

LEARNING RESOURCE

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Find out more about the dance-theatre company New Adventures and our show, *Sleeping Beauty — A Gothic Romance*.

This Learning Resource provides more information about the production and the creative process behind its creation. The content of the Learning Resource is designed for post-show discussion by those who have seen the show live or are able to access the 2013 recording, shot by film company Element 18, which is available to view online via YouTube.

In this resource you'll find information that will enable you to study and write about the production in detail. A Plot Synopsis and Key Moments from the production sit alongside timecodes that correlate to the 2013 recording to allow you to explore specific sections from the show at home or in the classroom.





You will find links to films of interviews with key production personnel as well as practical movement exercises, particularly suited to dance students who want to learn aspects of choreography from the show and discover how New Adventures movement material is created. You'll also find pointers for further research.

The content is suitable for GCSE, A-Level and BTEC students. The Learning Resource includes notes about all the key production elements from the choreography to set design, the lighting, music and sound, which can be adapted to suit various course requirements.

This resource is particularly suitable for:

- Dance students
- Drama and theatre students
- Anyone with an interest in the work of Sir Matthew Bourne and his company, New Adventures.



New Adventures is an iconic and ground-breaking British dance-theatre company, famous for telling stories with a unique theatrical twist. Since 1987, New Adventures has changed the popularity of dance in Britain, creating works that have altered the public perception of what is possible when it comes to telling stories without words.

The company is led by celebrated choreographer and director, Sir Matthew Bourne. The award-winning repertoire has inspired and thrilled millions worldwide, which includes intriguing twists on classical ballets and other shows inspired by popular western culture including Swan Lake, Edward Scissorhands, The Red Shoes. The Car Man. Lord of the Flies and Nutcracker!



## ABOUT SIR MATTHEW BOURNE

Sir Matthew Bourne is widely hailed as the UK's most popular and successful choreographer and director. He is the creator of the world's longest running ballet production, a five-time Olivier Award winner, and the only British director to have won the Tony Award for both Best Choreographer and Best Director of a Musical.

Matthew started training to be a dancer at the comparatively late age of 22. He studied Dance Theatre and Choreography at The Laban Centre graduating in 1985 but spending a further year with the college's performance company Transitions. Matthew danced professionally for 14 years creating many roles in his own work. In 1999 he gave his final performance playing The Private Secretary in the Broadway production of *Swan Lake*.

Matthew was the Artistic Director of his first company, Adventures in Motion Pictures, from 1987 until 2002. In 2002, Adventures in Motion Pictures became New Adventures and is still renowned as one of the UK's most innovative and popular dance organisations celebrated for its ground-breaking work both at home and internationally.

## **INFLUENCES & INSPIRATIONS**

As a choreographer, Matthew is renowned for his innovative approach, shattering stereotypes and exploring and pushing new boundaries in dance. His production of *Swan Lake* with its all-male swans is but one example of breaking the walls of convention and expectancy.

Key to the creative approach of New Adventures is the creation of new work from familiar titles that are accessible to audiences unfamiliar with dance. However, Matthew's aim is not to simply re-tell a well-known story but instead put his own spin on the narrative that provokes the audience to think, feel and consider the story in a new light. This adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty* is no exception and may prompt you to think differently about any preconceptions you had about the show before watching it.

Matthew's work is eclectic in its influences that range from old films to musical theatre. He is inspired by a plethora of stimuli, eras and dance styles; memorable references and images are weaved through the majority of his work.



## STYLISTIC FEATURES

Matthew himself would argue that it is difficult to describe his dance style because of the nature of his choreographic process. The movement content of a piece is deeply rooted in the background and context of the story, but always the focus is on storytelling using the body instead of words.

Narratives, characters and relationships interest him, rather than a more abstract approach to movement. As he works with dancers from a mixture of contemporary, musical theatre and ballet training, he blends all of these genres to create something unique.

Music inspires Matthew and although not musically trained, he is fanatical about capturing the emotional journey of a score, which influences the climaxes, phrasing, and timing of the choreography. Famous scores are often re-arranged to suit his novel storylines and are specially recorded with an orchestra and layered with sound effects.

## CHOREOGRAPHIC APPROACH

Key to Matthew's stagecraft is his unique approach to collaboration with his creative team and dancers. Once he has established the story and structure of a work with his creative team, ideas are explored and initial phrases of choreography created through workshops prior to full company rehearsals.

