

Freely adapted from **Oscar Wilde's**
gothic masterpiece

A **New Adventures** Production

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New Adventures, Sadler's Wells and the
Edinburgh International Festival present

MATTHEW BOURNE'S

DORIAN GRAY



Teacher's Resource Pack

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1. Using this Resource Pack

This pack aims to give teachers and students further understanding of Matthew Bourne's *Dorian Gray*.

- It contains information and materials about the production that can be used as a stimulus for discussion and practical activities.
- There are worksheets containing information and resources that can be used to help build your own lesson plans and schemes of work based on *Dorian Gray*.

This pack contains subject material for Dance, Drama, English, Design and Music.



Discussion



Further Reading



Practical Exercises



Written Work

The symbols above are to guide you throughout this pack easily and will enable you to use this guide as a quick reference when required. They will appear through the pack as symbols highlighting further work that can be done.

There are also a number of related activities, practical exercises and discussion ideas that can be used to develop ideas, workshops and as a starting point on which to use for your own course requirements.

2. Introduction to Matthew Bourne's *Dorian Gray*

Plot Synopsis – Matthew Bourne's *Dorian Gray*

Act One

21st Century London, we're at the core of the fashion industry. Dorian wakes to the sounds of *Sleeping Beauty* and gets ready for work as a waiter. Lady H is overseeing a photo shoot with Basil Hallward, the successful photographer. At the after party the models mingle with each other. Lady H and her assistant Edward Black move amongst the crowd drinking champagne. With the party over, the revellers have left and Dorian is left alone clearing up. Basil returns having forgotten his camera and sees Dorian. He starts taking photographs of Dorian and realises that Dorian is the key to his perfume ad campaign. Dorian and Basil end up entwined in Basil's bed. Whilst Basil sleeps Dorian holds Basil's camera and caresses it, and in a scene reminiscent of the one we have just seen he dances with the camera. Oblivious to his surroundings he is not aware of Lady H watching him. She goes to leave but first hands him her card. A star is born.

Dorian is preened to perfection by Lady H's team of helpers, Basil then creates Dorian's immortal image – the face of Immortal perfume. The billboard and Dorian's celebrity status is complete.

Everybody wants to be with Dorian, he is the guest of the moment, the person everyone wants to be seen with. Lady H throws a party at her house and she makes it very clear to Dorian that she wants to be with him. He accompanies her to the ballet, the orchestra soars and Cyril Vane takes to the stage and Dorian is in love. After the show Dorian waits at stage door for Cyril to emerge, and in a sudden change of status Dorian gives his card to Cyril and waits for him to call. Cyril and Dorian begin a relationship but Dorian's hedonistic lifestyle of endless partying, drink and drugs takes its toll and Dorian no longer wants Cyril around. One night when Cyril comes home he takes his pick of the drugs on Dorian's coffee table, he takes too many and he struggles to breathe. At first Dorian tries to help and goes to phone for an ambulance but he stops and instead watches Cyril take his last breath. Unseen by Dorian his doppelganger appears and watches him.

Act Two

Dorian is asleep but he is not alone, one by one a girl, a boy, Basil, and Lady H emerge from his bed. He



Act 1, scene 8

goes to a photo shoot but everywhere he goes his doppelganger seems to follow. We see his billboard, it now reads Mortal, it is ripped and ruined. Dorian is starting to crumble. He has a public appearance on the number one talk show but he is distracted and lashes out at a photographer as he leaves with Basil. They go to an exclusive club and they dance, fuelled by drink and drugs but still he's followed. Dorian sits away from the crowd but his doppelganger sits and stares back. Dorian goes to leave and sees Basil dancing with his doppelganger. Dorian leaves the club disorientated and angry. He goes to Lady H's house and although she is not interested in seeing him, he will not go away. He pours them both a drink but she refuses, he tries to kiss her but she does not kiss him back. In his frustration he tries to force himself on her. In trying to protect herself she scratches his face, he steps away from her and holds his face, his livelihood. He opens her portfolio, takes out his photograph, rips it up and leaves.

Dorian is at home, restless and uneasy when Basil turns up. Dorian brushes him off and Basil takes out his camera and – as in the first moment they met – starts taking photographs of Dorian, but this time Dorian turns away, he no longer wants his face immortalised in print. Basil disheartened stops and starts to leave but Dorian stops him and goes to the bathroom. Basil follows to find Dorian in the bath, Basil takes off his clothes and joins him but Dorian jumps out and before Basil knows what is happening Dorian hits him over the head with his camera and hits him again and again until he is no longer breathing. Dorian realises what he has done and runs to Lady H. He wakes her up and he throws himself on the sofa covered in blood and crying. She is uneasy and he stares at her before realising that she is not alone. He goes towards the bedroom but before he can go any

further his doppelganger appears and embraces Lady H. Dorian leaves and goes back to his flat but he is confronted with the dead bodies of Cyril and Basil. Inside his flat dead bodies hang and drape awkwardly on his furniture, they all stare at him and he runs to his bedroom unable to deal with these images anymore. His doppelganger sits waiting for him at the end of his bed, Dorian sits next to him and they hold hands, together they move to the bed and lie down. Dorian smothers his doppelganger to death but as he dies so does Dorian.

