

## ABSTRACT

### Adventure Towards Community: A Director's Approach to Bryony Lavery's *Treasure Island*

Abigail Dillard, M.F.A.

Mentor: David Jortner, Ph.D.

This thesis documents the production process and the directorial approach to *Treasure Island* produced at Baylor University at the end of February 2022. This work examines Bryony Lavery's biography and that of her co-author Robert Louis Stevenson. It discusses the inspiration of the two authors, their connections to the piece, and includes and analysis of the play through the lens of adaptation and Anne Hutcheon's theory of adaptation. and it's use as an analysis tool for the script. As this adaptation presents Jim Hawkins as a young girl, we look at the impact of adapting the gender of the characters and its push to include everyone in this adventure story through a cast of playable pirates. The thesis also discusses the development of the director's concept, the design process, auditions, rehearsals, and the run of sold-out performances in Baylor Theatre's Mabee theatre. Additionally, this thesis explores the impact of COVID-19 on the production, the audience reception, and the impact of a show performed with an emphasis on community.

An Adventure Towards Community: A Director's Approach  
to Bryony Lavery's *Treasure Island*

by

Abigail F. Dillard, B.A.

A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Theatre Arts

---

DeAnna Toten Beard, M.F.A., Ph.D., Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the  
Degree of  
Master of Fine Arts

Approved by the Thesis Committee

---

David Jortner, Ph.D., Chairperson

---

Stan Denman, Ph.D.

---

Dan Walden, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School  
May 2022

---

J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

Copyright © 2022 by Abigail Dillard

All rights reserved.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	x
DEDICATION .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
Bryony Lavery's and Robert Louis Stevenson's Biographies.....	1
<i>Introduction</i> .....	1
<i>Bryony Lavery</i> .....	2
<i>Biography and Early Career</i> .....	3
<i>Les Oeufs Malades</i> .....	5
<i>Gay Sweat Shop</i> .....	6
<i>Being Discovered</i> .....	9
<i>Frozen</i> .....	10
<i>Writing on the Dark Side</i> .....	18
<i>Frantic Assembly</i> .....	21
<i>Treasure Island</i> .....	25
<i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i> .....	31
<i>Biography</i> .....	31
<i>Falling in Love</i> .....	33
<i>Reception and Review</i> .....	37
<i>Review of Treasure Island</i> .....	38
<i>Literary Criticism</i> .....	40
CHAPTER TWO.....	42
The Theory of Adaptation and Script Analysis .....	42
<i>Introduction</i> .....	42
<i>Synopsis of the Play</i> .....	43
<i>Progression and Structure</i> .....	50
<i>Adaptation and Treasure Island</i> .....	53
<i>Adaptation as Product</i> .....	56
<i>Adaptation as Process</i> .....	57
<i>Jim Hawkins</i> .....	63
<i>Long John Silver</i> .....	65

<i>Marooned Cabin Boy</i> .....	67
<i>Goodie Crew</i> .....	67
<i>Pirates and The Walrus Crew</i> .....	69
<i>What: The Interaction of Adaptation</i> .....	71
<i>The Map to Treasure Island</i> .....	71
<i>The Black Spot</i> .....	72
<i>The Duty of Pirates</i> .....	74
<i>Where: Locations within Treasure Island</i> .....	76
<i>Hodge Analysis</i> .....	79
<i>Given Circumstances: Time</i> .....	79
<i>Given Circumstances: Place</i> .....	80
<i>Given Circumstances: Society</i> .....	81
<i>Given Circumstances: Economics</i> .....	82
<i>Given Circumstances: Politics and Law</i> .....	83
<i>Dramatic Action and Language</i> .....	84
<i>Dialogue</i> .....	84
<i>Idea: Title and Overall Meaning</i> .....	87
<i>Lens and Layers of Adaptation</i> .....	89
<i>Muppets Treasure Island</i> .....	90
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	91
CHAPTER THREE.....	93
Ships to Islands: A Collaborative Design Process.....	93
<i>Introduction</i> .....	93
<i>Directorial Concept</i> .....	94
<i>Dramaturg</i> .....	96
<i>Design Process</i> .....	99
<i>Scenic Design</i> .....	102
<i>Set Decorations and Properties</i> .....	106
<i>Costume Design</i> .....	111
<i>Lighting Design</i> .....	113
<i>Sound Design</i> .....	115
<i>Music Direction</i> .....	116
<i>Designing and Staging the Scenic Transitions</i> .....	117
<i>Tech Rehearsals</i> .....	119
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	122

CHAPTER FOUR .....	123
Working Towards Performance: Auditions through Rehearsals .....	123
<i>Introduction</i> .....	123
<i>Auditions</i> .....	123
<i>First Read Through</i> .....	128
<i>Dialect Work</i> .....	129
<i>COVID-19</i> .....	129
<i>First Rehearsals</i> .....	131
<i>Music Rehearsals</i> .....	132
<i>Transitions</i> .....	133
<i>Dead Bodies</i> .....	134
<i>Stage Combat</i> .....	136
<i>Dramaturgy in Rehearsal</i> .....	137
<i>Snow Day and Dramaturgy</i> .....	138
<i>Incorporating the Ensemble</i> .....	142
<i>Shadow Pirates</i> .....	143
<i>A Storm of a Scene</i> .....	145
<i>Serious Playground Injury</i> .....	147
<i>Actor Physicality</i> .....	148
<i>Dramaturgy and Character Building</i> .....	149
<i>Technical Rehearsals</i> .....	151
<i>COVID-19 Masking Policy</i> .....	152
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	153
CHAPTER FIVE.....	154
Performances: Critiques and Reflections .....	154
<i>Introduction</i> .....	154
<i>Performances and Audience Response</i> .....	154
<i>Challenging Middle Runs</i> .....	156
<i>War and a Need for an Adventure</i> .....	158
<i>Weekend Runs</i> .....	160
<i>Critiques</i> .....	161
<i>Post-Mortem</i> .....	165
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	166
APPENDIX A .....	169
French Scenes.....	169

APPENDIX B .....	173
Units .....	173
APPENDIX C .....	174
Stevenson’s Map of Treasure Island .....	174
APPENDIX D .....	175
Research and Design Images .....	175
APPENDIX E .....	186
Selected Production Photos .....	186
APPENDIX F.....	198
Actor’s Guide and Glossary .....	198
APPENDIX G .....	215
<i>Treasure Island Lyrics</i> .....	215
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	220

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure C.1 - Robert Louis Stevenson, map in <i>Treasure Island</i> . . . . .	171
Figure D.1. Research image of a ribcage . . . . .	172
Figure D.2. Research image of skeletons and treasure . . . . .	173
Figure D.3. Research image of a shipwreck ribcage . . . . .	173
Figure D.4 – Lobby display case . . . . .	174
Figure D.5 – The lobby ship model . . . . .	174
Figure D. 6 – Preliminary sketch of the ship . . . . .	175
Figure D.7 – Preliminary sketch of the island . . . . .	175
Figure D. 8 – Preliminary design for the ship in Act 1 . . . . .	176
Figure D.9 – Preliminary design for the island in Act 2 . . . . .	176
Figure D.10 – Scaled ground plan for the ship . . . . .	177
Figure D.11 – The ship’s final set design . . . . .	177
Figure D.12 – Jim and Doctor struggling with the sea chest . . . . .	178
Figure D.13 – The chicken, affectionately known as Peggy . . . . .	178
Figure D.14 – The parrot grabbing the map from Jim with her beak . . . . .	179
Figure D.15 – Final costume designs for Long John Silver . . . . .	180
Figure D.16 – Long John Silver stabbing himself in the leg . . . . .	180
Figure D.17 – the hanging rope lines that symbolized stars hung over the house . . . . .	181
Figure D.18 – The storm scene with lighting and set . . . . .	181
Figure D.19 – The island lighting . . . . .	182
Figure D.20 – An image of active transition from harbor to ship . . . . .	182



Figure E.1 – “Bright Morning Star A-Rising.”	183
Figure E.2 – “Sing mt to distraction, would ye?”	184
Figure E.3 – “Or was he always a monstrous kind of creature...”	184
Figure E.4 – “It is the thing that will enter my head and heart”	185
Figure E.5 – “Tell, or ye die unpeaceful in bed instanter!!!”	185
Figure E.6 – “I would rather walk through the doors of hell...”	186
Figure E.7 – “If you leave against my with it will be The Black Spot for all.”	186
Figure E.8 – “This is not Bones’s chest at all! Flint’s chest and “Flint’s Fist”.”	187
Figure E.9 – “Anything you wants lifting or eating Sit Captain Ma’am”	187
Figure E.10 – “They called me Long John Silver.”	188
Figure E.11 – “And I was out in the storm!”	188
Figure E.12 – “We are not the majority...We near the island...”	189
Figure E.13 – “...just there... the island with its treasure...”	189
Figure E.14 – “That cabin girl ain’t coughing its location!”	190
Figure E.15 – “These are dangerous men, we are in extreme peril.”	190
Figure E.16 – “One last time...recite me all the coordinates of the treasure map!!!”	191
Figure E.17 – “It’s flabby flesh.”	191
Figure E.18 – “I’m Ben Gunn I haven’t spoken to any one but myself...”	192
Figure E.19 – “Latitude north sixty two <i>big bullet hole</i> will find the isle...”	192
Figure E.20 – “Piece o whalebone! With words scrimshawed on it!”	193
Figure E.21 – “Stay up here by the trap, girl...”	193
Figure E.22 – “Seize the villain Silver!!! You too not now so Lucky Micky!!!”	194
Figure E.23 – “Pieces of eight Pieces of eight Pieces of eight.”	194

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank profusely and acknowledge the many Baylor Theatre students, faculty, and staff members who played any role in bringing this production of *Treasure Island* to life. Most especially, to my incredible team of stage managers, cast, designers, technicians, production staff, and crew. Thank you for trusting me to captain and willing to step up, get dirty, laugh, fight, and find the unswerving sense of adventure. It was an honor to sail the high seas with all of you!

Special thanks to Dr. Stan Denman, for his mentorship and support as my directing advisor throughout this thesis process. Thank you for believing in me and standing beside me at the helm. Special thanks also to Dr. David Jortner, my advisor for this writing process. Thank you for the consistent guidance through the crunch of outside circumstances and time. And, to my department chair, Dr. DeAnna Toten-Beard. Thank you for your enthusiasm and support.

Thanks to my fellow theatre department graduate cohort, past and present. It has been a privilege to pick your brains and see the world through your eyes. Most of all, to my cohort and dear friends, Emily Olson and Suzi Elnaggar, who I could not imagine completing this directing program without. You both consistently encourage me to look at the full picture and laugh alongside me as I jump anyway. Thank you both.

Finally, thank you to my family – Robert, Francie, and Cody – and my grandparents and lifelong friends for their unrelenting love and support for all I do throughout this thesis process and always.

## DEDICATION

To the memory of my grandfather Terry Hanes Sr., who always believed in me and encouraged me to chase my dreams. “I’m proud of you, kid.”

To the memory of my dear friend Cara Cox, who was always up for an adventure and who I know would have helped me laugh all my stress away.

I love you both and you are forever in my heart.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Bryony Lavery's and Robert Louis Stevenson's Biographies

#### *Introduction*

This thesis documents the production process and the directorial approach to *Treasure Island* produced at Baylor University at the end of February 2022. Chapter one examines Bryony Lavery's biography and her co-author Robert Louis Stevenson. It discusses the inspiration of the two authors and their connections to the piece. Chapter two examines Anne Hutcheon's theory of adaptation as an analysis tool for the script. Chapter three works through the development of the director's concept and the design process of *Treasure Island's* production. Chapter four discusses auditions, rehearsals, and the performance challenges of Baylor Theatre's production in the Mabey theatre. Chapter five reflects on the run of sold-out performances, audience reception, faculty feedback, and the reflection of my directing process.

This thesis will also cover the challenges we faced as a production returning to in-person theatre during the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant navigating changing mask policies, and the risks associated with the health and safety of the actors and production team. Additionally, coming out of the past two years with the COVID pandemic, the choice of show felt exceptionally appropriate but would also face its own challenges. As the driving theme of the show was a search for community, I felt that our cast, production team, and audience would especially cling to the idea of seeking adventure and checking in with the people we all surround ourselves with.

This chapter will mainly explore the biography of Bryony Lavery. I trace her timeline of “discovery” and the development of the themes that she worked avidly to incorporate into this adaptation of *Treasure Island*. Also, I will discuss the biography of Robert Louis Stevenson and what brought about his adventurous writing and the original inspiration for the novel of the same name.

### *Bryony Lavery*

Bryony Lavery, a British dramatist, is most known for her show *Frozen* which received the TMA new play award in 1998 and was first produced at Birmingham Rep, then moved to the National Theatre, and on to Broadway where it was nominated for four Tony awards. Lavery started as a clowning theatre performer<sup>1</sup> in the production of *Peter Pan* at the Drill Hall and quickly moved from teaching, to fringe theatre, to a developing career as a playwright. In addition to theatre, Lavery also writes for television and radio.

A rounded theatre artist, Lavery’s focus of activism and feminism became the grounding for her work. She started the Les Oeufs Malades (1975) as the artistic director and formed a feminist cabaret group, Female Trouble, in 1981. The group formed small comedic sketches with Lavery starting her feverish writing when, according to Lavery:

Caroline Eves came and we threw this thing together and it started in the tiniest place, I can’t remember, it somewhere off the Strand. But then it moved to the Arts Theatre and we were going to give women a good night out and that was the brief of that. So it was, we just made people laugh. We had far too little time to do it, to write it. I mean the last sketch, we needed a bit, we needed about ten more minutes work and they said well, we can’t learn it. Well I said okay, I’ll think of a way of writing something that we don’t have to learn, and we simply had this sketch where we’d say, ‘Wait a minute, there’s a message from women from the past,’ and they were literally on rolls of paper and they’d read them out, and we kept it

---

<sup>1</sup> Citron, Paula. “Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery.” Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

like that, but the very first time they scarcely knew what was written on it. I think people just wanted a good time. They were three very different people and they just did a number of sketches and songs.<sup>2</sup>

One consistent pattern to Lavery's work is that she gives herself very little time to actually write. Lavery would take on a task and work it well and then move to the next large project. She became a writer of children's theatre with shows including *The Dragon Wakes* (1988), *Madagascar* (1987), and *The Zulu Hut Club* (1984) and wrote many cabarets including *Floorshow* with Caryl Churchill for Monstrous Regiment in 1977. At Birmingham University from 1989 to 1993 she was Tutor-Lecturer on the M.A. Playwriting Course. She is an honorary Doctor of Arts at De Montfort University.<sup>3</sup>

### *Biography and Early Career*

Lavery was born near Wakefield, England to the Shepherd family in 1947 but grew up in Dewsbury. She is the second oldest of four, having one sister and two younger brothers. Lavery describes Dewsbury as "an industrial mill town, a center for the mungo and shoddy industries that produced heavy woolens."<sup>4</sup> Her father, a working-class man, was a principal of a nurse training college. He later served in WWII. Her mother was a stay-at-home mom.

In an interview with Paula Citron, a Toronto based arts critic, broadcaster, and arts journalist, Lavery describes the role art played in her family growing up, stating,

---

<sup>2</sup> Croft, Susan, and Jessica Higgs. "Bryony Lavery." *Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre*. Accessed February 9, 2022.  
<https://www.unfinishedhistories.com/interviews/interviewees-l-q/bryony-lavery/>.

<sup>3</sup> "Bryony Lavery." *Drama Online - Bryony Lavery*. Bloomsbury Publishing Place.  
[https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/person?docid=person\\_laveryBryony](https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/person?docid=person_laveryBryony).

<sup>4</sup> Citron, Paula. "Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery." Paula Citron, May 8, 2012.  
<https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

“We were a Bohemian family. My sister played the violin before she switched to science. One brother spent time backstage in the West End, and my youngest brother was an actor and comedian, known for his impressions of famous British fish. I was the only one to make a career of it.”<sup>5</sup> Lavery never went to theatre school but instead first pursued an external London degree. Lavery explains, “I was part of the baby bulge, so there were fewer university places available. I didn’t have the marks to get me into a London university, so I went to the Hendon College of Technology which is now Middlesex University. I was desperate to get away from Tewksbury.”<sup>6</sup> She earned her degree in English language and literature.

In her career and romantic life, Lavery jokes she’s “a late-learner.”<sup>7</sup> Now out as a gay woman, she was married to Paul Lavery for ten years. She claims she always identified with the gay struggle but didn’t come out until she “was hit by the twin torpedo heads of theatre and feminism”<sup>8</sup> later in life. After completing her degree, she taught eight-year-olds for five years and then moved to what Lavery refers to as the ‘theatre fringe’.<sup>9</sup> There she fell in love with theatre and writing for it. In college she had written three plays, but her first professional play would be *Sharing* (1976) in London, England about two roommates in a derelict flat.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Citron, Paula. “Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery.” Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Citron, Paula. “Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery.” Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

### *Les Oeufs Malades*

In 1976, Gerard Bell and Lavery were working at the Incubus Theatre Company. While there, Lavery wrote *Sharing*. Shortly after the rehearsal and preparation of that piece, she wrote an accompanying piece entitled, *I Was Too Young At The Time To Understand Why My Mother Was Crying* was added, creating a double bill feature. These pieces were entered into The Festival of the Audience under the company name 'Les Oeufs Malades.' Susan Croft and Jessica Higgs the organizers and project managers of "On the Unfinished Histories, Recording The History of Alternative Theatre" write,

The much feted La Grande Eugene was performing at the Roundhouse at the time to sell out houses and it was thought rather inspired to come with up a name that implied the company might be French. Favourite French words of the company such as as 'oeuf' and 'boeuf' morphed into Les Oeufs Malades. The original program was in French with a coined quote attributed to Baudelaire in which it was stated, 'Quand les oeufs malades restent sur la table a petit dejeuner, tous le monde est degoute.'<sup>11</sup> The French connection was dropped soon after but not before Ned Chaillet in *The Times* observed, 'Les Oeufs Malades...borrowing their name from Baudelaire...'<sup>12</sup>

Following their debut, all the company's plays were written and directed by Bryony Lavery. This included their productions of *Grandmother's Footsteps* (1977), *The Catering Service* (1977), *Helen and Her Friends* (1978), *Bag* (1979), and *Family Album* (1980).

The performers for this company were drawn from Lavery's close friends, most of whom had worked with her at the Incubus. According to Susan Croft, "The style was comic, oftentimes surreal comic, at other times darkly comic, and very reflective of the

---

<sup>11</sup> English Translation: "When sick eggs are left on the breakfast table, everyone is disgusted."

<sup>12</sup> Higgs, Jessica. "Les Oeufs Malades." Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre. <https://www.unfinishedhistories.com/history/companies/les-oeufs-malades/>.



lives and modes of expressions common to those involved.”<sup>13</sup> Though French sounding in name, all the pieces were performed in London in venues such as Young Vic Studio, Action Space, Warehouse Theatre Rotherhithe, Oval House, Old Red Lion, and Kings Head; the pieces also toured to the Edinburgh Festival, Dublin, and Holland.

Overall, the shows met with great success. In 1977 *Time Out* reported that *Grandmother's Footsteps* “... contains a quick, glancing, surreal wit...”<sup>14</sup> and *The Times* wrote that these “..shows a developing and original style... Miss Lavery’s talent is for the oblique, the unrealistic.”<sup>15</sup> Her show *The Catering Service* was reviewed by *The Stage* in 1977 “...as disciplined and as chilling a piece of theatre as you are likely to come across anywhere...adds a new dimension to both theatre of politics and the theatre of experiment.”<sup>16</sup> *The Catering Service*, *Bag*, and *Family Album* ended up touring nationally for small fringe audiences and the company ultimately disbanded in 1981.

### *Gay Sweat Shop*

Lavery continued to write after the disbandment of Les Oeufs. She wrote *Calamity* (1984) for Tricycle Theatre Company; ultimately it went on to a national tour. In the play, three strangers arrive in a town. One is French and mysterious, one dust-stained and raucous, one quiet and homely. They have come to audition for Kohl and

---

<sup>13</sup> Higgs, Jessica. “Les Oeufs Malades.” *Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre*. <https://www.unfinishedhistories.com/history/companies/les-oeufs-malades/>.

<sup>14</sup> Higgs, Jessica. “Les Oeufs Malades.” *Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre*. <https://www.unfinishedhistories.com/history/companies/les-oeufs-malades/>.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

Middleton's celebrated "Wild West Show." This odd trio are ultimately cast and head to the Dakota Territory for the show. The theatre company Monstrous Regiment, a company of women founded in the 1970's to highlight work with leading female voices described the production as following, "Based on the lives of three extraordinary women Calamity follows the hilarious trail of their epic wagon train across the mythical history of the Wild West."<sup>17</sup> Lavery wrote the works of *Origin of the Species* (1984), *Witchcraze* (1985), and was commissioned to write *Kitchen Matters* in 1990 for The Gay Sweatshop.

Gay Sweatshop was a London based company formed in 1975. The company acted as an interactive and cooperative community arts resource center. They staged a popular feminist season and established a name for themselves when they advertised for gay actors to perform in an entirely gay theatre season in 1974. Philip Osmet in his book, *Gay Sweatshop: Four Plays and a Company*, wrote,

The aim was to encourage gay people to produce a season of gay plays and eventually form a company. ...The intention of the group was to counteract the prevailing conception in mainstream theatre of what homosexuals were like, therefore providing a more realistic image for the public. The season was called "Homosexual Acts" and included three plays, all of which were written and directed by homosexuals.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> "Calamity." Calamity : Monstrous Regiment. Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre. <https://monstrousregiment.co.uk/productions/calamity/>.

<sup>18</sup> The Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company. "The Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company." Archives Hub. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/de1f8ea6-ade0-3d46-a020-71c14c052085>.