Creating choreography is a collaborative process where the dancers have ownership over their character through developed interpretation and research. The movement content is deeply rooted in the intention and truth of each character, their narrative journey, and struggles.

Once the choreography has been created, Matthew shapes the narrative, refining individual scenes but also the overall picture of the work Whether making adaptations to a show once opened or upon revisiting the repertoire prior to performance, reflection and evaluation are central to Matthew's work ensuring that it is contemporary and relevant to the audience watching.







## INTRODUCTION

There are many versions of the *Sleeping Beauty* story from the 1697 version written by Charles Perrault to the Brothers Grimm 1812 tale and the Disney animated film version from 1959. Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* is an adaptation of the original ballet of *Sleeping Beauty* by the dancer and choreographer Marius Petipa, featuring the same famous score by composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

The New Adventures adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty* is not faithful to the ballet. Matthew has cut several key scenes, partly to accommodate a cast of 27, which is much more amenable to the logistics of touring (typically the ballet can involve a cast of up to 95). Most of the dancers learn and perform two roles in the show, sometimes three.

Matthew's adaptation includes many surprising twists to the familiar tale as well as a host of new characters that owe nothing to the ballet. Tchaikovsky's score has even been re-arranged so it is a better fit for the action and emotion of Matthew's re-imagined narrative.

New themes are also foregrounded. The starting point of Matthew's story is 1890 — the year of the ballet's first performance and the height of the Fin-de-Siecle period when fairies, vampires and decadent opulence fed the gothic imagination. Styling the show with the secondary title *A Gothic Romance* is not only indicative of the sumptuous set, costumes and evocative lighting that we see on stage but also an atmosphere of intrigue and suspense. Typical of Matthew's trademark approach to reinvention, the traditional tale of Good vs Evil is turned upside down, creating a supernatural love story that spans 100 years.

## SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES TO TCHAIKOVSKY & PETIPA'S BALLET

Below is a summary of the key similarities and differences between the ballet and Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty.

### MAIN CHARACTERS: WHAT ARE THE CHARACTER DIFFERENCES?

MATTHEW BOURNE / NEW ADVENTURES	TCHAIKOVSKY & PETIPA
Princess Aurora A strong willed, carefree, playful Princess Aurora who is put under a curse as a baby. Her fate is sealed when she pricks her finger on a black rose thorn.	Princess Aurora A curse laid upon her at birth where on her 16th birthday she will suffer a terrible fate. She pricks her finger on a spindle of a spinning wheel.
Leo, the Royal Gamekeeper Aurora's childhood sweetheart. Their relationship is kept secret as Aurora is royalty and Leo is not.	Prince Désiré A stranger to Aurora who is guided to her, falls in love, and awakens the princess with a kiss.
Count Lilac The King of the Fairies who changes the curse and acts as a guardian. As a vampire fairy, he gives Leo eternal life and guides him to Aurora.	The Lilac Fairy (Fée de Lilas) The fairy of protection, responsible for changing the curse to a 100-year sleep and for guiding the Prince to Aurora. Traditionally a female role.
Carabosse/Caradoc The evil fairy who places the curse on Aurora after the King and Queen do not show her enough gratitude for providing them with a child. Carabosse's son, Caradoc, carries out the curse. Both roles are played by the same male identifying dancer.	Carabosse The evil fairy who places the curse on Aurora at birth as a reaction to being left out of the christening celebration. Portrayed as a frightening figure.
King Benedict Aurora's father	King Florestan XIV Aurora's father
Queen Eleanor Aurora's mother	<b>Queen</b> Aurora's mother
The Fairies — 5 as follows:  Ardour — the fairy of passion  Hibernia — the fairy of rebirth  Autumnus — the fairy of plenty  Feral — the fairy of spirit  Tantrum — the fairy of temperament	The Fairies — 6 as follows: Candide Coulante Fleur de farine Miettes qui tombent Canari qui chante Violette

