Lockyer (Peter Devlin) on their swordfight. Phelim and Terry discuss ideas for using the theatre setting to best effect, including using a rope swing, a falling sand bag, having Devlin run through the orchestra pit, and Lionheart getting his sword stuck in the side of a box.

We begin work on the storm scene in Act 1, and the transformation of Perdita that follows it. The actors playing tramps improvise with the large collection of props in the rehearsal room – many recycled from other productions – to create the sounds of the storm. Pots and pans are banged together, a rug and a bowler hat fly across the space, and the stairs are pushed on as if by a strong wind.

Rehearsal diary

We continue working our way through the scenes in Act 1. The 'mirror runs' during which the gestures and emotions of whoever is speaking in a scene are mirrored physically by the other actors on stage, generates new discoveries. A 'mirror run' of the flashback to Devlin's apartment sees the critics arrive as a group of hunchbacks, in an atmosphere of grotesque mirth. It also illustrates that this scene works best when all the critics watch everything that Lionheart does as soon as he enters. We begin to play with different styles, running this scene in a silent movie style with very large, bold acting.

Rehearsals begin with the understudies. The understudies are all cast from within the company, the actors who play tramps covering those who play critics, and one of the critics covering Lionheart. While understudying is always a strange task, the actors on this show will have some opportunity to rehearse using the Instant Acting techniques, as used in the principal rehearsals.

Week 4

More of the work now begins to focus on scenes in the second half of the play. Running through the scene in which Miranda and Devlin resolve to stop Lionheart, generates a range of emotions between the two characters, as well as different games that they play with each other. Phelim discusses with the actors the value in attending to clarity and stillness. It is possible to fully follow the emotional journey of the characters but still leave room for the audience to project onto and create their own stories.

At this stage of rehearsals the 'Pause run' – in which Phelim stops the recording at points during the scene – proves very useful in allowing the actors to go deeper into the emotions and atmospheres. For the Oliver Larding murder (based on the killing of Clarence in *Richard III*), by pausing the dialogue there is more time to play out the scene and discover the essential bits of business that need to happen to tell the story, such as the executioners' asides and the action of getting

Larding into the barrel.

Work on the murders continues. A blood spray effect for Maxwell's murder is developed by the illusionist, Paul Kieve. A number of experiments are carried out for the Merridew/*Titus Andronicus* murder, but the initial approach is not violent or visually powerful enough for this final murder of the play, so we go back to the drawing board. On the third day of this week the company feed back to each other on how they feel about the process; what they have enjoyed, or not, of the work so far, and focus on specific moments.



Actor Henry Irving, known for his gift for performing macabre and melodramatic roles, in *The Bells*
photo Theatre Museum

Week 5

We have now rehearsed each scene using the Recording Technique at least once and begin to revisit scenes and explore them in new ways. Now that early work has been done on exploring emotional journeys through 'repels', 'impels' and 'compels' (see Practical Exercises). Phelim encourages the actors to attend to making big and beautiful pictures with the scenes and not to be afraid of being big and bold with emotions. The world of Lionheart, and the old-style acting he draws upon, is one of large emotions and gestures, in the melodramatic tradition. With these, however, also comes a clarity and an economy in the storytelling. The artifice of theatricality is to be celebrated, but it must be rooted in an emotional honesty. We work on the scene

Rehearsal diary

where the critics are lost in the theatre, with the tramps improvising using different combinations of objects and furniture to create pictures of the critics wandering and unable to find the way out. What comes out of these improvisations will eventually form the basis of a fixed choreography for the scene. For the first time since the beginning of the second week of rehearsals, we do a recording of the whole play. A run-through to tape, allowing the actors to link the scenes up once again and explore their journeys through the play, is followed by our first run-through with the actors speaking the lines. Phelim reminds the actors that this run-through is only an exercise, rather than a test of how much they know. It is still possible for them to discover new things. Joby Talbot's music and Gareth Fry's sound effects are introduced into this run, and immediately prove how those elements will contribute to the atmosphere and grand scale of the show.

Week 6

This week is shaped by doing a run of the play in either the morning or afternoon and doing scene work for the rest of the day. It is a useful balance: the actors can stay in touch with the play as a whole entity, and at the same time, can keep playing with individual scenes in more detail. We have reached the stage of being off-book, so no longer use the recorded runs, but the spirit of improvising with the scenes continues. Phelim asks the actors to use different styles when they run through, such as opera, old-style acting, or creating beautiful pictures. He continues to lead exercises on atmospheres and qualities, which link back to the work from the first two weeks of rehearsals, so that the actors can keep feeding this work into the play. He also encourages the cast not to stop playing and discovering new emotions and actions for the scenes. There are certain given bits of business that have to happen in the show, often related to the murders, but within these the actors continue to improvise new movement and approaches.

Week 7

Our last week of rehearsals sees a combination

of running through the play and sorting out the technical details of the murders, the appearance of wings in the transformation of Perdita, and the choreography of the 'Lost in the Theatre' sequence. The prop-makers finish creating the different contraptions and machines required, and these are gradually fed back into rehearsal so we can try them out and then send them back for any alterations – big or small – that are required.

The production is large and technical, requiring a lot of work to get the fine details just right. The actors, though, feel ready to take it to the next stage – into technical rehearsal – with an eye on the first performance. The musicians are in rehearsal for the last couple of days, and it is exciting to watch the play with a live score for the first time, although some work is required to rectify the timings between the music and the action.

Week 8

Moving from the rehearsal room onto the Lyttelton stage, and seeing the design in the space for the first time is very exciting. It is strange to see an old burnt-out proscenium arch theatre built within the modern Lyttelton auditorium but gives everyone a hint of how the final scene (where Lionheart talks about the National Theatre) will feel.