Lady H enters the flat and cleans Dorian's face and hands and then allows the photographers to immortalise the face of Dorian one last time.

Plot Synopsis – *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde

The novel tells of a young man named Dorian Gray, the subject of a painting by artist Basil Hallward. Basil is greatly impressed by Dorian's physical beauty and becomes infatuated with him. Whilst with Basil Dorian meets Lord Henry Wotton, a friend of Basil's, and becomes enthralled by him. Lord Henry suggests that the only thing worth pursuing in life is beauty, and the fulfilment of the senses. Realising that one day his beauty will fade, Dorian wishes that the portrait of him which Basil is painting would grow old in his place. Dorian's wish is fulfilled, and under the influence of Lord Henry he plunges into a series of debauched acts. He meets an actress, Sibyl Vane and falls in love, proposing almost immediately. Sybil refers to him as her Prince Charming but her mother and brother are skeptical. Sybil's brother warns Dorian not to hurt his sister, and if he does he will kill him.

Dorian invites Basil and Lord Henry to see Sybil perform in *Romeo and Juliet* but she performs badly, unable to love theatre as much as she loves Dorian. Dorian rejects her saying that her beauty was her art and he no longer loves her. She is distraught and kills herself that very night by swallowing prussic acid. When Dorian returns home, unaware that Sybil is

dead he notices that Basil's portrait of him has changed, the portrait's expression now bears a sneer and Dorian realises that his wish has come true and his portrait has begun to age whilst his own appearance remains unchanged. He decides to reconcile with Sybil but it is too late and this plunges him into debauchery. Over the next eighteen years Dorian experiments with every vice, mostly under the influence of a "poisonous" French novel, a present from Lord Henry.

One night, before he leaves for Paris, Basil arrives to question Dorian about the rumours of his indulgences. Dorian does not deny the debauchery. He shows Basil his portrait which is revealed to have become as hideous as Dorian's sins. In a fit of anger, Dorian blames Basil for his fate, and stabs him to death. Wishing to escape his crime, Dorian travels to an opium den. James Vane, Sybil's brother is there and hears someone refer to Dorian as Prince Charming. He attempts to shoot him, but Dorian says that he is too young to have been involved with Sibyl eighteen years ago. James lets him go but is then told by a woman in the opium den that Dorian has not aged for the past eighteen years.

While at dinner one night, Dorian sees James Vane stalking the grounds and fears for his life. However, during a game shooting party the next day James is accidentally shot and killed by one of the hunters. After returning to London, Dorian tells Lord Henry that he has put his debauched days behind him. He returns home and unveils his portrait to find that it is worse than ever. Dorian knows that the portrait is there to remind him of the effect each act has had upon his soul, with each sin being displayed as a disfigurement of his form. In a fit of rage, he picks up the knife that killed Basil Hallward and plunges it into the painting. Hearing his cry from inside the locked room, his servants send for the police, who find Dorian's body, suddenly aged, withered, and horrible, beside the portrait, which has reverted to its original beautiful form. His corpse can only be identified through the rings on his hand.

Similarities and Differences: Matthew Bourne's *Dorian Gray* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde

The Picture of Dorian Gray: background information

The Picture of Dorian Gray is the only published novel written by Oscar Wilde, first appearing as the lead story in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine on June 20, 1890. Wilde later revised this edition, adding new chapters; the amended version was published by Ward, Lock, and Company in April 1891.

It is considered one of the last works of classic gothic horror fiction with a strong Faustian theme. It deals with the artistic movement of the decadents, and homosexuality, both of which caused some controversy when the book was first published.

When it was first published the book gained "certain notoriety for being 'mawkish and nauseous,' 'unclean,' 'effeminate,' and 'contaminating.'" [1] This response was mostly targeted at the novel's homoerotic overtones, which caused a sensation amongst Victorian critics when first published but there was also criticism towards Wilde's perceived hedonism, and its distorted views of conventional morality. Wilde responded to such criticisms by curtailing some of the homoerotic tendencies and by adding more chapters to the book in an effort to add background. [2]