### ADAPTATION: WHAT ARE THE NARRATIVE AND PRODUCTION DIFFERENCES?

MATTHEW BOURNE / NEW ADVENTURES	TCHAIKOVSKY & PETIPA
Act 1 opens in 1890, Act 2 is in 1911, and Act 3 is 2011. There is also the time period 'Yesterday'.	No specific time setting. The ballet is removed from time.
Aurora sleeps for 100 years. There is a visible change in setting.	Aurora sleeps for 100 years but there is no visible demonstration of time passing.
Carabosse conjures up the baby Aurora.	Aurora was born naturally.
Carabosse's curse is motivated by the lack of gratitude shown to her by the King and Queen for her role in creating Aurora.	Carabosse is motivated by the lack of respect shown to her at Aurora's Christening.
There is no Christening party.	The Christening party is the setting of the curse.
Carabosse places the curse, but the villain of the piece is also her son Caradoc.	Carabosse places the curse and is the sole villain of the piece.
Aurora's true love is Leo, the Gamekeeper.	Aurora's true love is the Prince.
Aurora and Leo's relationship is established before she falls asleep.	Aurora and the Prince meet for the first time when he wakes her with true loves kiss.
Aurora pricks her finger on a black rose thorn.	Aurora pricks her finger on the spindle of a spinning wheel.
Count Lilac is a vampire who gives Leo the gift of eternal life so he can wait for Aurora during her 100 year sleep.	The Prince first appears when Aurora is asleep.
Caradoc attempts to awaken Aurora.	Caradoc is not a character, and Carabosse does not attempt to awaken Aurora — she tries to prevent the Prince from reaching her.
Leo awakens Aurora but is caught in a trap by Caradoc who convinces Aurora he was the one to wake her with true loves kiss.	Aurora awakens, and she and the Prince instantly fall in love following true loves kiss.
Count Lilac kills Caradoc.	Carabosse is defeated by the Prince and the Lilac Fairy.
Aurora and Leo have a baby in their happy ending.	The ballet ends with the end of the Prince and Aurora's wedding party.



## **THEMES**

In updating the storyline of *Sleeping Beauty*, a variety of themes old and new appear in the production, creating a final piece that is multilayered in its intention. There are themes explored in the show that appear in Matthew's other major works — the concept of love and hate, sexuality, gender twists, the complexity of characters and their need to fit into society. There are also themes that appear in the ballet or that are recognisable from other popular versions of *Sleeping Beauty*, which are built on and interpreted across all aspects of the stagecraft.

#### **GOOD VS EVIL**

- Tchaikovsky's score in the ballet creates a malevolent world for Carabosse in the Prologue before the character and theme of Good vs Evil is sidelined in the narrative.
- The introduction of the character Caradoc ensures that, following the death of Carabosse, Good vs Evil is central to Matthew's narrative.
- The characters of Carabosse and Caradoc are especially dark, and the central driving force behind the battle between Good vs Evil throughout the story, its conflict and drama.

#### **SLEEP**

- Sleep is an intrinsic element of the story. In Matthew's production, much of Act Three takes place within the wooded grounds of the Palace where Aurora and blindfolded Sleepwalkers move in trance like states in a 100 year slumber.
- The Sleepwalkers symbolise souls who are searching for their lost loves, who they have left behind in the land of the living. Their movement is based on poses and positions of sleep, as well as extended movements that capture their yearning for their loves who are out of reach.

#### **GOTHIC**

- The term 'gothic' originates from the 4th Century and has subsequently re-emerged and been re-invented over the centuries. It is probably best known today from a revival in the Victorian era.
- It was the Victorian references that Matthew used as part of his own initial research and as inspiration for the dancers in developing their characters before and during rehearsals. Matthew created a list of books, films, music and subjects for his cast to look into. For example, the dancers cast as Aurora and Leo read Emily Bronte's 1847 novel Wuthering Heights.

#### **ERAS**

Matthew's production spans the below eras:

- 1890: Victorian era1911: Edwardian era
- 2011: Present Day
- Yesterday
- The enormous timeline of the narrative is represented in the various eras we see on stage in the set and costume designs.
- A trademark of Matthew's work that is weaved into all his productions is the social dance — a dance that has a social function and context and is intended for participation.
   In Act Two, a social dance takes place between the guests who are attending Aurora's coming of age party.
- When researching social dances for Sleeping Beauty,
   Matthew looked at period dances that he could draw on for each era, including Vernon and Irene Castle's "Castle Walk" that became extremely popular in the Edwardian era.
- The time period 'Yesterday' is deliberately timeless, lending this section of the piece a timeless and ambiguous quality.







#### **FAIRIES & VAMPIRES**

- In 1890 when the original ballet was created, there was much interest and intrigue in fairies, whether they were real or folklore and powerful creatures to be respected or feared.
- The fairies in Matthew's production bring the baby Aurora gifts and form protective circles around her cot but they do have darker sides to their personalities. Their movement has bird-like qualities and their wings are designed from different types of birds. There is a very striking 'otherness' about them.
- Vampires have come back into vogue with TV series and films like Buffy the Vampire Slayer, True Blood and the Twilight Saga. Matthew drew on the True Blood series and the alternative community it presents — as a source of inspiration for his world where humans and non-humans live side by side.