The sheer size and technicality of the production mean that we fall behind on our schedule for the technical rehearsal, but we manage to fit in three-quarters of a dress rehearsal just before the first preview. Getting to the first performance has been a pretty tight call!

Week 9

The first preview goes well. We continue to rehearse on stage during the afternoons for the rest of the week, while performing the show in the evening. This afternoon rehearsal time is vital for dealing with technical problems that have arisen from the previous evening's performance, and for re-rehearsing sections in order to make them work better for the stage rather than the rehearsal room.



Instant Acting

by Phelim McDermott

If you look at some of Improbable's rehearsal photos you may see that our company are standing round a microphone. They are not as you might imagine doing a radio play but using a rehearsal technique called the "Whelan Recording Technique."

In 1995 I caught sight of a book about acting in a bookshop. The first thing that drew my attention was its title. I remember thinking it was a bad title for a book if it wanted to attract British theatre practitioners. It was called *Instant Acting*. Working "hard" and putting yourself through a difficult rehearsal process seems to have currency in most British theatre. The idea of an acting technique which is "instant" feels alien. In other words it sounded far too much like cheating! I bought the book immediately. From the moment I began reading, I knew I had stumbled across a technique which was incredibly exciting and close to my heart. It was new but I realised it was what I had been looking for, as a director, in my work with text. For many years I had been struggling with the gulf between what happened in the improvised theatre that I did and my work on written plays. The text-based work never quite had the same quality of excitement or relationship to the audience that the impro shows seemed to have.

In the rehearsal room I'd always be dealing with actors who carried the ghost of a script in their hands, sometimes right up to the moment they were onstage and then on into performance. Most of the rehearsal time was spent not rehearsing but trying to deal with how to get the painful memory of line learning out of their bodies. Discussions about what the text "meant" did not seem to enable the actors but to hinder them and freeze the choices their bodies had. The input I gave to the scenes they were doing, either positive or negative, seemed immediately to limit the work they were doing. The decisions they were making were mine not theirs and it bored me. I went to the theatre and saw actors playing choices made for them by directors, and it depressed me. Actors were being disempowered.

One of the ways that I had tried to deal with the line-learning issue was to use a [Viola] Spolin exercise I had learnt from Keith Johnstone called "Dubbing". In my version this involved actors offstage reading the words for the onstage actors who just moved their lips so they got a chance to play the scenes themselves without having to worry about whether they knew their lines. It was exciting and useful but the lines never quite got into their skin.

In *Instant Acting*, Jeremy Whelan had taken this basic idea and run with it in a way which was simple but also a stroke of genius. The technique involves recording the text, very simply and clearly, without deciding how you play it emotionally. Then, as it is played back, the actors work the scene to the tape without speaking but exploring the emotions between them. It is what it says on the cover of the book: "Instant acting". You play the scene straight away, then once you've done it in the space you re-record and do it again. This process continues, exploring different games and ways of playing to the recordings as you go. The actors are never allowed to do the scene the same way. After they've done it about five different ways they then play it off-book. What is amazing is that they remember 70-80% of the text without ever having learnt their lines. They also haven't decided how to play the lines in isolation but discovered how, in the theatrical space, in interaction with each other.



Jim Broadbent and the
Tramps in rehearsal
Photo Keith Pattison

Instant Acting

As a director the challenge here is to resist the temptation to fix things, to set what they have done because you think it's the best way they will come up with of doing the scene. The temptation is great. Not only to feel you are getting somewhere but also to prove you are doing your job properly. However the essence of impro is to keep the performers and the audience in the unknown so that they stay engaged. Time and again I have seen performers play the scene in a way that seems definitive, only to be surprised when they come up with an even better way. I now know there is no definitive way and that if you trust them to play the scene the way that is best in the moment, they will find that each night. You also have to sit with them and 'hold the pot' when they get lost and feel helpless. As Joan Littlewood said "If we don't get lost, how will we ever discover something new?" In my experience, if you can resist this temptation,

Herbert and Maud Beerbohm
Tree in a Haymarket Theatre
production of *Hamlet* in 1892
photo Theatre Museum



actors always come up with better ideas than you, and any honest director will admit that the ideas he or she has in rehearsals are actually only bringing into focus ideas that the actors are beginning to manifest.

To work with instant acting takes a certain kind of director. I have used this process on six major shows now and I never cease to be amazed at how it supports actors' creativity and courage. As a practice it fundamentally encourages them to believe in their own impulses and intuition. It is invigoratingly joyful and, as with all true play, it takes performers into places of vulnerability and excitement their heads would never choose to lead them. It also puts them at their edges, there is no choice but to be vulnerable. Exactly what an audience longs to see onstage; theatre is usually about people in situations of vulnerability where the great forces of the universe are acting upon them. As I have used the technique more I have become more confident about its value and less controlling as a director.

As I write, we are in our fifth week of rehearsal for *Theatre of Blood* and are still playing with the script in different ways. It is our intention to keep playing as we go into previews, and beyond, in order to find new and exciting ways of performing it. Maybe it will become set or maybe it will continue to change but our intention is to make a play that has the vibrancy and immediacy of an improvised show whilst really doing justice to the script we have created. With luck, there will be new discoveries up until the last performance.

Our anti-hero, Edward Lionheart, is not just an enemy of the critics, he is also a champion of unbridled, outrageous theatricality. Perhaps thanks to "Instant acting" we will be able to give you a flavour of that sort of theatre.

