

Hull Truck Theatre & Pilot Theatre present



Mary and The Hyenas

Written by Maureen Lennon. Music by Billy Nomates (Tor Maries)

Show Experience Guide

This show experience guide is designed for anyone who may want to familiarise themselves with the show, Mary and The Hyenas, before their visit.

The guide includes a visual story, images of the cast and information about light/sound effects and show content.

We also have a venue experience guide which includes photos and information about the theatre itself and what to expect when you arrive and during your visit.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW OUR VENUE EXPERIENCE GUIDE.](#)

Show Running Time: Approx. 2 hour 25 mins (including a break)

Recommended Age: 13+

Content Warnings: Domestic violence, childbirth trauma, sexual content, swearing, death and loss, suicide, sexism.

Guide Content

- Mary and The Hyenas at Hull Truck Theatre Social Story
- About the show
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- Sensory items

Mary and The Hyenas Social Story

Many people enjoy seeing stories told by actors at the theatre. This is often called a production. The people watching the production are called the audience.

The production of Mary and The Hyenas is a story about Mary Wollstonecraft, a writer, philosopher and supporter of women's rights. Mary Wollstonecraft is a real person who lived in the 1700's.

The actors play lots of different characters. They wear different items of clothing and put on different accents to show which character they are pretending to be.

To make the production more interesting the stage production team use items called props. These items are sometimes used in unusual ways. It may be a boat sail or even a watermelon! They are there to help to create an interesting stage set.

The actors often enter and exit through a doorway in the back of the set. This leads to the back of the stage where actors can get changed. The stage and these areas are only for the actors use.

Special effects are also used to create an interesting production. These may be haze, occasional loud noises and flashing lights.

Many people enjoy these effects. Some people like to bring their ear defenders, sunglasses and a favourite smell sprayed on a tissue, to help them manage these moments and enjoy the production more.

The production team like to sometimes include jokes, words or phrases that are not true or may seem unkind to one of the other actors. This is to help tell the story and show how the characters are feeling.

During this story some of the characters, the actors are playing, pretend to die or experience violence. The actors themselves are not hurt, just their characters.

Many people enjoy the production of Mary and the Hyenas. We hope you do too!

About the Show

The show is about the life of Mary Wollstonecraft, a writer and supporter of women's rights, who lived in the 1700s. The 'Hyenas' are a chorus of women who play every other role in the show.

The show follows Mary's life from her teenage years to her death. Sometimes the show will jump backwards and forwards in time, and we see Mary talking to her daughter as she is dying. This is a musical, so the actors will sing and dance.

The Stage and Set

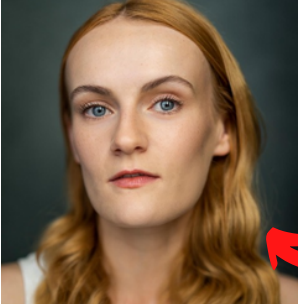
When you enter the theatre, you will see the stage and set. The actors will come out on to the stage to perform.

The stage looks like there are lots of wooden blocks and cubes stacked on different levels.

Parts of the stage are raised up off the ground. The actors sometimes climb up to sit or stand on the higher parts.



The Cast



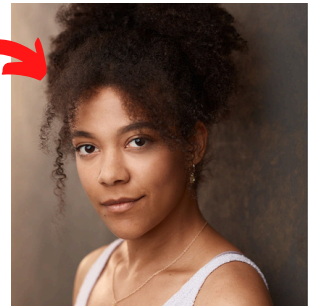
This is Beth Crame who plays Eliza Wollstonecraft, Dr Price and Margaret Kingsborough



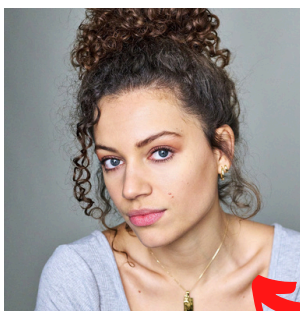
This is Laura Elsworthy who plays Mary Wollstonecraft



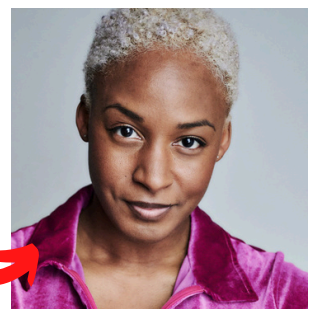
This is Kate Hampson who plays Mary Wollstonecraft's Mother and William Godwin



This is Kat Johns-Burke who plays Fanny Blood, Fuseli and Edward Wollstonecraft



This is Ainy Medina who plays Mary Shelley, Marguerite and Thomas Paine



This is Elexi Walker who plays Joseph Johnson and Gilbert Imlay

Key Characters

Here are the main characters in the play. They wear different items of clothing to show what character they are. The actors will play other characters as well.