In the late 1980s the company came under new management and was struggling with program funding. Gay Sweatshop ultimately disbanded in 1997 and the Arts Council withdrew funding from the failing company.<sup>19</sup>

The company commissioned Bryony Lavery to write *Kitchen Matters* in 1990. *Kitchen Matters* was set around a theatre company and the problem of putting on a show with government project funding. In *British Theatre Companies 1980-1994* Graham Saunders writes,

In many ways, Bryony Lavery's *Kitchen Matters* should be considered the paradigmatic Sweatshop piece. This play exemplifies Sweatshop's chaotic way of working in the moment and irrepressible desire to upend the mainstream (or what Lavery's main character calls 'upstream') on its end. In a City Limits review of *Kitchen Matters*, Antonia Denford describes the piece as both a 'swansong and a knees-up' (Denford, 1991, 1498)... Lavery's play ravages the greats of dramatic literature, forming them into a gleeful pastiche of Euripides, Noël Coward, Alan Ayckbourn, Pirandello and more. She also acutely skewers social types - gay and straight alike.<sup>20</sup>

This play has a chaotic and cabaret style. It revolves around the working people of the theatre and the problems they face professionally, personally, and financially producing a show. The up and down of the issues faced in the script mirrored the life of Gay Sweatshop and Lavery's own writing as she worked to stay recognized in her field.

---

<sup>19</sup> The Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company. "The Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company." Archives Hub. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/de1f8ea6-ade0-3d46-a020-71c14c052085>.

<sup>20</sup> Saunders, Graham. *British Theatre Companies: 1980-1994*. 1st ed. British Theatre Companies: From Fringe to Mainstream. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016.

### *Being Discovered*

Lavery has been “discovered” a lot. Although Lavery has written a new show or two every year since the beginning of her writing career in 1976. She claims the break-out play that officially helped her stay “discovered” was not until 1997 with her script of *Goliath*.

It was my response to Beatrix Campbell’s book where she dissects the 1991 riots that happened on the housing estates all over Britain. I realized it was okay to write seriously – that I should do serious stuff. It was a one-woman show where the actor played many parts with many different accents... Beatrix Campbell is an icon – a hard-hitting feminist lesbian journalist. She wrote the controversial book on Princess Di. She was very generous with the *Goliath* material that I used verbatim in the play. In light of *Frozen*, it taught me, erroneously, that it was okay to use things that people write. Unfortunate in hindsight.<sup>21</sup>

After writing *Goliath*, Lavery wrote *More Light* for the Royal National Theatre in 1997. As a part of the National’s Connections season of plays, the play revolves around a group of young women concubines of the late Chinese ruler. Buried with him in his tomb they are driven to the extremes of human behavior. The play starts with entombed women remarkably looking the same. As the story progresses, their personalities as individuals emerges. Bryony Lavery’s writing personality emerges as well. In Lyn Gardner’s review in *The Guardian* she writes,

Lear's artful production brings out the decorous teasing wit of a script that is both a meditation on different kinds of meat, a celebration of sisterhood and an examination of how art is valued in a dominant male culture. There is an exquisite moment when the women, who initially all look exactly the same, throw off their foot-bindings and outer garments and start to create their own empire of the imagination. "For the first time in my life, it is my life," cries one. Lavery doesn't shirk the horror of what the women do, the difficulties of sisterhood or the knottiness of the dilemmas faced as the central character, called *More Light*, has to decide whether to seek the

---

<sup>21</sup> Citron, Paula. “Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery.” Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

Emperor's sun or stay within the glow of the world created by the women for themselves. In clumsy hands, a play this delicate might turn to dust like the paper birds the women make, but Lear's production lets it fly.<sup>22</sup>

*More Light* is still performed today. In 2017, the People's Theatre in Tyne, UK produced the show with co-director's Sarah McLane and Kate Wilkins excited to take on the piece. The director's enjoyed the play of the material and content of the script. David Whetstone from the *Chronicle Live*, in review of the piece, writes, "The material might seem adult, to say the least, but Bryony Lavery has said in the past that she has learned, from writing for children, that you don't have to steer clear of complex issues."<sup>23</sup> He continues by describing that there is a "playful wit" to the script which we see consistently mirrored in Lavery's unique writing style. Whetstone continues, "It is a celebration of the sisterhood of women and how people facing extreme circumstances can empower themselves. There is both laughter and horror as the eponymous figure More Light and her sisters struggle to come to terms with their dilemma."<sup>24</sup>

### *Frozen*

Plays with a strong focus on women, connecting stories both in and out of the script, and adaptation became markers of Lavery's work. In 1998, Lavery wrote the play *Frozen*, a story surrounding the disappearance of a young girl named Rhona and her mother's retreat into 'frozen' hope. The script includes the additional characters of

---

<sup>22</sup> Gardner, Lyn. "Theatre Review: More Light." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, May 21, 2009. <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2009/may/21/more-light-review>.

<sup>23</sup> Whetstone, David. "The Rarely Performed More Light Was a Tough Challenge for the People's Theatre." ChronicleLive, May 8, 2017. <https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/whats-on/theatrenews/rarely-performed-more-light-tough-13004728>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

Agnetha, a traveling academic researching her thesis “Serial Killings: A Forgivable Act?” and loner Ralph who are all drawn together by these terrifying circumstances.

In review of the Royal National Theatre performance in 2004, Mike Dempsey of the *Creative Review*, writes,

This play (at the National in London) makes for very uncomfortable viewing, even more so since the tragic killings of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman. Anita Dobson plays an emotionally frozen mother, whose ten year old daughter had been abducted and murdered some years before. We witness her trying to live her daily life with this terrible burden weighing her down. At the instigation of an American clinical psychologist, vibrantly played by Josie Lawrence, a meeting is arranged between Dobson and her daughter's murderer, played with great depth by Tom Georgeson. The outcome of this meeting is in parts too emotionally draining to endure, but demonstrates the sheer power of live performance and an art form that, at its best, is hard to surpass.<sup>25</sup>

In Geraldine Cousin's book, *Playing for Time: Stories of Lost Children, Ghosts and the Endangered Present in Contemporary Theatre*, they write of the connection *Frozen* seems to have with the well-known fairy tale, *Little Red Riding Hood*: “Lavery uses elements of the fairy tale as pegs on which to hang her portrayal of a mother's quest for her lost daughter. Her fictional representation was chillingly echoed two years later when a real little girl, Sarah Payne, was murdered. Like Lavery's Rhona, Sarah Payne was on her way to her grandmother's house when she was abducted.”<sup>26</sup>

In more critical review, the 2004 production seemed to hold more connections than just an artistic approach to a fairytale. While in production, Dr. Dorothy Otnow

---

<sup>25</sup> Dempsey, Mike. "Frozen by Bryony Lavery." *Creative Review*, October 2002, 68. *Gale OneFile: Business*.<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A92852363/GPS?u=txshracd2488&sid=bookmark-GPS&xid=40eabc07>.

<sup>26</sup> Cousin, Geraldine. “Stories of Lost Futures.” In *Playing for Time: Stories of Lost Children, Ghosts and the Endangered Present in Contemporary Theatre*, 73–92. Manchester University Press, 2007. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt155j719.8>.

Lewis, a criminal psychiatrist, was invited to join a discussion about the play. Throughout the run, friends had been reaching out to her that she should see the work. Ultimately, someone from the production team asked if she would like to come and do a talk-back on the piece with the audience. Lewis was intrigued and requested a copy of the script. As she became familiar with the text, she quickly found her own words verbatim in the script. According to *New York Times* reporter, Malcom Gladwell, “Lewis and Gladwell said that they have found ‘a dozen instances of word-for-word plagiarism in the play, as well as thematic similarities to a 1997 New Yorker profile of Dr. Lewis by Mr. Gladwell and a 1998 book by Dr. Lewis.’”<sup>27</sup>

Lewis was especially interested in the character of Agnetha. In Malcolm Gladwell’s 2004 *New Yorker* article he writes,

The script came, and Lewis sat down to read it. Early in the play, something caught her eye, a phrase: “it was one of those days.” One of the murderers Lewis had written about in her book had used that same expression. But she thought it was just a coincidence. “Then, there’s a scene of a woman on an airplane, typing away to her friend. Her name is Agnetha Gottmundsdottir. I read that she’s writing to her colleague, a neurologist called David Nabkus. And with that I realized that more was going on, and I realized as well why all these people had been telling me to see the play.”

Lewis began underlining line after line. She had worked at New York University School of Medicine. The psychiatrist in “Frozen” worked at New York School of Medicine. Lewis and Pincus did a study of brain injuries among fifteen death-row inmates. Gottmundsdottir and Nabkus did a study of brain injuries among fifteen death-row inmates. Once, while Lewis was examining the serial killer Joseph Franklin, he sniffed her, in a grotesque, sexual way. Gottmundsdottir is sniffed by the play’s serial killer, Ralph. Once, while Lewis was examining Ted Bundy, she kissed him on the cheek. Gottmundsdottir, in some productions of “Frozen,”

---

<sup>27</sup> Simonson, Robert. “Frozen Playwright Lavery Accused of Plagiarism.” Playbill. Playbill Inc. , September 25, 2004. <https://www.playbill.com/article/frozen-playwright-lavery-accused-of-plagiarism-com-122131>.

kisses Ralph. "The whole thing was right there," Lewis went on. ... Lewis never did the talk-back. She hired a lawyer.<sup>28</sup>

In a fifteen paged chart detailed with Lewis' lawyer, she highlighted direct similarities between Lavery's play *Frozen* and Lewis's 1998 book *Guilty by Reason of Insanity*. Another section listed over six hundred words utilized amongst *Frozen*'s passages of text from a profile written on Lewis by the aforementioned Malcolm Gladwell from 1997.<sup>29</sup> Lavery's play, nominated for a Tony Award for best play in 1998, winner of the TMA Best New Play in 1998, and winner of the Eileen Anderson Central Television Award for best play, went from raving review to heavy scrutiny. Dr. Lewis was ultimately angry about the entire incident. Mr. Gladwell wrote, "I would have been happy to let her quote whatever she wanted had she asked. But I wish she would have asked."<sup>30</sup>

Though Lavery is now infamously known for her plagiarized work on *Frozen* that has not stopped her from adaptations. In fact, she excels in her work of adapting stories into plays but is now more forthcoming on her source material. Jennifer-Renee Thomas, in her 2010 dissertation<sup>31</sup> works to reframe Lavery and her works as an English playwright and feminist adaptor to salvage her powerful work from more critical scholars and media alike.

---

<sup>28</sup> Gladwell, Malcolm. "Something Borrowed." The New Yorker, November 15, 2004. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/11/22/something-borrowed>.

<sup>29</sup> Gladwell, Malcolm. "Something Borrowed." The New Yorker, November 15, 2004. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/11/22/something-borrowed>.

<sup>30</sup> McKinley, Jesse. "Playwright Created a Psychiatrist by Plagiarizing One, Accusers Say." The New York Times. The New York Times, September 25, 2004. <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/25/theater/playwright-created-a-psychiatrist-by-plagiarizing-one-accusers-say.html>.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas, Jennifer Renee. "Bryony Lavery: English Playwright as Feminist Adaptor." Order No. 3420430, University of Oregon, 2010, <http://ezproxy.baylor.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/bryony-lavery-english-playwright-as-feminist/docview/749773878/se-2?accountid=7014> (accessed December 11, 2021).



Thomas notes that in addition to the brand of “plagiarist” over *Frozen*, Lavery’s other titles of lesbian, gay, woman, and feminist may also be involved in Bryony Lavery’s lack of discovery as a mainstream English playwright. In fact, Thomas works to present Lavery’s work as a strong adaptor, saying:

*Frozen* serves as the nodal point in discovering a way to discuss Lavery's work as a feminist adaptor, and when the definitions of feminist and adaptor are opened up, it emerges that Lavery's oeuvre works to challenge dominant ideologies embedded in the "eternal truths" of oft-repeated stories.

Through the adaptational strategies of Lavery's political/feminist playwright phase and the strategies employed in her storytelling phase, Lavery's work is an amalgamation of old (history, myth, news, research) stories and newly conceived ideas. Her work has contributed not only to the feminist and lesbian theatrical traditions but also more broadly to the theoretical conversation surrounding theatrical adaptation. It is my hope that this study will inspire further scholarly interest in Lavery's work as a prolific English playwright and feminist adaptor and will activate further discussion on theater-specific theories of adaptation.<sup>32</sup>

Lavery is commonly written about in small section headers under British feminist Theatre from the 1970’s-1980’s, but there is very little written on her adaptation strategies, engaging writing style, and her research and source material interests.

Since this has all come about Lavery has made quite a name for herself adapting novels to the stage and radio shows. In 2018, there was a revival of *Frozen* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket. David Fox of Philadelphia Magazine writes this of Isis Production’s 2018 production,

Soberingly, two decades have only served to sharpen aspects of Lavery’s play, a piercingly sad study of murder, family loss, grief, and the healing

---

<sup>32</sup> Thomas, Jennifer Renee. "Bryony Lavery: English Playwright as Feminist Adaptor." Order No. 3420430, University of Oregon, 2010, <http://ezproxy.baylor.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/bryony-lavery-english-playwright-as-feminist/docview/749773878/se-2?accountid=7014> (accessed December 11, 2021).

power of forgiveness.... In other ways, though, the play hasn't aged well. Lavery's tone wavers across a wide spectrum — intimate emotional drama through melodrama through didactic finger-wagging. Some of the action is tied-up implausibly and too quickly. Lavery inserts an unwelcome note of pamphleteering which dilutes rather than enhances the message. In any event, the Isis production is earnest, but literally and figuratively too small-scale.... Next year, Isis Productions will relocate to a new space. I wish they'd held off on *Frozen* till they could give it more room to expand. Seen here, though it remains a provocative piece, it misses full resonance.<sup>33</sup>

For its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary revival in the West End, Mark Lawson of the New Statesman writes,

Theatre's invisible fourth wall has rarely, though, been more jaggedly broken than in Bryony Lavery's 1998 play *Frozen*, a National Theatre and Broadway success now granted a starry 20th anniversary West End revival.

The performers draw out every subtlety in the writing. Lavery does not definitively attribute the antagonist's monstrosity to either damaged head or evil heart, and the portrayals maximize this ambiguity. ...The play's title reflects its organizing metaphorical idea that a brain might be stilled, like ice, by what is done to it in childhood. But a good play must be fluid, running afresh for new times or teams. Two decades on, *Frozen* shows itself to be, in every sense, capable of moving.<sup>34</sup>

The show dealing with heavy content still honored Lavery's style of writing and her ability to craft a producible story for the stage. Despite the backlash of plagiarism claims on the piece, the revival was well received.

Shortly after Lavery wrote a stage adaptation, *The Lovely Bones*, based on Alice Sebold's novel of the same name. Like *Frozen*, this story covers the death of a young girl

---

<sup>33</sup> Fox, David. "Review: In *Frozen* - Forgiving the Unforgivable." Philadelphia Magazine. Philadelphia Magazine, March 16, 2018. <https://www.phillymag.com/things-to-do/2018/03/16/review-frozen-forgiving-unforgivable/>.

<sup>34</sup> Lawson, Mark. "Rarely Is Theatre's Fourth Wall Broken so Jaggedly as in Bryony Lavery's Play, *Frozen*." New Statesman, June 24, 2021. <https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/music-theatre/2018/03/rarely-theatre-s-fourth-wall-broken-so-jaggedly-bryony-lavery-s-play>.

and her family's grief and connections afterwards. Unlike *Frozen*, the young girl in this story is very present on the stage. Suzie Salmon is like any other teenage girl but observes her family not as just the ignored teenager but as the lost daughter as her parents deal with grief and work to identify the killer.

In interview with Nick Curtis from *The Guardian*, she was asked about the show's similarities to *Frozen*. Lavery responded that she was initially apprehensive about taking on a show dealing with child murder so quickly after the revival of *Frozen*. Lavery says however, "The only real similarity between the two stories is that both are about redemption and surviving, and the important people are the innocent."<sup>35</sup>

Lavery has worked on numerous adaptations throughout her career. She embraces the collaborative style of working with another author and original source material. When she does this work, she sees adaptation as an opportunity to work as a co-author as she develops shows from original source material.

It's a different satisfaction because I get to work with another writer, even if that writer is on another continent, like Alice, or is no longer with us, like Arthur Ransome. The big advantage is that someone has already done the work of plot and character.<sup>36</sup>

Lavery writes most often for commission in her partnership with theatre and companies across the UK. In an interview between Thomas and Lavery, Lavery says, "I try to be helpful to the actor. If you listen to the way I talk, I pause a lot and it's because something

---

<sup>35</sup> Curtis, Nick. "Playwright Bryony Lavery: 'We Have to Watch Our Backs, Particularly in This Strange Climate'." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, August 25, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/aug/25/byriony-lavery-interview-the-lovely-bones-we-have-to-watch-our-backs>.

<sup>36</sup> Curtis, Nick. "Playwright Bryony Lavery: 'We Have to Watch Our Backs, Particularly in This Strange Climate'." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, August 25, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/aug/25/byriony-lavery-interview-the-lovely-bones-we-have-to-watch-our-backs>.

is going on in my head or my heart. So all those spaces are when I think, ‘Actor, look at this because I think there will be an emotional change or a breath change or something.’”<sup>37</sup> In Lavery’s style of writing, she writes in almost a listed style. The text acts like bullet points of information only keeping what’s important to relate the narrative. This style of writing leaves large pauses where Lavery writes in suggestive stage directions that encourage the future creative teams who handle the work to add in physical movement to better show than tell the stories.

Lavery has consistently worked collaboratively with other playwrights and acting companies creating new stories from their work or research interests. In the same interview, Thomas asks where Lavery sources materials for her plays, she responded, “I think half of me still does that, still takes a lot of stuff from myself, my own experience and probably emotional archives and about half of me just goes with the wind. Somebody says, 'You know we're thinking about this thing with a submarine' or 'We're thinking we want to do boxing— are you in?' and I say 'yes' because I know somehow I’ll connect with it.”<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Thomas, Jennifer Renee. "Bryony Lavery: English Playwright as Feminist Adaptor." Order No. 3420430, University of Oregon, 2010, <http://ezproxy.baylor.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/bryony-lavery-english-playwright-as-feminist/docview/749773878/se-2?accountid=7014> (accessed December 11, 2021).

<sup>38</sup> Thomas, Jennifer Renee. "Bryony Lavery: English Playwright as Feminist Adaptor." Order No. 3420430, University of Oregon, 2010, <http://ezproxy.baylor.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/bryony-lavery-english-playwright-as-feminist/docview/749773878/se-2?accountid=7014> (accessed December 11, 2021).

### *Writing on the Dark Side*

As shown in Lavery's writing style, in her own speech pattern she jumps from one topic to another in speeches and interviews. In an attempt to encompass all the many topics that Lavery covers in her variety of work and thematic through line may be the darker material sprinkled liberally in her work. Lavery doesn't seem to shy away from the darker material including entombed concubines, serial killers, race riots, disease, memory loss, fatal car crashes, submarine explosions and more. In the Paula Citron interview, she asks "Why do you write on the dark side...?" Lavery responds, "To fire a play, you need a strong flame to keep it going. I explore things that frighten us. I write about what's the worst that can happen. I suspect that a large percentage of all the plays written are on the dark side."<sup>39</sup> Lavery doesn't view the dark material as taboo but instead seems to tackle it with an adventurous spirit that helps herself and audiences explore the subjects of her plays.

Theatre creates an amicable space to work through this material and offered a space to explore the things that frighten us. Lavery not only uses this space to explore dark material but also again establish herself as a collaborator with all of those in the production process. Under the name of exploration, though her main form of contribution is the written script, her next work and inspiration comes from the collaborative aspects of working with a company. With her 2009 production of *Kursk* Lavery to work with the

---

<sup>39</sup> Citron, Paula. "Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery." Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

sound/theatre company Sound&Fury. “I got so excited about how sound works, and the wonderful army of sounds that you can create. Sound drives the production.”<sup>40</sup>

*Kursk* is influenced by the 2000 Russian submarine *Kursk*’s explosion that then trapped the vessel on the sea floor. Lavery’s script is set in a fictional British submarine that happened to be spying on the Russian sub at the time. In addition to her writing, Sound&Fury created a entirely new soundtrack of music to recreate the auditory effect of a submarine. This work continues to grow through her growing resume. Building on one adaptation to the next, there is then a correlation between her growing creative work here, the connections she is making her, and the discovery of her work to culminate in opportunities like the commission of *Treasure Island* (2014).

Though Lavery writes on dark topics she does not limit herself to strictly adult or mature audiences. In 2014, Lavery was asked to be the keynote speaker of England’s Theatre Centre’s Write Lines conference, a conference for new writers and writers for young audiences, she said, “I don’t think writers write for age groups or my contention is they shouldn’t write for age groups because I think age is all in sort of layers.”<sup>41</sup> She describes writing as scary, wonderful, exciting, and tedious. You aren’t just writing for yourself but to present a part of yourself to others. In the keynote address Lavery felt as though she learned three key factors from her time working with the Theatre Centre, speaking first as establishing rules for your writing,

I think limitations release art. They release theatre so always trying to work out the game of writing a play ... That’s the first thing I learnt at

---

<sup>40</sup> Citron, Paula. “Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery.” Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

<sup>41</sup> Theatre Center. “Write Lines Conference: Bryony Lavery Keynote Speech.” June 14, 2014. YouTube. 23:54. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CuBBfxQuDM>

theatre center about writing it also it encouraged me to always make up my own internal rules to tease out any art or any wonder that I was grasping for.<sup>42</sup>

These rules once established act as a game to play with while writing. This can evolve narrative, structure, or your own personal time and voice in the writing. Lavery evolves these rules to allow for space for her collaborators to play with her script. Lavery takes these rules and makes sure to follow them for each piece of work she is commissioned to be a part of.

The second piece of advice was her encouragement for writers to try their new material on young people. She recalled that while working at the National with *More Light* that though the content seemed mature she was encouraged to share it with young people.

I said that won't work because it's not a play for young people. It's about this and this happens and there's a castration and there's you know there's cannibalism but she insisted and I did it and I learnt this huge thing which is that young audiences like everybody else like serious deep hard stuff and I had the glory of seeing loads and loads of wonderful versions ... I just thought in [the] future I am never going to think I'm writing for a young audience or because if you look at those kids [young people] there you know they've got different energies they've got different brains it's ludicrous trying to tailor stuff.<sup>43</sup>

Lavery feels that the addition of younger audiences promotes better and more exciting versions of her work. With her scripts having large sections of space for the creative collaborators to come in and add their own interpretations, this is where Lavery's shows shine. This allows for young and contemporary audiences and artists to make their

---

<sup>42</sup> Theatre Center. "Write Lines Conference: Bryony Lavery Keynote Speech." June 14, 2014. YouTube. 23:54. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CuBBfxQuDM>

<sup>43</sup> Theatre Center. "Write Lines Conference: Bryony Lavery Keynote Speech." June 14, 2014. YouTube. 23:54. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CuBBfxQuDM>

own impressions of Lavery's work. This tactic is exciting as even after the script is complete the impetus to continue to collaborate and make the work relevant to its new audience is promoted.