© Phelim McDermott, April 2005

Themes

The 1973 film

Whether loved or loathed, evoked with fond or terrified memories, this genre-bending film clearly offers up some pithy themes for its audience. On the surface a somewhat camp horror film which focuses on a central character with an astounding yet irreverent knowledge of Shakespeare, it raises questions about the way we usually pigeon-hole art forms. Surely Shakespeare is high art and horror is low art? Here we find the two jostling up against each other, reminding us that Shakespeare is not a world away from the culturally-despised 'Hammer' films in his work's sensationalist horrors. After all, did Shakespeare's work not in its own time provoke screams of horror, cries of delight, and the occasional hurled tomato from those who watched it from the pit at The Globe? Of course, the language is unquestionably beautiful for the most part, but is its sacred place within English literature the result of the decision of critics and commentators across the generations? Does this deified position intimidate the average modern viewer, who feels much more comfortable scaring themselves silly with a horror film than with the gruesome deaths and maiming in *Titus Andronicus*? Perhaps the film, then, was in some way attempting to re-discover the

sensationalist roots of Shakespeare's plays and marry them once again to a truly popular form.

Lionheart, in his determination to continue to present Shakespeare in the 'popular', larger-than-life way he had always done, is in many ways a radical. He has refused to fall into line with the contemporary wave of critical opinion that favoured the gritty realism of John Osborne and the angry young men which preferred a naturalistic acting style to a heightened one drawn from melodrama. By stubbornly sticking to the ways of the past he is, to an extent, fighting against those leading voices that try to impose a blanket of cultural conformity upon their generation. Nestling within the history of the changing 1960s and '70s British theatre scene, then, are clearly larger questions about whether it is possible to objectify that which is surely, by its definition, subjective. In *Theatre of Blood* we are dealing with acting style and theatrical form, but these questions can be stretched to apply to other areas of visual art, literature and fashion. If art arises from primal human urges and emotions is it possible to categorise it through the cold lens of fashion and subjective taste?

Lionheart, in his claims that the public should be the benchmark by which his work is measured, also raises questions about who it is that art is created for: a small set of critics with their own often intellectually-defined criteria? Or the public who Lionheart attempts to hold up as the true mark of his success? If an audience is simply entertained by a play, do we need a critic to tell us whether it is good or not? Or without critics would we simply become lost in a sea of bland and shoddy productions? *Theatre of Blood*, gory, hammy, good camp fun as it is, manages to raise these questions, without weighting down the grisly action by trying to provide answers to them.

The adaptation

If these themes exist tangibly but elusively in the film, Lee Simpson and Phelim McDermott's adaptation brings them more sharply into focus. Their version links the film's 1973 date to the great drama of the English theatre world during



Edmund Kean, depicted in various Shakespearean roles
photo: Theatre Museum

THEMES

that period, the building of the new National Theatre on the South Bank, and therefore the questions about whether it would continue to be run by Laurence Olivier, an actor-manager of the old school, or by Peter Hall, a Cambridge-educated director who, significantly for *Lionheart*, never made his living as an actor. By this synthesis, the ideas touched upon in the film are placed in a crucible where their full implications can be probed. In *Improbable's* version the critic Devlin has been offered a position as Associate Literary Manager at the new National Theatre. This addition allows *Lionheart* to challenge directly the arrival of this breed of, as he sees it, university-educated directors and administrators, who were not interested in the theatre before it "became a place where careers could be carved". Devlin, invited into their fold, represents for *Lionheart* this new set to an extent that the other, older



Rachael Stirling
(Miranda Lionheart)
in rehearsal

photo Keith Pattison



Bette Bourne (Michael Merridew)

photo Keith Pattison

school critics, do not. *Lionheart* keeps Devlin alive until the end of the play so that he can challenge him on these points. In the final scene of Lee Simpson and Phelim McDermott's version we see that *Lionheart's* anger has a more complex root than only the string of stinking reviews he has received during his career. It derives from finding himself set against a new theatrical Establishment, sanctioned by government money. For *Lionheart* this "diplomatic service with artistic knobs on" has set in steel, in compact with the critics, what theatre should be, complete with a set of criteria, as if it were possible to treat art and artists as businesses to be streamlined. We see in *Lionheart's* confrontation of Devlin, that it is a sense of powerlessness in the face of the cultural conformity that he perceives which has driven *Lionheart* over the edge and powered his murderous revenge.

THE ORDER OF THE SHAKESPEAREAN DEATHS

1. Critic: George Maxwell, *The Daily Telegraph*.
Death based on Caesar's from *Julius Caesar*.
Maxwell is stabbed to death by the tramps, as Julius Caesar is by conspirators.

2. Critic: Sally Patterson, *The Guardian*.
Death based on Hector's from *Troilus and Cressida*.
Patterson had written of Lionheart's Achilles that "He thinks he is incomparable but he is in fact incompetent". Lionheart, as Achilles, casts Patterson as Hector and orders the tramps to: "Empale him with your weapons round about".

3. Critic: Trevor Dickens, *The Evening Standard*.
Death based on the trial of Antonio from *The Merchant of Venice*.
Dickens' review called Lionheart's Shylock "An ignoble insult to the Jewish nation". Lionheart uses the beautiful tramp, Perdita, to lure the lecherous Dickens into taking the part of Antonio in his very special version of *The Merchant of Venice*. Casting himself as Shylock, Lionheart stages the courtroom scene from the play, in which Portia tells him that he may have his pound of flesh, but reminds him he may not spill one drop of Christian blood to get it. In *The Merchant of Venice* this warning is enough to halt Shylock, but here Lionheart decides to re-write Shakespeare and take his pound of flesh. In a grisly operation he removes Dickens' heart.

4. Critic: Oliver Larding of *The Daily Mail*.
Death based on Clarence's from *Richard III*.
Larding's review complained, "Edward Lionheart's Richard III bored the doublet and hose off me, till at last I found merciful relief in the land of nod". Lionheart drowns Larding in a barrel of wine as Richard III's henchmen drowned Clarence in the "malmsey-but". Lionheart feels this is an appropriate death for Larding because he is a "disgusting wine bibber" who slept through his performance of Richard III.