Mary Wollstonecraft

Writer and supporter of women's rights



Mary Shelley

Mary Wollstonecraft's Daughter



Fanny Blood

Mary Wollstonecraft's Best Friend



Key Characters Continued

Eliza & Everina Wollstonecraft

Mary Wollstonecraft's Sisters



Gilbert Imlay

Mary Wollstonecraft's lover
(Father of her first child)



William Godwin

Mary Wollstonecraft's Husband
(Father of Mary Shelley)



Marguerite

Mary Wollstonecraft's French Friend



The Story



Mary argues with her parents. Her father has been drinking and hits her. Mary sings about how she has been told to behave, and how she wants to be free.

The family move to London and Mary meets Fanny Blood. They share interests in philosophy and independence. Fanny is engaged, but Mary does not want to get married. They sing about friendship.

In her early 20s, Mary cares for her dying mother, who won't talk to Mary. Her sister Eliza gets married.



Mary realises Fanny would be better if she got married and went somewhere warmer. Later, in Portugal, Fanny dies and Mary and her sister grieve. Their school cannot continue. Mary is offered work in Ireland and promises to send money to her sisters.

In Ireland Mary takes meets her new pupil Margaret and encourages her independence.

The play starts with Mary giving birth to her daughter, Mary Shelley. After the baby arrives there is a medical problem, and a doctor is called to help. Mary gets an infection and has ten days left to live - a countdown appears.

Her daughter, Mary, appears as an adult, wanting to know her mother's story.

The play jumps back to Mary's childhood in Beverley - she is 14.



Two years later Mary rescues Eliza from her unhappy marriage - they run away to start a school with Fanny.

Mary teaches a class on Shakespeare - she encourages her pupils to have their own opinions and ask questions.

Mary and Fanny listen to a speech about the American Revolution. Mary is excited about change and freedom. Fanny coughs and collapses. She has tuberculosis.

Mary is fired for encouraging Margaret to think for herself, and returns to London, ready to change the world.

Mary writes lots and gets her work published. She talks with a group of famous male writers and argues for more rights for women. She is against marriage, and one of the men, William Godwin, agrees with her.

Mary writes her most famous book "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman", inspired by the women from her life. Men say Mary's work is outrageous.

Mary goes to France to join the revolution. There she meets Gilbert Imlay. Mary and Gilbert become partners and Mary becomes pregnant. She continues writing, but he asks her to stop and stay safe.



Mary watches people being beheaded during "The Terror". She begins to give birth, and is helped by Marguerite.

Mary names her daughter Fanny. They travel with Marguerite, and later find Gilbert in a relationship with another woman. He offers to give Mary money to look after the baby.

Mary is very sad, and climbs over the railings of a bridge. She jumps but does not die.



Mary continues to write and is visited by William Godwin. William tells Mary he is fond of her and they begin a romance. Their partnership develops and we see them writing and working side by side.

The play ends where it began, with Mary slowly dying. She tells her daughters to live a full life and the other women from the play surround her.

The women Mary inspired tells us of their achievements, and join together to sing.



