

A Visual Story

To support your visit to Shakespeare's Globe.

**SHAKESPEARE'S
GLOBE**

PRINCESS ESSEX



Contents



Visual Story

This document will give you a detailed description of what to expect from Princess Essex at Shakespeare's Globe.

Included is:

- Pictures of the cast in and out of costume
- Show notes and helpful information
- Synopsis
- Sonic Story
- Contact Details

Cast

Most of the cast play multiple roles in this production.
You may see them in different costumes to the ones listed below.



Matthew Ashforde



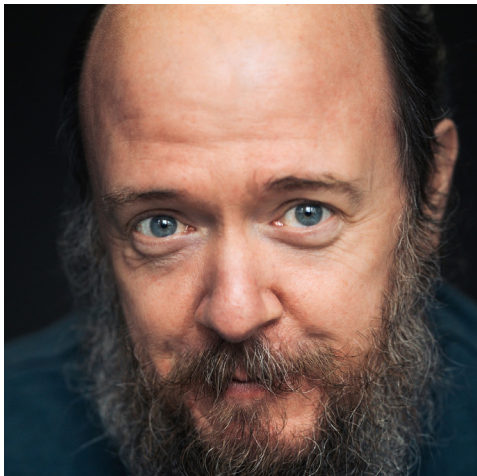
Mr Bacon



Nigel Barrett



Colonel Harris
Nigel also plays one of
the Reporters



John Cummins



Edward VII
John also plays Cousin Arthur
(the postman), Councillor
Perry (with a green rosette)
and the Vicar



Alison Halstead



Batwa
Alison also plays Councillor
Reginald (with a red rosette)



Lizzie Hopley



Mrs Bugle
Lizzie also plays Councillor Cecil (with a red rosette)



Tyreke Leslie



Mayor Pepper
Tyreke also plays Councillor Bernard (with a red rosette), a debt collector, Joanna's Dad and one of the Reporters



Sophie Merzell



Ensemble
Sophie also plays the Nun and
one of the Reporters



Syakira Moeladi



Councillor Bertie
Syakira also plays one of the
Reporters, a debt collector,
Councillor Geoffrey (with a
red rosette), Courtier, and
Miss Belgium



Jamie-Rose Monk



Mrs Bacon
Jamie-Rose also plays
Peaches



Anne Odeke



Joanna/Princess Dinobolu



Eloise Secker



Violet
Eloise also plays Joanna's
Mum and Councillor Clive
(with a red rosette)



Simon Startin



Mayor Ingram
Simon also plays Councillor
Thomas (with a green
rosette)



Yasmin Taheri



Harriet
Yasmin also plays Councillor
Robert (with a red rosette)

Show Notes



Relaxed Performance

A relaxed performance will take place on:

Saturday 5 October 2024 at 2.00 pm

Thursday 17 October 2024 at 7.30 pm



This will mean:

- An open-door policy: you can come and go as much as you want or need to.
- Quiet Space in the 'Bull Ring', on the level below the entrance.
- A culture of acceptance and respect for however you want to experience the show.
- Movement and noise are welcome should you need or want to.
- Pre-show information packs are available online and at the welcome desk



Content and Trigger Warnings

The production includes themes of:

- Racism
- Colonialism
- Misogyny
- Racist language
- Ableist language
- Sexual assault
- Sexual references
- Strong language
- Stage violence

Show Notes



Times

This performance lasts 2 hours and 30 minutes including a 20 minute interval.



Music and Sound

Check out our sonic story for full information.

Lighting

The lighting is the same throughout.

In the matinee performance the show will be lit by daylight.

Set

The set looks like this:



Princess Essex – Synopsis

ACT 1

The show starts with all of the characters singing a song about the seaside, and then the main character, Joanna introduces us to the setting of the play: Southend-on-Sea in Essex. The locals are very proud of their town, and especially their huge entertainment venue, the Kursaal. They have a rivalry with the county on the other side of the river, Kent.

Joanna is interrupted by Mrs Bugle, her mistress, who tells her that Folkestone (a town in their rival county, Kent) is planning a beauty pageant; they discuss what a beauty pageant actually is. They go off to see a show at the Kursaal.



Lots of people including Joanna and Mrs Bugle are going to see a show at the Kursaal. Colonel Harris comes onto the stage to present his 'findings' from his travels; a small, black man called Batwa, who is a 'pygmy' (an old, out-dated term for someone from Africa who is very short). Batwa performs on the stage, and Colonel Harris talks about him with very racist language, as if he is just an animal.

The next day, Joanna is furious for the way Colonel Harris treated Batwa. She has an argument with Mrs Bugle. Joanna storms off, intending to save Batwa.