5. Critic: Chloe Moon, *The Observer*.
Death based on Joan of Arc's from *Henry VI Pt 1*.
Moon's review of Lionheart stated that, "Mr Lionheart's performance in *Henry VI Part 1* is so

crashingly dull, one suspects he might be taking some kind of personal revenge on the play". Lionheart decides that Chloe Moon will be burnt, not at the stake, as Joan is in *Henry VI Part 1*, but by being electrocuted to death in a hairdresser's chair. To die having her hair done, is a punishment that Lionheart has matched to the fashionably-dressed, highly-groomed Moon.



6. Critic: Michael Merridew, *The Sunday Times*.
Death based on Tamora's in *Titus Andronicus*.
Merridew on Lionheart's *Titus Andronicus*: "Laid between the delicate performances of Miss Lillywhite as Lavinia and Miss Brown as Tamora, one is irresistibly reminded of a ham sandwich". Merridew's 'babies' are not sons, as Tamora has in *Titus Andronicus*, but two poodles that accompany him everywhere. As Tamora at the end of *Titus Andronicus* is fed with her two sons baked in a pie, so Lionheart serves Merridew up a poodle-pie, within the frame of the fictional television show 'This Is Your Dish'.

7. Miranda Lionheart and Edward Lionheart
Based on Cordelia's and King Lear's deaths in *King Lear*.
At the end Miranda, following her attempt to kill Devlin, is stabbed by the tramps and dies in Lionheart's arms, before he dies next to her. Even in their dying moments they play out the final scene from *King Lear*, in which Lear, cradling the dead Cordelia in his arms, refuses to believe that she is in fact dead, even as he dies himself of a broken heart. Lionheart's last lines before he dies are exactly those that Lear speaks before his death. 'Do you see this? Look on her, look her lips,/Look there, look there!'

Interviews

LEE SIMPSON, CO-WRITER AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Have you always had an interest in the film? When did you begin to conceive that it might provide material for an Improbable show?

I haven't always had an interest in the film, but Phelim has. I didn't know about it until Phelim told me, and when he first wanted to produce it as a show it wasn't commercially available on video. I just took it from Phelim that it was probably worth doing. The basic premise, that an actor kills critics, is naughty enough to pique one's interest and when you're looking for an idea for the kernel of a show, you want something that's useful, but not too useful: you want some problems in there. It shouldn't be perfect, otherwise there's nothing to solve, nothing to exercise your creativity.

What were you interested in preserving from the film in your adaptation and what were you hoping to move away from?

We wanted to celebrate the strange tone those movies had, where it is a horror movie, but also a bit funny and a bit 'thriller'. I don't think there is a name for it. There's a kind of peculiar delight in them which defies genre-categorisation, because they're not as terrifying as *The Shining* or *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, and they're not as funny as, say, *Pink Panther* films. There's a very specific joy in experiencing them. The *Theatre of Blood* film is quite badly behaved and I think that attracted us to it: we wanted to maintain its bad behaviour.

We wanted to strengthen the through-line. The story is episodic by nature; it's a series of set pieces. You can't get away from that and I don't think you should try to. The film tried to link them together with a police investigation, but I'm not sure it's a successful element of the film, so we wanted to find a different framework in which to set the whole thing.

Was that frame provided by the old, delapidated theatre setting with the critics all trapped inside it?

Yes. Setting the whole thing in the theatre solved a lot of problems for us. When you're

adapting a film for the theatre, certain things are really difficult to achieve, but when you make the frame a theatre within a theatre you have licence to exercise the imagination of the audience.

Did you spend time workshopping the idea for a stage version before you began writing it? How useful was it?

We didn't workshop with performers initially. First of all, we workshopped with the three Improbable members – myself, Phelim McDermott and Julian Crouch. And then more extensively with myself and Phelim, with just the two of us talking and mucking about. It wasn't until a script of some sort had been penned that we brought actors in to work on it, to find out what we'd got, and to see whether that was something worth pursuing or whether we should start again.

And after you had done that workshop with the actors how much did you then change or develop the script?

Very little, as it turned out. We found we'd ended up with this rather old fashioned, slightly creaky, West End style play with weird bits in it. We'd suspected that's what we had, but we weren't sure if those elements would work, and especially whether those bits would work on a traditional, thriller level. But they did seem to when actors said the lines. We sort of thought 'oohh, what's going to happen next?', and that was good enough for us, so we kept on track. It gave us more confidence in what we'd done.

How much of the script has changed during the rehearsal process?

It's got shorter. It's been open season in a sense that both the company and the stage management team make suggestions about bits that can be dropped or bits that need re-working. It hasn't changed tremendously though, it's just a little bit less over-written. It's probably still a bit over-written, but hopefully we'll reach what it should be.

What has been the most surprising thing to come out of the rehearsal process?

What occurs to me is that we are essentially

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doing the script that we started with. I had assumed that at a certain point we would chuck it all out and have to start again. Also there haven't been, in the negative sense, any major surprises. Halfway through rehearsals for the last show we did, *The Hanging Man*, a cast of seven was reduced to a cast of six, because someone had to leave through ill health. I think we only found the end of the show just before we tech-ed it. It had a real 'skin of your teeth' feel. This has felt much less like that, which surprises me I suppose.

As the writer have you found the Instant Acting technique a useful way of working?

As someone who has done some writing for the show, rather than being a writer (which I don't consider myself to be), I think it's fantastic. However, there are two or three moments where I can still see an echo of the stage directions that were in the script we sent to the company before rehearsals. The first thing you do with the Recording Technique is to obliterate all the stage directions and only leave the lines, so that the writer doesn't have any influence over how the actors move or the way they deliver lines. I love that because invariably the actors come up with a better way of saying the line and a better way of staging it than the writer ever can. But, there are a few moments where I suspect that people are still playing the stage directions that they read in the old script and I'm going to have a word and tell them they're not allowed to – because they're bound to have a better idea than me!

