ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

Visual Story for the Relaxed Performance of

ROALD DAHL'S

Matilda

THE MUSICAL

Sunday 10 June 2018, 3pm

CAMBRIDGE THEATRE

Seven Dials, Earlham Street, London WC2H 9HU

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This visual story is designed for visitors to the relaxed performance of Matilda The Musical to help prepare you if you are curious (or anxious) about your visit.

It contains lots of images along with helpful information including:

- photographs of the Cambridge Theatre to help you find your way around
- descriptions for the main characters in the show
- notes on the plot and production
- an outline of the story of the show

We hope you enjoy this relaxed performance of Matilda The Musical

Information about the Cambridge Theatre

Matilda The Musical is being shown at the Cambridge Theatre in London.

For your comfort and safety, when you arrive at the theatre, you will be asked by a member of the security team if they can look inside your bag. This is the procedure in all London Theatres, and should only take a few moments.

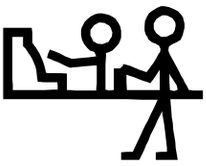
The Cambridge Theatre will be open from 2pm on the day of the relaxed performance and audience members will be able to use the theatre facilities and purchase drinks or merchandise from this time onwards. The auditorium (where the musical is being shown) will open at 2.15pm.

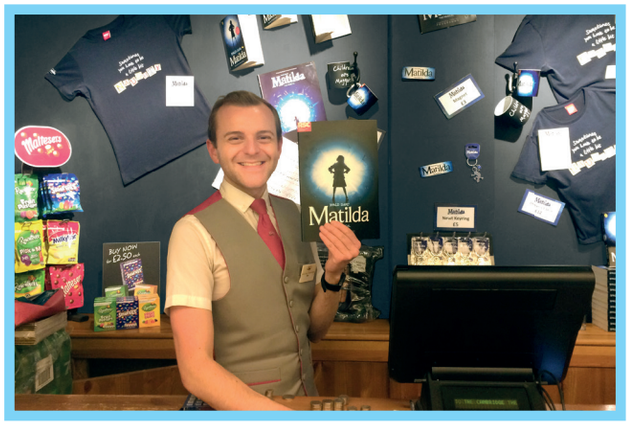
When you enter the theatre you will go into the foyer. This is a small area where you can wait before going through into the auditorium. This can be quite busy and noisy before the performance as everyone waits to go in and see the show.

If you have purchased a wheelchair seat, you will need to enter the theatre by the wheelchair entrance on Earlham Street.

Also in the foyer is the Box Office. The Box Office is a place where you can pick up your ticket from a member of staff. If your tickets have already been sent to you in the post you probably won't need to go to the Box Office.

As you go through the foyer and into the auditorium you will see merchandise areas where you can buy souvenirs.





There will also be refreshment stands where you can purchase food and drinks.

If you need help or have any questions there are plenty of staff members who can help you. The staff members who check your tickets and help you to find your seat are called ushers.

Inside the auditorium

The auditorium is the part of the theatre where the audience sit when they are watching the performance.

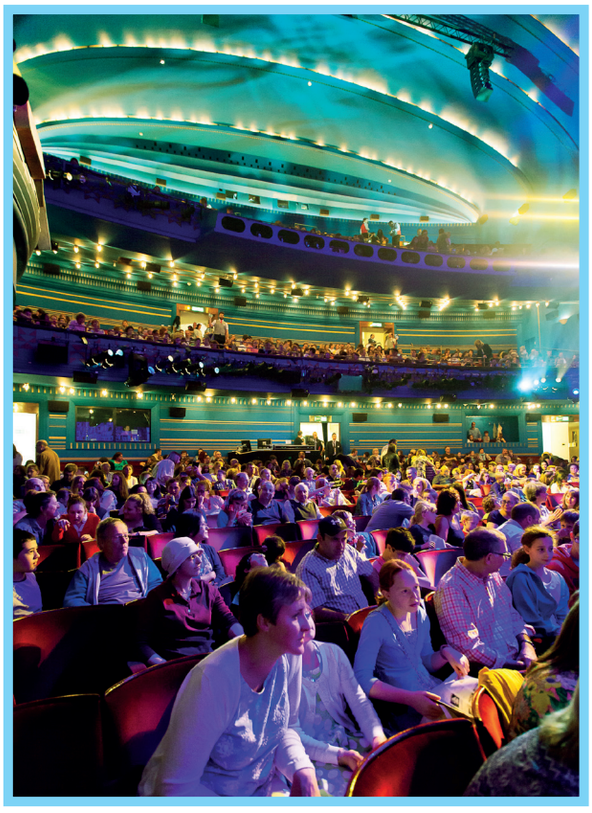
There are three different levels in the auditorium. You may be sitting very close to the stage or you may be quite high up and looking down on the stage. You will have some time before the show starts to find your seats and get comfortable.