The final piece Lavery imparted that day was on her collaboration with Frantic Assembly Company (2007). When the offer to work with them first appeared she almost turned them down because she hadn't heard of them. She's grateful she didn't because now as her work progresses plenty of young audience members come up to her and tell her that they first got involved with theatre because of Frantic's work.

During Lavery's time with Frantic, she would watch their physical and devised theatre rehearsals. Her goal was to write a story and narrative based on the concept the company was devising on. In remarking on watching the rehearsals she said:

Something wonderfully physical with for two actors and two performers to two dancers and then I try and write it and what I found is I was replicating it so I just stopped writing and I watched and I watched various physical stories emerging and I discovered that this is you know one of the chief ways which I want to pass on to you of finding the stories in you is try and work physically.<sup>44</sup>

Lavery found while working with Frantic that she had only just touched the possibility of opening a script to explore a narrative physically. Inspired by Frantic's work she was rediscovering the idea of space and physical theatre. She continues to be enthralled and active in their work, finding a mutual collaboration.

---

<sup>44</sup> Theatre Center. "Write Lines Conference: Bryony Lavery Keynote Speech." June 14, 2014. YouTube. 23:54. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CuBBfxQuDM>



## *Frantic Assembly*

Frantic Assembly Company is a physical actor training and devised theatre company in the UK. The Company utilizes “The Frantic Method” established by co-founders Scott Graham and Simon Stephens to create original productions as a collaborative ensemble. Aleks Sierz from *Theatre Forum – International Theatre Journal* writes, “Frantic created shows not by spending months devising work, but by having an idea and booking the tour. Then six or seven weeks before the opening, they’d start rehearsals.”<sup>45</sup> This group works frantically but their process has proved successful. This group created *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*. Their artistic director and co-founder, Scott Graham writes,

The Frantic Method is approaching devising as a series of tasks, each broken down into building blocks. This is designed to establish progress from the simplest discoveries.

Performers are encouraged to take a moment back to its simplest truth and build from there. This places dancers, actors, students, teachers and all participants on the same starting point. Using these building blocks, they are empowered to find and create complex work through a process that is safe, fun and constantly illuminating. This process came about through recognizing my own limitations coupled with a desire to teach and share something as soon as I learnt it.<sup>46</sup>

Their open trainings come through direct involvement in their work and casting calls, workshops, and/or joining their company for the creation of a particular show.

With the lyrical wit of Bryony Lavery and the collaborative movement styles of Frantic Assembly Company, this partnership flourished. So far, Lavery has worked on *Stockholm*, *Beautiful Burnout*, and *The Believers*. Steven Hoggett and Scott Graham,

---

<sup>45</sup> Sierz, Aleks. “Frantic Assembly.” *Theatre Forum - International Theatre Journal* (January 1, 2005): 3–9. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/2292922/>.

<sup>46</sup> Graham, Scott. “The Frantic Method.” Frantic Assembly. Accessed September 30, 2019. <https://www.franticassembly.co.uk/the-frantic-method>.

Frantic's co-founder state in their book, *Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre*, "Working with writers like Bryony Lavery ... has been the most exhilarating and empowering experience. It was Bryony who really gave us [Frantic Assembly] the confidence to 'write' in movement. She understood image and aspired to write in it as much she wrote in text."<sup>47</sup>

In a conversation with choreographer Susie Burpee and Bryony Lavery about her show *Stockholm*, Lavery talks about her relationship with the two men. "Co-directors Scott Graham and Steven Hoggett – I call them 'The Boys' and they call me 'Ma' – commissioned the play and chose the title and the main theme – the Stockholm Syndrome. I'm a fiction writer. I can't push reality. I had to have a reason for the title, so the couple in the play have a trip planned to Stockholm."<sup>48</sup>

*Stockholm* is a show about a couple, Todd and Kali, and their romantic plans for a trip to Stockholm. During the dinner the night before everything unravels amongst covering themes like love and domestic abuse. Lavery says, 'In an ordinary domestic relationship, usually it's the man who is more possessive of the woman. I flipped it with the woman seeming to be the stronger. Actually, they're equal. Each one is suffering from Stockholm Syndrome.'<sup>49</sup> Citron remarks that Lavery's script is very poetic, which is a common trait associated with her work. Lavery noted that her interest lies in how

---

<sup>47</sup> Graham, Scott, and Steven Hoggett. *The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre*. London: Routledge, 2009. Page 15.

<sup>48</sup> Citron, Paula. "Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery." Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

<sup>49</sup> Citron, Paula. "Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery." Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

people and ultimately her character use words. She's intrigued by raw dialogue and "Elevated language allows them to better articulate these hurtful words."<sup>50</sup> The language and rhythm found in Lavery's work leaves room for added movement, audience response, actor processing and inaudible moments of future collaborators contributions.

For the 2010 production of *Beautiful Burnout*, the events of the play are written to track the frenetic energy of the world of boxing. Lavery leaves space on the page to add rigorously devised movement and the show celebrates the triumphs and downfalls in what some consider a blood sport. Lavery writes during the collected ensembles exercises as they build a show from the ground up. Hoggett and Graham continue in their book, that Lavery's collaborative style of writing is so necessary because, "The shaping of theatre and choreography requires an outside eye and it is this objective influence that can liberate the performer to be brave, take risks and try things new. We, as the director/choreographers, are liberated too as the performer is now providing a palette so much larger and richer than our own imaginations could provide."<sup>51</sup>

Lavery commented that it was wonderful to work so collaboratively with Frantic. After taking a break from a few workshop rehearsals, she remarked, "Steven and Scott and I, we worked out how to make when it should be physical and when it should be text. We moved the script around as we made it."<sup>52</sup> There was also the addition of film, lighting, and music. They worked out the measure of each discipline equally. This

---

<sup>50</sup> Citron, Paula. "Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery." Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.

<sup>51</sup> Graham, Scott, and Steven Hoggett. *The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre*. London: Routledge, 2009. Page 15.

<sup>52</sup> Graham, Scott, and Steven Hoggett. *The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre*. London: Routledge, 2009. Page 15.

collaborative approach to involving all of these artistic disciplines then inspired her next piece, *Treasure Island*.

### *Treasure Island*

In 2014 Bryony Lavery was commissioned to adapt Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *Treasure Island* for the National Theatre in London. The show was directed by Polly Findlay and staged in National's Olivier Theatre. The show was released for virtual audiences in April 2020 during the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic as a part of the National Theatre at Home collection. All audiences could then view this show on their own streaming platform at home.

For supplemental information and program announcements, National Theatre released a series of YouTube videos. In NT at Home's Official Introduction of *Treasure Island* Bryony Lavery spoke on her adaptation of the work:

There are some women pirates. We looked and discovered there were some terrible dangerous, murderous women pirates and it seemed silly not to put them in. *Treasure Island* was written at a time when the Victorians had decided that women had never gone to sea, in any capacity. And so it's a remarkably masculine book, but women were at sea in significant numbers, and always had been. There were women pirates and if we were writing this book today, Stevenson would indeed have some, some high profile, very aggressive female pirates who would probably be far more dangerous than Long John Silver. Stevenson said very explicitly when he published the book that it was a story that was for boys only and I think that we felt coming to adapt that and to put it on stage here at the National, that we wanted to find a way of making it clear that the story was for boys and for girls And that making Jim a girl felt like a really appropriate gesture in that direction. I think we stayed loyal to the innate character of Jim that Louis Stevenson portrays in the book. One of someone who's young but intelligent, and apart from the fact that she's a girl in this production is actually insignificant. We're pushing the idea that it's about adventure.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> National Theatre "Official Introduction to *Treasure Island*: National Theatre at Home." April 16, 2020. YouTube. 4:11. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLzbNrvM9Qc>

This project melded Lavery's writing emphasis of women in lead roles and her love of adaptations for the stage. Her push to incorporate Jim Hawkins as a girl solidifies the idea that adventure should be for everyone not for one gender over another.

In the same video, Polly Findlay, the director, talks about the iconic nature of producing *Treasure Island* itself. She says:

Treasure Island is just such an exciting title. It's such an iconic title. It's one that I think most people have heard of. It's got such a huge reputation as an adventure story. It felt like a real privilege to be able to get our hands on, telling that in such a big space. ... It was a real challenge for Bryony and I to start thinking about how we might put it on stage. The novel is vocalized really chiefly through Jim and Long John Silver. That doesn't quite work in a staged format. So, Bryony has invented this wonderful set of, completely individual, fantastically comic creations that populate the stage.<sup>54</sup>

This lead of young female Jim's voice and the unique writing style of Lavery keeps just the necessary dialogue to tell the story. The spaces provided within the text allow for Findlay and National's designers to play collaboratively with music, movement, and scenic design to visualize the entirety of the story.

The process for creating this story mirrored Lavery's work with *Sound & Fury* and *Frantic Assembly*. After being commissioned in April 2014 to write the show, Lavery was allowed a summer workshop series with the director and cast to collaboratively write and rewrite the adaptation. Expanding on her three rules that she discussed with young playwrights as the keynote speaker earlier that same year, her rule

---

<sup>54</sup> National Theatre "Official Introduction to *Treasure Island*: National Theatre at Home." April 16, 2020. YouTube. 4:11. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLzbNrvM9Qc>

for *Treasure Island* was “really more of a pleasure.”<sup>55</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson’s classic adventure novel for boys is a tale full of adventure, excitement, and interactive storytelling. Lavery then adapted this for the stage.

The physical elements that have always been a part of Lavery’s work are also present in *Treasure Island*. In Geraldine Brennan’s article reviewing the show for *Books for Keeps* Lavery says, “On stage you need an incident every five seconds. We are constantly looking for ways to add sight gags and visual story. I’m rewriting all the time.”<sup>56</sup> Ultimately, the show itself became one where the revolving set of the Olivier stage was another actor in the show. In the NT at Home streamed version of the show, the recording had a moment of applause just for the unveiling of the ship, *The Hispaniola*.

In review of this production, the adaptation is received as overwhelmingly positive. Emma Clarendon of the “Love London Love Culture” art blog writes:

Watching Bryony Lavery’s clever and always engaging adaptation of this adventure story, the audience are effectively swept into a world filled with pirates, danger and lively characters – brilliantly brought to life in Polly Findlay’s authentic and daring production. ...Bringing it all to life, the incredible set design by Lizzie Clachan is an incredible achievement with so many elements that can be changed and fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle – that it is worth watching to see it in action. No spoilers really – but to watch the ship taking shape is an impressive spectacle.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> Brennan, Geraldine. “Treasure Island: Mutiny and Murder for Christmas.” Books For Keeps. Richard Hill <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/bfklogo.png>, November 28, 2014. <https://booksforkeeps.co.uk/article/mutiny-and-murder-for-christmas/>.

<sup>56</sup> Brennan, Geraldine. “Treasure Island: Mutiny and Murder for Christmas.” Books For Keeps. Richard Hill <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/bfklogo.png>, November 28, 2014. <https://booksforkeeps.co.uk/article/mutiny-and-murder-for-christmas/>.

<sup>57</sup> Clarendon, Emma. “Review: Treasure Island, National Theatre Online.” Love London Love Culture, April 19, 2020. <https://lovelondonloveculture.com/2020/04/19/review-treasure-island-national-theatre-online/>.

These characters constructed by Lavery from heavy influence of Stevenson's writing take shape to lead the actors and audience alike on an adventure.

Lavery was especially excited to add female pirates to the crew headed to *Treasure Island*. In addition to the female voice, we know historically there were strong female pirates sailing the seas at the same time as Stevenson's novel. In Lavery's own research for preparation of this piece she found there were "some terribly dangerous, murderous women pirates."<sup>58</sup> At the rise of Victorian pirate literature, when Stevenson was writing his adventure novels, women were not initially reported to have been present on the sea.

Jim may be the largest change from Stevenson's work to the stage. Lavery believed that she stayed true to the initial character of Jim. Jim is young, intelligent, stubborn and seeking to know more about the world around them. The change of Jim from boy to girl is actually meant to be insignificant. For Lavery, the larger idea should be about the adventure that everyone can go on.<sup>59</sup> In review from *Come to the Pedlar*, the anonymous author writes that Patsy Ferran, who was cast as Jim in National Theatre's production, highlighted the beautiful gender ambiguity of the character.<sup>60</sup>

And it's a lovely adventure to send a girl on. Jim is played by Patsy Ferran, in a performance that delightfully plays at first with gender ambiguity ('Be ye boy or be ye girl?' 'It be none of your business') before confirming that she is female, and later is identified as Jemima. Throughout, Ferran's Jim insists on her right to have adventures too, from

---

<sup>58</sup> National Theatre "Official Introduction to Treasure Island: National Theatre at Home." April 16, 2020. YouTube. 4:11. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLzbNrvM9Qc>

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> "Theatre: Treasure Island Adapted by Bryony Lavery (Directed by Polly Findlay for National Theatre at Home)." *Come To The Pedlar*. WordPress.com, April 17, 2020. <https://cometothepedlar.home.blog/2020/04/16/theatre-treasure-island-adapted-by-bryony-lavery-directed-by-polly-findlay-for-national-theatre-at-home/>.

joining the crew in the first place to angrily complaining about being sent to work in the galley. Narrating as well as performing, Ferran anchors the entire production and she's magnificent – charming, funny, earnest, brave, and selling the (real and imagined) betrayals with conviction.<sup>61</sup>

Chloe Lane for “City Girl Network” writes in her review that as Lavery’s script follows the plot of Stevenson’s book the changes she made really add a needed modernization to the classic tale. Lane writes, “Although the novel may have been intended for children, Lavery’s adaptation will instill a childlike feeling of adventure into any adult in the audience – which is exactly what many of us are looking for right now.”<sup>62</sup>

In addition to Jim, there is also Long John Silver, the lead antagonist to Jim’s adventure and the entire crew of the *Hispaniola*. This twenty-two-person cast vies for attention throughout the script and on the stage. In Philip Fisher’s review for the British Theatre Guide, he writes,

This production is filled with the ingredients for a swashbuckling evening to remember but doesn’t quite mix them together to the best effect. The plot feels sluggish and there are almost too many odd characters vying for attention to allow it to flow. The result is an evening that both young and old will feel has been pleasurable but not the superlative experience that so many National Christmas events of the past have led one to look anticipate.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> “Theatre: Treasure Island Adapted by Bryony Lavery (Directed by Polly Findlay for National Theatre at Home).” Come To The Pedlar. WordPress.com, April 17, 2020. <https://cometothepedlar.home.blog/2020/04/16/theatre-treasure-island-adapted-by-bryony-lavery-directed-by-polly-findlay-for-national-theatre-at-home/>.

<sup>62</sup> Lane, Chloe. “Review: Treasure Island at the National Theatre Online.” City Girl Network. City Girl Network, May 19, 2020. <https://citygirlnetwork.com/magazine/review-treasure-island-at-the-national-theatre-online>.

<sup>63</sup> Fisher, Philip. “Theatre Review: Treasure Island at Olivier Theatre (National).” British Theatre Guide. British Theatre Guide, August 3, 2020. <https://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/treasure-island-olivier-theatre-11008>.



This is something to consider in the restaging of the script for future production teams now that rewrites have stopped. In Susannah Clapp's review of the same production for *The Guardian*, she positively highlights the twists and turns of the plot.<sup>64</sup>

In Birmingham Repertory Theatre's production of Lavery's *Treasure Island* in 2016 director Philip Breen seemed to move their focus off of Jim and onto Long John Silver. In Alfred Hickling's review for *The Guardian*, he writes,

But, though it's great to see that pirating has become an equal opportunities employment, director Phillip Breen seems determined to introduce a psychosexual undercurrent that feels out of kilter in a family show. Stevenson was somewhat disingenuous in his claim that the story was unburdened by fine writing or psychology. Long John Silver is one of the most complex antiheroes in children's literature – a surrogate father to the young Hawkins who is, literally and emotionally, all at sea. But in Breen's production, the paternal aspect becomes darker. The image of Hawkins and Silver brushing lips as the one-legged reprobate fondles his pistol may be the most heavy-handed piece of over-interpretation you encounter this Christmas.<sup>65</sup>

Bryony Lavery with her personalized style of writing and collaborative spirit views herself as a co-author with Robert Louis Stevenson as she brings his original work to the stage. Lavery and Stevenson both mirror each other in their joy to find the adventure in story. In the adaptation of *Treasure Island* their co-authorship created a community driven pirate adventure to be shared by all.

---

<sup>64</sup> Clapp, Susannah. "Treasure Island Review – Astonishing Spectacle." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, December 14, 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/dec/14/treasure-island-national-theatre-observer-review>.

<sup>65</sup> Hickling, Alfred. "Treasure Island Review – Horrors on the High Seas." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, December 6, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2016/dec/06/treasure-island-review-birmingham-rep-theatre>.

## *Robert Louis Stevenson*

Robert Louis Stevenson, a British author, is most known for his works of *Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886), and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). Born in November 1850 in Edinburgh, Scotland, Stevenson was an only child to his middle-class parents. For much of his life, Stevenson suffered from several respiratory illness and a limited formal education. Despite his life of illness, he would later attend the University of Edinburgh, fall in love, travel to the Americas with his family, and write what we now consider to be classic adventure novels.<sup>66</sup>

## *Biography*

Stevenson is known for his realistic and romantic adventure writings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His ancestry comes up in his own published writings<sup>67</sup> as well as in the numerous biographies<sup>68</sup> about him. In Frank McLynn's biography *Robert Louis Stevenson* he writes, "Stevenson entertained many fantasies about his ancestors... Yet all RLS's imaginings of possible Norse, Highland or French origins for his family were in vain."<sup>69</sup> In addition to Stevenson's adventure stories, he incorporated his fantastical writing style in his autobiographies. In the writings about his family tree, he would create

---

<sup>66</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. "The Life: ROBERT LOUIS BALFOUR STEVENSON (1850-1894)." Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. StevensonMuseum.org, June 19, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/>.

<sup>67</sup> Read More: Steuart, John Alexander. *Robert Louis Stevenson: a Critical Biography*. 1924. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x000181947&view=1up&seq=38&skin=2021>

<sup>68</sup> Read More: Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. "Biographies: The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson." Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. StevensonMuseum.org, June 23, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/education/biographies/>.

<sup>69</sup> McLynn, Frank. *Robert Louis Stevenson: a Biography*. 1st U.S. ed. New York: Random House, 1994. Page 7.

elaborate and false backstories for his family history and present them as truth. In reality, his family traces back to small-scale traders.<sup>70</sup>

Robert Louis was born to Thomas Stevenson, a lighthouse engineer, and Margaret Isabella Balfour. Frank McLynn in his biography of Stevenson writes how Stevenson suffered from a chronic health condition, he spent most of his young childhood in bed rather than in more formal schooling,

As a result of his persistent poor health, Stevenson had a limited formal education. Instead, he was typically educated by private tutors and nannies, none so beloved as Allison Cunningham, whom he nicknamed “Cummy.” Cummy would regularly read to him from the Old Testament, Catechisms, and Bunyan’s *Pilgrim Progress*. This somewhat isolated childhood led to the development of a healthy imagination through which dreams of being a writer developed.<sup>71</sup>

After a home-schooled education, Stevenson attended the University of Edinburgh in 1867. At first, he went to school for the sciences. The thought is that he planned to follow in his father’s family tradition and become an engineer. Shortly into his schooling, RLS instead focused his studies on French literature, Scottish history, and the works of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. After an argument with his father about his change in course work, it was decided that Stevenson would switch to the professional career track of law.<sup>72</sup>

The Stevenson Museum notes that in addition to his change of studies, Stevenson also developed a bohemian appearance as well, “growing his hair long and wearing a

---

<sup>70</sup> McLynn, Frank. *Robert Louis Stevenson: a Biography*. 1st U.S. ed. New York: Random House, 1994. Page 7.

<sup>71</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. “The Life: ROBERT LOUIS BALFOUR STEVENSON (1850-1894).” Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. StevensonMuseum.org, June 19, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/>.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

velvet jacket when about town. He also developed more atheist beliefs, diverging from those of his parents, and began spending more time in the lounge of the Speculative Society – a group for orators and writers at the university.”<sup>73</sup> During the summer, RLS would travel to France to connect with other artists, writers, and painters. While there, he worked on his first publication, an essay called *Roads* (1873).<sup>74</sup> In 1875, Stevenson earned his law degree with no plan to pursue the career. Instead “he continued to write – always keeping two books with him ‘one to read, and one to write in.’”<sup>75</sup>

### *Falling in Love*

At the age of twenty-five, Stevenson traveled back to France to visit with his cousin at an artist’s colony there. While there, he caught sight of Fanny Osbourne and immediately fell in love with her. In Beverly Gherman’s book *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*, she writes, “He had fallen in love the moment he first saw her. Louis was a romantic and a storyteller. It’s natural that he would tell stories about his own life, embellishing them when it suited him. Still, this time it seemed he was telling the truth about his feelings.”<sup>76</sup>

Fanny Osbourne was an American woman who was married to Sam Osbourne at their meeting. Osbourne was living in France with her two children Belle and Lloyd on

---

<sup>73</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. “The Life: ROBERT LOUIS BALFOUR STEVENSON (1850-1894).” Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. [StevensonMuseum.org](https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/), June 19, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/>.

<sup>74</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Essays of Travel by Robert Louis Stevenson*. Ontario: Musson. 1905. Page 227. <https://www.gutenberg-org.ezproxy.baylor.edu/files/627/627-h/627-h.htm#>

<sup>75</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. “The Life: ROBERT LOUIS BALFOUR STEVENSON (1850-1894).” Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. [StevensonMuseum.org](https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/), June 19, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/>.

<sup>76</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 30.

her husband's money. Their relationship altered this stay and Fanny was sent home to America to dissolve her marriage with her husband and wait for Stevenson to meet back up again.<sup>77</sup> Almost a year later in 1879, Stevenson received a wire from Fanny to come and see her.

Throughout this separation Stevenson never stopped writing. He took an excursion through France in which he purchased a donkey and wrote a book about his travels entitled, *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* (1879). On his way to Fanny he was working on a short story, "The Story of a Lie" (1879). It was about a complicated relationship between a father and son and most likely mirrored his own relationship between his parents and himself as they were not initially thrilled with his love interest in Fanny.<sup>78</sup> Gherman writes, "He was also recording his impressions of his shipboard companions in preparation for a future work he hoped to write about the voyage. He questioned everyone – the stow-aways, the gentlemen, the laborers – and found them all good talkers willing to share their stories with him."<sup>79</sup> He ultimately married Fanny Osbourne in 1880 and would begin more travels on the sea with her and her two children.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. Page 33.