You and Phelim are long-term collaborators. What has been the structure for working together on this project?

It has reflected pretty much the way it was with *The Hanging Man*: I led the writing process, with Phelim feeding into it; and Phelim has led the directing process, with me feeding into that. I think the initial plan was that I wouldn't be in rehearsals, that I would work on the development of the show and the script and that once rehearsals started I'd disappear. Then Phelim would direct pretty much alone but I'd pop in. But as we've progressed, that's changed. It changed as we started the casting

process. Phelim was away for a while before the rehearsals began because *Shockheaded Peter* was in New York, so I had to take on some of the work on things like the design budget and casting. Slowly I've found myself more embroiled in the project than I'd expected to be. But it has ended up with Phelim very much leading the directing, with me chipping in as an associate director – as my title says – as an outside eye on him and on the whole process, giving feedback from the sidelines.

We've always found this helpful at Improbable. Somebody nearly always fulfils this associate director or 'outside eye' role. This is either quite fluid when the three of us work on a show (we might take it in turns to direct and to be the



associate to the director) or, in the case of *Spirit*, we actually had Arlene Audergon come from outside the company to co-direct and, among other things, fulfil that idea of feeding back to the director. So the director has a director. It's a very complex group of relationships. When you're directing a show, you hit moments every day when you don't know what to do. You have a blank, you're at a loss or you go up a cul-de-sac and you just don't know where to go next. Everyone does it. At that moment you have some choices: you can either bluff your way through it, which I don't think is very helpful, or you can ask for help. In this set-up the director can say "I don't know, can anyone help me?". And I think that's really valuable.

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Tim McMullan (Oliver Larding), Sally Dexter (Chloe Moon), Jim Broadbent (Edward Lionheart) and Rachael Stirling (Miranda Lionheart)

photo Theatre Museum

Is there anything about the process or about *Improbable* as a company that doesn't get mentioned very much? Something people would like to know, even if that's a difficulty?

What occurs to me is that a lot of the interviewers that talk to us say "the thing about *Improbable* is...", as if they know what we are, or they know the kind of theatre we do. And a lot of them are expressing surprise that we are interested in a story of theatricality and old-style acting. Why would that interest us, because we're improvisational and casual, and about honesty, not artifice? I've noticed that and I'm interested in it because I think that underlying our improvisation and honesty onstage is an incredible formality. Otherwise what you get is messy – messy in the wrong way, rather than messy in a way that can take you somewhere exciting.

The only other thing is that we don't get asked what *Theatre of Blood* is about. Everyone's assumed that it's not about anything, that the echoes and ideas of the story that we're telling don't go beyond the plot. I think they do and they're quite consciously in the film. But because it is an early 1970s British horror film, there's an assumption that there aren't any wider lessons to be drawn from it. I think there are. It's a really important story, but it's important to take it seriously and not seriously at the same time. Otherwise you'll muck it up.

It doesn't have an overt moral message, but what are the questions it sets up and the ideas it makes you think about?

In modern Britain every area of our lives is subject to 'evaluation', a process by which officialdom attempts to assess effectiveness in areas where effectiveness is to some degree subjective: the Arts, Education, Health, Food Production, Social Services, Criminal Justice. I see a lot of anger about this evaluation culture but, as yet, no real strategy to fight it. I think you could replace *Lionheart* with an old-style headmaster killing Ofsted Inspectors, or a GP killing the members of a health trust, or a traditional food producer killing officials from the EU. None of those would be as much fun of course!



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RAE SMITH, DESIGNER (SET AND COSTUME)

How did you start work on designing the set for *Theatre of Blood*?

The beginning of my work was to think about the difference between my memory of the film and the reality of watching it again. The memory of the film gave me a distinct excitement: about the gothic horror, extreme violence, the camp joy of revenge and the murdering of critics. I first watched it when I was little, though, so it wasn't important that they were critics, it was just important that they were bad people that deserved to die. Since then, of course, I've grown up a bit and now work in the theatre so the fact that the victims are theatre critics – who make every artist's life a misery at times – was very exciting. This project was also desperately appealing for the fact that we could reclaim a cult horror movie back for the theatre, because it is in a sense about theatre.

I watched the film again and thought about what the differences between the film and a theatre version of this story would have to be. What was really interesting in the film were the many, varied locations but by bringing the story back into an old theatre the multi-location aspect would have to function within one building. But a theatre becoming the main scene of all the murders was terribly exciting because it meant that Lionheart was, therefore, killing people in his theatre by surrounding them with scenery from a Shakespeare play or with theatrical objects which represented moments from their lives and tricking them into the illusion of it all. They each die acting a part in a play that they have once reviewed. The film has this to some degree but the theatre setting provides even more opportunities, because the architecture of this crumbling, yet functioning, theatre has to somewhat represent the insane, gothic fiction of Lionheart's mind.

All the things the film did we had to make work across a different period of time and make relevant and appropriate to our way of telling the story. Things that film can touch on quite superficially have to be thought through very

deeply for them to work in the theatre, both technically and narratively.

Did you research the old theatres that Lionheart would have made his hideout?

I went to the Theatre Museum to research derelict, blown-up theatres that had fallen down and what they looked like inside. There's a great beauty in ruined theatres and I was sure that putting one into another theatre would create an image of great poetic resonance. Particularly because the design would be a piece of architecture – the proscenium arch of a theatre – as opposed to just the scenery. That's something we love. It's like the love of ruins or a nostalgic, melancholy reflection on the past. This helped me to find a way in to finding out how insane Lionheart is, and how this might be framed. As the design progressed it became obvious that this front cloth of the theatre, which is the next thing you see, was like *The Picture of Dorian Gray* up in the attic.