Main Characters

<i>A Picture of Dorian Gray</i> by Oscar Wilde	Matthew Bourne's <i>Dorian Gray</i>
Dorian Gray – an extremely handsome young man who becomes enthralled with Lord Henry's idea of a new hedonism. He begins to indulge in every kind of pleasure, moral and immoral.	Dorian Gray – an extremely handsome young man who is photographed and becomes the face of a perfume advert. He becomes a celebrity and is immersed in the culture that accompanies this status.
Basil Hallward – an artist who becomes infatuated with Dorian's beauty. Dorian helps Basil to realise his artistic potential, as Basil's portrait of Dorian proves to be his finest work.	Basil Hallward – a photographer who spots Dorian at a party and photographs him for a perfume advert catapulting him to fame. He becomes infatuated by Dorian.
Lord Henry Wotton – a nobleman who is a friend to Basil initially, but later becomes more intrigued with Dorian's beauty and naivety. He corrupts Dorian with his world view, as Dorian attempts to emulate him.	Lady H – a powerful iconic figure in the art-fashion world who takes Dorian under her wing and introduces him to a world that he is eager to explore.
Sibyl Vane – An exceptionally talented and beautiful actress with whom Dorian falls in love. Her love for Dorian destroys her acting career, as she no longer finds pleasure in portraying fictional love when she has a true love in reality.	Cyril Vane – a male ballet dancer whom Dorian falls in love with whilst watching him dance. Cyril dies after taking too many drugs whilst Dorian watches on.
Dorian's portrait – painted by Basil it ages with every sin that Dorian commits whilst Dorian remains beautiful and ageless. When Dorian destroys the portrait he dies as well.	Perfume advertisement and the Doppelganger – the evil twin that represents Dorian's evil nature and the corruption of Dorian's soul from the inside out. When Dorian kills his doppelganger he dies as well.
James Vane – Sibyl's brother who is extremely protective of his sister. He doesn't trust Dorian.	Bourne has not created an equivalent character but has created a new character in the form of Edward Black who is the PA to Lady H, and is constantly by her side and enhances her status.
The other characters in Bourne's <i>Dorian Gray</i> play various roles from models, party guests and clubbers. They represent the world in which Dorian finds himself a central part of.	



Act 1, Scene 5: Basil is infatuated with the subject of his photograph

You will notice that Matthew Bourne has chosen to change the sex of two of the characters. Lord Henry becomes Lady H in this contemporary adaptation, and Sybil Vane, Dorian's fiancée becomes Cyril Vane, a ballet dancer.

Matthew Bourne when reading the novel felt that there was a "note of misogyny which didn't hold up in a contemporary setting... when Dorian announces he is 'in love' with a young actress, it strikes a false note. Everything you have read up to this point has led you to believe that his interests lie elsewhere". Sybil becomes Cyril, a male ballet dancer which gives the scenario a deeper sense of truth.



What effect does changing the sex of these two characters have on the story? Do you agree with Bourne's reasons stated above?

Similarities and Differences



Discuss the main similarities and differences between Wilde's novel and Matthew Bourne's interpretation.

For example one of the biggest differences is the use of a doppelgänger as opposed to a portrait.

Why do you think Bourne decided to physicalise Dorian's portrait? What effect does this have on the drama and the story?

This is not the first time that an artist has been influenced by Wilde's novel and has chosen to focus on and update certain key themes.



Will Self's novel *Dorian, an Imitation* updated the original by placing events in June 1981, a time according to Self when "Britain was in the process of burning most of its remaining illusions."^[3] In Self's novel, the homoeroticism that was merely an undertone of the original work becomes an overt theme: Dorian indulges in homosexual orgies and the portrait of Dorian is replaced with a postmodern piece of art.



Self says he relocated to 1981 because "Britain was in the process of burning most of its remaining illusions".

Bourne says his version is "a template for the times: London 2008".

Discuss ways in which Bourne's *Dorian Gray* represents London 2008.

Key Themes

Duplicity – the Evil Twin

Duplicity is a strong theme in *Dorian Gray*, and in Bourne's version this is physicalised by the presence of a doppelganger, Dorian's evil twin. As Wilde demonstrates Dorian's duplicity in his visits to the opium dens of London, the upper class Dorian visiting the impoverished districts of London, he also feels the terrible pleasure of a double life when attending a society gathering just 24 hours after committing a murder. The split personality and duplicity seen in *Dorian Gray* is also evident in another gothic horror novel, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by RL Stevenson.

Bourne says that **“Dorian's discovery of the power of his own beauty and youth begins a journey that turns him into a heartless monster and leads to his destruction at his own hand”**. Dorian has to hide his evil twin and suppress the feelings that will eventually kill him.



Act One, Scene One: the Photo Shoot

Evil Twin Model Phrases

- Choose 5 positive words that best describe you or how you think others would describe your personality.
- Next to each word write down the exact opposite of those characteristics.
- Using the first 5 words imagine you are having your portrait taken. With each word create a pose or movement, it can be as simple as a turn or a jump, the movements you choose should visually describe the five words as clearly as possible.
- Once you have 5 separate movements find a way of linking them together to make a single phrase of movement. Stillness is allowed within the phrase of movement but the transitions between the poses should be fluid. Think about how the single movements connect visually to make a single phrase. What looks interesting?
- You should now repeat the exercise above for the contrasting 5 words.
- By the end of this exercise you should have 2 phrases. One phrase is comprised of movements that should reflect your personality; the other phrase is your evil twin phrase.
- Working alone work out counts to a rhythmical piece of music and practice the two phrases. Experiment with the length and style of transitions.
- Get into pairs and demonstrate your phrases to each other. You should then learn each other's phrases. Think about how the phrases interact. Using both phrases create one single phrase. Adapt the timing so that low and high levels are used at the different times and experiment with a moment of canon and unison.