<sup>78</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Essays of Travel by Robert Louis Stevenson*. Ontario: Musson. 1905. Page 227. <https://www-gutenberg-org.ezproxy.baylor.edu/files/627/627-h/627-h.htm#>. Page 37.

<sup>79</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 37.

<sup>80</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. "The Life: ROBERT LOUIS BALFOUR STEVENSON (1850-1894)." Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. StevensonMuseum.org, June 19, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/>.

### *Illness and a Search of Adventure*

Stevenson seems to be a person in search of an interesting life. As a child and then adult, he was constantly sick and in and out of bed. Fanny became a nurse to him and as a family they would travel to different climates for health and the experience. Gherman writes, “In August of 1881, thirty-year-old Robert Louis Stevenson began to write an adventure story he called *The Sea-Cook*, which became *Treasure Island: A Story for Boys*. He described it as a story about a map and a treasure and a mutiny, and the ideas poured out of him.”<sup>81</sup>

While living in England, Stevenson was recovering from an illness. He and his wife and stepchildren lived with his Stevenson’s parents Thomas and Margaret. To pass the time they would paint, write, and work in their home.<sup>82</sup> Stevenson discovered himself painting with his stepson Lloyd and his interest was drawn to the creation of maps.

After doodling on several sheets, Louis found himself drawing the map of an island. He added trees and caves. He put in rivers and hills. One he called Spyglass Hill. He put in North Inlet. He added a smaller island, which he called Skeleton Island. Louis grew more and more excited. Faces appeared to him. Ideas for chapters came next. Spurred on by Lloyd, who begged him for an adventure story, not another “horribly dull” essay or travel book, he began to write with great speed, almost a chapter a day. In the beginning he called it *The Sea-Cook* by Captain George North. Sitting by the fire while it stormed outside he worked on the pirate story – “The best book about the Buccaneers that can be had.”<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 1.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. Page 62.

<sup>83</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Pages 62-63.

From a painting of an original map with his stepson, Stevenson fabricated a full sixteen chapters for a new book. This story was invented to entertain his young stepson but ultimately created the story that put him on the map as a professional author.

Stevenson ultimately dedicated *Treasure Island* to his stepson Lloyd thanking him for the many adventures, “To Lloyd Osbourne, An American Gentleman in accordance with whose classic taste the following narrative has been designed it is now, in return for numerous delightful hours and with the kindest wishes, dedicated by his affectionate friend. The Author”<sup>84</sup> The love of adventure stories was shared with the entire Stevenson family. Lloyd had one added request as the story unfolded,

He pleaded that there should be no women in it; rightly or wrongly maintaining that they spoil the story; Stevenson laughed and obeyed, though he made an exception of Jim Hawkins’s mother who was necessary for the first few chapters before Jim, Squire Trelawney and the doctor set sail in the *Hispaniola*, innocent of having signed on among their crew a whole gang of buccaneers, led by the smooth-tongued crippled sea-cook, Long John Silver...<sup>85</sup>

Stevenson would share his writings with his family at the completion of each chapter. Gherman notes that his father Thomas especially enjoyed the storytelling and is responsible for the additions of Jim hiding in an apple barrel and the various objects found in Billy Bone’s chest.<sup>86</sup> Gherman continues by writing,

Louis could hardly wait to get to work each morning and found that he could produce at least a chapter a day. “You just indulge the pleasure of your heart,” he said, “just drive along as the words come and the pen will scratch!” In great haste he wrote the first sixteen chapters and sold them to

---

<sup>84</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis, and Frank T. Merrill. *Treasure Island*. Illustrated edition. London: Cassell and Company, 1885.

<sup>85</sup> Stern, G. B. *Robert Louis Stevenson, the Man Who Wrote “Treasure Island”: a Biography*. New York: Macmillan, 1954. Pages 66-67.

<sup>86</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 2.

*Young Folks* magazine, which would issue them a chapter at a time beginning in October 1881. It was one of the few times when Louis was so absorbed in his writing he forgot about his illnesses. For the truth is that Robert Louis Stevenson lived his whole life expecting to die at any moment. Even as a child when asked what he would be when he grew up, he said perhaps a minister like Grandfather or an engineer like Father or an adventurer. Always adding, “If I am spared.””<sup>87</sup>

Stevenson consistently, through all of his work, used influences from his travels and friends for his stories. Long John Silver was no exception. Often embellishing the truth, he used his friend “William Henley, with his tangled hair, thick red beard, and crutch, as a model for the one-legged Long John Silver.”<sup>88</sup> It seems the whole of Stevenson’s life was influence for his story.

### *Reception and Review*

Robert Louis Stevenson went on to great success, though most of it came after his death in 1894. Known for his romantic and yet realistic writing, the appeal to Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* had immediate appeal. In William H Hardesty III and David D. Mann’s article, *Historical Reality and Fictional Daydream in “Treasure Island,”* they note the allure of pirates, the grand adventure, and the intrepid spirit of Jim as the novels guide a great appeal to adolescents for generations to come.<sup>89</sup>

In part its success may be attributed to purely romantic elements, since pirates have always captured the imagination of young readers. Purchasers of the first edition of the novel in 1883 must have been intrigued by the map, drawn by Stevenson himself and placed opposite the title page. Full of thrilling names (Skeleton Island, Spyglass Hill) and implications of

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. Page 2.

<sup>88</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 63.

<sup>89</sup> Hardesty, William H., and David D Mann. “Historical Reality and Fictional Daydream in ‘Treasure Island.’” *The Journal of narrative technique* 7, no. 2 (1977): 94–103. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30225608>



fabulous wealth ("Bulk of Treasure here"), the map in fact brought the story to Stevenson's mind: "...as I poured upon my map of Treasure Island, the future characters of the book began to appear there visibly among imaginary woods; and their brown faces and bright weapons peeped out upon me from unexpected quarters, as they passed to and fro, fighting and hunting treasure, on these few square inches of a flat projection."<sup>90</sup>

In the introduction of the Penguin Classics print of *Treasure Island*, John Seelye echoes the call of adventure and romanticism that draw in young readers.

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* is the quintessential British adventure story, and like so many such is aimed at a young and chiefly male readership. It belongs in part to the castaway tradition, commencing with *Robinson Crusoe* and continuing with *The Swiss Family Robinson* and Marryat's *Masterman Ready*, all of which Stevenson read as a boy. But like other Stevenson tales, it was also inspired by the example and form of Sir Walter Scott's historical romances, and contains as well characters obviously indebted to Charles Dickens, who had by midcentury replaced Scott as the popular author of the day.<sup>91</sup>

### *Review of Treasure Island*

Initial review was not the most positive. There were mixed concerns about the realistic and historical context of *Treasure Island*. LitCharts notes that with Stevenson's novel set in the eighteenth century, he was playing within the romanticism of the Golden Age of Piracy. They note is incorporation with, 'The Jolly Roger, the pirate flag mentioned in the novel, was historically an iconic image used by many pirates to force other ships to surrender. Blackbeard, who is equated with Captain Flint in the book, was also a real historical figure who sailed around the West Indies in the late seventeenth

---

<sup>90</sup> Hardesty, William H., and David D Mann. "Historical Reality and Fictional Daydream in 'Treasure Island.'" *The Journal of narrative technique* 7, no. 2 (1977): 94–103. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30225608>

<sup>91</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island*. Edited by John D. Seelye. London: Penguin Books, 2009. Page vii.

century.”<sup>92</sup> This pulls in his audience but then he creatively added elements like The Black Spot and of course the map.

Gherman again calls Stevenson out as the ‘teller of tales.’ As the story of *Treasure Island* unfolds each week letters start to come into the editor of *Young Folks* and the illustrious author,

No one wrote to say they liked the weekly stories. Instead there were letters with comments like, “This stuff isn’t good enough; chuck it.” Tell the writer to “get a move on,” to “cut the cackle” and come to the “osses” as a writer of adventure stories should. They were bored with the slow start and felt there was too much description and not enough suspense. How could it take ten chapters before young Jim was ready for action, they wondered.<sup>93</sup>

In one of his later travels with his family, Stevenson boarded the ship of Captain Otis.

At first the captain of the ship was not pleased to have them aboard. He didn’t care at all that Louis was a famous author. In fact he told Margaret that he had read *Treasure Island* and was not impressed. Your son may be a great author, but he sure doesn’t know anything about ships, Captain Otis muttered. And he was not about to read anything else Louis wrote.<sup>94</sup>

Ultimately, the Stevenson clan won over Captain Otis. Later, like with all the absorbed influences of Stevenson’s life, Captain Otis became the model for the villain in *The Wrecker* (1892).<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> LitCharts. “Treasure Island Study Guide.” LitCharts. Accessed February 10, 2022. <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island>.

<sup>93</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 64.

<sup>94</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 91.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. Pages 91-95.

Stevenson plays again with realism. His illness truly pushed him to explore the world and utilize his imagination while stuck in bed. He continued to dream and write up until his early death at the age of forty-four. Stevenson would go on to write two to three books or essays a year up until 1893.

### *Literary Criticism*

Charles Baxter a friend of Stevenson arrived to visit Vailima and Stevenson had already died. In hand, he had the first two volumes of Louis's collected works in the Edinburgh Edition. After his death, more of Stevenson's works were published including *Songs of Travel and other Verses* (1895) and Stevenson's unfinished novel, *Weir of Hermiston* (1896). Many believe that this unfinished work would have been his best. Stevenson was quoted to have said, "My work is profounder than it was; I can touch emotions that I then scarcely knew existed."<sup>96</sup>

In Caroline McCracken-Flesher's book, *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, she writes,

Stevenson's reputation has been high culture and low populist; Romantic and modern; British, Scottish, and American; and up and down. ...Another fascination with Stevenson that began early and echoes today revolves around the problem of romance. [Henry] James recognized the value in Stevenson's romancing and its challenge to the literary norms of their moment as the two authors debated the art of fiction. Yet most contemporary reviewers found themselves perplexed. When Stevenson contributed evenhandedly to the *Cornhill* and *Young Folks*, they praised the art of tall tales... In growing appreciation of this complexity, critics of recent years have increasingly and unashamedly accepted Stevenson as an accomplished and innovative writer of genre fiction – one who manifests and extends the possibilities of popular forms.<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Gherman, Beverly. *Robert Louis Stevenson, Teller of Tales*. 1st ed. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1996. Page 117.

<sup>97</sup> McCracken-Flesher, Caroline. *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2013. Pages 3-5

Overall, the adventure of Stevenson's work lives on. This is never truer than in the adaptation from Bryony Lavery. Synthesizing the explosive and overly descriptive work of Stevenson, the staged adaptation keeps the necessary dialogue to progress the story. The text that seems choppy and open allows for the creative influence of the production team.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Theory of Adaptation and Script Analysis

#### *Introduction*

Bryony Lavery does more than co-author Robert Louis Stevenson's original novel. Through adaptation she spins Stevenson's original audience of young boys and invites everyone to an evening of adventure. Through, what seem like small changes, the play presents Jim Hawkins as a girl and our Hispaniola and Walrus crews now include women. Today's production is for everyone and as Doctor Livesey says before they start their voyage, "Girls need adventures too."<sup>1</sup> This chapter explores the plays' structure and the layers of adaptation in relation to Lavery's work through the process of the play.

The directorial analysis for *Treasure Island* was developed by utilizing Francis Hodge's work outlined in *Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style*, originally published in 1971 but most recently published in its seventh edition in 2010<sup>2</sup>. Hodge developed his system for script analysis with theatre directors specifically in mind. This "Hodge Analysis" was chosen due to its text-based approach to analyze the given circumstances, characters, dramatic form, content, and structure of the play and how this will inform the direction of the production. In addition to Hodge, the analysis will also

---

<sup>1</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 30.

<sup>2</sup> Hodge, Francis, and Michael McLain. *Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style*. 7th ed. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.

include the discussion of Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation*<sup>3</sup>, originally published in 2006 but most recently published its revised edition in 2013. This will incorporate and highlight the differences between this work, adapted for the stage by Bryony Lavery, and the original source material of the novel written by Robert Lewis Stevenson.

### *Synopsis of the Play*

Bryony Lavery's stage adaptation of *Treasure Island* follows young Jim Hawkins – as a girl – as she discovers a treasure map and starts on a journey to Treasure Island. It's a dark and stormy night, and the arrival of a staggering pirate brings danger, excitement, and adventure. As the door opens for this new arrival, a large sea chest, full of possibilities, lies at his feet. As Jim cares for the ailing pirate, a furtive investigation reveals secrets that begin a dangerous voyage.

### *Act 1*

At the beginning of Act 1, Jim addresses the audience directly and informs them of her charge to tell the tale of her adventure to Treasure Island. She states:

Men various  
Have chosen me to tell you  
From beginning to end  
Keeping nothing back but its bearings  
All the particulars about Treasure Island...<sup>4</sup>

These words are directly adapted in Lavery's own poetic yet choppy style from the matching phrases of Stevenson's start of his novel,

---

<sup>3</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 1.

Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted...<sup>5</sup>

Jim informs the audience of her parents passing and that she is now living and working with grandma in the Admiral Benbow Inn. Bill Bones arrives at the Inn. As the first guest in a long while, he brings the breath of adventure and a warning that more pirates are on the way. Bones talks of treasure and whispers a warning to Jim to watch out for a one-legged man.

In the crash of a storm, Black Dog, an eight-fingered villain, arrives in search of Bill Bones. Black Dog demands the return of Flint's Fist and they ultimately fight; Bones crumples to the floor. As Bones recuperates, Jim corners him in his room and offers Bones grog if he will answer questions about Flint's Fist, the one-legged man, and the Black Spot. Blind Pew arrives at the inn and forces Jim to show him Bones. Blind Pew places the Black Spot into Bones' hand which means the judgement of the pirates is coming. In a race to find answers,

The dreaded pirates arrive earlier than prescribed. The crew of *The Walrus* storm the inn and precede to rip it apart in search of Flint's Fist. Not successful in finding what they want the frustrated crew turn on their new pronounced leader, Blind Pew. Killing him in disgust and outrage, they angrily leave, abandoning another dead pirate at the Hawkins' door.

Slowly coming out of hiding, Jim and community survey the damage done to the inn. In a search for answers, Jim, Squire, and Doctor Livesey dig through Bones' chest

---

<sup>5</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island*. Edited by John D. Seelye. London: Penguin Books, 2009. Page 3.

and discover the map to Treasure Island. Reading the inscription, they have coordinates for the treasure for the first time,

So I may always find my pile.  
Lat E 62 17 20Lng SE19 3 40 will find the isle...  
The heart protected by the ribs  
Who knows this will get his dibs  
Upon it if unfair of face  
It's simple escalate the biggest pimple...  
Upon that spot I suggest you linger  
Until you see a pointing finger  
By my hand. Edward Flint.<sup>6</sup>

Desiring treasure, Squire uses his influence to outfit a ship and crew to set sail. Captain Smollett arrives and doesn't love that Squire has pseudo assigned himself command. Squire introduces us to Lucky Micky, Job Anderson, Red Ruth and Grey; this misfit crew shocks the captain. Squire continues his hunt for crewmen and asks a stranger for help. With a short whistle from the stranger sea-faring persons seem to arrive from the mist of the docks. Killigrew the Kind, Dick the Dandy, Joan the Goat, Israel Hands, Black 'Cat,' and George Badger join the Squire's ranks. As Squire rises to leave, he thanks the stranger and lastly hires him as the ship's cook.

As the sails unfurl, Jim takes verbal ownership over the adventure on *The Hispaniola*. As she explores the ship, she is quickly relegated to cabin girl and cook's assistant. Entering the belly of the ship she discovers, the cook is the one legged nightmare of her dreams. Silver turns on the charm and makes a friend of Jim. She can read, knowledge on which Silver capitalizes. Through narration, Jim speeds through

---

<sup>6</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 28.



some of the travel of the voyage. The two characters work happily together in the galley and Silver teaches Jim about the stars.

Treasure Island is spotted! Jim, our young heroine is hungry after all the bustle of preparing the shift and goes to look for an apple. At the same time, Long John Silver has started to assemble his original crew to plan a mutiny and overtake the ship. Thinking quickly, Jim hops in the barrel and, in addition to overhearing Long John's plan, also discovers the treasure map that Doctor has hidden. Jim rushes to warn Doctor, Squire, Captain, and her friends of their plan. This group will be referred to as the goodie crew.

As ship's crew prepares to go to land, the Captain purposefully nominates *Walrus* crew members to go ashore, hoping to maroon them. In encouraging Silver to go ashore as well, Jim gives away the Captain's plan and Silver calls for the pirates to attack. In the closing of Act One, the parrot swoops in and grabs the map from Jim's grasp; Silver announces,

Killigrew! Shoot the girl!  
*KILLIGREW aims, fires...*  
*Then it all goes black...*  
*...The Jolly Rodger appears...*  
*It is the Interval.*<sup>7</sup>

## Act 2

Act Two opens on the island to the pirates leading the crew in manacles. Long John Silver has taken his rightful place in command and leaves community crew members to bake in the sun as they refuse to give up the map coordinates. Jim is not found, and the frustrated pirates go off in search of the treasure themselves.

---

<sup>7</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 68.

On another part of the island, Jim arrives alive. She's lost, exhausted, scared, and grumpy. Strange sounds startle her as the ground shifts and Ben Gunn reveals himself from the swampy ground below. Quickly becoming friends, Ben Gunn and Jim decide to team up to defy Long John Silver together.

Meanwhile the crew works to break free. Grey, easily forgotten, saves the day as it's discovered he wasn't chained at all. With the help of tools from the Doctor's bag and a pistol, they shoot off the locks. Crawling over and around the drunk and sleeping bodies of their guards they exit deeper into the island. The parrot swoops in directly after, quickly followed by Silver and the other pirates. Silver eerily calm in his anger, approaches Killigrew and stabs him to death.

On a new part of the island, the crew has set up camp. As they begin to settle Jim and Ben Gunn emerge. The Squire asks for an English flag to be raised in celebration. As Red Ruth climbs to unfurl the flag, she dies by thrown knife, as she gave their hiding spot away with the Union Jack. Silver, furious, arrives and threatens the Goodie Crew again. Captain dares to challenge him and is quickly shot.

As Silver leaves the Goodie Crew to care for their losses, Jim crawls out of her hiding place to their side. The Doctor, Squire, and Grey, exhausted, settle to camp for the night. As the Captain passes, Jim recognizes that the ship has been fully abandoned. Thinking quickly, she decides that if they can just move the ship, they could escape. However, the Goodie Crew cannot continue tonight. Frustrated with these tired grown-ups, Jim traipses off by herself.

On another part of the island, Ben Gunn appears from his underground tunnels. He quickly rationalizes how he can help the Goodie Crew defeat the pirates once and for

all. In the meantime, Jim has boarded the Hispaniola and discovers Israel Hands sitting perched on her barrel of explosives. Israel and Jim struggle for control and in an attempt to show dominance, Israel lights her pipe and accidentally sets off the explosives she's sitting on. As everything settles, Jim takes the opportunity to take the ship.

Jim heads back to what appears to be the goodie crew's camp. Quickly she realizes her mistake as Long John Silver and his pirates have her surrounded. With the feeling of dread, Jim has no choice but to go along with Silver and join the pirates side. Her ability to read means she is now the only chance and hope to read the coordinates on the map and find the treasure.

The island landscape around the pirates quickly reveals the very real and tangible location of the treasure. From earlier the rest of the poem is revealed,

Upon that spot  
I suggest you linger!!!  
Until you see a pointing finger...  
Stand thereupon  
Chose moon or sun  
The cove as knows to turn his face  
Has wit and luck to find the place  
By my hand. Edward Flint.<sup>8</sup>

The pirates rush to dig and uncover a music box left by Ben Gunn. With the tinkling of a haunting yet familiar tune, they retrieve a message from the marooned cabin boy.

For those who've left both wounds and hurts  
You now enjoy your just desserts...  
You've found the box, you've followed the map  
You need now to ope your trap!  
To stuff those groats  
Into your coats right up to their gunnels

---

<sup>8</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 98-99.

Try and find a maze of tunnels.<sup>9</sup>

With these final instructions the pirates find a trap and the maze of tunnels underneath.

Silver informs Jim that the final key to his plan is that they will take the treasure all to themselves and kill the others on the way out. But as the climax of the play works out, Jim has a great realization,

JIM: I realized in that moment  
Three things...  
One... I was not quite enough grown-up for some of this yet...  
Two...  
Grandma!  
Grandma... wouldn't take a penny that wasn't hers!  
Even when she was starving even when I was starving!  
"My dues and not a farthing more!"  
O Jim, Grandma would hate you if you were a pirate!  
You are Jim Hawkins...  
Honest granddaughter to honest Grandma Hawkins and  
NO PIRATE!!!  
No pirate at all but  
Three I was a...  
A pirate fighter holding a pistol from a lying pirate!!!<sup>10</sup>

Jim turns the gun on Silver and orders issues of arrest to the pirates. The parrot then swoops in again and knocks the pistol out of Jim's hands and into Silver's. But also at the moment, the terrible and frightening voice of "Edward Flint" comes across the cavern.

As Flint's "ghost" terrorizes the pirates. We learn it's the Squire, Doctor, and Ben Gunn manning the charade. As the pirates beat on the tunnels of the cave to release the treasure, in the collapse the caverns fall on the pirates themselves. Ben Gunn speaks,

---

<sup>9</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 100.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Page 103.

“See this is the true character of treasure cold hearted dangerous and not useful or delicious like a tunnel system or eatable liked cheese...”<sup>11</sup> The Goodie Crew are safe and Jim shares she has the ship to head home!

### *Progression and Structure*

*Treasure Island* has an episodic plot. This makes sense as Robert Louis Stevenson submitted his writings one chapter at a time to the *Young Folk's* magazine for boys. Each chapter was written to stand on its own and then ultimately culminated in a published book in 1881.

*Treasure Island* is composed of two acts and led by our protagonist, Jim Hawkins. The first act is comprised of sixteen scenes; the second act of nine scenes. The scenes range from one to eight pages of dialogue. Our point of attack of the show starts with Bill Bones arrival with a sea chest to Admiral Benbow Inn.