Were there any other influences on your design?

Yes, the fact that I was alive when the film was made. When you're little you watch tons of TV, which gave a different sense of the time: *The Avengers*, *Randall and Hopkirk*, all that great 1960s and '70s surrealist TV. Also, with the 1970s having been recently stylised into something gorgeous, it was exciting that we could make it tacky and rough, as it really was.

The other influences would be what one discovered in the present – Improbable's style of working and definitely the type of actors who were used. Their influence and the way they approached things determined some of what we did design-wise, particularly in terms of the costume.

How did you and Phelim work together and what was that relationship like in developing the design?

Lee and Phelim and I talked about the script and the many ideas we all had. We worked for two weeks talking it through and mocking up a model. Then I went away and drew a story-

board of the show, as well as sketches of all my ideas for the costumes and the murders. I then came back and built a model from that.



Above and below: sketches from Rae Smith's storyboard



The murders storyboard was realised and made fantastic by Paul Kieve. The costume storyboard gives a plot or narrative of how the story travels forwards and backwards in time, and what people are wearing at these times. Storyboards were key to condensing our conversations, organising ourselves and knowing how many people we had to deal with. The next stage, in terms of costume, was to dress up in rehearsals with garments that we had selected from the National's store, to find the actors' characters and also the language of the piece. When we first met with the production team, the set storyboard and the model gave them an idea not only of how the scenery would function, but also how the story would be told physically, visually and literally. The way Phelim and Lee work is integrated with the environment. It's not just people talking,

disconnected from the space and atmosphere that they inhabit. It's about people in the context of their space. So, when I drew the storyboards they represented our conversations so far, and how they were going to rehearse the show as well.

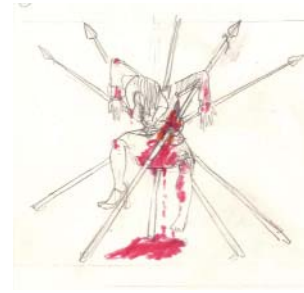
Has working with Improbable been a distinctive experience for you?

Yes. I'm not afraid of working in different ways and in different rehearsal processes so I fell in with them quite happily. What was distinctly different from any other experience was the fact that they're so nice. What that means is not simply are they good-natured and companionable, but they treat you with respect and make you feel your contribution is important. If you have moments when you don't know if something is right, they'll go with it and say "ok then, let's see what it's like if we don't do that". They have a very intuitive and gentle way of pulling out your creativity. They also cast people who were not only good, work hard and are diligent, but who are also good-natured. This healthy attitude to your work in a friendly environment actually makes work of a better quality.

Could you describe how you work with the production team at the National to realise your design and ensure that everything gets built in the way you want it to be?

The production manager and the production department worked very hard and put all their creativity and excellence into it, and that's why we got a good result at the end of the day. To integrate the design into the rehearsal as much as possible is different to simply delivering a design which never changes from the first day of rehearsal. Manufacturing it as part of the rehearsal process means that you have to push the theatre's departments to be more involved in the rehearsal process, more involved in talking to you and in talking inter-departmentally. This is particularly the case with the murders in this play, because the illusions have to be integrated into every aspect of the action. For example, a character's costume has to work with a piece of set or a prop, then, on top of that, the character has to get

covered in stage blood. This involves negotiation between four different departments: the costume supervisor, the designer, the prop-makers and the illusionist. We all have to talk to each other at every stage, in addition to watching the rehearsals to see what's going on and what might have changed. So the challenge is to get the production team really involved with each other, with the way Phelim and Lee work, and with the actors. This makes the process a bit more intimate than some people are used to. Sometimes one finds in institutions that people work in certain ways, which usually means they'll go off and make something and then show it to you when it's finished and gorgeous. But with this way of working nobody goes off and produces something solely on their own. You make something and then try it out with lots of people watching and if it doesn't work then you and your team have to come up with a better idea. So, as a maker, you've got to be very brave, open-minded and confident.



The whole idea, I believe, is that the realising of the design happens throughout, responding and adapting to the rehearsal process.

Gerard Bell, Jim Broadbent
and Edward Woodall
photo Keith Pattison



TRISH MONTEMURO, STAGE MANAGER

Have you worked with the deputy stage manager (Fiona Bardsley) and the two assistant stage managers (Valerie Fox and Andrew Speed) before?

Yes, on numerous occasions and – with some of them – over the last 15 years. We work very closely together and know each other's thoughts a lot of the time. There is a structure at the National whereby the stage manager, deputy stage manager and two assistant stage managers form a team and work together on the same shows.

How has working with Improbable and their use of the Recording Technique been different to other rehearsal processes?

In loads of ways. Normally actors are holding the book, learning their lines and trying to do the moves at the same time. That goes on for about three and a half weeks which can sometimes feel like a struggle for the actors. What's interesting about this method – which is to record the text and then have the actors improvise to this recording – is that it makes the emotions much more immediate, because the actors are not worrying about a book in their hands, they can try lots of different things physically. It feels like a very positive way of working and it makes the actors very free because they haven't got anything impinging on them in that really creative period. They probably learn the words at about the same rate as others doing the traditional thing of learning lines at home at night. They haven't had to do that because they're forbidden to learn their lines away from rehearsal.

Has this process changed the roles much for you and your team?

In a way it has, because we've had sound and music in rehearsals longer. Fiona, who is the DSM on the book, would normally be prompting and noting the 'blocking' in the script from early on. That hasn't happened until the very late stages of rehearsals because the blocking would change and be different. I think that was probably the area where we really had to keep our wits about us. Actually it isn't a problem

because it makes the actors themselves responsible for their own props. I think stage management have to really think on their feet in this type of rehearsal process, which is where my ASMs come in. They've had to use their imaginations and have objects ready to try out or available to improvise with before they have been requested.