#### **GROWING UP & REBIRTH**

- As well as the classic Good vs Evil story, Sleeping Beauty is also a "rite of passage" story about growing up and rebirth.
- It is full of fascinating symbolism. The prick of the finger and the drawing of blood are symbolic of a young girl's journey into womanhood.
- The baby Aurora grows into a hedonistic heroine, who falls in love with Leo. Their innocent love is tested following the realisation of the curse. Leo's quest to release the sleeping Aurora is symbolic of his journey from boy to man.
- The formality of the ballet's famous Rose Adage becomes a
  duet that demonstrates the flirtatious and playful charm of
  Aurora and Leo's young love. The tone of the dance shifts
  after she has pricked her finger on the fatal rose and the
  fate of the characters' is uncertain.



Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* premiered in 2012 and was the fastest selling production in the company's history. Created for the 25th birthday celebrations of New Adventures, it completed Matthew's trio of re-imagined Tchaikovsky ballet masterworks that started in 1992 with *Nutcracker!* followed up, most famously, in 1995 with the international hit *Swan Lake*. The 2022 production is the third time that *Sleeping Beauty* has been produced and presented by New Adventures.

To put on a show like *Sleeping Beauty*, we rely on the skills of lots of talented people. Before and during the rehearsal period, a creative team work closely together to stage the show, determining the overall concept and what the final piece will look, feel and sound like.

The Creative Team credits are as follows:

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

Director/Choreographer Sir Matthew Bourne
Set and Costume Designer Lez Brotherston
Composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Lighting Designer Paule Constable
Sound Designer Paul Groothuis
Associate Artistic Director Etta Murfitt
Resident Director Neil Westmoreland
Associate Choreographer Christopher Marney

To find out more about the creative process and the ideas behind the work, please see the <u>Production Notes</u> section of the Learning Resource.





The following notes have been compiled to help guide you through the significant design and performance aspects of the production.

## **CHOREOGRAPHY**

Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* is full of the stylistic features of the dance and movement of Matthew and his company New Adventures. His reinventions of such iconic stories always contain a mixture of classical and contemporary styles of choreography, which enables his work to engage a new demographic of audience, as well as satisfy and earn the respect of dance enthusiasts.

In Sleeping Beauty ideas for the dance in Bourne's piece were inspired by Tchaikovsky's score and the ballet, with famous features including: fairy variations, a vision scene, a hunting scene and several pas de deux, trois and quatre (a classical ballet term encompassing dance sequences performed by two, three of four people).

The recreation of different time periods and settings on stage is clearly reflected by the choreography, which aims to give a flavour of the dance styles of each period:

- Act One, set in 1890, the year of the ballet's premiere, takes on the feeling of a classical ballet complete with fairy variations (solos) with more than a passing nod to Petipa's original choreography.
- Act Two is set in 1911, when the waltz was still king, but we suggest the introduction of 'new dance crazes' from America, inspired by the legendary dancing partnership of Vernon and Irene Castle; "The Castle Walk" and "The Maxine" in particular.

- Act Three, in which Leo encounters the lost souls of the Sleepwalkers, who are trapped along with Aurora in a purgatory like land, is led by our heroine's personality and a free-spirited dance inspired by Isadora Duncan, one of the great innovators in the history of dance.
- Act Four finds Aurora about to be wed; the movement is boldly confrontational, confident, sensual and dangerous.
   The unsettling atmosphere is suggestive more of a cult ritual than a fairy tale wedding.

The choreography of *Sleeping Beauty* encompasses not just many styles of dance, but many entirely different moods, intended to represent different themes and emotions. Matthew chooses to subvert gender stereotypes of dance and bring more focus than is traditional upon the male leads.

The introduction of the character Caradoc who is Carabosse's son, responsible for carrying out his mother's curse following her death, allows for many striking moments in the drama as a dark and ominous presence on stage. In Matthew's production both characters are played by a male identifying dancer.

The choreography lends itself to the creation of distinct characters. In Act 1, each Fairy has their own personality which is expressed through their varying dance styles whether delicate, comic, impish or strong. The Good vs Evil dance styles of Caradoc and Count Lilac are contrasting and a clear signal of each character's truth and intention.