The events leading to this point of attack revolve around the death of Jim's parents, bringing her to the inn to stay with her Grandma. They need money to continue to survive as they have not had a true guest stay at the inn in a long time. The primary conflict is that Jim and her community need the money, but they all know it is the treasure hidden by a one-legged pirate they were told to hide. They have hired a one-legged pirate to join their crew and Long John Silver is after his own treasure himself.

The climax of the show is in the tunnels as the pirates' search for the treasure. Jim recognizes that in choosing to help the pirates she has forgotten why she's on the

---

<sup>11</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 108.

adventure in the first place. This was all for Grandma and the care of her found family. Jim has to make the decision; is she pirate or pirate hunter.

In addition to this adventure, this play acts as a *bildungsroman*. A bildungsroman is a coming-of-age story which focuses on the character development of (typically) the lead young adult of the story.<sup>12</sup> The story then centers on the main character's evolution to maturity or a changed perspective of the world around them. The staff of MasterClass.com in their writing workshop write on the key elements of how a bildungsroman plot unfolds:

**Loss:** The protagonist experiences a profound emotional loss at the beginning of the story, typically during their childhood or adolescent formative years.

**Journey:** Inspired by their loss, the protagonist sets out on a journey, either physical or metaphorical, to find the answer to a big question and gain life experience that will help them better understand the world.

**Conflict and personal growth:** The protagonist's path toward maturity is not an easy one. They make mistakes and are usually at odds with society. But as the story continues, the protagonist slowly accepts the ideals of society and society accepts them back.

**Maturity:** The protagonist demonstrates immense psychological growth, change, and maturity by the end of the novel. The story sometimes ends with them giving back and helping someone else on the path to maturity.<sup>13</sup>

Jim Hawkins in both Stevenson's novel and Lavery's staged adaptation meets the criteria.

---

<sup>12</sup> "Bildungsroman Examples and Definition." Literary Devices, November 7, 2015. <https://literarydevices.com/bildungsroman/>.

<sup>13</sup> MasterClass. "What Is a Bildungsroman? Definition and Examples of Bildungsroman in Literature - 2022." MasterClass. MasterClass, August 30, 2021. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-a-bildungsroman-definition-and-examples-of-bildungsroman-in-literature#how-a-bildungsroman-is-structured>.

The audience first meets Jim Hawkins where she (in Lavery's adaptation) lives with her grandma. Her journey is pushed into action due to her dire economic straits. The conflict of the play centers on Jim's moral choices, especially when it comes to the adventure in the latter part of the play. Throughout her adventure, Jim argues to be treated equally like the crew. In Act 1, Scene 8, as the Squire plans how to acquire a ship and assemble the crew he says he will bring Doctor Livesey and Jim along. Grandma Hawkins protests saying girls' adventures should be, "nice quiet safe ones here at home!"<sup>14</sup> In Lavery's adaptation, not only is Jim embarking on a grand adventure for a child, but also one that as a young girl, will expand her role beyond the home. In Lavery's adaptation, her inclusion of women in roles in the. Professional world, provide an example to Jim different than her grandma back home.

As Jim starts the story in both Stevenson and Lavery's stories, the young hero has already lost family and has very little in terms of money and time. As she starts her journey on the ship, the grownups in her life are keeping her to the sidelines, not letting her keep the map, relegating her to below deck, and ignoring Jim's brave ideas to steal the ship. Young Jim has a rare skill, the ability to read. This community that Jim stems from all appear to be literate and the pirates that she joins on ship do not have but greatly value this skill. Being literate is valued, as it is the only way to read and the decipher the clues scrawled on the back of the map. When Long John Silver discovers this, he quickly befriends and protects Jim until they get to the island.

---

<sup>14</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 30.

The conflict for Jim is wrapped around the decision to become a pirate or pirate hunter. This decision is used as a metaphor as our young protagonist must really make decisions about her own moral compass and establishing the difference between right and wrong when exposed to the world around her. Maturity, according to the elements of the Bildungsroman, is found in Jim's reasoning on protecting her friends, the decision to take the treasure back to share with all of her community, and her realization of the good and bad in the world and her recognize of the safety of home.

### *Adaptation and Treasure Island*

As a director I cannot ignore that this work is an adaptation of original source material. Utilizing Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* the process and product of adaptation are clearly seen in how Bryony Lavery utilized the work of Robert Louis Stevenson. Hutcheon theorizes how the method of adaptation matters in terms of material. Through the cross-over of one original source to an adaptation, the artist relies on familiarity that determines the success of an adaptation via process or product.

Hutcheon writes,

My method has been to identify a text-based issue that extends across a variety of media, find ways to study it comparatively, and then tease out the theoretical implications from multiple textual examples. At various times, therefore, I take on the roles of formalist semiotician, poststructuralist deconstructor, or feminist and postcolonial demythifier; but at no time do I (at least consciously) try to impose any of these theories on my examination of the texts or the general issues surrounding adaptation.<sup>15</sup>

This is Hutcheon's approach as theorizer, and as a director, I also note the similarities and differences in the two works presented here; the play and novel. With Lavery's

---

<sup>15</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page xiv.



adaptation, she's left a lot of space in her writings for the production team to fill in the blanks. Stevenson's novel provides answers for those blanks if you work with both sources.

Connecting Lavery and Stevenson through the theory of adaptation one doesn't keep the current work and original source separate. Hutcheon writes, "One lesson is that to be second is not to be secondary or inferior; likewise, to be first is not to be originary or authoritative".<sup>16</sup> As Lavery discussed in her introduction to her work she was excited to bring this adventure to the 21<sup>st</sup> century by expanding the communal aspect of the piece and intentionally including Jim as a girl to retell the story as one for everyone.

Though stage play and novel are under the same names, adapting is not simply an allowed copy of another work. Commonly adaptations are differentiated by their new medium of communication. Hutcheon writes,

Adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication. And there are manifestly many different possible intentions behind the act of adaptation: the urge to consume and erase the memory of the adapted text or to call it into question is as likely as the desire to pay tribute to copying.<sup>17</sup>

Lavery was ultimately commissioned to tell Stevenson's story. This meant manifesting the story on stage rather than just rewriting the book. The characters, thematic elements, and plot remained the same and guided Lavery's writing.

Lavery's adaptation of Stevenson takes only the necessary components of the story to build this stage adaptation. Lavery's adaptation condenses Stevenson's novel into around 100 minutes. There are generally minor changes to the plot (major changes to the

---

<sup>16</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page xv.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. Page 7.

ending), and it employs a lighter tone intended for wider audiences. As a part of the National Theatre's collection and process of creating the show they created a teacher's guide for their production. Within the teaching guide, Susie Ferguson, National Theatre's Education and Arts Consultant, provides the following information on large changes made from Stevenson's novel to Lavery's stage adaptation:

- Jim's parents are cut, with the role of his mother instead being his grandmother.
- Blind Pew is trampled to death by soldier's horses in the novel. In this version he is impaled on his own stick.
- Many of the ship's crew have different names and roles in this version, and their characteristics are heightened for comedic effect. Various other minor characters including sailors and crew are cut.
- In this version Jim reveals Long John Silver's crew are pirates before they leave for the island on the jolly boat, causing a fight to break out on the ship.
- Captain Smollett is killed in this adaptation.
- The pirates' mutiny against Silver is quickly quashed in this version. He is not given the black spot and he never claims allegiance to the Doctor.
- In this version the treasure is inside the island rather than Gunn's hiding place, and Silver along with his crew are killed trying to recover it.
- In the novel the return journey to England is long, travelling via America. That is cut in the play.<sup>18</sup>

The cuts are quite severe in changes from novel to play. However, the additions increase audience interest. By cutting these details, the story now runs at a faster pace. The audience can then be swept up in the adventure along with Jim.

---

<sup>18</sup> Ferguson, Susie. "Treasure Island Learning Pack - Media.bloomsbury.com." National Theatre: Treasure Island - Learning Guide. Bloomsbury, 2015. [https://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/nt\\_treasure-island-learning-pack.pdf](https://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/nt_treasure-island-learning-pack.pdf).

### *Adaptation as Product*

In terms of adaptation, Lavery's work is still following Hutcheon's theory directly. Hutcheon writes on the definition of adaption, "According to its dictionary meaning, "to adapt" is to adjust, to alter, to make suitable."<sup>19</sup> This can be done in a number of ways. Most commonly adaptations are done through different media, i.e. book to film, novel to stage, film to tv series, novel to film to video game. This change of media draws the audience familiarity across but allows them to explore the material in new ways.

Hutcheon further defines the terms of adaptation through viewing the material as product or process. Hutcheon writes,

First, seen as a formal entity or product, an adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works. This 'transcoding' can involve a shift of medium (a poem to a film) or genre (an epic to a novel), or a change of frame and therefore context: telling the same story from a different point of view, for instance, can create a manifestly different interpretation.<sup>20</sup>

She continues by writing that this transition of shift of medium is a way to highlight one text through a different lens in another.<sup>21</sup>

Lavery's adaptation is by nature a shift of medium. Purposefully with the performance at National Theatre and the ability to perform this script in other theatres the space to showcase adaptation is viable. In terms of writing, Lavery's cuts and additions, Hutcheon connects, are the use of paraphrase.

---

<sup>19</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 7.

<sup>20</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 8.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Page 16.

The idea of paraphrase is an alternative frequently offered to this translation analogy. Etymologically, a paraphrase is a mode of telling “beside” (para) and, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one of its first meanings is “a free rendering or amplification of a passage” that is verbal but, by extension, musical as well.<sup>22</sup>

Lavery uses paraphrase in terms of her combination of Stevenson’s characters into the character’s listed in her script. She also uses paraphrase to shorten the timeline of the story. There are large time jumps in the script and she utilizes paraphrase the narration of Jim Hawkins to the audience to keep up the pace.

### *Adaptation as Process*

The collaborative nature of Lavery’s work establishes herself as an adaptor that works in both product but also process. She first defined herself as a collaborator by rule due to her experience with Frantic Assembly. Now, she considers herself a co-author with Stevenson as this novel is pushed to be shared on stage. In the process of writing the first draft she workshopped a rehearsal with the production team of the National Theatre. This led to script changes, casting choices, and highlighted very specific components kept from Stevenson’s work, i.e. adventure and community building.

Linda Hutcheon writes that the process of adaptation is just as important to recognize as the product. Hutcheon writes, “As a process of creation, the act of adaptation always involves both (re-)interpretation and then (re-)creation; this has been called both appropriation and salvaging, depending on your perspective.”<sup>23</sup> Adapters then

---

<sup>22</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O’Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 17.

<sup>23</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O’Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 8.

act as interpreters for their original source material and then creators to keep the value of the original work alive for contemporary audiences.

For this adaptation, Lavery re-interprets Stevenson's novel to better establish its relevance today. As a novel originally meant for boys, Lavery adds or recreates characters in the story to incorporate role models for girls as well, making this an adventure for everyone. Lavery, in her introduction of the script and in interviews for the National Theatre production, explained her push to make Jim a girl and include blood-thirsty women pirates as a push to make the story for everyone. In her author's note Lavery writes,

The book contains only two very minor appearances by women... Jim Hawkin's mother in the inn scenes and a mention, much later of a wife for Long John Silver. We felt that as this was a family Christmas show we needed to find more fabulous women characters to balance the already exciting male parts because girls would be watching this as well as boys. The three of us [Polly Findlay (director) and Lizzie Clachan (designer)] and Nick Hynter were initially in two minds about turning Jim into a girl. (I had already searched the Internet and discovered quite a crop of bloodthirsty women pirates for authenticity) ... until during a two-week pirate-making/sailing/eighteenth century/ treasure/ parrot workshop... we met the captivating and talented Patsy Ferran... who played Jim with such humour and pathos and comic genius timing, that we decided to pursue a female lead.<sup>24</sup>

Even as Lavery is writing her initial version of her script she's adapting to the time and the circumstances. Hutcheon writes,

As in staged works, the performers are the ones who embody and give material existence to the adaptation. Although clearly having to follow the screenplay, some actors admit that they seek background and inspiration from the adapted text, especially if the characters they are to play are well-known literary ones. ...Certainly in interview, novelists often comment on their surprise when actors – through gesture, tone of voice, or facial expression. – interpret through incarnating characters in ways the initial creator never envisaged actors can bring “their individual sense and senses

---

<sup>24</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016.

to the characters and give them those glances and gestures that come from their own imaginations.”<sup>25</sup>

As previously discussed in chapter one, Lavery is interested in promoting women’s voices and creating lead roles for women. This was a perfect opportunity to build this female version of Jim through a different medium and working to stay true to Stevenson’s original text of adventure.

Hutcheon theorizes that the focus on process allows scholars and audiences alike to broaden their worldview of adaptation. Our recognition of adaptation becomes an exciting treasure hunt in and of itself. As we view new works, we find connections to previous works. This familiarity of Stevenson’s novel draws audiences in and we throughout the play audiences then explore Lavery’s differences. Adaptation then becomes an immersive process no matter what media is being explored. Theatre can’t ignore the immersive nature of its work, live theatre exists by working with surprise and revelation in the space right in front of the viewer. Hutcheon writes,

An emphasis on process allows us to expand the traditional focus of “immersive,” though to different and in different ways: for example, the telling mode (a novel) immerses us through imagination in a fictional world; the showing mode (plays and films) immerses us through the perception of the aural and the visual ... neither the act of looking at and interpreting black marks – words or notes – on a white page nor that of perceiving and interpreting a direct representation of a story on the stage or screen is in any way passive; both are imaginatively, cognitively, and emotionally active. But the move to participatory modes in which we also engage physically with the story and its world – whether it be in a violent action game or a role-playing or puzzle/skill testing one – is not more active but certainly active in a different way.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O’Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Pages 81-82.

<sup>26</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O’Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Pages 22-23.

This participatory mode of theatre requires an extended engagement in the adapted material, and this will be better highlighted in the design and rehearsal chapters as this director's approach plays with idea of puzzle/skill testing in the creation of the set and the scenic transitions with the actors. With Lavery's adaptation maintaining Jim as narrator and character, the play works in what Hutcheon calls the "telling mode." Hutcheon writes, "in the telling mode – in narrative literature, for example – our engagement begins in the realm of imagination, which is simultaneously controlled by the selected, directing words of the text and liberated – that is, unconstrained by the limits of the visual and aural."<sup>27</sup> However, Hutcheon continues but with a stage adaptation Jim as narrator is not only engaging the audience's imagination but also then moving to showing mode that drives the story forward. Suddenly, there is a mix of "both detail and broad focus." Jim as narrator talks about a story she has lived through and vividly participates in the story on stage.

In the case of *Treasure Island* the circumstances of the original source material and the staged adaptation itself proves to be a very clear example of the theory of adaptation. Both Lavery and Stevenson happily admit to building their work from others. In a clear separation of plagiarism, adaptation allows these authors to piece together a variety of influences to create a familiar plot and ultimately share an adventure story. Hutcheon writes,

By their existence, adaptations remind us there is no such thing as an autonomous text or an original genius that can transcend history, either public or private... despite being temporally second, it is both an interpretive and a creative act; it is storytelling as both rereading and

---

<sup>27</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 23.

rerelating. Any answer to the question, “Why adapt?,” needs to take into account the range of responses provided by adapters themselves.<sup>28</sup>

Lavery’s answer, despite that she was commissioned by the National Theatre to adapt *Treasure Island* specifically, would be to pursue co-authorship with an original genius and relate the text to an audience today. In Lavery’s resume we note her draw to adapting other works and finding a connection in collaboration to these original source materials. In the author’s note for *Treasure Island*, Lavery writes that her need to adapt to this show stemmed from a creative desire to highlight authentic portrayals of women and pull from the book the exciting world Stevenson created to present a show of play and adventure.<sup>29</sup> Stevenson acts as an adaptor as well, less with a collaborative mindset and more like a master borrower.

Robert Louis Stevenson was writing before and just after the copyright law. Today, we could apply Hutcheon’s theory of adaptation to his work. But in Stevenson’s time, he considered his work to be original to him even though he copiously took notes on the people he interacted with during his own voyages. Robert Louis Stevenson was not far from an adaptor himself. As much as his work has been used as original source material, he also borrowed elements of his novel from his contemporaries as well as his own adventures. In Monica Cohen’s *Pirating Fiction*, she compares our author of pirate fiction to pirating some of his fiction,

As an author of pirate fiction in the years immediately following the 1878 report, Robert Louis Stevenson seems to have taken [Sir Louis] Mallet’s idea of “gifts which were intended for all” to heart. “I believe plagiarism was rarely carried so far,” he triumphantly confessed in 1894 about his

---

<sup>28</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O’Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 111.

<sup>29</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016.



first successful novel, *Treasure Island*: the parrot he stole from Daniel Defoe; the skeleton he swiped from Edgar Allan Poe; the stockade he palmed from Frederick Marryat. As for “Billy Bones, his chest, the company in the parlour, the whole inner spirit and a good deal of the material detail of my first chapters,” these, Stevenson attests, “were the property of Washington Irving.” Elsewhere he declaimed that the Dead Man’s Chest he lifted from Charles Kingsley; and *A General History of Pyrates* provided the workaday details of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pirate culture, specifically the rules, the swearing on a Bible, and the ubiquitous references to pieces of eight.<sup>30</sup>

Stevenson’s novel on pirate treasure then also acts a chest of stolen treasure as well. This original source material then also meets Hutcheon’s theory of adaptation as a continuing process and product.

### *Script Analysis through Adaptation*

Working with Hutcheon’s theory one can utilize her who, what, when, where, why approach when analyzing an adapted work. This highlights key moments of script analysis and an insightful background into the work as it is now and the original source material that it came from.

### *Who and Why: The Characters*

An adaptor’s voice in works of novels and staged scripts comes through the characters sharing the story. The immersive nature of the adaptation is not just with the text of the play but also the interpretations done by the actors themselves. The actors act as additional collaborators in considering the question, why adapt? The answer connects to the intentions of the actors and production team. W.K. Wimsatt writes on the intention behind academic literacy,

---

<sup>30</sup> Cohen, Monica F. *Pirating Fictions: Ownership and Creativity in Nineteenth-Century Popular Culture*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018. Page 183.

An art work is something which emerges from the private, individual, dynamic, and intentionalist realm of its maker's mind and personality; it is in a sense... made of intentions or internationalistic material. But at the same time, in the moment it emerges, it enters a public and in a certain sense an objective realm; it claims and gets attention from an audience; it invites and receives discussion, about its meaning and value, in an idiom of inter-subjectivity and conceptualization.<sup>31</sup>

Characters obviously can be transported from one text to another. They then become the crucial "rhetorical and aesthetic effects of both narrative and performance texts because they engage receiver's imaginations."<sup>32</sup> Since novels and theatre's main subject is the human, the characters then become one of the most recognizable devices of connection from source to source. In the case of *Treasure Island*, our recognizable characters are clearly young Jim Hawkins and the pirate captain of nightmares; Long John Silver.

### *Jim Hawkins*

Jim Hawkins Jr., is 13 year-old and described simply as "a teenage girl dressed like a boy." Jim has been living and working in her grandma's pub for as long as she can remember. Naturally resourceful, intelligent and adventurous, she yearns for a more exciting life. *Treasure Island* is that more exciting life, it's Jim's coming-of-age story and how her life will be defined.

Jim is the protagonist of the play. The action centers on dramatic axis of transition from innocent childhood the introduction to the dangerous world out there. As her parents

---

<sup>31</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 109.

<sup>32</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 11.

have died and she's raised by her grandmother we follow a story full of unreliable parent substitutes. Suddenly the good-hearted community that has kept Jim safe is not nearly as exciting as the expansive world out there and the possibility of treasure. This is a story of learning who to trust. Bryony Lavery writes in her author's note,

The story is terrifying because it imaginatively delivers that moment in life when, if we were lucky enough to have safe childhood homes, suddenly, on the outer perimeter of our collective consciousness, dangerous human beings start to enter our lives...and, like *The Black Spot*, we know it is a warning from the dark, dangerous world out there...

<sup>33</sup>

When we first see Jim Hawkins, she is childhood innocence, a young girl, curious, a dreamer and naïve as she works and lives in a protected and safe community. She is bored and contains hints of rebellion. By the end of the play, Jim is strong and determined. She is highly aware of the care and strength of family. She seeks comfort and stability with the realization that though the world can be dangerous, adventures are a part of growing up and becoming oneself. Jim comes home a young lady, a leader, and an independent woman of society that cherishes relationships she has made.

Jim seeks adventure, friendship, and independence. As a strong-willed young girl, she leaves her only remaining family, Grandma to go with Doctor Livesey and Squire Trelawney in search of Treasure Island. In the world of the play, her moral character remains good even when briefly mesmerized by the lure of pirates and treasure. She wants to be heard as an independent grown woman but is consistently seen as a manipulated child. Through the course of the play as she fights for independence she

---

<sup>33</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016.

remains loyal to the members of her small community including Doctor Livesey, Squire Trelawney, Red Ruth, Captain Smollet, Silent Sue and Grey.

As Lavery has written Jim as a young girl, we see her in Lavery's words "on the promisingly-dramatic axis of that terrible confusion of hormones over the safety but dullness of home and the excitement and danger of the unknown."<sup>34</sup> At first, she fears Long John Silver, the one-legged pirate and then later befriends him. Their relationship turns sour as she realizes he intends to steal the treasure for himself and hurt her family. She distrusts the pirates on the crew and defends the crew members. She befriends Ben Gunn as they learn their paths are very similar and that they both have a need of a family.

### *Long John Silver*

Long John Silver is our harrowing one-legged pirate leader of the play. Lavery describes him as a one-legged cook, charmer, and villain. Long John Silver is the primary antagonist of the play. John Silver acts as a chameleon. We first see him as a loveable rogue and by the end of act one as a bloodthirsty pirate. Long John must manage to be both things, and command attention as the ship's cook and the pirate ringleader. He adds to the action of the play through his own selfish efforts to take back the treasure buried on Treasure Island for himself.

When we first see Long John Silver, he is smooth and charismatic. He is perceived as the carefree ship's cook. He comes off as kind and helpful to the Squire as

---

<sup>34</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016.

he helps hire the crew for the *Hispaniola*. He quickly befriends and cares for Jim creating a pseudo-parental figure for the young girl.