Lighting, Sound Effects and Other Content

<u>Effect / Content</u>	<u>Approx Timing</u>
Loud booming noise	As the show starts
Childbirth: Mary gives birth - there is some screaming, but nothing graphic is shown.	Begins approx. 1 min into Act 1
Childbirth / medical trauma / death: A doctor performs a non-consensual medical exam. We are told Mary gets an infection and will die in 10 days.	Approx. 7 mins into Act 1 After the doctor arrives
Domestic Violence: Mary's father appears drunk and slaps her. It is implied that he is abusive towards her mother.	Scene begins approx. 13 mins into Act 1 After projected title "Beverley 1773"
Death: Mary comforts her mother who is dying in bed. Her death is implied as the actor leaves the bed.	Scene begins approx. 28 mins into Act 1 After projected title "London 1781" She dies approx. 32 mins into Act 1
Flashing lights: Not strobe - directed towards actor	Approx. 33 mins into Act 1 During the song "A Little Patience" as Mary is on the top part of the set
Death: Fanny coughs and as she collapses it is confirmed she has tuberculosis. Her death is implied as she exits the stage.	Fanny collapses approx. 45 mins into Act 1 As Mary and Joseph Johnson talk She dies approx. 46 mins into Act 1
Loud booming noise / music begins	As Act 2 starts
Loud crowd noises / sound effect of fire: Implying the French Revolution	Begins approx. 14 mins into Act 2

<u>Effect / Content</u>	<u>Approx Timing</u>
Weapons / implied violence and death: A watermelon is cut in half with an axe, implying beheadings. A sword is used to open a bottle.	Approx. 16 mins into Act 2
Sexual content: Mary and Gilbert Imlay get into bed together - nothing graphic is shown.	Begins approx. 23 mins into Act 2 During the song "Falling For You", after they come down from the top level.
Loud discordant music	Begins approx. 27 mins into Act 2 After projected title "France 1793"
Implied violence and death: Actors stand on the top level of the set - beheading is implied as a character kneels down. Sound of chopping.	Approx. 29 mins into Act 2 She dies after speaking in French.
Childbirth: Mary gives birth - there is some screaming, but nothing graphic is shown.	Approx. 29 mins into Act 2 Begins as the beheading happens.
Flashing lights: Not strobe - directed towards actors on boat to show lightning.	Scene begins approx. 34 mins into Act 2 After projected title "The Ocean 1795"
Suicide attempt: Mary jumps off a bridge - the actor jumps over the back of the top level of the set.	Approx. 39 mins into Act 2 After Mary goes to the top of the set
Death: We are told about Mary's death and she says goodbye.	Approx. 52 mins into Act 2 After projection "0 days"

Other content

Domestic abuse / neglect - there are a few references to Mary not being loved or wanted by her mother (Act 1)

Infant death - there is a reference to Mary's sister Eliza's child dying (Act 1)

Grief / mental health - characters grieve and Mary is often in low moods (Act 1 & 2)

Death - throughout we are reminded that Mary has 10 days to live (Act 1 & 2)

There is some water based haze used throughout the show - this can look like smoke but is perfectly safe.

At some points the stage will be very dark.

There is some flashing lights and the lights often change colour. The flashing lights usually happen during the songs - see below for approximate timings.

<u>Song</u>	<u>Approx Timing</u>
How'd You Grow A Girl	Act 1 - 10 mins in
Run Wild	Act 1 - 16 mins in
Find Your Tribe	Act 1 - 24 mins in
A Little Patience	Act 1 - 32 mins in
Utopian Dreams	Act 1 - 34 mins in
First Of A New Genus	Act 1 - 61 mins in
We Are The Men	Start of Act 2
Vindication Of The Lives Of Women	Act 2 - 9 mins in
Falling For You	Act 2 - 19 mins in
You Can't Always Be The Strong Woman	Act 2 - 40 mins in

Relaxed Performances

There is a relaxed performance of Mary and The Hyenas on:
Saturday 22 February, 2pm

During the relaxed performance the lights inside the theatre will be a bit brighter than usual and we don't mind if you need to get up, move around a little bit or leave the theatre for a break.

There will be a quiet space on the First Floor should you need it.

There will be a resource table on the Ground Floor before each relaxed performance and a pre-show introduction at the advertised show start time. This will allow customers to familiarise themselves with the actors, characters and some of the effects within the show.

If you would like to arrange a pre-show visit to the theatre, to familiarise yourself with the space, please contact paul.bennett@hulltruck.co.uk or call 01482 488208.

Sensory Items

We have a small number of ear defenders available to loan (suitable for baby, toddler and adult) which can be useful for patrons with auditory sensitivities.

We also have a small number of wobble cushions, weighted lap blankets, sunglasses and a range of sensory toys available for loan from the Box Office.

Please feel free to bring with you any items that usually assist in coping with busy or noisy environments.

We hope that you enjoy the show and your visit to Hull Truck Theatre.