The stage is the area where the actors perform.

If you are sitting in the stalls (the seats on the ground floor) please be aware that the actors move up and down the aisles throughout the performance.

There are two balconies at the sides of the auditorium which will be used by the actors during the performance. Around the walls in the auditorium you will also be able to see writing. This is part of the set design and has been created deliberately to make the auditorium feel part of Matilda's world.

Don't be alarmed if you see something called a safety curtain in front of the stage when you come into the auditorium. This means that there are still last minute preparations taking place for the performance on stage - the curtain is there to protect the audience while this takes place.



Mobile phones and tablet devices are permitted inside the auditorium, however no photography is allowed during the performance.

Would you like a familiarisation visit?

If you want to visit the theatre and see your seat before the performance, you can arrange a visit on Tuesday–Friday between 10am and 6pm. To organise this please email Henry.Bays@rsc.org.uk

Useful information on the day!

Chill-out areas

If you want to leave the auditorium at any time during the performance, there are three chill-out areas that you can visit. You can go to these areas to relax if you need a little break before going back in to watch the show. If you need to, you can ask the ushers where the chill-out areas are and they will show you the way.

Performance times

The musical is shown in two halves with a 20 minute break in the middle (called the 'interval') and is a total of 2 hours and 40 minutes long.

Show changes

For this Relaxed Performance the sound and lighting and some other small aspects of the show have been altered in order to reduce anxiety and to provide a less stressful experience. Also, if you need to talk during the show or to take a break, that's fine, just ask an usher to show you the way to a chill-out area.

What is the show about?

Matilda is a musical (which means there are lots of songs in the performance) based on the book called Matilda, which was written by Roald Dahl. The musical tells the story of Matilda, an extraordinary girl whose family doesn't understand her, and her fight to ensure good triumphs over bad, even if it means being a little bit naughty...

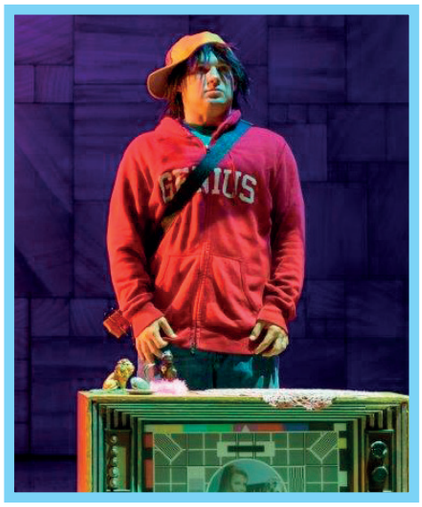
Characters in the show

Below are pictures of the different actors and the name of the characters they play. Some actors play more than one character and, so that they look different, they change the way that they move and talk and their costume (a costume is the name for clothes that actors wear on stage).

Matilda Wormwood
Matilda is our heroine and the daughter of Mr and Mrs Wormwood. Matilda is very clever and loves to read books.

Mrs Wormwood
Mrs Wormwood is Matilda's mum. She loves bright colours, salsa dancing and being LOUD!

Mr Wormwood
Mr Wormwood is Matilda's dad. He loves trying to make money by playing tricks, he loves television and hates books.



Michael Wormwood
Michael is Matilda's brother. He loves watching television and he never reads books.

Miss Honey
Miss Honey is Matilda's teacher. She is very gentle and kind.

Miss Trunchbull
Miss Trunchbull is the Headmistress of Crunchem Hall, Matilda's school. She is quite frightening and scares all the children (and teachers). The role of Miss Trunchbull is played by a man.

Mrs Phelps
Mrs Phelps is the librarian who Matilda visits and tells stories to.

Rudolpho
Rudolpho is Mrs Wormwood's dance partner.

Doctor
The doctor delivers Matilda into the world as a baby. He tries to explain to Mr and Mrs Wormwood that their daughter is a miracle.

Lavender
Lavender is Matilda's best friend at Crunchem Hall.

Bruce
Bruce is one of Matilda's class-mates at Crunchem Hall.

The Escapologist and the Acrobat
These two characters are in the story that Matilda tells Mrs Phelps when she visits the library.

Children in the show

There are different 'teams' of actors who play the characters who are children. As some of these actors are children themselves they cannot act on stage every night and we don't know until shortly before the show who will be performing. For example, there are four young actresses who play the role of Matilda. That means that when you come to see the musical the actors playing the characters might be different than the pictures above, but they will be wearing the same costumes.

As well as the characters in the list there will be other children on stage in some scenes at the school and the older children at Crunchem Hall are played by adult actors.