Symbolism is present in the choreography. The Sleepwalkers, like Aurora and Leo, are lost souls searching for their lost loves in a land beyond the living. Their yearning is characterised by outstretched arms and extended movements whilst travelling across the stage as if searching for their loved one. Their sleep is captured by the rise and fall of the movement, heavy with the weight of sleep. At times the arm movements portray a pillow like motif.

## SET & COSTUME

Matthew worked closely with the Set & Costume Designer – Lez Brotherston – to realise the physical world of *Sleeping Beauty*.

Lez has designed many of the New Adventures productions over the years. His working relationship with Matthew is indicative of a shared, deep understanding of each other's creativity and vision. Their collaboration sits right at the heart of the creative process and is key to shaping the mood, look and feel of a piece.

When originally conceiving the production, Matthew and Lez developed design ideas as well as a 'storyboard' for the show across a number of creative meetings. The enormous timeline of the narrative and multiple eras we encounter on stage were key design considerations as well as the practicalities of ensuring the dancers could move sufficiently in their costumes.

The sets were designed to be historically accurate for the time periods they represent as were the costumes, which include accurate period details of the Victorian or Edwardian eras. As well as the specific eras the show re-creates, *Sleeping Beauty* presented Matthew and Lez with the opportunity to create fantasy and supernatural figures and worlds, such as the Fairies and the Sleepwalkers, who we meet in a land of silver birch trees and a mythical moon.

After the interval, the story moves on 100 years to 2011 where we encounter tourists standing outside the overgrown and lock strewn gates of the Palace hoping to catch a glimpse of the sleeping princess. The club and wedding scenes of





the second half offer a completely different style again, with Caradoc and his followers clothed in red and black velvet and lace corsets. The skewed glamour and gothic style of the costumes and colour choice serve to enhance the hellish nature of the wedding scene where Caradoc's evil intention to sacrifice the princess becomes clear.

In Sleeping Beauty there are a few design elements that have not appeared in a New Adventures show before. Travelators (sections of floor which move) play an intrinsic part of the design, placed upstage on a slightly raised platform, two sections of floor move across the width of the stage in opposite directions, giving a powerful sense of movement and dramatic entrances and exits.

The Fairies first entrance in Act One is enchanting, eerie and mysterious, as the dancers appear to glide across the stage before stepping off the travelators to offer their gifts to the baby Aurora. The Sleepwalkers also use the travelators in Act Three in the woodland held in limbo under Caradoc's spell. The Sleepwalkers weave across the stage with arms outstretched or effortlessly drop to the moving floor as if unable to control their need to sleep.

Another element unique to *Sleeping Beauty* is the use of a puppet (of which there are three) to portray the baby Aurora, brought to life by members of the cast. The use of puppetry gives the audience a very clear picture of Aurora's impetuous, strong character at the start of the show which we then see in her as a young woman. This arc continues through to the climax of the production and the 'happy ever after' final scene where the audience are introduced to Aurora and Leo's baby. The puppets' movements, like every detail in the production, are choreographed in time with the music.



## **LIGHTING**

The Lighting of *Sleeping Beauty* is fundamental to the design of the show. Lighting Designer Paule Constable's design accentuates and enhances the set and costumes and adds atmosphere and clarity of storytelling to the overall creative concept.

The theme of Good vs Evil, darkness and light, is clear throughout. We first encounter the dark fairy Carabosse as a silhouette, lit via a translucent screen whose shadow we see conjure the baby Aurora. Dark, ominous lighting adds tension to scenes that are suspenseful and dramatic. Scenes between the lovers Aurora and Leo are bright and light.

The Victorian glamour, rich reds and gold and brocade of the lavish set and costumes of the first half of the show gleam as if lit by candlelight. A bright moon shines next to an inky black sky, which helps establish the enchanting atmosphere of the Sleepwalkers mythical land. In contrast, the neon coloured, strip lighting that appears in the club scene accentuates the dark atmosphere and is modern and striking.

Overall, the evocative lighting adds to the spectacular visuals that make *Sleeping Beauty* stand out against other shows in the New Adventures repertoire due to the variety of styles and moods we encounter on stage.

## **MUSIC**

As referenced earlier in the Learning Resource, Tchaikovsky's score of *Sleeping Beauty* was re-arranged when the show was originally conceived in 2012 in order to best communicate the dramatic action of Matthew's re-telling of the story.