Jim: But he was no nightmare, hardly frightening at all.<sup>35</sup>

Jim: Long John... the one-legged man of my nightmares??? No! There are millions of one-legged men on the sea! Sailing's a dangerous life! Us sailors are ever in peril! Long John was my best friend. Not only on the *Hispaniola*... But in the Whole World...<sup>36</sup>

As we get closer to the island, Silver comes off as manipulative and ruthless. He commands his hidden and mutinied crew, and they will go so far as to kill anyone in their way in an effort to get the map to their true goal; the map. Silver demands the crew of *The Walrus* assemble and charges the mutiny forward by taking the ship after Jim's miswording in trying to get the pirates off on their own.<sup>37</sup>

Long John Silver values those who can read for the sake of the treasure map, those who will remain loyal through all odds, and those who will follow exact instructions. Long John Silver is both charmer and villain, patient and yet ready at any moment to take the upper hand at the first opportunity. He demands loyalty of his crew both new and old. There are no second chances with him, once you have crossed him he is fiery and deadly. He is the villain we love to hate. He draws us close, comes off as protective, spends quality time with those he wishes to manipulate for his own gain.

Long John Silver is the voted upon leader of *The Walrus* crew. He and Captain Flint held the original idea to kill of the first crew after burying the treasure. The idea was to also kill off Ben Gunn, but he escaped via Treasure Island's tunnel system and was left

---

<sup>35</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 44.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. Page 50.

<sup>37</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 63.

for dead. On the docks he quickly charms Squire Trelawney and at his whistle his crew arrives in the harbors' mist to be hired for this adventure. He holds the loyalty of Killigrew the Kind, Joan the Goat, Black Dog, Israel Hands, Dick the Dandy, George Badger, and his parrot compatriot, Captain Flint. As ship's cook, he manages his position under the charge of Captain Smollett who he later betrays and kills. Silver also quickly befriends and protects Jim, to his own gain. Their friendship and pseudo-father daughter relationship lacks a real connection, but Silver is someone of authority Jim admires.

### *Marooned Cabin Boy*

Ben Gunn is a secondary character in the play. Though we know a lot about our marooned cabin boy due to the backstory of the Treasure Island and Long John Silver's past we find Ben Gunn in the play at a moment of desolation. The abandoned cabin boy has gone wild on the island. Ben Gunn lives in fear of the pirates and needs to summon up all his courage to confront them. Ben, filled with an obsession to have a bit cheese one day, is our underground cavern dweller and becomes a true friend to Jim.

### *Goodie Crew*

The Goodie Crew in the show are honorable and generally good members of society that for the most part come from the town surrounding the Admiral Benbow Inn where Jim lives with Grandma. The community comprises of Grandma, Doctor Livesey, Squire Trelawney, Red Ruth, Job Anderson, Lucky Mickey, Mrs. Crossley and later Captain Smollet and Grey.

In Lavery's adaptation the leading role models and highest educated members of this crew are female: Doctor Livesey and Captain Smollet (cast as female in this

production). Doctor Livesey is a no-nonsense woman who is direct, brave, and easily seasick. She acts as protector of Jim and doctor for the community. She wears pants and proudly takes charge in her position more-commonly filled by a man in this time. Captain Smollet, cast as a female in this production, also leads with authority as the hired captain of the *Hispaniola*. She's an honorable sailor with all effort geared to upholding the laws of England and treating others with respect. She withholds passing judgment for fair trial of the pirates.

Squire Trelawney, the magistrate of the area, is headstrong, posh, and silly. He can't keep a secret and tends to talk too loud. He fronts the money for the voyage, acquires the ship, and assembles the crew much to Captain Smollett's chagrin. There seems to be a budding or light romance towards Red Ruth as he cares for her until her death. He does seem to enjoy ribbing Doctor Livesey and ultimately does want this trip to be successful. He creates an amazing ruse as the voice of Captain Flint to trick the pirates to their death at the end.

Grandma Hawkins, the feisty land lady of the Admiral Benbow Inn, Mrs. Crossley, a drinking church marm, Red Ruth, a loyal and consistently snacking crew member, Silent Sue, a voiceless companion to Red Ruth, Lucky Mickey, a treacherous and self-interested sailor, and Job Anderson a berated husband who dies with honor, round out the community. Grandma is an adaptation of Jim's mother in Stevenson's novel. Red Ruth is adapted from the gamekeeper, Tom Redruth. Job Anderson in Lavery's adaptation is most likely a combined adaptation of Mr. Dance and Mr. Arrow rather than the written Job Anderson in the novel.

In addition to Captain Smollett who is hired for the ship, Lavery also adds Grey, forgettable to the other characters, comedically memorable to our audience. Grey is a hapless and forgettable sailor, of somewhat mystic nature. Grey, surprisingly, saves the day by spotting land, getting the goodie crew out of manacles, and joining Jim's found family at the very end. Grey is adapted from Abraham Gray in Stevenson's novel.

### *Pirates and The Walrus Crew*

The pirates of *Treasure Island* are for the most part from the crew of *The Walrus*, the late Captain Flint's crew. Prior to the start of the show, it is discovered that Long John Silver has taken over as Captain after his murder of Captain Flint. In this exchange of power, the pirates McGraw, Allardyce, O'Docherty, Thimble the Sail Mender, Grimes the Giant, and the scrawny cabin boy were said to have been shot after burying the treasure.

At the start of the show Bill Bones enters the inn as a haunted villain running from the remaining *Walrus* crew as he has stolen the map and any hope of retrieving the treasure from them. Bill Bones is haunted by his past and must keep moving to stay alive. With his arrival at the inn he brings the first sense of adventure to Jim. Though frightening in appearance, the community of the Admiral Benbow Inn is not scared. As the other pirates arrive, he's handed the Black Spot and dies of fear when Blind Pew presses the token of judgement into his hand.

Blind Pew facilitates the action of the play. He brings the Blind Spot, a literary device of piratical judgement, to Bones. Pew though a terrifying villain, death-like judgment caller is killed by his own crewmate, Israel Hands, as he tries to maintain control in the destruction of the Admiral Benbow Inn.



Long John Silver's remaining Walrus crew for the journey to Treasure Island includes, Black Dog, Dick the Dandy, Killigrew the Kind, Israel Hands, Joan the Goat, George Badger, and the parrot Captain Flint. Black Dog, missing two fingers on his left hand, goes as Black Cat to board the *Hispaniola* in disguise. Scuttling and scary, black through to the very heart, he acts as non-redeemable muscle. Dick the Dandy is a pirate voguish. As a dandy, he's handsome, pouting, and loves himself. Killigrew the Kind, a gentle killer, is a large handed and gentle-natured murderer, who is most likely adapted from Stevenson's character, O'Brien. Israel Hands, noted as a clumsy Brazilian, is an enigmatic character who you might assume to be bad to the bone... but who has some surprises up their sleeve. The script for Hands is interchangeably in Spanish and English and in this production is played by a woman parading as a man. Joan the Goat, a head-butter, was saved by Silver after a head injury cut her to the bone. Silver quickly forged his own stewpot to her head and her loyalty to him as been firm ever since. She is most likely a female adaptation of Stevenson's characters, Tom and Alan. George Badger, always last in the crew, is a malcontent. A pirate, who likes to grumble and stir up trouble. He seems to notice things a bit quicker than others and goes against Silver to be voted as new Captain when Silver's choices lead to the escape of the Goodie Crew in Act 2. Badger is most likely an adaptation of George Merry.

A part of Long John Silver's team, yet not a working member of the crew, Captain Flint, a parrot, engages with both actors and audience alike. The pirate-bird causes trouble and has loyalty to Silver though most likely it was Flint's parrot first.

### *What: The Interaction of Adaptation*

With these characters guiding the share of the story, the adapters' next focus must be on what they are trying to portray. Lavery's direction was clear; she wanted to make this a story for everyone and highlight the aspects of building a community through this coming-of-age story. Hutcheon writes,

Neither performance medium [stage or screen], however, has an easy time transcoding print texts. Telling is not the same as showing. Both stage and screen adaptations must use... indexical and iconic signs- that is, precise people, places, and things – whereas literature uses symbolic and conventional signs.<sup>38</sup>

Lavery then worked to keep the map of Stevenson's creation, the pirates, the sense of adventure, and Stevenson's creative literary devices, i.e. treasure hunting and black spot.

### *The Map to Treasure Island*

In addition to the familiarity and the sense of escape through the adventure, the map itself was this playable piece published at the beginning of the novel. The map from Stevenson and Lloyd's day at home became an interactive component to the novel. Sally Bushell in her article, *Mapping Victorian Adventure Fiction: Silences, Doublings, and the Ur-Map in Treasure Island and King Solomon's Mines* she writes that the map is more than a drawing to illustrate the story. The map has three values additional values,

Its primary identity is actually that of a chart, with the navigational value of providing depth readings, latitude and longitude coordinates for the island (withheld from the reader), and information on harbors and safe places to land. Secondly, it is geocentric, a topographical map of what is on the island, with a scale supposedly measuring the extent of the island by the familiar English mile. Thirdly, it is egocentric, a map

---

<sup>38</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 43.

reappropriated by a particular individual to locate something personal on the island and requiring place-specific bearings and marks in a different color of ink. In this respect, it is Captain Flint's map, with a status nearly equivalent to that of a will and a value that exceeds its informational content. In short, this map can be used in three ways: to get you to the island, to help you situate yourself once there, and to locate a specific and highly significant point upon it.<sup>39</sup>

Bushell continues that like the three distinct uses of the map this mirrors the three sections of the show. The first part of the show works towards the discovery of the existence of the map. Like coordinates, Stevenson sets up the key events and characters that lead us to the adventure. The second part of the show lays the groundwork for the power of the map and its value, similar to highlighting the value and power of those journeying with Jim on the *Hispaniola*. Lastly, the final section of the show is on the island itself. The map then becomes the only key to finding the treasure through its layered directions and clues. The story then also highlights the truth of character amongst the pirates and goodie crew. See Appendix C for an image of the map.

### *The Black Spot*

The Black Spot is a literary device of Robert Louis Stevenson's creation. The Spot is tangible token of guilt and judgement passed from a pirate messenger to a subordinate pirate. Passed to Bill Bones early in Act One, the Black Spot acts as a promise to the victim that their space as leader will be disposed of soon by their choice of exit or death.<sup>40</sup> In Lavery's adaptation she keeps that Bill Bones is delivered this sentence

---

<sup>39</sup> Bushell, Sally. "Mapping Victorian Adventure Fiction: Silences, Doublings, and the Ur-Map in *Treasure Island* and *King Solomon's Mines*." *Victorian Studies* 57, no. 4 (2015): 611–37. <https://doi.org/10.2979/victorianstudies.57.4.02>.

<sup>40</sup> LitCharts. "Treasure Island Study Guide." LitCharts. Page 6. <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island>.

in act one but she removes the second showcase of the Black Spot to Silver that's found in Stevenson's novel.

Jim learns about the rumors of the Black Spot from the arrival of Billy Bones in both novel<sup>41</sup> and playscript<sup>42</sup>. In the Treasure Island Lit Chart, they write the use of the Spot is for,

When pirates want to depose their leader, they burn a piece of paper until it's charred with a black spot and then hand it to their captain, usually giving them a period of time until their authority is no longer good. ... While the black spot is thus a real, material object, it also serves to represent the entire logic and system by which the pirates organize their lives. In many ways the pirates are outside society, escaping (as much as they can) the laws and restrictions governing civilized life, but the black spot is their way or ensuring some kind of order and standards in their own, independent realm. At the same time, however, the black spot can also portend disorder and destruction—not only danger for the leader, who is about to lose all authority, but also for all the other pirates, since it signals discontent and resentment and may lead to violence for all.<sup>43</sup>

Like the map, the Black Spot is a part of interactive storytelling of the novel and included in Lavery's adaptation.<sup>44</sup>

Though Stevenson is known for incorporating other people's work and life stories into his work, the Black Spot was his own invention. There is no known record of pirates using a card of judgement amongst their crews. That Lavery keeps this invention feels

---

<sup>41</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island*. Edited by John D. Seelye. London: Penguin Books, 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 14.

<sup>43</sup> LitCharts. "Treasure Island Study Guide." LitCharts. Page 6.  
<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island>.

<sup>44</sup> To Read More: Cohen, Monica F. "IMITATION FICTION: PIRATE CITINGS IN ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S 'TREASURE ISLAND.'" *Victorian Literature and Culture* 41, no. 1 (2013): 153–73. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24575677>.

like a nod of honor given to one author by another. Through the lens of adaptation, the development of the Black Spot's legacy extends outside of literature. During the Vietnam War, the ace of spades, the playing card became a card of black death in the North Vietnamese army. In fact, this would go so far that the 1<sup>st</sup> Calvary Division would leave the ace of spades on their enemies dead as a calling card.<sup>45</sup>

Before this in the 1930's, gangsters were found assassinated with aces left in their hands. Friedman states,

We do know that during the reign of "Murder Incorporated" in the 1930s, at least two gangsters were assassinated and left with aces in their hands. One of the unidentified criminals with an ace of spades is depicted on the cover of the Burton B. Turkus book *Murder Inc.: the Story of the Syndicate*. Turkus also mentions Salvatore Maranzano, an early Cosa Nostra crime boss who was assassinated by a younger faction led by Lucky Luciano. When Maranzano was killed, he had an Ace of Diamonds in his hand.<sup>46</sup>

All of this is drawn back to legend that 18<sup>th</sup>-century pirates used the Black Spot as a symbol of intimidation. The ace of spades, which can also draw connections to a shovel used to dig graves, was drawing reference to Stevenson's created literary device.

### *The Duty of Pirates*

The romanticized nature of pirates and pirating is an obvious draw to the story. Pirates are known for their brutality and yet their description often comes with a Robinhood-esque nature. Pirates are both loyal to their captain and yet mutiny and murder are common tropes associated with the distinguished group. Pirates were

---

<sup>45</sup> Friedman, Herbert A. "The Death Card." Death Cards - Psychological Operations. Canadian Military Journal, 2014.  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20140715120241/http://www.psywarrior.com/DeathCardsAce.html>.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

historically diverse and capitalized on the rebellion or lack of acceptance to general society. Pirates from my own memory seem to be made of naval deserters or those not accepted by their own peers.

David Sergeant in his article, “‘The Worst Dreams That I Ever Have’: Capitalism and the Romance in R. L. Stevenson’s *Treasure Island*” writes on the nature of the pirates encapsulated in the novel,

The pirates are distinguished by their brutality; on another, by their dilettante carelessness. They flout the practicalities of economy and geography, camping in a spot where they will inevitably grow sick, while Jim notes their profligacy and “entire unfitness for anything like a prolonged campaign” (163; Ch. 31). The pirates have obviously not been exposed to the emphasis on practical ability, discipline, and self-improvement which informed the reshaping of Victorian institutions from the army and medical profession to the civil service and household. ... The periodization which is normally both inbuilt into the romance and invisible – the past, the setting for adventure, as better than and separate from a present against which it is implicitly opposed – thus gains a reflexive power in *Treasure Island*, as representatives from past and present are made to stand against each other.<sup>47</sup>

The pirates don’t cleanly work together, they are ultimately in this treasure hunt for their own gain. However, the fear that Long John Silver brings to the entirety of the story is felt by this *Walrus* crew. In turn, they do attempt to mutiny when it looks like the treasure might not be found, however, time and again Silver pulls rank, calls for loyalty, and he gets it.

There is a real sense of a pirate code or duty to one’s captain. There is also the literary device of the Black Spot created by Stevenson to warn of a judgment day to

---

<sup>47</sup> Sergeant, David. 2016. “‘THE WORST DREAMS THAT EVER I HAVE’: CAPITALISM AND THE ROMANCE IN R. L. STEVENSON’S TREASURE ISLAND.” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 44 (4). Cambridge University Press: 907–23. doi:10.1017/S1060150316000279. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/victorian-literature-and-culture/article/abs/worst-dreams-that-ever-i-have-capitalism-and-the-romance-in-r-l-stevensons-treasure-island/3B1B825839821B5640D8A8D85467D6B0>

rebellious pirates. However, this rule doesn't even seem to affect Silver in Stevenson's novel, whereas Billy Bones dies of apoplexy after receiving the Spot in the Admiral Benbow Inn.

Alex Thomson in his article, "'Dooty is Dooty': Pirates and Sea-Lawyers in *Treasure Island*" writes, "The formal equality of the pirate council, and the guaranteed autonomy of the pirate, over whom the captain's command was absolute only in the heat of battle, are a reminder of an earlier age when most seamen were equal partners in the profits of an expedition."<sup>48</sup> Stevenson established that all of the *Walrus* crew have something to gain by completing this trek and historically we can assume these pirates have all joined piracy because they don't belong anywhere else. Thomson continues by writing,

The contrast with Long John Silver is particularly striking. Where Billy Bones was struck down by apoplexy on receipt of the Black Spot back in the Admiral Benbow Inn – as if a single piece of paper embodied the full force of the law – Silver seems to be not so much exempt from the strictures of the pirates' code as immune to them. Like much of Stevenson's work, *Treasure Island* is intensely aware of its own literary appropriation of oral narration, and literacy becomes the figure of boundary between the pirates' submission to the law and Silver's overcoming of it.<sup>49</sup>

#### *Where: Locations within Treasure Island*

The Admiral Benbow Inn, the *Hispaniola*, and *Treasure Island* are all products of adaptation or borrowing on Robert Louis Stevenson's part. In the introduction of the novel, John Seelye writes on the establishment of both. For the *Hispaniola* he writes,

---

<sup>48</sup> Moore, Grace. *Pirates and Mutineers of the Nineteenth Century: Swashbucklers and Swindlers*. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2011. Page 213.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. Page 213.

“There is it should perhaps be said, a real Hispaniola, the name Columbus gave the island now containing the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and in whose waters a sunken Spanish galleon was discovered by a legendary Puritan governor-adventurer, William Phips, who recovered a fortune from the wreck and left some treasure behind for others to claim.”<sup>50</sup>

We know from the creation of the map that Stevenson and his stepson Lloyd created the map of Treasure Island. However, as adaptors create images of the island, the location and its environmental life can be looked at for clear representation. Seelye writes,

But where, exactly, is Treasure Island? I often direct this question to my students, who look at me as though I am asking them the location of the Brooklyn Bridge, the answer seems so obvious: It must be, once again, somewhere in the Caribbean. But then I call their attention to certain matters of flora and fauna, which inform the careful reader that Treasure Island cannot possibly be located in the Caribbean; instead, like the island made famous by the original Robinson Crusoe, Alexander Selkirk (that half-crazy maroon who is most likely the model for Ben Gunn), it lies on the Pacific side of the American continent. <sup>51</sup>

This exciting description of the island<sup>52</sup> that Stevenson shares with us in his novel established images to jump from in the creation of set design when considering the stage adaptation of Lavery’s work.

For Lavery, adapting the *Treasure Island* did not require recontextualizing the location. This was one structure that is perfectly mirrored in both novel and scripts. Hutcheon writes that there is a vastness to how adaptation works in terms of context. She

---

<sup>50</sup> Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island*. Edited by John D. Seelye. London: Penguin Books, 2009. Page xx.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. Page xx.

<sup>52</sup> To Read More: Watson, Harold Francis. *Coasts of Treasure Island: A Study of the Backgrounds and Sources for Robert Louis Stevenson's Romance of the Sea*. San Antonio: Naylor Co., 1969.



writes, “an adaptation, like the work it adapts, is always framed in context – a time and a place, a society and a culture; it does not exist in a vacuum.”<sup>53</sup> In Hutcheon’s chapter on the importance of where and why, she talks about the subject indigenization. Lavery kept the locations found in the novel because her focus for adaptation wanted to use the landscape Stevenson devised. Hutcheon writes,

The adaptor works in one context, but the meaning he or she establishes within that frame of reference can change over time... [for example] politics returned, but a different politics this time. The feminist writer introduced the themes that the earlier works by men had silenced: sexual and physical abuse and abortion. This is adaptation: repetition without replication.<sup>54</sup>

Hutcheon’s example was referring to the Greta Garbo’s film *Camille* (1936) with the staged adaptation of the same name in 1985. This directly relates to Lavery’s approach to the adaptation of Stevenson’s work. As a female and queer author, she adapted Stevenson’s novel to play with context of place and time.

In addition to an inclusive lead of Jim Hawkins as boy or girl, her addition of female pirates filled out their authentic history. Addressing that *Treasure Island* was a drawing created by Stevenson and stepson, the question of actual pirates lies within the time period of the play. While some pirates were certainly white men, many were people of color, women, or both. The most successful pirate in history was Zheng Yi Sao, the Chinese Pirate Queen.<sup>55</sup> Lavery is taking her liberty as adaptor to note that the time and

---

<sup>53</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O’Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 142.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Page 148-149.

<sup>55</sup> To Read More: Arun, Vishnu. “Ching Shih: A Prostitute Who Became History’s Deadliest Pirate.” *History of Yesterday*. History of Yesterday, September 25, 2020. <https://historyofyesterday.com/ching-shih-a-prostitute-who-became-historys-deadliest-pirate-f596f7fcff23?gi=a8feab0a6da1>.

place of *Treasure Island* should have also included women then and now. This is all relevant when an audience today is going to have access to both Stevenson's novel, Lavery's work, and the history surrounding the time period we're presenting in production.

### *Hodge Analysis*

Francis Hodge created this style of analysis with directors in mind looking to the director as the leading collaborative artist. As the director coordinates a production with both performers and designers it is imperative that a director can look at the full scope of a play in structure, text, performance, and the design process. This text-based analysis focuses on three major categories: the play's given circumstances in relation to the world of the play, the characters and their development, and the dramatic structure through which the text is presented. These three together create a clear organization for the direction of a play.

### *Given Circumstances: Time*

*Treasure Island* takes place in 18<sup>th</sup> century England. Through the play's episodic nature, time will jump ahead through Jim's narration. Time intensifies the action by the arrival of the pirates one after the other to the inn. As act two progresses, Lavery's script seems to shrink time by only writing scenes containing the key moments of the budding friendship between Jim and Long John Silver. Finally, in transition from act one to act two, the mutiny is ended quickly and we start the next act already on the island with the goodie crew chained up and Jim still missing.