This exercise relates to the photo shoot section at the beginning of Act 1. All the dancers' phrases created in rehearsals using this technique are used in this section.

Homoeroticism

Wilde does not mention any homosexual acts explicitly in his writing, and descriptions of Dorian's sins are often vague, although there does appear to be an element of homoeroticism in the competition between Lord Henry and Basil, both of whom compete for Dorian's attention. Both of them make comments about Dorian in praise of his good looks and youthful demeanour. However, while Basil is shunned, Dorian wishes to emulate Lord Henry. The novel is considered groundbreaking in the context that, in literature, "Dorian Gray was one of the first in a long list of hedonistic fellows whose homosexual tendencies secured a terrible fate." [4]

In Bourne's *Dorian Gray* there is a much more explicit focus on the homosexual relationships that Dorian has. When Basil takes his photograph for the first time they end up in bed together. Dorian then falls in love with Cyril Vane. In setting the world of *Dorian Gray* in contemporary society Bourne says he "cannot imagine that there is anyone in the 21st century who is still shocked by homosexual relationships". However, despite Dorian's relationships with Cyril and Basil, he also enters into a relationship with Lady H. Although it may be that he knows she holds so much power and can make or break him.

Celebrity

The theme of celebrity is not very prevalent in Wilde's novel, instead it was Wilde himself who became the celebrity. His status in society and his position as a public figure sowed the seeds of his downfall. Wilde, like Dorian Gray, came to be seen as an evil influence and corrupter of young men. In a letter, Wilde stated that the main characters of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are in different ways reflections of himself: "Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry what the world thinks me: Dorian what I would like to be—in other ages, perhaps." [5]

In Bourne's *Dorian Gray* Dorian's image is immortalised as the face of a new fragrance, a photograph taken by Basil Hallward. Dorian's image is everywhere; he becomes a celebrity because of his appearance.

Bourne asks **"what does it do to someone when you turn them into an icon?"**



How does Bourne show Dorian's personality change? What influences are surrounding him and tempting him?

Bourne says "we live in a culture where image and appearance are all, fame for fame's sake. What happens when the spotlight is turned on you? Sometimes monsters are created."

Think of three high profile celebrities and how fame has changed them. Many celebrities go into rehab because of various addictions. What have been influencing factors in their decline? Discuss why there is so much interest with these celebrities.



Bourne uses a number of contemporary references during the production to show the trappings of fame.

- Discuss and list as many contemporary references in *Dorian Gray* that you can think of.

One example is that Dorian appears on a talk show that many of us recognise as Jonathan Ross.

- In pairs think of 5 questions that Jonathan Ross might ask Dorian. Think about what he is famous for and what the public might want to know about him. For example, is his relationship with Basil Hallward public knowledge?
- Once you have a list of questions one of you should take on the role of Jonathan Ross and the other, Dorian Gray.
- Stage the interview, from the moment Jonathan announces Dorian's name and he enters to the end of the interview.
- Think about Dorian's character? Is he interesting as a person or is he just a pretty face?
- Show your interview to the rest of the group and compare and contrast different interpretations.

Murder

Matthew Bourne doesn't believe that he has taken any liberties with his interpretation of Wilde's novel. Bourne says that **"Wilde suggests that Dorian leaves a trail of infamy, humiliation, suicide – even murder – behind him. We know that Dorian kills Basil and causes the death of Sybil Vane. So it is not difficult to imagine him as a serial killer"**.



Dorian and Lady H



Is the character of Dorian a hero, a villain, a monster or an innocent who gets involved with the wrong people.

Bourne says that **"his narcissism – even the evil – was probably there all along; it just needed someone or something to make him aware of it"**.

- Do you agree with Bourne's theory? Discuss this in groups.

Bourne also describes Dorian as an anti-hero.

- Think of some other examples of an anti-hero in literature and in modern media.
 - List their characteristics and be clear about why he or she is an anti-hero.
 - Once you have listed as many as you can think of see if you can find common characteristics with all of the characters.
-

Art

Bourne uses the art on the walls of Dorian's flat to show the decline of his soul, and the pieces of art are visual references to demonstrate the corruption of Dorian's soul.

These are three of the pieces of art, in addition to this there is also a photograph of Dorian with his eyes scribbled out.



Figure with Meat by Francis Bacon



Great Deeds Against the Dead by Jake and Dinos Chapman



Quang Duc a Buddhist monk, 11 June 1963



In small groups discuss the effect these images have on you.

- Why do you think Matthew Bourne chose these particular images to show Dorian's corruption?
- Are there any other pieces of art that you think provoke similar emotions? If so find examples and explain your choices.



Portrait of the Artist

Working in groups of three, choose the work of one artist or photographer.

You can either choose an artist each or choose the same artist for three of you.