Mr Bacon, the owner of the Kursaal, comes on stage. He is attacked by two debt collectors for failing to pay his debts. He promises to pay up. Joanna comes on to ask Mr Bacon where Batwa and Colonel Harris are. He says they have already left. Then Batwa and Colonel Harris come on stage, but the setting is very different. Batwa is wearing a very smart suit, and he and the Colonel seem to be good friends.

Joanna tries to persuade Batwa to let her talk to him, but he doesn't want to. She sings a song and eventually he comes out. Colonel Harris then reveals he has to leave to sort out permits so that he and Batwa can return to the Congo. Colonel Harris pays Joanna to be Batwa's maid.



Princess Essex - Synopsis

Mr Bacon goes home, beaten up, and Mrs Bacon is very concerned about him. The Mayor comes over with his daughter Violet. Violet has insisted to the Mayor that the Kursaal hold a beauty pageant in Southend-on-Sea, like the one in Folkestone. Mrs Bacon cleverly convinces the Mayor to pay Mr Bacon lots of money to go and 'research' the pageant in Folkestone, so that they can solve their money problems.

Batwa and Joanna finally get to talk properly. Joanna is shocked that Batwa is pretending to be uneducated and 'tribal', but Batwa argues that he is giving a show to the public while also making money. Joanna tells us about her background; she does not know her parents, but she imagines that one night, an African musician was in town and met her mother. Joanna reveals that she wants to join the pageant in Folkestone, and Batwa encourages her to do it.



In Folkestone, the Mayor and councillors are waiting for girls to enter the pageant competition. Mr Bacon arrives dressed as a woman, undercover, to find out more about the pageant. Joanna arrives late, but the Mayor tells her she cannot join the pageant (he doesn't say why, but he implies it is because she is not white).

Princess Essex - Synopsis

She is very disappointed, but then Mr Bacon is thrown out of the pageant. They have a conversation and realise they are both from Southend-on-Sea. In the conversation, Joanna hatches an excellent plan to help both herself and Mr Bacon.

All of the Southend-on-Sea councillors are awoken by Mayor Ingram. He reveals that they have received a letter from Princess Dinobolu of Senegal – she wants to enter the Southend-on-Sea beauty pageant. The councillors don't know what to do – they are worried that letting a black woman enter the competition will ruin their reputation, but they are worried about causing an international dispute if they don't let her participate, because Senegal was ruled by the French Empire. They decide to ask the King to decide instead, so they can't be blamed.



In the last scene we meet the King of Britain, Edward VII. He calls himself 'Dirty Bertie' and sings a song. Someone brings him a letter from the Mayor of Southend-on-Sea. The King reads it and says 'yes', they should let the Princess compete. The first act ends with singing 'Rule Britannia', we then have an interval.

Princess Essex – Synopsis

ACT 2

At the start of the second act, Mr and Mrs Bacon announce to the press that the international beauty pageant in Southend-on-Sea will have an entrant from Africa, to the shock of many people. He announces that 4000 tickets will go on sale.

Mr and Mrs Bacon go back to their house where Joanna is getting ready – Joanna will 'become' Princess Dinobolu. Mrs Bugle comes trying to find Joanna her maid, she feels very apologetic. The Bacons' maid, Harriet, persuades Mrs Bugle to try being unconventional. Violet sneaks up to Harriet and asks for them to be friends.



Mr and Mrs Bacon argue because Mrs Bacon isn't sure about Princess Dinobolu plan. Batwa is shocked by the plan; he feels Joanna shouldn't pretend to be someone she isn't, while Joanna says that Batwa did exactly the same thing. Mrs Bugle comes over and Joanna hides, but Mrs Bugle talks to Batwa about how sorry she is for being rude to Joanna. Princess Dinobolu enters and Mrs Bugle doesn't recognise that it is actually Joanna in disguise; Joanna performs as Princess Dinobolu with a posh accent. The postman arrives to reveal that the King will be attending the pageant!

Princess Essex - Synopsis

Harriet and Violet are hanging out together. Harriet asks Mayor Ingram to let her participate in the pageant, but he says she can't as only Violet will be participating on behalf of England. Violet asks Harriet to be there as her dresser and support in the backstage.



The day before the pageant, Princess Dinobolu meets the King. He brings her to his room in the hotel. The King speaks in a very entitled way – he believes he can do whatever he likes purely because he is King. He reveals that the King of Belgium has been committing horrendous acts in the Congo (where Batwa is from). He forces her to kiss him. She runs out of the room, and the King decides to leave Southend-on-Sea altogether.