Here is an interview with the Musical Director, Brett Morris, where he describes how he and other collaborators worked with Matthew to adapt the music for the show:

"I think it would be fair to say that one of the hallmarks of a Matthew Bourne dance piece is the way in which the various production elements (stage and costume design, lighting, sound, choreography and music) are unified into a cohesive structure, which serves to tell a dramatic story to the audience. Sometimes the search for a dramatic narrative will lead Matt to commission a new piece of music specifically for the production, as in, for example, The Car Man. In the case of Sleeping Beauty, we adapted an existing classical score in order to arrive at a performance version which best-served Matt's vision of his dance piece.

About six months before the recording was made, Matt and I began to meet for a series of conversations about how we might best utilise Tchaikovsky's score for the new production. Composed in 1888-89 for the Imperial Ballet in St Petersburg,

Sleeping Beauty is one of the most loved scores in the classical ballet repertoire, brimming with beautiful melodies and colourful orchestration. At the same time, it posed two major challenges for us. Firstly, it is the longest of the three Tchaikovsky ballet scores and because of this it is seldom performed in its entirety: each production always being slightly different. Secondly, it contains extended periods of pure classical dance music (the Fairy variations in the Prologue, and all the character dances in Act Three for example), which are less suitable for the dramatic narrative style of Matt's theatrical approach.

So my task was to help select which numbers we would use and in what order, for our production, and then to find solutions to the inevitable musical problems that arise when a work is not presented whole in the way the composer originally conceived. Over the course of several meetings we gradually came to piece together a musical structure that served the characterisation and narrative that Matt had in mind. Developing a detailed understanding of the dramatic vision of the choreographer/director is always essential to me during pre-production discussions, in order that I am able to bring out the pertinent dramatic aspects musically during the recording sessions and/or live performances.

The re-ordering of certain pieces posed particular challenges for us musically. Tchaikovsky, like all good composers, was very mindful of the interrelationship between the different keys and styles of the individual numbers he wrote, in order that the music flowed naturally from piece to piece and that the overall musical structure was cohesive. In changing the order of some of the pieces in the score we had to transpose certain passages into different keys, and even compose small linking passages of music in a style that was indistinguishable from Tchaikovsky!

When Matt and I had arrived at a final version of the score, the orchestral parts of our new version had to be prepared and

then closely checked for any errors to ensure that we did not waste any time rectifying problems in the recording studio. Because the orchestration of each piece varies (some using the full orchestra whilst others using smaller groupings within it for example), it was essential to plan how best to utilise our time in the recording process. Our recording producer Terry Davies devised a very detailed recording schedule, which entailed recording numbers that shared similar orchestrations within the same session. Therefore, the score was not recorded in the sequence in which it is heard in the show, and this places special demands on the conductor. I had to be able to convey to the orchestra the exact tempo and dramatic character of each piece as it occurred within the recording session, so that when the pieces were edited together into performance order, the original vision of the piece as a whole remained.

We recorded the score with a sixty-six-piece orchestra in eight three-hour sessions across four days, frequently needing to use every last second of recording time to ensure that we got the perfect "take". Each evening following the recording sessions Terry (\*Davies, who oversaw the Orchestration) and I would listen back to all the takes made that day to decide which ones we wanted to keep, which edits had to be made and what might need to be re-recorded during another session. Matt was present throughout the recording process and this ensured that the dialogue and creative process between us remained alive and on-going whilst recording. Occasionally, for example, we would record slightly different versions of the same piece, in order that Matt had some freedom to experiment with different ideas in the rehearsal studio with the dancers.

Lastly, following the sessions, the recorded material was edited into its final performance order, and rebalanced by the engineer and producer in order to achieve a good sound in performance in the theatre (which is different from the balance required for listening at home). The musical component of the production was now complete."





## SOUND

Like all the other production elements in *Sleeping Beauty*, the sound design plays a significant role in creating the vision of the piece.

Sound is used to add depth to the score, reinforce a feeling or emotion being portrayed as well as enhance a particular setting or scene. The Sound Designer, Paul Groothuis, worked closely with the creative team to establish what specific atmospheres, moods, or sound effects were needed and at what points throughout the narrative. He then researched and sourced sound effects or recorded them specifically for the production.



In Act One, as we see Carabosse conjure the baby Aurora, violent thunderclaps are heard, adding to the powerful imagery on stage. The thunder fills the space as if rumbling across a vast sky.

Sound for the baby Aurora is an important element in bringing the puppet to life. Baby cries are heard from the basket left at the Palace gates and we see and hear the toddler Aurora crying at her displeasure in having to take her medicine.