Artists you might want to research: Picasso, Lichtenstein, Bacon, Warhol, Banksy,

- Once you have decided which artist you want to look at try and find a selection of different images.
- Using either one single piece as inspiration or a selection of images create a moving work of art that uses the style of your chosen artist.
- You can decide whether to represent actual images or just move with the feeling that the work gives you.
- You should try and include the following things in your sequence:
 - Travelling steps
 - One or more turns (you should decide how many as a group)
 - A change in level
 - One or more jumps (you should decide how many as a group)
 - Decide how many counts each movement will take.
- Individually work on your movements thinking about the images in the pieces you have chosen.
- As a group whether working on one artist or three try and find a moment where you move in unison and perform the same movement. If you are looking at different artists then you could try performing the same movement with different styles.
- Rehearse and experiment in both canon and unison. Vary how the sequence is performed so that some members of the group jump whilst the rest of the group are changing levels.
- Think about how you might interact with each other and how your physicality affects the speed and type of movement.
- Perform in groups and evaluate each other's work.

4. Rehearsal Diaries

Written by Michela Meazza (Lady H)

Week 1 – Rehearsals

Matthew told us in advance that the first week would be very “workshop like” and it definitely was. Every day we worked on new ideas. We worked on the idea of a photo shoot: all the aspects involved with photography (being a camera and the technical vocabulary or observing photography) and movements related to celebrities in front of paparazzi. We created examples of “perfume advertisements” in teams, almost like a task from *The Apprentice*.



Using the perfume advert in *The Science of Beauty* Act 1, Scene 6 as inspiration work in groups to devise and direct a fragrance advertisement.

Working in small groups think of a name for your fragrance, it might be helpful to do research by looking through magazines, and watching various perfume TV adverts

- Use YouTube to research existing perfume advertisements and other adverts that might help influence the style of the campaign.
- Once you have thought of a name start thinking of a concept. It will help to think about what shape and colour the bottle is.
- Think of a marketing campaign
- Choose a music track that you feel fits the campaign
- Your brief is to make the ad at least 60 seconds long, it must have a beginning, middle and an end. Try and work on a story, as this will make the structure easier to work with.
- You must use movement and dance to tell the story. You might also wish to include moments of tableaux.
- Perform your adverts to the rest of the group and evaluate each others work.
- Think about what you like and didn't like and the reasons why.
- Which was the most effective advert and why?

Towards the end of the week Matthew approached character work. We all have to create names, age, nicknames, history and traits of the character we play (even if they only exist in one scene).



Dorian Gray company in rehearsal



Choose one character from *Dorian Gray* and create a character description.

You should include the following

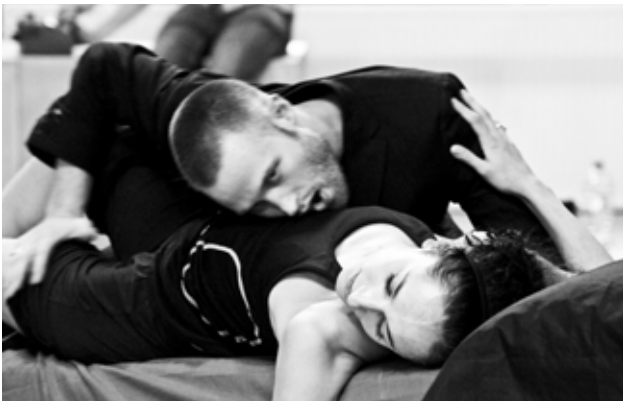
- Age
- Nickname/s
- Character traits
- Back story – how did they get to where we see them in the production.

Read them out to the rest of the group without saying the name of the character you have chosen and the group should try and guess what character you have chosen to create from *Dorian Gray*.

I am working on the character of Lady H (in the book: Lord Henry Wotton), a very sophisticated, high-powered woman, stern and collected. Discovering Lady H is like being in front of a blank canvas, the hardest part is the first stroke and after that, day after day the picture emerges but it's constantly changing as it's interacting with other characters, situations and emotions. It's a very rewarding process as a dancer, as we are given a sort of responsibility towards the character and the piece. It has been a very intense week, physically and mentally.

Week 3

We spent a lot of time on the section where Dorian is being manipulated by a group of beauty scientists. Matthew is very clever at creating scenes with lots of people. There is always a constant flow to it. The way groups come in and interact or replace each other is very engaging for an audience. To achieve this we have to repeat the moves and try all the possible routes and options until it's flowing and we can look confident and natural.



Dorian Gray company in rehearsal



Beauty Scientists

There should be no talking during this exercise. You should concentrate on your character, either as an artist, a critic or a model. Think about your body language and how this informs who you are and your status within the group.

Working in pairs, one of you should take on the role of the model and the other should be the artist.

- The artist should begin by manipulating the model. Create a variety of images, start with a pose that is beautiful and then distort this image to make it grotesque. Then from this grotesque image change it to make it an inspiring image.
- Swap roles and repeat the same exercise.