### *Given Circumstances: Place*

*Treasure Island* takes place in three key locations. The first location is the Admiral Benbow Inn located above Black Cove, England. It a two storied inn that houses a bar downstairs with at least a guest room for Bill Bones above seen by the audience. As director, I hope to evoke the sense of hard work, drudgery, and repetition in Jim's life. She was brought here after the death of her parents to live with her grandmother. There is the sense of safety through the protection of the adults in her life, and a sense of familiarity in the same community customers coming to the inn to indulge.

The second location is the *Hispaniola*, the grand ship that changes ownership due to pirate mutiny. The ship, procured by Squire and skippered by Captain Smollet, is said to weigh two hundred tons and is held in the Bristol Harbour ready for sea. In our production, I hope to evoke the full life that a ship takes on as it sets sail on a voyage. The ship is our passageway to adventure and our first new location that Jim has ever seen. With the ship comes new faces, the *Walrus* Crew join rank with Long John Silver, as ship's cook. These armed motley individuals bring about the spice of life, they act as playable constructs and with their own quirks are easily definable as a tougher crowd than Jim is used to.

The third location is the infamous Treasure Island. Described as "the island of Billy Bones' horrors...shaped and smelling like a dead man's corpse...Hot, bright and steamy... The land has a strange, unnerving language...Insects buzz and bite...There are odd bumps and shapes."<sup>56</sup> Jim, her friends, and the pirates, explore separate parts of the

---

<sup>56</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 65.

island. The original camp of the pirates is on one side and during a moment of escape the “goodies camp” is created on another beach. When Jim arrives in Act 2 she finds herself in a Black Lagoon where she meets Ben Gunn. The ground is wet and soft and “glooping.” From the glooping ground, Ben Gunn appears having been living in underground caverns beneath the island. Ben Gunn can appear almost anywhere on the island do to these muddy tunnels. As Jim reappears to her friends and the Silver she leads them to the treasure following the maps instructions that describe the island in further detail. Where the treasure is hidden the architecture of this side of the island is resembles the ribs of a skeleton curving above the pirates. “The landscape...looked from on high...it would look... like a great face covered inn stubble and spots.”<sup>57</sup> The stars above at night appear as a constellation of Flint’s Fist. The maze of tunnels under ground has enough for all the pirates to separate and run through and for Jim and his friends to hide and plan their trick.

The island is the location of the most growth for Jim. On its bumpy transitional landscape Jim will become a pirate and a pirate hunter. She will sail a ship to save her friends, attempt to arrest pirates in the honor of her grandma, and befriends a marooned cabin boy. Ben Gunn then ultimately leads her through the tunnel of caves that kills the pirates so that the Goodie Crew can escape with the treasure and head back home.

#### *Given Circumstances: Society*

The play centers on the adventure of Jim to Treasure Island. Jim as a young girl sees the world in two camps, her adult friends from the inn and the pirates she fears. As one of

---

<sup>57</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 98.

only two young people in the show, the adults are poor replacements for parental figures. Jim's friends from the inn are a part of the group, the Goodie Crew. Squire, Doctor, Captain, Grey, Grandma, Job Anderson, Mrs. Crossley, Red Ruth and Silent Sue. (Also, Lucky Micky who defects and joins the pirates.) This group is composed of community members from the Admiral Benbow Inn and the hired friends of Squire as they prepare for the journey. This group starts this journey to find treasure to support the whole of the community. They plan to use the money for necessities, food, clothes, and repairs to their community.

The pirates are majority made up of the *Walrus* Crew that Long John Silver has hired for the voyage. Long John Silver, Bill Bones, Black Dog, Blind Pew, Killigrew the Kind, Israel Hands, George Badger, Dick the Dandy, and Joan the Goat are the remaining members of Captain Flint's crew. The pirates are illiterate and are not only in search of the treasure but the map that he lost when Bill Bones ran away. When Long John Silver meets Jim, he realizes her value in being able to read the map and convinces and later threatens her into joining them. They are seeking the treasure as a driving need and want. One does not join pirate-hood lightly and a part of the tablework of the actors was to decide for themselves why they could not go home and instead pursued a life of piracy and loyalty to Long John Silver.

#### *Given Circumstances: Economics*

At the beginning of the play, Jim and her grandmother have next to nothing. They are struggling to make ends meet and Jim at 13 is already working hard and fulltime for the inn and her grandmother after the death of her parents. With the discovery of the map

and the knowledge that it would lead to treasure, the opportunity is too impressive to ignore.

*Given Circumstances: Politics and Law*

There are not real political references in the world of the play. There is obviously some form of hierarchy with the titles of Squire, Doctor, and Captain being well-esteemed or at least appear to be so within the community. This establishes the two to have the stronger voices in terms of decision making when it comes to starting the journey. When they move to the ship, Captain Smollett is hired and pulls rank to captain the ship and command the crew. Within the Goodie Crew, the hierarchy is very traditional in terms of status and role.

However, the hierarchy of pirates is quite different. Prior to the start of the show, we learn that Captain Flint and the Walrus crew have gone to Treasure Island to bury treasure. On this venture, Long John Silver was confidant to Captain Flint and turned the table on Flint by killing him in his sleep. Long John Silver's resume as consistent ship's cook would not put him as next in line after the fall of Flint. Bill Bones, our runaway pirate, should have been next or Black Dog as first mate and the muscle for the pirates or even George Badger. However, building on the idea of pirate law, Long John Silver manipulated himself to this top position and he will work through an inferiority complex to maintain the role. In Act 2, when they have lost Jim, the map, and hope at finding the treasure the remaining Walrus crew does look to George Badger to bid for leadership.

### *Dramatic Action and Language*

The play has singular action with a single-story line revolving around Jim's adventure to Treasure Island and the impact this adventure has on creating her own world view. Through this story she discovers her stance on moral good and bad. The play can be divided into approximately one-hundred traditional French Scenes. This is determined due to entrances and exits of characters and large scenic shifts in the scenes of the play. Each French Scene is further divided into several units, each of which focuses on a subject and has an aggressor and a defender. For examples of French Scenes and examples of Units, see Appendices A and B respectfully.

### *Dialogue*

The play is written in prose. However, in a style I recognize from Lavery's other work the language can be short and choppy relying on informing the audience directly of facts related to the story rather than conversation between the characters. The sentences are a combination of short, long, and medium length as in real life. Also, the sentences are short and choppy to relay facts and key plot points as a young girl is the narrator of our storytelling. The style of writing is almost poetic and has a rhythmic quality that we find in other Bryony Lavery work and mirrors the use of sea shanties and large movement and crew building mechanics of the show.

An example of a short line, BILL BONES: "Grog!!!"<sup>58</sup>

An example of a long sentence,  
BEN GUNN: The five is shot through their HEADS EVERYONE!!!  
Annnd Captain Flint says...now boy...  
Come very nearer here. So I won't miss.

---

<sup>58</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 13.

But my feets won't go foreward.  
 They insist on going backward and... I fall down a hole and I'm in tunnels.  
 I feel SAFE inn tunnels scrawniness is a GIFT in tunnels I think Ben Gunn run  
 run run.  
 I'll tell my Best Friend Silver He'll save me from Flint...  
 I tunnels up see him sitting... I opens my mouth to say, "friend Silver, help."  
 And I hears him say... Ip Ip Ip.  
 "Ho Flint... Ho Flint... did ye abracadabra away those six???"  
 "No" says Flint, "I'm one short that scrawn he disappeared into thin air." And my  
 friend my friend says...  
 "We got to subtract that one... he's smart as paint!!!"<sup>59</sup>

Images of the play include the inn, the bar, the ship, the unrolled sails, the galley  
 kitchen, apple barrels, the stars at night over the ocean, a map room, a treasure chest, a  
 treasure map, a parrot, a ship yard, the Hispaniola, Treasure Island, a matriarchal  
 household, working class families, women wearing breeches, a one-legged man, a pirate  
 crew, a sword fight, a duel, jungle of an abandoned or undiscovered island, a sandy  
 beach, gaseous underground caverns and tunnels, a swampy sticky lagoon, separation of  
 loved ones, first love, treasure, a mutiny.

The dialect of the characters for the production are really split between Standard  
 British and Hampshire or if specified Cockney or Spanish. The words and storytelling  
 within the play are indicative of the fact that these characters are lower or working class  
 in 18<sup>th</sup> century England. There is the Squire and Doctor who appear to be highly educated  
 and therefore of higher status and may have a more formalized language. This is  
 contrasted with the Pirate's dialect that is adapted from Stevenson's novel. In Monica  
 Cohen's book, *Pirating Fiction*, she writes,

Stevenson makes playful use of Silver's eye dialect. And here the  
 assignment of value reverses itself as imitation becomes indistinguishable  
 from playacting. Like Stevenson's other techniques for designating pirate

---

<sup>59</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French,  
 2016. Page 74.



speech in all of its sea-salt flavor, eye dialect calls attention to itself as a theatrical act... Besides the slurs and contractions and missing phonemes that convey the oral and preliterate dimensions of the pirates' speech ... Stevenson marks the pirates' language with compulsive nautical tropes: in enjoining the hands to plan carefully and patiently, Silver cautions, "If you would on'y lay your course, and a p'int to windward."<sup>60</sup>

In Lavery's writing, for reasons unknown, she kept a more formal speech for Silver. However, we know from context clues in the script that he is illiterate, stopping him from reading the map. Instead, Lavery seems to rely on the nautical language of Stevenson but provide a more pronounced and elongated languages for her characters,

Silver: What happened here???  
Little sleepy were we lads??? Forty winks was it???  
Notice anything different tosspotters???<sup>61</sup>

Or,

Silver: Doctor handed me the map on a plate  
Sea has handed me you on a plate!  
The very stars are saying you are with us...<sup>62</sup>

The sounds of the play are that of an old English inn, a harbor, a working ship, and a perceived uninhabited island. Sounds include; crows and rooks caw, fire blazes, crowd drinking and clinking of glasses, slapping down a tankard, breaking glass, blood gushing, noises from injured, swords flying and clanging, gun shots, island sounds, seagulls shrieking, ocean waves, storm sounds with lightning and thunder, a brawl, the inn clock, tapping of the arrival of pirates, something sharp striking a wooden door, a

---

<sup>60</sup> Cohen, Monica F. *Pirating Fictions: Ownership and Creativity in Nineteenth-Century Popular Culture*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018. Pages 198-199.

<sup>61</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 78

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. Page 96

whistle code, whistles for the ship, horse hooves, a knife struck into a wooden leg, unfriendly winds, dunking and drowning a man, moaning and suffering of crew and pirates, parrot swoops, a map unfurling, sails unfurling, a parrot flying and talking, shots fired, a flag being unveiled, steam, bubbles bursting from the island floor, strange unnerving language, insects buzzing and biting, odd bumps and shapes, the island whispering and murmuring, dripping water, the island belches, stepping in something soft, island gloop noises, swamp-like noises and pop, a man falling on his face, a whirring sound of bullet fired and knife thrown, sword fights, cutting of rope, wheel spins, wind quickens, sails whip, a clang, trapdoor opening, echoes of underground tunnel, a sound of bones, a rush of wind, treasure pouring out onto dirt

Music includes the following songs; “Bright Morning Star A-Rising”, “Blood Red Roses” played by violin and sung, “Haul Away Joe”, “Making Leave”, a music box playing, whistling, taverns persons and pirate crew singing “Fifteen Men On A Dead Man’s Chest”, and “Homeward Bound.” The written music lyrics in the script act as large scenic shifts for the piece. In chapter 3, I discuss the utilization of the sea shanties as working songs for this production’s scenic transitions.

#### *Idea: Title and Overall Meaning*

The title of the play, *Treasure Island*, follows the premise that Jim is a young girl on the precipice of terribly confusing hormones. She seeks the adventure of the excitement and danger of the unknown over the seemingly dull life at the inn. Lavery leaves with us that ‘treasure’ is defined as: 1. Wealth stored or accumulated, esp. in the

form of precious metals, gold and silver coins 2. A store of anything valuable 3. Anything valued and presented as precious 4. To hold or keep as precious.<sup>63</sup>

This adventure to find treasure and acquire it for the betterment of the community and nefarious individuals who seek it certainly drives the action of the play.

Squire: I'm taking them after treasure, sir!

Silver: Quiet, sir! The world crawls with large-eared villains! And... Treasure has a way of getting smaller the more it is exposed to the air... Hold your secrets close...

Squire: This is good counsel, sir. I will not tell a soul!

Silver: Keep your treasure's bearings to yourself.

Squire: Keep the island's bearings to myself. Good!

Silver: And... take provisions a-plenty.. For I've heard that treasure is devilish hard to find once you are in its vicinity.

Squire: Not if you have a map, sir.

Silver: Sir, tell no-one you have a map! Treasure makes even Englishmen mad, sir....<sup>64</sup>

As we reach the treasure's location, friendships are tested, betrayal taints the divided camp, and Jim has to make the decision choose piracy or pirate hunter. Lavery writes,

In this new, exciting world, the steady, honest good-hearted people who have looked after and kept Jim Hawkins safe until the moment the story begins suddenly seem dull as ditchwater and rather stupid and stuffy. Villains and cut-throat sailors seem dashing and glittering, dangerous transport (eighteenth century ship life!) and treasure almost within her grasp, the astonishing arrival of those first teenage hormones *insist* and *propel* Jim into the path of oncoming danger. *Treasure Island* is about learning the hard, perilous way who and what to trust.<sup>65</sup>

This is realized through the journey of Jim, her discovery of the world around her, and the realization of her own moral compass in choosing to become a pirate fighter instead of a pirate.

---

<sup>63</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page xi.

<sup>64</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 35.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. Page xvii.

### *Lens and Layers of Adaptation*

Lavery's production of *Treasure Island* is not the first adaptation by any means. Hutcheon writes, that "multiple versions exist laterally, not vertically."<sup>66</sup> More than that, there are reportedly more than fifty film adaptations of the novel, there are over sixty other stage adaptations of the work, and numerous connections to sequels, prequels, radio adaptations, music recordings, comic book, and art references.<sup>67</sup>

Hutcheon discusses that adaptation is really the process of reception and since its creation *Treasure Island* has been well-received and fodder for other works. Even in the pre-production of Baylor Theatre's production I can't tell you how many people have come up to me to tell me that they love *Treasure Island*. But, there are more commonly referring to a stage production or Disney's *Muppets Treasure Island* or confusing it with *Treasure Island* or the tales of Robinson Crusoe. Hutcheon writes,

Adaptation is ultimately viewed as a process of reception. Due to the layered intertextuality between new work and the original source, our memory or thought association with one work is connected with many others of the same name or idea. For audiences, such adaptations are obviously "multilaminated"; they are directly and openly connected to recognizable other works, and that connection is part of their formal identity, but also of what we might call their hermeneutic identity. This is what keeps under control the "background noise" of all the other intertextual parallels to the work the audience might make that are due to similar artistic and social conventions, rather than specific works. In all cases, the engagements with these other works in adaptations are extended ones, not passing allusions. Part of both the pleasure and the frustration of experiencing an adaptation is the familiarity bred through repetition and memory.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>66</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page xv.

<sup>67</sup> Dryden, Linda, ed. "Derivative Works: Robert Louis Stevenson." Robert Louis Stevenson Website, December 2008. <http://robert-louis-stevenson.org/derivative-works/>.

<sup>68</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 21.

Through the different lenses that adaptation is viewed, some of these connections are viable to consider when producing a heavily adapted work. I think as a director it's important to consider the connections that are being brought up before the new production is even being seen.

### *Muppets Treasure Island*

The *Muppets Treasure Island* (1996) draws heavily from Stevenson's book above anything else. With their own recognizable characters of Kermit, Miss Piggy, Gonzo, and others their characters take on the notable roles of Stevenson's book. The movie again highlights the running theme of building a community and finding a family. In this version, we meet young Jim Hawkins as an orphan at the start of the film. He longs to feel connected and feel at home rather than working for every little scrap that comes by. By the end of the movie, with Long John Silver held at sword point, Silver admits that Jim's family really came through for him referring to the motely muppet crew he has assembled. Kermit, as Captain Smollet, also tells Jim that his father would be very proud of the young man he has become and the decisions he's made on this adventure.<sup>69</sup>

Hutcheon would explain that this play with material from stage to puppets is the joy of adaptation itself. She writes, "Like classical imitation, adaptation appeals to the "intellectual and aesthetic pleasure" of understanding the interplay between works, of

---

<sup>69</sup> "Muppet Treasure Island." IMDb. IMDb.com, February 16, 1996.  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0117110/>.

opening up a text's possible meanings to intertextual echoing. The adaptation and the adapted work merge in the audience's understanding of their complex interrelations..."<sup>70</sup>

Other stand outs might be the Treasure Island casino<sup>71</sup> and its display of pirate ship battles in their man-made water feature outside their hotel. Other prominent mentions might be audiences layered assumptions of the story's connections to the later films of *Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003)<sup>72</sup> or *Treasure Planet* (2002)<sup>73</sup>. All these links are driven by the contemporary understanding of pirates. As pirates, in terms of sword wielding swash bucklers, are no longer a danger to us in the seas, our collected memory romanticizes them as a career for fantasy. The depiction of pirates in these and all the novels source material is based on fiction and is truly meant highlight the idea of adventure. In a lot of ways this further promotes Robert Louis Stevenson's amazing ability to blend reality with a romanticized fiction

### *Conclusion*

Lavery's *Treasure Island* as an adaptation of Stevenson's novel stands on its own immersive storytelling party. By keeping the plot and structure of Stevenson's work, through Lavery's writing style we have a story that pushes the narrative to explore adventure and the draw to surrounding yourself with a strong community. This can be

---

<sup>70</sup> Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013. Page 117.

<sup>71</sup> Medlin, Steve. "The Full Original Pirate Ship Battle Show Outside Treasure Island Hotel Las Vegas 1994." August 2019. YouTube. 10:04. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ai3t1Mw4MmQ>

<sup>72</sup> "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl." IMDb. IMDb.com, July 9, 2003. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0325980/>.

<sup>73</sup> "Treasure Planet." IMDb. IMDb.com, November 27, 2002. [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133240/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133240/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1).

seen in several lights, through Jim our protagonist, who through her coming of age story informs us of the good that can be done when you rely on strong moral and pursue a hunt for treasure that is really the creation of a strong community to rely on through the trials of life. Conversely, through the foil of Long John Silver, it can showcase the downfall of greed and that building a crew under duress can lead to mutiny, rebellion, and death.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Ships to Islands: A Collaborative Design Process

#### *Introduction*

This chapter will provide an overview of the design process for creating the world of *Treasure Island*. This starts with a directorial concept, inspirational images, collaboration with designers, and their process from ideas to final designs. Discussed here will be a highlight of the major decisions made in each of the technical design areas of scenic, properties, costume, sound, and lighting design. Special attention will be given to discussing the collaboration between director and designers, how the research and analysis of the play as found in the first two chapters as well as with this productions' dramaturg influenced the decisions, and examines some of the opportunities and challenges unique to this production.

It should be noted that outside circumstances due to the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and weather closures also affected Baylor University and consequently, our production of *Treasure Island*. As an ensemble, we were highly aware that exposure to COVID could mean cancelled rehearsals and that safety protocols, including masks, were implemented at rehearsals, design meetings, and technical activities. Following Baylor University's protocols, masks for actors were removed during tech and in performance.

*Treasure Island* was officially approved as my thesis production on February 25, 2021. We began with an initial design conversation on September 16, 2021. *Treasure Island* was decided to be the fourth show of the 2021-2022 production season and would



open for the Spring 2022 semester. With this show, the design faculty also implemented a new design process for production shows since there were majority student designers on this production with faculty mentors. This pre-production phase included meetings with my directing mentor, collaborating with a new design process, solidifying a directorial concept, preparing for auditions and casting, and informal meetings with some designers. Auditions and callbacks, which began on November 11, will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. This chapter is focused on the design process, which began mid-September and lasted until the beginning of January.

### *Directorial Concept*

My first experience with *Treasure Island* was during the summer of 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a special summer project, the National Theatre was releasing their archived filmed productions once a week to engage their audience though their theatre was closed. I had turned to this at home audience experience because I followed the playwright Bryony Lavery's work and was looking forward to the opportunity to see her commissioned work from home. By following Lavery's career I found that her commissioned *Treasure Island* collaboration would be streaming online in June 2020.

After watching the online production, I felt a deep connection to the familiar story. There was such a tie to not just finding treasure but establishing a community. This felt and still feels relevant as we work as a society to reestablish our communities after the impact of COVID-19. From the very beginning this story of *Treasure Island* was about this search. Under the pretext of a treasure hunt, I feel as though the real treasure for Jim Hawkins is finding the gift of the community she surrounded herself with.

A director's concept is a unifying idea presented by the director to the full production team. The idea behind having a director's concept is to establish an artistic guide to rely on as questions arise during the design and rehearsal phases of a production. A concept should feel textually supported and can come in the form of a poem, image, collection of images, or other artistic expression. I feel as though a concept is best supported with visual images. This can then inform structure, texture, our impression of sound and it is something tangible to fall back on.

My director's concept was wrapped with the idea of how we form community, the support that it brings us, and that our personal presentation is dependent on the people we surround ourselves with. With this in mind, I was drawn to our provided map for clues of inspiration.

So I may always find my pile.  
Lat E 62 17 20Lng SE19 3 40 will find the isle  
The heart protected by the ribs  
Who knows this will get his dibs  
Upon it  
If unfair of face  
It's simple  
Escalate the biggest pimple  
Upon that spot I suggest you linger  
Until you see a pointing finger<sup>1</sup>

The ribs, our first clue to finding this treasure! In reflection, I thought about how bones are wrapped around the body as well as the treasure. The ribs main function in our body is to protect. See Figure D.1. They protect the body's vital organs, including the lungs and heart, which are commonly referred to for breath and emotion. The ribs also maintain space and support. There are 12 ribs total and 3 different sections of ribs. The first is the

---

<sup>1</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Pg. 28.

piece of bone that attaches to your spine, I thought about how for Jim, this is her base community. The people she's grown up amongst, the people that are there with her throughout the story and act as a positive support system. The second section of your ribs gives you space, for Jim they are the world around her and take the most impact if you were to be harmed. This felt like the pirates to me, exposing Jim to the different sides of the world and the impact the people surrounding you can have. Finally, the last section of the ribs is actually free floating toward the center front of your chest. This is the part of the ribs we most present to the world. I thought about how Jim has to decide for herself who she presents to the world. Pirate or pirate hunter?

