



Easy Read

A Visual Story

To support your visit to Shakespeare's Globe.

SHAKESPEARE'S
GLOBE

THE FIR TREE



The Cast



**Anna
Crichlow**
ACTOR 4 – THE
INNOCENT



**Tony
Jayawardena**
ACTOR 1 – THE
GUIDE



Molly Logan
ACTOR 2 – THE
TREE



Paul Ready
THE
STORYTELLER



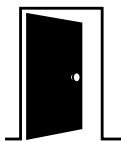
Jos Vantylor
ACTOR 3 – THE
MAGICIAN

Show Notes



Relaxed Performance

A Relaxed Performance will take place on 30th December at 3pm.



This will mean:

- An open-door policy: you can come and go.
- There are ear defenders available in different sizes to borrow from the Welcome Desk in the main foyer.
- Option to book seats with less people on the row.
- A Quiet Space is available in the 'Bull Ring'- below the Welcome Desk.
- We have worked to reduce sudden noises and other sensory elements. This means some of the trigger warnings in 'The story' section have been reduced.

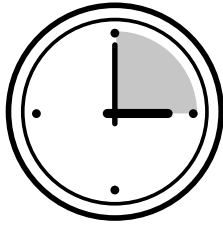


Content and Trigger Warnings

The production includes:

- Sudden loud noises
- Use of fire
- Large puppet that represents 'Death'
- An axe is used

Show Notes



Times

The running time is approx. 1 hour 20 minutes.
There is no interval.



Music and sound

Check out our sonic story for full information.

A note from our Composer, James Maloney:

“The music in the show is performed by four singers, who also play a few other instruments: a piano, a guitar, a double bass and some smaller percussion.

Sometimes the music is big and loud, like thunder, and other times it's subtle like the birds in spring.

Very often, the musicians sing like a choir, in harmony – sometimes festive songs, sometimes creating moods that might feel hopeful and exciting, and occasionally scary and foreboding.

At one moment, towards the end of the play, the musicians play The Nightingale's song – which sounds magical and dream-like. The play ends with a sonnet by Shakespeare sang by all the actors and musicians to the melody of the Nightingale.”

Show Notes



Design

Set

A note from our Designer Sam Wilde:

"The whole theatre is filled with fir trees and the doors of The Globe are left wide open.

There is a large red sign reading THE FIR TREE in the musician's gallery. Above the stage hangs cardboard stars and a moon.

The stage is set with a central pile of suitcases and boxes on a raised wooden platform. All the props and costumes are visible from the outset, these are mostly made from cardboard delivery boxes."



Costume

The costumes are modern dress, they are reminiscent of vintage hiking or wilderness explorers, like knitwear and heavy chords. Everyone wears bobble hats and thick socks.



The actors play multiple roles, changing from their initial characters to play other roles, these are largely done with cardboard "homemade" additions to their current costumes. The Hare wears a cardboard headband hare ears on the side. The Stork wears a pair of cardboard wings and a white Shakespearean ruff.

Show Notes



Lighting

There is soft lighting throughout.

When it's Christmas, the stars shine, and large fairy lights are turned on.

The matinee show is lit by daylight.



Puppets

There are multiple puppets in this show, they are all made of recycled cardboard boxes and old coffee sacks.

The Sparrows are 6 identical bird puppets flown in unison on short sticks.

The storyteller who plays the Stork has cardboard wings on his arms.

The Cat is big headed with a sack body, it has no legs but large green eyes.

The Mice are two identical puppets with sack bodies and oversized ears.

The Rat is larger than the mice puppets and has very small ears but a large, very angular nose.

The Death Puppet is about 3 meters tall and 5 meters wide. It has a cardboard skull and two long cardboard arms draped in a long black cloak.



Find out more about The Fir Tree:



We have lots of resources, blogs, and events around the show.

Find out more on our website:

<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/whats-on/the-fir-tree-2022/#details/>

The Story



Someone in a black, hooded cloak raises an arm, signals The Globe bell to ring three times.

▲ Globe bell rings three times.

Four storytellers enter through the audience, musicians stand in the musician's gallery. They all sing.

♪ Silent Night ♪



One storyteller wants to tell the story of The Fir Tree. He casts a spell for everyone to enter their imagination.

The story is set in a magical forest, in Spring.

♪ Seasons Alter ♪

The Fir Tree is little and doesn't like being little.

▲ The Hare trombone.



A hare jumps over the fir tree every season making the tree feel even littler.

A child comes and tells the fir tree all about a book they are reading about an Emperor in China.

The Fir Tree is determined to grow bigger so it can leave the forest.

♪ Seasons Alter ♪



A stork appears, the Fir Tree asks where the other trees go.