What do you think the actors thought of the 'Tape Technique'?

I think they found it fantastic. A lot of them have never worked in this way before. They've all enjoyed the process and found it a very open and liberating way to rehearse. It also produced a lot of trust among the company, especially between Jim and the tramps. It's been really interesting to watch them develop together because they're integral to each other in the play. Having the tramps form a chorus that back up the main actor is great.

What have you most enjoyed about this rehearsal process, or what has most surprised you about it?

What's most surprised me is how relaxed everyone is. The directors are very relaxed and I've never seen a lighting designer in the rehearsal room so much before the final week. The sound designer has also been in much longer than would usually be the case. That process has been very interesting to observe and to see what state we are in in terms of sound effects and music. Phelim has always operated the sounds and music in order to try them out in the places he feels they may be appropriate. Joby Talbot, the composer, comes into rehearsal and then composes some music in response to what he sees. Phelim listens to it and we then start integrating it into the rehearsals, seeing if it works with the action and where it should be.

What has it been like to see props reappear from previous productions you have worked on?

That's been great because we often remember a lot of them very fondly – and sometimes not so fondly! Quite a lot of them have been in previous productions we have done, and it has

Interview

been funny to see them reappear and get used in totally different ways. Some of them are so suitable for this play because it is set in an old theatre, and it's really good to use things with a theatrical history attached to them. It has also been great to have these props in the rehearsal room from the beginning and not have to wait on a whole new set of props to be made or bought. The National has a very large props store from which Phelim and Rae Smith were able to select props before rehearsals began. Many of these have made their way into the show. Some of them even come from previous Shakespeare productions.

We're about to go into technical rehearsals. What is your role during these?

This show is very technical – not as much as I thought it would be in stage movements – but it is very technical in terms of the lighting and the murders. Although we've rehearsed these as much as we can in the rehearsal room, with blood when possible, there are a lot of technical issues attached to the murders, so from that point of view it's slightly daunting going into this part of rehearsals.

For the tech, the two ASMs will be on either side of the stage, the DSM will be in the box at the rear of stalls, and I will be in the stalls co-ordinating the different departments that are involved in a tech rehearsal. I have to oversee and keep it all moving. I've done this from the stalls in past techs, because then I can have an eye on the stage to see what needs to be done.



Bette Bourne
(Michael Merridew),
with one of the poodles,
in rehearsal.

Photo Keith Pattison

Practical exercises

Drawing from Improbable's rehearsal process for *Theatre of Blood*

The descriptions of these exercises are intended as rough guidelines; we suggest you refer to the source books listed on page 23 to explore them further. The exercises can be used at the beginning of a rehearsal process, to form an acting company who are aware of their impulses on stage and of the other people sharing the performance space. They can be revisited throughout the process so that the playfulness and sensitivity that they develop in an actor can be fed back into the rehearsal work.

1. One-word story improvisations

Find a partner. Place your arms around each others' backs: this will help you to stay connected during the exercise. Walking around the space, begin to tell a story together, each of you providing one word at a time. Let these stories run for a while, before swapping partners and beginning again. Notice what tense these stories are told in: past, present or future tense? Try to tell a story which stays in the present tense. Enjoy the live feel that this produces. Still linked with your partner, use actions to help tell your story. Actions may also help you stay in the present tense. You may want to form an audience and watch some one-word stories being created.

This exercise comes from Impro by Keith Johnstone and Improvisation In The Theatre by Viola Spolin.

2. Movement Qualities

Move around the space making a series of wide, broad but simple movements. Use your whole body as much as possible, but remember these are not dance movements. Imagine that these movements and the impulses that produce them are flowing from a centre within your chest. Continue to move around the space but introduce a quality of *moulding*. Mould the space around you, as you are sculpting it with your body. Explore this for some time and then change to a quality of *floating*. Imagine the air around you is like a surface of water which supports you and over which your movements can skim. Next switch to a quality of *flying*

through the space. Let your movements merge into each other, but without becoming shapeless. Even when you are static continue flying inwardly. The air around you supports you so that you can overcome the weight of your body. Now, continuing with these movements, begin to *radiate*, sending rays from your body out into the space around you. Send rays out from different parts of your body and then from the whole body at once. Try combining radiating with the other movement qualities. The facilitator can encourage the actors to take the movement quality up a level, to make it bigger, and then to slowly bring the level down, so as to make it more of a secret or naturalistic.

After exploring these qualities, form an audience and have two actors enter the space and meet, each with a different quality. These qualities may change once a scene has begun, and this can be encouraged from a facilitator outside the scene. You may want to tell the actors that they can introduce sounds or single words to the scene. Once the scene has taken some shape the facilitator may want to give it a simple title that might help encourage the actors to follow the impulses and games that are already present.

These exercises come from To The Actor; on the technique of acting, by Michael Chekhov.

3. Atmospheres

Move around the space, becoming aware of your body and the parts of it that you might not usually make contact with. Be sensitive to the presence of the other people around you and the atmosphere that is present. A facilitator from outside the group introduces a particular atmosphere, which might be nostalgia, love, inebriation, remorse, excitement, etc. Move around within this atmosphere. Know that it is possible to move within an atmosphere of grief, for example, but not be grieving. Once a number of atmospheres have been explored, the facilitator can introduce a scene title, such as 'The Cocktail Party'. They can then continue to change the atmospheres as the scene develops.

This exercise comes from To The Actor; on the technique of acting, by Michael Chekhov.