In Act One, as the King and Queen check on their baby daughter, a large moon is present upstage right, a star backcloth twinkles indicating night. We hear an owl hoot, stopping the King and Queen in their tracks. Just that one sound effect is enough to unsettle the King and Queen momentarily as well as the audience and suggests an impending uncertainty or potential danger.

In the final act, as Caradoc is overpowered by Count Lilac and stabbed with the blade with which he intended to sacrifice Aurora's life, Caradoc releases an anguished, almost demonic scream as he dies, finally freeing Aurora completely from the curse. It is a heightened moment in the story contrasted immediately by the idyllic reunion of Aurora and Leo in the wooded, leafy fairy world.

Key to the sound design's success is its role in supporting and enhancing the audience's experience of the work overall. It is another production element that connects seamlessly with the music, set and lighting to ensure each is interconnected and work together to serve the creative vision.



When you have watched the show, you can begin to consider further how all the elements work together to form the overall production and draw your own analysis of the impact and effect the staging of the piece has had on you as an audience member.

In particular you might like to explore:

- · How a piece of dance is adapted for the stage.
- How the company work together as an ensemble and interact with the production elements to tell the story.
- How the music in the production and the emotional journey of the score supports the storytelling.
- How this adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty* resonates with a contemporary audience.

## **KEY PRODUCTION MOMENTS**

You might like to consider these moments when you are analysing the production, as key points in the narrative with many interesting elements of stagecraft to reflect on:

1.	Introduction to Baby Aurora and the Royal Palace	(00:02:04)
2.	Fairies enter and bestow their gifts on Baby Aurora	(00:11:45)
3.	Carabosse enters and casts the spell	(00:19:22)
4.	Fairies stop Carabosse's curse	(00:24:26)
5.	Leo enters Aurora's bedroom	(00:29:49)
6.	Caradoc enters the garden party	(00:37:51)
7.	Leo and Aurora, Rose Adage.  Caradoc switches roses and Aurora pricks her finger	
8.	Count Lilac enters and sends Aurora to sleep for 100 years	(00:54:25)
9.	Count Lilac bites Leo, giving him eternal life as a vampire	(00:57:20)
10.	Leo breaks into the castle to find Aurora	(01:12:37)
11.	. Caradoc kisses Aurora but she doesn't wake	(01:18:02)
12.	Leo kisses Aurora but is captured by the guards. Aurora wakes and Caradoc is by her bedside	(01:20:39)
13. Aurora's attempted sacrifice. Count Lilac kills Caradoc (0)		
14. Aurora and Leo see each other again		
15. Final scene at the Royal Palace		(01:41:49)



# QUESTIONS TO GUIDE ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

You might like to consider the questions detailed below to help you analyse and discuss the piece.

#### **DIRECTION:**

- Describe the style of the production what theatrical devices and conventions were used?
- What do you think the Director/Choreographer is trying to convey through the production? Was it a success?
- How did the new twist on a well-known narrative contribute to the action and emotion of the story?

#### **CHOREOGRAPHY:**

- How would you describe the overall choreographic style of the piece?
- How are the themes in the piece established through the movement material? Describe the symbolism or motifs that contribute to this.
- How did the choreography contribute to the overall effectiveness of the piece – consider the use of space, action, characterisation and character dynamics.

#### **DESIGN:**

- Describe the set, lighting and sound what kind of statement did each of these make in the production?
- How did the overall design concept contribute to the production's meaning and mood?
- How is costume used to enhance our appreciation of the work?
- How does Matthew's approach to re-ordering the original Tchaikovsky score impact the narrative and intention of the piece?





Here you will find a range of additional resources that will take you further Behind The Scenes of *Sleeping Beauty*, including:

- A series of interviews with members of the creative team, cast and technical team so you can gain additional insight into the concept and staging of the show
- Practical exercises so you can explore movement material and the repertoire of the show led by New Adventures Dance Artists
- Articles and Reviews about the show
- More information about New Adventures and our work

#### 1. WATCH: BEHIND THE SCENES FILMS

- Adaptation & Music Matthew Bourne, Choreographer & Director
- Choreography & Staging Etta Murfitt, Associate Artistic <u>Director</u>
- Rehearsal Insights
  - Cast: Shoko Ito and Rory MacLeod
  - Cast: Ashley Shaw and Andrew Monaghan
  - Cast: Kayla Collymore and Jackson Fisch
- Costume & Wardrobe Gemma Bishop, Head of Wardrobe and Zoe Thomas-Webb, Costume Supervisor