Working in groups of six:

- Three of the group should create a pose using the exercise you have just done as a starting point.
- One by one the remaining three people join the group reflecting the style established by the original three people.
- Relax and one by one strike a pose, each new person to enter should think about how their presence changes the image.
- From start to finish it should take 60 seconds to get into the final pose. i.e. 10 seconds per person to step into the image and move into a position.
- Discuss this as a group, discuss what moments worked and what didn't and the reasons why.
- Repeat this exercise again taking on board the discussion you have just had.

Working in one large group divide the group in half, one half should be the artists and the other half should be models.

- The group of artists should work together to arrange the models in the room into a piece of art.
- The artists should think about how they are moving and interacting with each other without talking.
- The artists can use objects in the room to create the piece of art.
- The models should think about facial expressions and how they move into position.
- Once all the models are in position the artists should then hold their own pose of observation as if they are assessing a piece of art.
- Discuss this exercise and the final tableaux as a group.

You may wish to do this in two smaller groups so that each group can observe the process.

Week 5

It's our last week of rehearsals. We spent quite a long time on the opening of Act 2. A very fast moving section, it's the life of a celebrity summed up in a very short time. It's very exciting and everything has to be timed very carefully and the transition from one moment to the next doesn't allow for mistakes. We have to stick to counts all the time.



Dorian Gray company in rehearsal



Solo Work – Celebrity

Journey down the red carpet. This is an exercise that was used to help the company devise the movement in the celebrity section in Act 2.

You are going to paint your name with body parts, as if you are announcing your arrival on the red carpet.

Start by thinking about which body parts will represent each letter of your name, for example:

Top of head	D
Elbow	O
Knee	R
Shoulder	I
Hip	A
Wrist	N
Chest	G
Foot	R
Chin	A
Stomach	Y

Once you have decided what body part will represent each letter start by practising the movements quickly tapping each body part whilst saying the letter each body part represents.

Before you make your journey down the red carpet think about the different types of celebrities there are:

Options

- Big personality celebrity – exciting, energised movement
- Cool celebrity – smooth, stylish movement
- Car crash celebrity – wild and out of control movement
- Powerful and influential celebrity – strong, clean and arrogant movement

The way you say your name using your body parts will change depending on the type of celebrity you are. Some examples:

If your first body part is the top of your head and you are a cool celebrity slowly bring your hand to touch your head and smooth your hair back. If you are a car crash celebrity bring both hands up to your head and shake your head.

Decide on one type of celebrity for each red carpet phrase.

Every two or three letters you should stop and pose for a photograph.

Set up a red carpet walk and take turns to walk down the red carpet. Members of the group should take turns to be the camera using techniques that can be found in **Workshop A: Exercise 2: Solo and Duet Work – I Am A Camera.**

Technical rehearsals can be very long and tiring, as we go through the show very slowly and we have to repeat sections several times but it gives us the chance to familiarise ourselves with the stage and become comfortable with costumes, lights and music. Occasionally I can't help feeling nervous. It's a mixture of excitement and adrenaline that usually keeps me very focused.



Write some extracts from Dorian's diary. It would be useful to write an extract from the beginning, middle and end to show Dorian's journey.

You can decide whether to write it as a handwritten diary or a web blog. Perhaps Dorian has his own website, Facebook or MySpace page.

4. Production Elements

Set & Costume Design

Lez Brotherston has designed a revolving set allowing the scenes to move fluidly from one to the other giving the production a very filmic feel.



What do you think the set design brings to the production? How does it inform the story?

What effect would it have on the production if there wasn't a revolve? How do you envisage the scene changes happening?

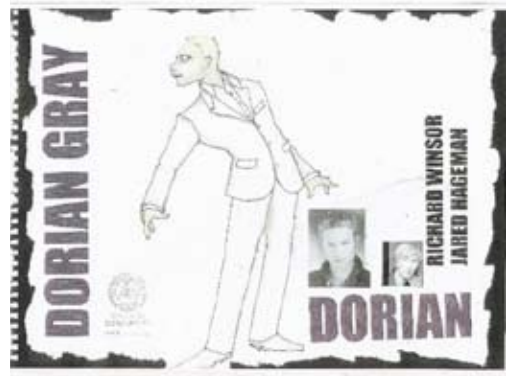
The costume design gives a very contemporary feel to the production. Brotherston has used colours to demonstrate characters. Dorian is dressed in a pale sharp suit whilst Basil is dressed in leather trousers and dark clothes.

The lines of the costumes are all very contemporary, Lady H is dressed in a very fitting masculine suit that allows her to exist in a male world but it is fitted to show her figure. Her status is heightened because of how she is dressed.



Discuss why you think that Brotherston made the decision to dress Dorian in pale clothes and all of the other characters in dark clothes.

What effect does this have on the production?
Does it help with the portrayal of the characters?



Costume drawings by Lez Brotherston

Music

The music is all original, composed by Terry Davies. He wrote the music during rehearsals, so was able to watch the devising process and was able to get a really clear sense of the characters and their journey.



For each scene in Matthew Bourne's Dorian Gray write down five words to describe the music. Try to listen to the music in isolation from the action.