Practical exercises

4. Impulses

Walk around the room naming the things and the people that you see as you move. Then name what you see *and* also what you feel. Keep speaking and don't let yourself stop to think about what you will say next: the idea is to really follow your impulses. Try not to censor what you feel, or, at least be honest about your desire to censor yourself by expressing this as something you feel. After a period using the whole space the facilitator should ask the group to now move around closer together within a smaller space. Being in closer proximity changes the atmosphere of the exercise. Notice this. This monologue should now be made internal, but be strict and carry it on inside your head.

Find a partner and face them across the space. Starting with an internal monologue that will later become vocalised, approach your partner, noticing whether you feel *impelled* to come towards them, *repelled* away from them or *compelled* to stay in one place. Keep eye contact at all times so as to share this journey with your partner. Eventually, the facilitator encourages the actors to become aware of the whole group. As the whole group comes together the impulses followed should synthesise with the whole group. If a game emerges the group should follow its impulse to play it. Try not to lead the action, but let it emerge of its own accord. Be aware of your emotions and let any games that begin to be influenced by these emotions. The facilitator may notice if a scene begins to emerge and may want to encourage this.

This exercise is from Irreverent Acting by Eric Morris.

5. Physical and emotional work on melodrama

The actors walk into the space and throw a ball into the air. While this ball comes back down to earth the actor must stay up in the position that they struck to throw the ball. Staying in this position they can begin to move around the space, and discover how holding this original gesture informs their movement. It is this sense of a performance going upwards and outwards that is important in melodrama. Try new

gestures, still being physically drawn upwards as you were when you threw the ball. Turn out to the imaginary audience continuing with these gestures. Your performance is not directed to those richer audience members in the stalls, but to those in the 'gods', for whom you feel a strong love and connection. Up there are the real people who truly appreciate your greatness as an actor. Think of a line of text and experiment with delivering this line so that it will reach the back of the gods. Play out some simple scenarios using what you have learnt emotionally and physically from these techniques. For example, a priest whose affair with a married woman has been uncovered must walk across the room to his lectern and address his congregation.

Melodrama cards: Another useful technique for exploring the large gestures of melodrama. Produce a set of cards which give simple instructions for gestures. For example:

1. One hand palm out, one hand on heart
2. One hand on shoulder, one hand to head
3. Two hands out

Notice the emotion that making each gesture causes you to feel. Follow this, make it bigger and bring it into your whole body and onto your face.

Discussion, research and resources

DISCUSSION

1. Discuss both the positive and negative contributions that critics make to theatre. Do you feel both arguments are represented in Improbable's adaptation of *Theatre of Blood*?
2. Discuss whether *Theatre of Blood* can be considered to fall into the genre of horror.
3. Discuss the various challenges of adapting a film into a piece of theatre. Consider, in particular, the strengths and problems of both mediums.
4. Lionheart remembers a time when theatre: "Only survived by getting people through the door with the promise of blood and titillation". Discuss Shakespeare's plays in light of this comment.
5. What do you think Lionheart means when he asks "what has theatre, or sex, or death, or dreams, or pain, or love ever had to do with 'quality' or 'relevance' or 'excellence'"?

FURTHER RESEARCH and WRITTEN WORK

1. Research the history of British theatre in the 1960s and 70s. What can be considered the key events? Who were the important directors, writers and actors? Look at the building of the National Theatre on the South Bank. It may help you to make a timeline. How does this research inform your understanding of Lionheart and *Theatre of Blood*?
2. Write a review of the *Theatre of Blood* production. Try to incorporate any additional knowledge you may have gained from your research. You may want to consider the success of the adaptation and the old ruined theatre setting, the set design, the murders, as well as individual performances.
3. Consider the challenges to an actor playing the role of Lionheart. Make a list of the ways in which, as an actor, you would prepare for this role.

Consider both the physical and vocal demands and how you could prepare yourselves for these. What research might you undertake in preparation for playing the role?

4. Other areas to research:

- The Actor-Manager tradition in English Theatre
- The life of actor and director Laurence Olivier
- The early career of director Peter Hall
- The career of the critic Kenneth Tynan
- Melodrama
- The history of major productions of Shakespeare's plays, and their changing style.

RESOURCES

Improbable's influences

Impro by Keith Johnstone

To The Actor; on the technique of acting by Michael Chechov

Irreverent Acting by Eric Morris

Improvisation In The Theatre by Viola Spolin

Instant Acting by Jeremy Whelan

On Theatre of Blood

Peter Hall's Diaries by Peter Hall, edited by John Goodwin

The Diaries of Kenneth Tynan, by Kenneth Tynan, edited by John Lahr

Silent Shakespeare, a bfi collection on DVD and video of restored silent movies based on Shakespeare plays.

Confessions Of An Actor, An Autobiography, by Laurence Olivier

The Real Life of Laurence Olivier, by Roger Lewis, Laurence Olivier

Theatre of Blood, the 1973 film, directed by Douglas Hickox, screenplay by Anthony Greville-Bell, starring Vincent Price and Diana Rigg.

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With thanks to Rae Smith and Keith Pattison

Blood splash illustration: www.istockphoto.com

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About Improbable

Improbable was founded in 1996 by Julian Crouch, Phelim McDermott, Lee Simpson and Nick Sweeting.

Each of our shows is different but they all reflect our shared interests and beliefs. Improvisation, in some form, is always a part of the process; our best work comes from mistakes and accidents; theatre is too important to take too seriously; we trust in the creativity of the artists who make work with us.

Artistic Directors: Julian Crouch, Phelim McDermott, Lee Simpson
Producer: Nick Sweeting
General Manager: Kirstie McKenzie
Publicist: Sharon Kean

Improbable
4th Floor, 43 The Aldwych,
London, WC2B 4DN,
020 7240 4556
office@improbable.co.uk

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www.improbable.co.uk