Batwa reveals to Joanna that he is going home to the Congo. Joanna is very upset. Mr Bacon begs her to compete in the pageant. Mrs Bacon introduces Joanna, disguised as Princess Dinubolu, to a young black girl called Eve who is inspired by her. Joanna decides to participate after all.



The pageant takes place, with various participants being 'eliminated'. Harriet interrupts proceedings by singing a song in support of votes for women. Eventually, three participants remain: Peaches (USA), Violet (England), and Princess Dinobolu. During a break, Mrs Bugle comes to see Princess Dinobolu and reveals that she knows she is Joanna. She encourages Joanna to keep going.

Finally, there is a vote of audience participation to decide the winner. Princess Dinobolu receives the most cheers, but the organisers won't let her win, so they crown someone else the winner instead. Joanna is very tired. Eve comes and they walk off together.

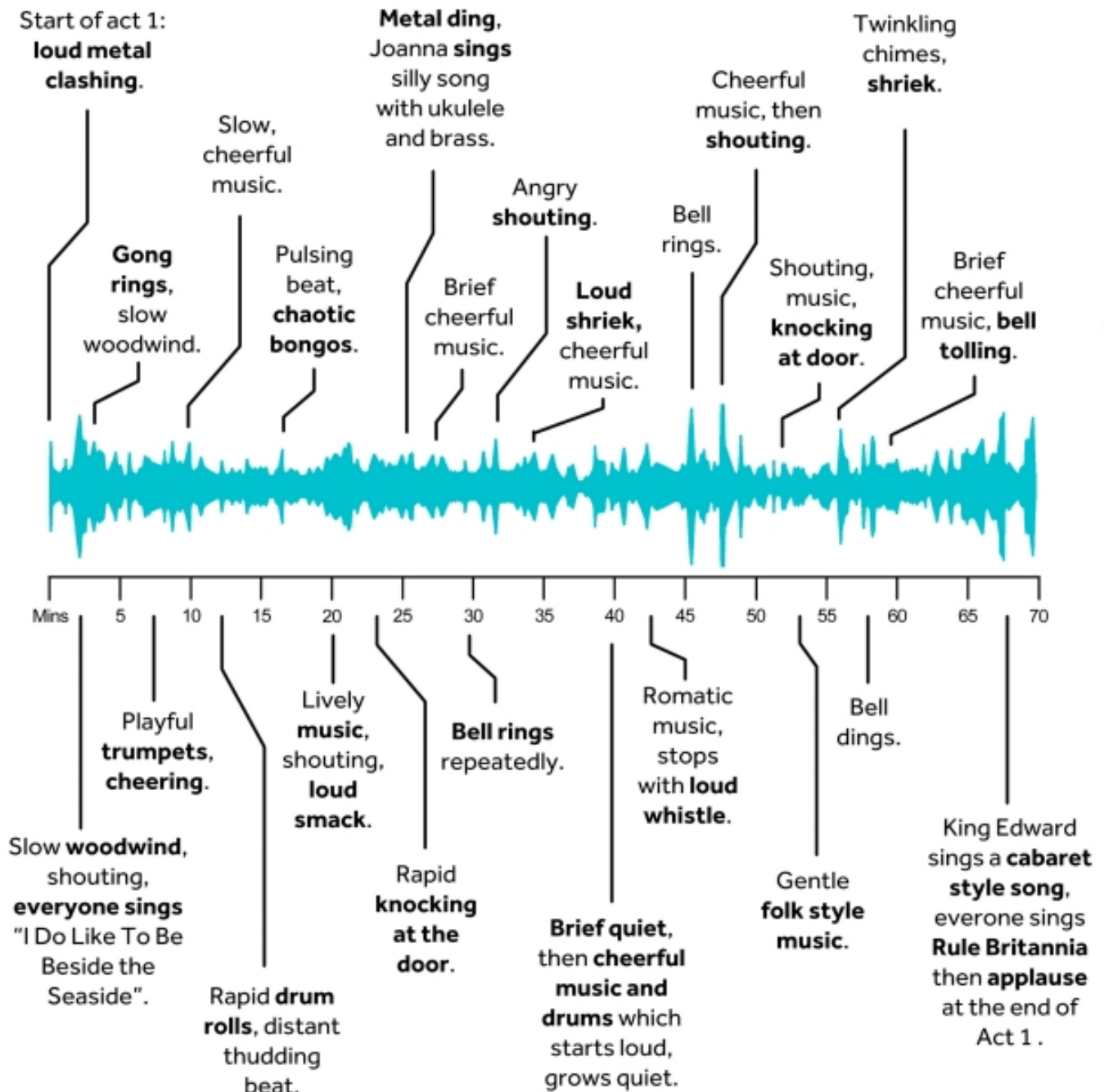
THE END

PRINCESS ESSEX

Sonic Story

This graphic tells the 'Sonic Story' of Princess Essex. It highlights loud and quiet moments from the performance and moments when the sound changes suddenly.