The seasons change and the Fir Tree grows, winter arrives, the storytellers put on hats and scarves. Finally, the hare can't jump over the Fir Tree anymore.

♪ Celebrate Good Times ♪

The Fir Tree meets a flock of sparrows.

The Story



⚠ Loud, thudding, sound of trees getting chopped down.

The lumberjacks arrive and cuts down the fir trees.

⚠ Threat of axe chopping down tree.

⚠ Loud, thudding sound of trees getting chopped down.



🎵 Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree 🎵

The Fir Tree is cut down, she gets her wish!

🎵 In the Bleak Mid-Winter 🎵

The Fir Tree is grabbed and put in a van and taken to a tree sale.

🎵 Walking in a Winter Wonderland 🎵

A little girl chooses the Fir Tree to take home.

The Fir Tree meets the little girl's cat, Ophelia.

🎵 Jingle Bells 🎵

The Fir Tree is decorated with fairy lights and a pinecone.



🎵 Twinkle Twinkle little Star 🎵

A star decoration is flown in from above.

⚠ Little girl shouts - 'It's Christmas Day!'

🎵 Oh Christmas Tree 🎵

⚠ Loud knocking.

A stranger arrives at the door. He is a Storyteller and tells everyone a story called "The Emperor and the Nightingale."



The Story



⚠ Fire used onstage.

The story begins in an Emperor's great palace in China. He learns of a nightingale who sings beautiful songs. The Emperor wants the nightingale to be brought to him. The nightingale is found, and they hear the nightingale sing.

🎵 The Nightingale song 🎵

When the Emperor hears the nightingale sing, he is amazed by it.

⚠ Round of applause from audience.

The Emperor has a cage made for the nightingale, so he can always hear its song. But the Nightingale was not happy.



The Emperor receives a mechanical nightingale that sings whenever the Emperor turns its key. The Emperor plays its song over and over again and the real nightingale escapes the palace in relief. The mechanical nightingale breaks and can only be played once a year, leaving the palace feeling silent and empty.



The Emperor becomes sick, and Death comes to visit.

⚠ Death comes onstage.

The real nightingale saves the Emperor from Death. The Emperor in gratitude returns his gardens to nature.

The Fir Tree listens to the story and is happy.

⚠ A bell rings in the distance.

⚠ The Fir Tree is grabbed and pulled down.

🎵 When a Child is Born 🎵



The Story



Then, suddenly, the Fir Tree is taken down and put in the attic, alone. The Fir Tree meets 2 mice and a rat. The Fir Tree tells them all about its home in the woods and tells them the story of the nightingale.

⚠ The Fir Tree is grabbed again.

The Fir Tree is taken from the attic and the girl is worried because the adults want to cut it up and turn it into firewood.

⚠ Swinging of an axe.

One of the storytellers stops the story. He says we have the power to change the story.

⚠ Storytellers move quickly, rewinding the story.

The girl and the Fir Tree are back in the woods. This time, instead of the tree being cut down, it is dug up with spades so that it keeps all its roots. The Fir Tree is happy because it knows that it can spend Christmases inside. It can then be planted outside to enjoy nature and the passing seasons.

The tree is happy knowing that once it dies it will become a book and can live forever as a story. There is a final blessing.

🎵 The Nightingale song 🎵

⚠ Snow falls.

⚠ The Globe bell rings three times.

🎵 Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree 🎵



Sounds From The Show

During the show you will hear:



1. **The story** - the actors tell the story of The Fir Tree.



2. **Choral singing and musical instruments** - used throughout.



3. **Lots of songs** - there are 10 songs in the show (roughly 1 every 10 minutes).



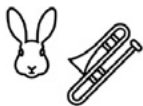
4. **Cheering, clapping and singing from the audience** - happens throughout.



5. **The Globe Bell** - this rings 3 times at the start of the show and 3 times at the end of the show.



6. **Audience singing** - throughout the show the audience sing a song called 'Seasons Alter'.



7. **The Hare motif** - every time we meet the character of The Hare, we hear a loud trombone.



8. **The Lumberjack** - whenever the lumberjack chops down the Fir Tree, we hear loud repeated thuds.



9. **'Rockin Around the Christmas Tree'** - the cast and musicians sing this Christmas classic which suddenly stops in the middle of the song.



10. **Grabbing the tree motif** - members of the cast chant whilst grabbing the tree - this is repeated throughout.

Sadly, we have not been able to create a Sonic Story for this performance of the Fir Tree. We are providing a summary of the sounds from the show below. We are happy to say that there will be lots more Sonic Stories in the future.

Further information



Have further questions about this performance?

Find out more about Shakespeare's Globe here:
<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/>



Getting here:

Find directions to getting to Shakespeare's Globe here:
<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/visit/getting-here/>