Once you have completed this task for each scene look at what journey the music has taken the listener on. How does this reflect what happens on stage?

Comment on this and discuss how the other production elements; dance, costume, set and lighting work together to inform the story.

Lighting

Lighting plays a significant role in expressing the world of Dorian Gray.



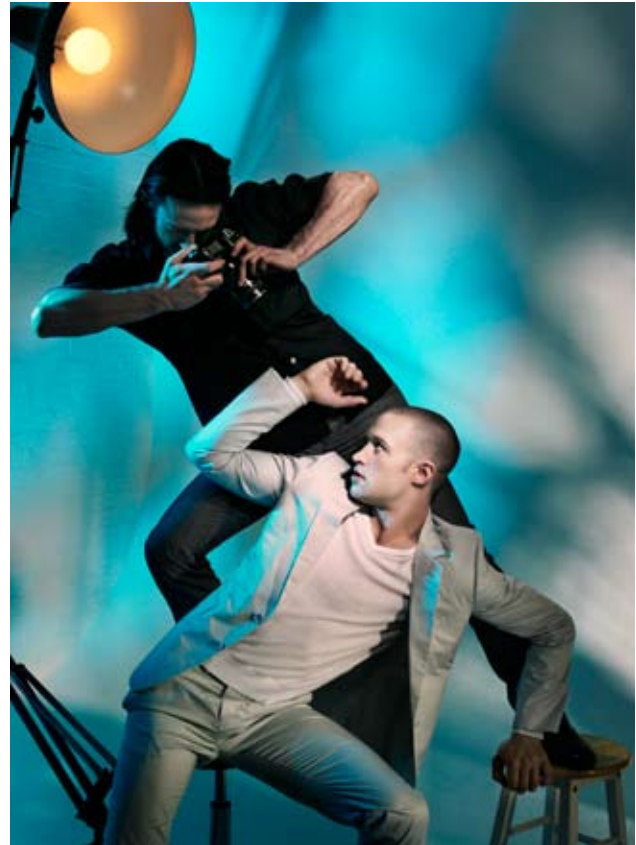
Choose two completely different points of the production. Describe what is happening in each of your chosen scenarios and comment on why they are different and how lighting, sound, set and costumes contribute towards this.

Sound

Sound helps to create the atmosphere of the production.



Think of other moments throughout the production where sound is used to enhance or create atmosphere.



Basil and Dorian

5. Worksheets

Worksheet A: Developing and Devising Ideas

Matthew Bourne and his Associate Directors Etta Murfitt and Scott Ambler use different exercises to help devise and develop work onstage.

Here are some examples of exercises used during the rehearsal process, the results of which you can see on stage.



Exercise 1: Solo Work – Self Destructive

Dorian begins to hate everything about himself. He wants to destroy the hatred that is inside him.

Working in a group start thinking of words that describe how Dorian is feeling at this point.

He hates who he is and what he has become. Some words to start this process:

- Possessed
- Frustrated
- Distorted
- Uneven
- Angry

Working solo think of your body as being comprised of two parts, the right side of your body is evil and wants to destroy the left side.

The left side is determined not to let the right side win.

The right side stops the left from:

- Walking
- Jumping
- Turning
- Shouting
- Running
- Crawling
- Lying still

Work on the moments where the left side almost wins and then the right side fights back.

Try experimenting with the right side and left side both taking turns to be the strongest side.

Work each movement to a set number of counts.

The phrase will be more effective if you vary the levels of movement.

For example: Jumping > Crawling > Running > Lying Still

The contrasting movements will enhance the energy of the piece.

Choose a piece of music that reflects the struggle going on between the two sides, evil and good.

Before deciding on one final piece of music experiment with different types of music.

Think about how different types of music make you move in different ways.

What effect does music have on your movement?

Perform your solo pieces to the rest of the group. Evaluate and comment on each person's performance.



Exercise 2: Solo and Duet Work – I Am A Camera

Start by working solo:

Imagine there are eight cameras surrounding you all wanting to take your photograph. You want each camera to notice a different part of your body.

Create a natural pose for each camera shot.

- Right side
- Left side
- Behind you
- Circling you
- On the floor behind you
- Under your right arm
- Above you
- On the floor in front of you

Make each transition between each pose as smooth as possible.

Hold each pose for 4 counts.

Working in groups of eight develop a phrase of movement that involves working in canon and unison. Choreograph a piece of dance based on these eight poses.

Try and incorporate these following moments:

- Movement of the same pose in unison
- Movement of the same pose in canon
- Movement of different poses in unison
- Movement of different poses in canon
- One person poses whilst seven people play the part of the camera
- Seven people pose whilst one person plays the part of the camera.

Those who play the part of the camera think about how you can demonstrate the following through movement and dance:

- Angles
- Zoom in and out
- Crop
- Stretch or distort image
- Shutter speed (slow motion or rapid fire)
- Focus

As a group think of movement that denotes a flash and insert it between each tableaux moment.

Choose a piece of music with which to perform your photo shoot with.