Guide to the lights, sounds and scary bits

- There are lots of sound effects in the musical and, while we have reduced the noise level throughout the show, there are still moments when the sound is quite loud. If you are particularly sensitive to sound you are very welcome to wear ear defenders during the performance, if you have brought them with you.

- Matilda tells a story about an escapologist and an acrobat which is very sad and some people might find it upsetting. Sometimes you just hear about these characters from Matilda, but sometimes they are played by actors on the stage and sometimes you see them as characters projected onto a cloth screen. Matilda also plays a part in one scene.

- There is a room mentioned called the 'chokey' which Miss Trunchbull uses to punish the children. This can be frightening but we never see the chokey on stage.

- There are balloons in this production but they are not deliberately popped at any point in the performance.

- In one scene a child appears to drop from the ceiling. Please do not worry - this is a puppet and not a real child.

- If you are sitting in the stalls (the seats on the ground floor) you need to be careful if you want to leave the auditorium during the show as the actors do move around the aisles throughout the performance.

- At the beginning of the second act, after the interval, the actors will come out on stage before the lights go down in the auditorium, we call this the interval entertainment. So if you arrive and they are there, don't worry, you're not late.

- The Wormwoods are obsessed with watching telly, especially Matilda's brother Michael. Mr Wormwood sings a song about how important television is and, while he sings, Michael shouts and looks very blank, because television has stopped him thinking for himself.

- In the second act there is a scene in which some of the children play on playground swings. There are times where they swing up high into the air and out towards the audience. Please don't worry, they are completely safe and have rehearsed this many times.

- During the song called Revolting Children in act two, there is a moment when the children throw paper aeroplanes from the stage out into the auditorium and at the end of this song confetti explodes above the auditorium and falls down over the audience sitting in the stalls below.

- Towards the end of the musical some of the actors will come on stage dressed as Russian gangsters. These characters speak with Russian accents and appear to be quite violent.

What happens in the story?

SPOILER ALERT!
These pages provide a longer explanation of the musical and plot so please don't read or share these pages if you don't want to know more

Matilda The Musical is a story about a clever girl named Matilda, who lives with her mum, dad and brother.

At the start of the musical Mrs Wormwood is pregnant with Matilda but she doesn't realise. When Matilda is born both Mr and Mrs Wormwood don't really seem to care very much about their new daughter. Mr Wormwood even thinks she's a boy.

Five years later, Matilda is now a little girl who loves to read books and invent stories but her family are more interested in watching television and ignore Matilda most of the time. Sometimes her dad is quite nasty to her and she plays tricks on him to try and put things right.

Matilda also spends lots of time in the library where she tells stories to the librarian, Mrs Phelps. She starts to tell a story about an escapologist and an acrobat. This story continues throughout the show every time Matilda visits Mrs Phelps.

When Matilda is old enough she goes to school and is put in a class with a very kind and caring teacher, Miss Honey. Miss Honey likes Matilda and realises how brilliant and clever she is.

The headmistress of the school is Miss Trunchbull who is quite frightening and doesn't like children and, in particular, doesn't like Matilda. Miss Trunchbull is bossy and mean to the children at the school. She uses a cupboard in her office called "the chokey" to punish children when they do things wrong and also spins one girl round by her hair because she doesn't like her pigtails.

Miss Honey tries to help Matilda by visiting her parents, but she interrupts one of Mrs Wormwood's dance lessons with Rudolpho, and Mrs Wormwood doesn't want to listen to her.

One day, while Miss Trunchbull is shouting at Matilda's classmates, Matilda gets very angry and discovers that she has a magic power – she can move things with her eyes!

Miss Honey invites Matilda to tea at her house and Matilda is shocked to see how small her home is. We learn that Matilda's story about the escapologist and the acrobat is actually the story of Miss Honey's parents. Miss Honey tells Matilda that after her father died in mysterious circumstances, she used to live with her aunt, who is so mean that she is now taking all Miss Honey's salary to pay her back for looking after Miss Honey when she was little. Matilda realises that Miss Honey's aunt is actually Miss Trunchbull. And so, Matilda decides to try to help Miss Honey get her father's house back.

One day in the classroom, she plays a trick on Miss Trunchbull. Using her magic power, she writes a message on the blackboard from Miss Honey's father. She tells Miss Trunchbull to give back the house. This scares Miss Trunchbull so much that she runs away, and gives Miss Honey back her house. Miss Honey becomes headmistress of the school.

Meanwhile, Matilda's parents are in trouble with some Russian gangsters after one of Mr Wormwood's money-making schemes goes wrong. They decide to run away to Spain to escape the Russians but Matilda doesn't want to go with them. Miss Honey asks if Matilda can stay and live with her. Matilda and Matilda's parents all agree that this is a good idea and Matilda goes to live with Miss Honey.

Photography: Manuel Harlan and Helen Maybanks