# 2. TAKE PART: REPERTOIRE & CREATIVE TASK FILMS – PRACTICAL EXERCISES

- Meet the Dance Artists Repertoire & Creative Task Films
- Fairies Repertoire Autumnus Solo
- Garden Party "Castle Walk" Repertoire
- Sleepwalkers Phrase & Creative Task Adapted
- Act Four Zodiac Repertoire & Creative Task

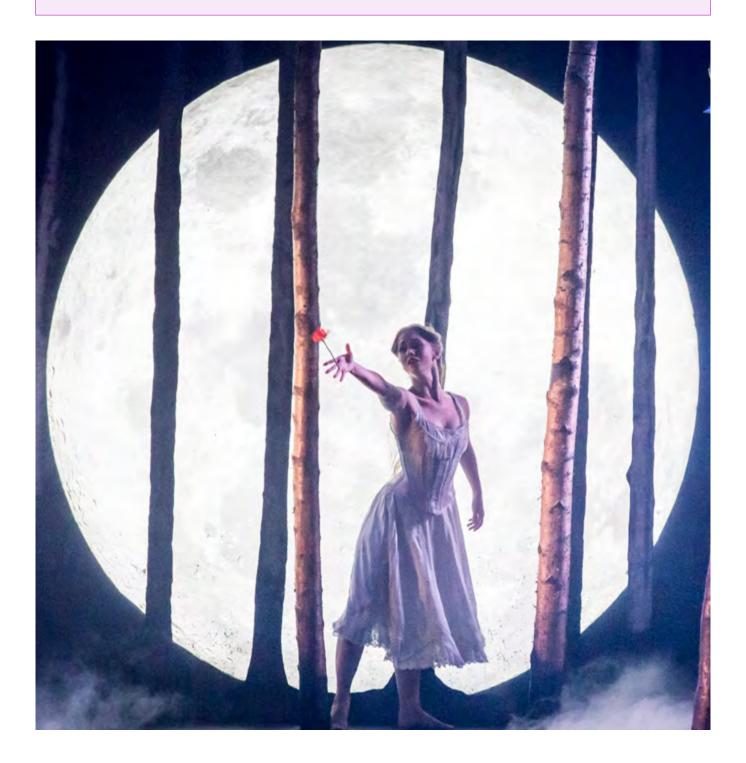
#### 3. FURTHER READING: REVIEWS & ARTICLES

- Winship, Lyndsey. <u>'Don't worry, just watch': how do</u>
   <u>you tell a story through dance?'</u>, Article, The Guardian,
   6 October 2022.
- Vickers, Charlotte. <u>'Matthew Bourne's Sleeping</u>
   <u>Beauty at Sadler's Wells Theatre and on tour'</u>,
   Review, Whatsonstage.com, 09 December 2022
- Skuse, Jenny. <u>'Review Matthew Bourne's Sleeping</u>
   <u>Beauty Sadler's Wells'</u>, Review, Lost in Theatreland,
   9 December 2022
- Abrahams, Judith. <u>'Ballet: Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty, Sadler's Wells, 2022'</u>, Review, Ham & High, 13 December 2022
- Crompton, Sarah. <u>'Matthew Bourne's Sleeping</u>
   <u>Beauty review delights the heart and mind'</u>,
   Review, The Guardian, 18 December 2022
- Craine, Debra. 'Sleeping Beauty is Bourne Again'.
   Article, The Times, November 2012

#### **4. EXPLORE: NEW ADVENTURES**

- To learn more about New Adventures Take Part work, including talent development opportunities with young people in professional and non-professional training or workshops in schools, please contact: office@new-adventures.net
- To learn more about the career paths of a range of people from across the New Adventures family, including Artistic Director Matthew Bourne, <u>watch our Two Minute Tales</u> <u>series of 2 minute films here</u>
- To go Behind The Scenes of other shows from the New Adventures repertoire, including FREE learning resources, practical tasks, films and photos, <u>click here</u>

We hope that you have enjoyed watching and learning more about Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty – A Gothic Romance* and getting to know the work of New Adventures. If you have any comments or feedback on this Learning Resource, please contact us: <a href="mailto:office@new-adventures.net">office@new-adventures.net</a>



Learning Resource written by New Adventures

Contributions from and with thanks to the creative team and company of Sleeping Beauty – A Gothic Romance

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