Perform your photo shoot to the rest of the group and ask for comments and evaluation. Discuss as a group moments that worked most effectively and what moments didn't work and why.

Worksheet B: Character



- Think of a character from a classical novel.
You might find it easier to use other novels from the gothic horror genre as the events will be more dramatic and easy to dramatise in the next exercise. For example *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by R.L. Stevenson or the character of Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*.
- Write a character appraisal of them, use key words to describe their characteristics.
- Describe what they look like, what clothes they are wearing and how they communicate with other people.
- Write down what makes them angry and what makes them sad.
- Write down three key events in the novel that your character is involved in and how they react. Now place your character in a contemporary setting and think about how they might alter to fit into a contemporary setting. Does their name change? What do they look like? What clothes are they wearing?
- Discuss how the contemporary setting affects the three key events you wrote about originally. How have things changed?
- Does your character have a more violent reaction to any of the situations? Think about the environment your character is now placed in.
- What other things do you have to consider when placing your character in a contemporary setting? Think about the people your character comes into contact with.

For example in Wilde's novel Dorian visits opium dens but in Bourne's adaptation Dorian visits a nightclub and the drugs where the drugs taken are most probably cocaine and ecstasy.

If you wish to expand this exercise and use the material collated from the written exercises above you can start working on physicality of the characters.

- Working in pairs use the key words you used to describe each character in the original context and find a shape for each word.
- Once you have created a total of 3 shapes think about how you might move from shape to shape.
- Now repeat this exercise for your character in a contemporary setting. Once you have practised your two phrases start working on ways to link the two phrases.
- Start by simply repeating one after the other then try and integrate the two phrases so that you begin moving from historical to contemporary and back again.

One of you may wish to play the historical character while the other one plays the contemporary character and think of ways that the two characters interact and their similarities and differences.

You could also play the same character at the same time and create a journey together from historical and contemporary thinking about the physical changes and the change in environment.

Choose a piece of music and start practising your phrases to music.

Perform to and discuss with the rest of the group.

6. Reflecting and Reviewing

Reviewing Live Performance

General overview:

- Summarise the plot in 3–5 sentences
- Describe the style of the production
- Did it remind you of any other productions you have seen or know?
- What was your personal response to the production?
- What theatrical devices and conventions were used?

Direction and choreography:

- What do you think the director/choreographer was trying to convey through the production?
- Do you think that the choreography, set design and staging supported and conveyed this?
- Was there an interesting and varied use of stage space?

Dancing:

- How would you describe the dancing style?
- What different styles of dance did you recognise?
- Were they all successfully used within the production?
- What can you say about the dancing in comparison with the dancing in other productions you have seen?
- Who gave the most notable performance? Try to be specific about why in your answer.

Design:

- Describe the set, costume, lighting and sound.
- What kind of statement did each of these make?
- How did the design contribute to the production's meaning?
- Give examples of how the lighting enhanced the narrative.

7. Further Work

Essay Questions

1. Will Self says he relocated his version of Dorian Gray to 1981 because “Britain was in the process of burning most of its remaining illusions”. Bourne says his version is “a template for the times: London 2008”. Compare and contrast London in 1981 with London in 2008.
2. Choose another example of an modern adaptation. This could be a film, play or musical. Using *Matthew Bourne’s Dorian Gray* as a point of comparison, discuss the depiction of modern life.
3. Who is Dorian Gray? Discuss
4. “Youth, youth, there is absolutely nothing in the world but youth” Lord Henry says to Dorian. What other novels, plays or films have youth as one of the main themes. Compare and contrast.
5. Is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* a gothic novel?

Footnotes and References

1. The Modern Library – a synopsis of the book coupled with a short biography of Oscar Wilde.
2. Cliffs Notes: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* – an introduction and overview the book.
3. Observer review: Dorian by Will Self – a review of Will Self’s reworking of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.
4. Meloy, Kilian (2007-09-24). “Influential Gay Characters in Literature”. *AfterElton.com*.
5. The Modern Library – a synopsis of the book coupled with a short biography of Oscar Wilde.

Other Resources and Further Reading

Prefaced and annotated editions of *Dorian Gray*:

The Picture of Dorian Gray
(Oxford World’s Classics, 2008)

The Picture of Dorian Gray
(Norton Critical Edition, 2006)

The Picture of Dorian Gray (Penguin Classics, 2003)

Other books by Wilde:

Complete Shorter Fiction
(Oxford World’s Classics, 2008)

Oscar Wilde: A Life in Letters,
ed. Merlin Holland (Caroll & Graf, 2007)

*The Soul of Man under Socialism
& Selected Critical Prose*
(Penguin Classics, 2001)

The Complete Letters of Oscar Wilde,
eds Rupert Hart-Davis & Merlin Holland (Holt, 2000)

Other examples of gothic fiction:

Dracula by Bram Stoker

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde
by Robert Louis Stevenson

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

Contemporary gothic fiction:

The Woman in Black by Susan Hill

The Shining by Stephen King



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