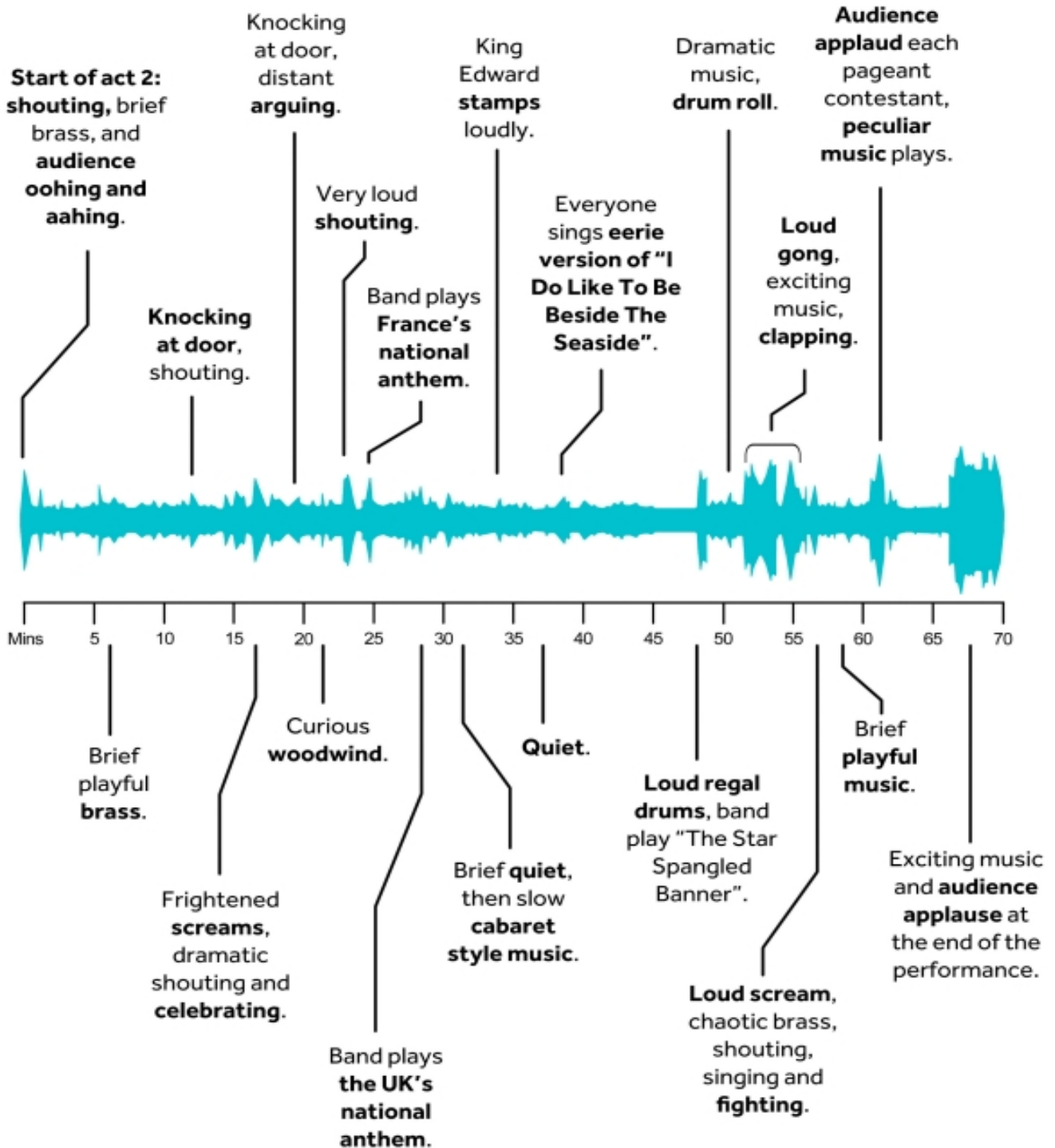
ACT 1



PRINCESS ESSEX

Sonic Story

ACT 2



Sonic story provided by Touretteshero

Further Information



Contact Details

Should you require more information or wish to discuss your access requirements please contact the Access team on accessteam@shakeapearesglobe.com or 0207 401 1548



We welcome feedback about your Relaxed Performance experience at Shakespeare's Globe. Please contact us on the above details.