My concept quickly formed to a thematically appropriate skeleton's ribcage. It may have been a little on the nose, but it acted as such a support to us in thinking about where we fit in the world surrounding Jim Hawkins and how we define community. See Figure D.2. I also couldn't ignore that there is an omnipresent threat of shipwreck through the story. See Figure D.3. With a skeleton's ribcage we can imagine the abandoned ships crashed on the beach or sunk. In addition, aesthetically, there is a rough and porous texture to bone, smooth and yet filled with marrow. There is a sound associated to cartoons playing ribs like xylophones adding to the island's natural ambient noises. And the idea of fleshing out bones, just as Jim is growing up and growing in her own perspective and experiences.

### *Dramaturg*

A dramaturg is an in-house historian for a production piece. They can be avid researchers, historians, or literary analysts, but really, they are curious. A dramaturg is a necessary and underutilized member of the production team. They are involved in the

process to protect the author and the original work as well as support the new concepts or direction a production is taking. They work alongside the director to help envision the overall impact of a show. For this production, the dramaturg assisted me in balancing the original novel with the script in hand and helped bring it forward to an audience today. The dramaturg worked alongside me as I gathered information to inform the designers and actors and then ultimately, we selected information to present in the lobby displays and audience guide to share with our audience.

The dramaturg was the first additional production team member attached to this project. She was excited to work on this project and we met informally several times throughout the summer of 2021. We talked about the collaborative nature and large themes of community building, my initial director's concept and we started talking points for the actor's packet, audience guide, and lobby display. During our first official meeting in September, we discussed the idea of sea shanties as vehicles for the work of the crew during production. She was excited to further research the history of sea shanties, the inclusive nature of piracy, elements of a ship and ship navigation, and work on how to share this information with our full production team and future audience.

As I pushed for the inclusive nature of the show, the dramaturg supported my idea and helped me expand this idea to include the audience as well. We were both excited about expanding the lobby design to include interactive exhibits and tangible information; that way the audience would feel the same engagement as entering a ride at Disney World. Our first ideas for the lobby played with expanding the world of the play into the lobby by incorporating the sea shanties as the audience entered and playing with the lights in the space to match the harbor as though they were boarding a ship. We talked

about the idea of a large ship for the lobby and that we could play label the ship or that we could have a treasure hunt throughout the space.

In corroboration with front of house, we crafted a lobby proposal utilizing props and set dressings we knew we would have access too. In November I met with the Front of House and Publicity coordinator, and we talked about the major themes I wanted to highlight for the audience: community, a story for everyone, a sense of adventure, and interactive elements incorporating treasure. We discussed again the idea of music and lighting playing a role in the lobby and the idea of the treasure hunt (though we wanted to remain aware of COVID concerns our audience may have).

By our full production meetings in January, after winter break, the Front of House came and presented that we would be partnering with the Mayborn Museum, and they would be hosting a treasure hunt in our honor. This would act as publicity for our event and the winner of the treasure hunt would receive two tickets to come and see the show. We also attempted to start our TikTok challenge and have viewers on our social media sites join us for a sea shanty challenge. Though there was initial interest for the idea from our theatre department there were never further posts from the challenge we posted.

The dramaturg worked diligently to provide and build an actor's packet for the cast by the start of rehearsals. The packet included information about the novel and our two authors. She spent a great deal of time on working to catalog the characters found in *Treasure Island*. This became so important to the cast and direction as we met female pirates for the first time on stage. She supported this adaptation by finding information on historically dangerous female pirates, the life of piracy, and the inclusive nature of piracy.

She also provided information about the history of sea shanties and their use on an active ship and gave a glossary of ship terms.

In December, the dramaturg and I met again to discuss the lobby and the interactive displays. I was contacted by a local Baylor theatre donor and offered the use of a 6-foot pirate statue to include in the lobby courtesy of a local high school's mascot. We built around the idea of incorporating a pirate in the display and utilized a large chest filled with props for a visual display and photo opportunity. The display cases permanently housed in our lobby would be the dramaturg's chance to highlight the history and information the cast had been using to develop their characters. In one case she provided a history and snapshots of female pirates (see Figure D.4) and answered questions about piracy and why someone might be drawn to the occupation. In another case she expanded the original novel and focused on the map and Lavery's adaptation to see how the literary work is being utilized artistically today. The lobby also included a sea shanty playlist provided by our sound designer, special lights and lanterns provided by our master electrician, and a three-foot ship model (see Figure D.5) provided by our props team to fill out the space. Lastly, our lobby did include a small pirate hunt with ten hidden pirate skulls being hidden throughout the lobby with the challenge issued to find them all. The dramaturg then supported all of these ideas with an audience guide found online and in our program. See Appendix B for the actor packet created by the production's dramaturg.

### *Design Process*

In the fall of 2021, Baylor Theatre was implementing a new design "phase" process for their mainstage shows. As *Treasure Island* was set to start our spring

semester, we would be the first show to realize this new production plan. The main idea was to lengthen the design process and allow for greater flexibility, more in-depth reflection on the design, and a more evolved collaboration process between designer and director. This work was created as a pedagogical journey for student designers and allow the process to develop more organically towards a collaborative performance. The phases of design would include an initial design conversation, concept development, rough drafts (roughs), preliminary designs (prelims), and final designs.

The initial design conversations were driven and created by me as the director. The first meeting was looking for the designers' first impressions of the script and generally talking about my expectations and what I hoped to achieve in the space. The second meeting was concept-based. I introduced my directing concept to the designers, and we discussed how they might implement it into their own design areas and ideas. I found that I was starting this process with an enthusiastic team that was passionate about the opportunity to work on this show.

The second phase of the design process was concept development. Now that we were on the same page for the creation of the world, each designer took time to collect research images about the feel of the play. These included sound clips, historical images, movie references, illustrations, and sketched-out ideas.

The third phase was rough drafts or "roughs." At this time the themes running through the full scale of the designs emerged. The collaboration between technical departments crossed over and our discussion leaned toward actualization and practicality. We started to think about our full needs for the production and expanded our team to incorporate others who may need to be involved in our process.

The fourth phase was preliminary designs (prelims). The first meeting in this phase rendered designs and we made sure we are all on the same page. Feasibility discussions with our design department followed this meeting. We then came back together to make any large adjustments we need to address.

The last phase before build and rehearsal was final designs. Here designers presented their completed ideas to our entire production team and designers. From this phase we developed the show's full production calendar.

Prior to meeting with the design team, I met with my directing mentor. In this conversation we walked the space of the Mabee theatre where *Treasure Island* was set to perform. As I explained my concept, we talked about how I could showcase that in the space and introduce it to the designers. While walking the stage, I expressed my excitement about the world of the play. The Mabee theatre has such an opportunity for height and shape, and I wanted to bring that to the designers. The space seemed to provide opportunity for a full curve of the ship as it wrapped around the thrust's stage apron into the audience.

We also discussed how we can use the space to our advantage. The audience juts up directly against the stage and the aisles are long staircases that lead to the stage floor. With an adventure show like *Treasure Island* it became crucial to bring the audience along on the adventure. As a novel originally meant for boys, and now adapted for everyone, this show would be marketed as kid-friendly and playful. To my directing mentor and I it was clear that this connection to the story should also be seen in the design and direction of the show.



On September 30, I met with the full design team for the first time. In this initial meeting I opened the virtual floor, as we met on zoom, to talk about their first impressions after reading the script. We started this meeting by describing why I was so excited about this show and started by uniting us on why we should present it.

### *Scenic Design*

The scenic designer was excited about the playfulness I was looking for with the script. The play takes place in four locations: the inn, the harbor, the ship, and the island with underground caves. The inn, ship and island are each used for eight consecutive scenes and the harbor is used for one scene as transition between inn and ship in Act 1. At minimum, the inn required a place for the community to gather, a room for Bill Bones, a chair for grandma, and a stove to potentially burn the map. The ship needed to hold Captain's map room, Long John's kitchen galley, the top deck for the storm, a place for the star navigation moment between Jim and Long John, space for the mutiny, and a rope ladder for Jim to climb up the rigging. The island necessitated several different spaces for the goodie crew and pirates to set up camp, Benn Gunn to dive to the tunnels below, and caverns for the treasure collapse onto the pirates. We anticipated coordinating the movement of the set pieces to achieve all of these scenic locations would be a challenge. In Baylor's Mabree Theatre there is a long thrust stage into the audience and very little room backstage to store set pieces. On stage right and left of the stage are two vomitories that break into audience sections 2 and 4 that also needed to be accounted for as a main entrance and exit point and/or playing space. A vomitory (vom) is passage way that allows actors to enter or exit through the audience.

Prior to this meeting, the scenic designer and I had met informally to talk about the idea of a pirate's playground. We both had this idea that there was a great sense of play and he agreed that we should utilize the vertical space of the theatre. The scenic designer came to the initial meeting with some simple sketch ideas. (See Figures D.6 and D.7) He pushed the idea that the audience should feel involved and encompassed on the adventure along with the performers.

When the scenic designer came back with preliminary designs, he had taken the quote at the top of the show that the playwright had provided from John Donne for inspiration, "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main." Utilizing this he focused on the individual spaces acting as a part of a whole. With inspirational images of ship-themed playgrounds and actual sailing ship structures, he created a design that provided levels, allowed for play, and the same set pieces would be able to be manipulated to encompass all the different locations of the play. The set designer and I were both on the same page. I loved his initial designs, and we were excited that the large set pieces could be used for many locations and that they were multi-purposed. See Figures D.9 and D.9.

As we moved towards final designs, we were confident that though our asks for the world of this show were large they were well supported by the script and the needs of the show. As we neared conversations with our technical director and the rest of the production team we met again. See Figure D.10. During this meeting, the scenic director had previously built a working model of the set to scale. In our discussion, we physically manipulated the different set pieces to discover how these pieces might travel around the

stage to show location or be stored away. Our goal was to make a list of cuts to match with budget and time needs.

As our production calendar fell during winter break of the academic calendar, the primary build time for this project happened during the end of the semester finals for the fall and then the first weeks of January before classes started back. As we arrived back for rehearsal the set was roughly eighty percent done and established on stage. This was a large gift and not normally available to rehearsing productions. I met with my directing mentor prior the week before rehearsals began and we walked the space and the audience. In transitioning from one set location to another, we quickly noticed there would be some sightline issues for our audience. The set itself starts farther back at first with the inn structure being pushed flush to the large bridge set beneath the theatre's proscenium arch. As I moved to push the inn piece into its storage spot in the vomitory in audience section 4, I was faced with a real challenge. Before I even set up act 2 set, I had already noted that I needed to remove or hold roughly 80 seats due to sightline issues.

I quickly brought in the scenic designer and technical director and discussed the problems with the set pieces. We brainstormed new options. We decided that the inn piece would move back to live beneath the large bridge structure after the inn scenes and we would incorporate it in more scenes throughout Act 1. It became our main kitchen base for Long John Silver and was tucked away for Act 2. This solved all the sightline issues for the set before rehearsal even began.

Prior to the start of rehearsal mid-January, the designs final designs for the ship included two rope ladders that ran from the platforms built into the voms to the catwalks above the theatre floor. I was very excited at the opportunity for the pirates to climb up

and down throughout the space and during transitions. As we faced the reality of actor safety, there are a lot of requirements needed to be set in place in terms of harnesses and crew to support a tall height climb above the stage floor. The production team suggested that I cut the ladders completely as they also caused sight line issues. At the end of Act 1 however, in the script Jim is instructed to climb the rigging of the ship to rescue the map from the parrot's claws. In the final moments of the act Jim is described as climbing up out of sight as Long John Silver commands Killigrew the Kind to shoot the girl as she has the map. I met with the technical directors and scenic designer on the stage to discuss solutions as I needed some form of rigging to match the script. We evaluated what was needed in terms of safety protocol to determine what we would be allowed to climb height-wise without a harness. The tallest a platform can be without a railing is three feet, so we knew the actress playing Jim could not climb more than three feet off the floor without a harness. As we looked at the large structure of the bridge, we decided that we could use the height of the bridge placed beneath the proscenium. A rope ladder tied into that space could then tilt over the platform floor and if the actress climbed 3 feet off the platform, though she was three feet from a floor, aesthetically she would be a total of twenty-three feet off the stage floor giving the impression of a great height without endangering the actress. See Figure D.11.

The final scenic challenge was the trap door. Our first struggle was the actual placement of the door itself in the stage floor. The flooring in the Mabey Theatre is sectioned in 4x8' panels with a metal I-beam running the length of the floor center stage. This meant we were not able to put the door center stage, though it would have been ideal. It seemed simple to then just decide between right and left stage, however there

were blocking and transition questions to consider in the placement. Ultimately, I decided to place the trap door on stage right of center, to me this would allow a more even asymmetrical look as the major moving pieces of our set was on stage left. The trap door was ultimately used in several scenes throughout the show. In Act 1, we used the trap door to create a magical realism effect for large objects to come out of Edward Flint's sea chest which would have never squeezed into the chest alone. We also utilized the trapdoor as a hatch on our ship's floor. The cast could then use the door as an escape after transitions and allowed our pirates to sneak about more easily as they defected around the goodie crew. Finally in act 2, the prime purpose of the trap door was utilized as an entrance for Benn Gunn, our marooned cabin boy, who travels the island via tunnels. This also acted as the entrance to the caverns where our pirates found treasure and their untimely end.

### *Set Decorations and Properties*

The decorations for this set mostly revolved around items for the inn, ship and set dressing for the island. For the ship, our set decorations were mainly ropes, crates, and barrels found in stock or borrowed from a local whiskey distillery. For the island, the sculpture of the landscape was created through a variety of added materials set up during intermission. The largest piece was our netting that covered the bridge structure of the set to transform our ship to the island. The netting was made from a camouflaged netting backed with treated burlap and stitched on gold doubloons and beads to denote treasure. The netting covered the entire length of the bridge, the left and right staircases, and the stage right and left lower platforms (which we called poopdecks). The island floor was also covered in large "pimples" (as described in our script). The pimples were made

mainly from large foam blocks sculpted to form various spherical shapes painted in a fleshy pink with green overtones to blend into the island floor and lighting. One pimple was made from a partially deflated exercise ball and painted to match the foam structures. When the actors interacted with this pimple it could be squished and described as “flabby” which drew verbal reactions from cast and audience.

Finally, we also needed all the denotations on the island that were found in the clues of our treasure map. From the catwalks to the railing surrounding the stage in the Mabey theatre we hung three long netting pieces that acted as the ribs for our treasure. I was very excited about this implementation of physical ribs that lived and surrounded the space as this fed directly into my director’s concept. From there the items for the island, ship, and inn fell to the creative team led by the properties (props) master.

When I first met with the props supervisor in September, we discussed the show's full scope and magical realism qualities. The props supervisor and his team oversaw creating a list of very specific items for the show. These specialty items include a carved whalebone, a music box, maps, Grandma’s chair, a sea chest, three distinct puppets, and a long list of weapons that included firing guns and explosives.

To create the whalebone, the team sanded down a wooden block and wrote words for the next clue of the treasure onto it as though it had been scraped into the surface. The production also called for a music box that an image of a twirling cabin boy with a scrap of parchment placed in the box. For the map that led us to the island, they hand painted a piece of fabric and duplicated the item so that for Act 2 it could have a bullet hole in it to see the resolution from Killigrew firing the gun at the end of Act 1. The map was a close

interpretation of the map that Robert Louis Stevenson had painted prior to writing his novel and was complete with the lines of clues provided in the script.

There were few furniture pieces for the show but one in particular was Grandma's chair. Though never fully talked about in the script, in Act 1 Scene 7 the pirate Joan the Goat enters the inn with the other pirates and bashes the chair to pieces with her head. I met with the props supervisor, his mentor, and the fight director to talk about how we could accomplish this moment. After choosing a chair from stock we talked about the needs of the chair. To be able to break it several pieces we determined that we would not also be able to sit in it. As the chair planned to be tucked along the back of the moving inn piece this made sense that the chair could function in this way as Grandma was much too busy working to ever sit and rest. The loss of the chair could symbolize a loss of peace in Grandma's life. The props master, fight director, and I agreed that the best picture for this moment and best surface area to break would be along its ladder back and have Joan crash into those pieces. The back was then retrofitted with thin balsam wood pieces that would break under slight pressure and with Joan's stovetop head piece they were no match. At the end of Act 2, Grandma receives a new chair as a gift from Jim and the goodie crew bringing a moment of rest and peace back to the hardworking character.

The sea chest was created from an existing chest that the props supervisor had pulled from stock. We discussed adding a rounded top that fit our pirating world and included a false lid that would be stuffed with coins. The bottom of the chest was completely removed, and the sides were framed out so that the chest could sit on top of our partially opened trap door. Once the chest was placed on the trapdoor, the door could

be opened from below and the assistant stage manager could hand various props; like the map, ledger, paper, full sized Joseph Wright painting, a Virgin Mary statue, and an octopus tentacle.

One of the longest projects for the props team was the three puppets asked for by the script. The first was a large octopus tentacle that could be pushed through the trap door and out of the sea chest above. The tentacle, when manipulated by the attacked actors, would move and mold to them as though it was attacking from the chest itself. See Figure D.12. Ultimately the puppet arm was supported from below by the assistant stage manager and brought back down through the trapdoor.

Another puppet was a chicken that was described as Mrs. Crossley's laying hen. See Figure D.13. The actress playing Mrs. Crossley was also on the props team and helped build the puppet she ended up working on stage. This chicken had wings that fluttered and shifted as you pat them down and they sprung back. For further use of the creative puppet, we also had Killigrew the Kind bring the puppet on during his hiring to board ship where he was able to twist and snap the chicken's neck as proof that he could acquire fresh meat on the ship, a skill he was reporting to have.

The final large puppet for this show was the parrot. The parrot was named Captain Flint and he was a feathered, flying, talking, and evil bird. The actress who played Grandma was double cast as Captain Flint and would act as the bird's puppeteer and voice. The props master created this bird to be manipulated in two ways. The main body of the bird could perch on the ship's structure or an actor's knee or shoulder and flap it's wings by a trigger pulled by the puppeteer to look as though it could fly through the air. In the bird's head, the puppeteer had the ability to wear the beak like a glove and



chomp the bird's beak and manipulate it as they spoke the bird's lines giving it a fun and creative lifelike sensibility. The bird had several jobs in the play, the main was to support Long John Silver. See Figure D.14. The more technical jobs were that the bird had to be able to steal the map from Jim at the end of Act 1 and knock the gun out of Jim's hand near the end of Act 2 to help the pirates take back control of both situations.

Weapons were a large part of this production. A fight director was brought into the rehearsal to choreograph several tense moments of the show. I met with the fight director in the summer and again in November to discuss the weapon needs for the show. We assigned weapons to all of our mutineers and gave each a specialization that was adapted to their character and again after auditions to the actor's added abilities. In addition to swords, knives, and hand to hand combat I had three distinct close fires of a gun visible on stage and one explosion of an explosives barrel that would kill off a character. We met with one of the department's technical directors, who was acting as props mentor for the show. We discussed the need for close-range gunfire and the safety protocols that would need to be in place for the actors and crew on stage and the audience viewing the show. He ultimately built a gun frame from scratch and ordered small explosives that could be wired through the gun and fired on stage and reloaded. In January we met again and discussed the explosion of Israel Hands found in Act 2, Scene 6. The technical director provided an air cannon that through the expulsion of air would blast small foam pieces painted to match the set across the stage. With the assistance of lights and sound all of the effects worked perfectly for the show.

### *Costume Design*

I didn't meet with the costume designer individually until after our initial design meetings with all the designers. We met on October 7, and she was thrilled to costume a cast of pirates and create the world of the play holistically in the design. As we met, she brought in color pallets for the pirates from the goodie crew to make creative distinctions. The goodie crew had more earth and nature tones to soft teals matching their working lives on land. The pirates would grow from gem tones matching their greed and desire for treasure. She worked from historical images of pirates and crews from the 1780's. Photos were difficult to find but several drawings and contemporary interpretations were available. This matched our understanding of the adaptation bringing Robert Louis Stevenson's story forward to today. It also worked within the world of the play that blended history with magical realism, it also matched that we were ultimately presenting a story for children, for everyone.

At the end of October, we met again, and the costume designer brought in sketched renderings for all of the characters and their transformations through the play. There were three main challenges costuming would face. One was that Jim Hawkins in this adaptation was a girl. However, consistently through the script she was mistaken for a boy and we then at the end of the play she would come out on stage in a new dress. This meant that for our actress in addition to her own physicality the costume would need to lend itself to remaining ambiguous until the time came for us to reveal Jim's femininity with the dress in the final scene.

The second challenge revolved around that though the costume designer had rendered sketches. I was waiting to make the call at auditions about the gender of some of

the roles for the cast. I had several characters who I thought could be played gender neutral and that with the inclusivity the playwright and script were implying I would wait to see what actor fit the role rather than the role determining a typecast. One of the longer discussions was what it would mean if Captain Smollet was played by a female instead of a male. In a lot of regards it was scripturally and thematically supported. With a female Captain we would even out the represented parental figures onboard ship with Jim; Long John Silver and Squire to mimic poor pseudo father figures evened out by the Doctor and now Captain to as poor maternal substitutes for Jim. The costume designer was excited to explore these options and was willing to develop designs for both genders until the decision was made at auditions.

The final challenge was the creation of Long John Silver's costume and leg. When we discussed Long John Silver we talked about his chameleon-like demeanor. Long John is a manipulative man and blends in with his surroundings to gain knowledge to use against others. This was developed into his costume design with outfits that melded into the world and role he was playing. When we first meet Silver in Act 1 at the harbor he is resting as simply a wounded sailor. When he accepts his position as cook for the ship, he takes to this role fully as an aproned galley chef. However, when we get to the island and Silver takes back his role as captain, we finally see his whole presence complete with a large captain's hat and luxurious coat that we imagine his previous treasures brought him. See Figure D.15.

Silver is a one-legged villain; however, the actors auditioning all had two legs, so we needed to design a way to hide this and make it viable for action on the actor's part. The leg itself was planned as a prosthetic that the actor would wear like a boot. It would

restrict the actor's movement in his ankle and knee but not stop it completely for safety reasons as the actor moves about the set. See Figure D.16.

Another discussion that I had with both costumes and props was the use of blood. The script has three major fight scenes, fourteen stage combat moments, and thirteen deaths several of which are caused by knife and gunfire. Blood was a question. Costuming and props were both initially open to the idea of incorporating blood into their design work. I was quite hesitant to give the go ahead. As I worked out the concept and large ideas of the play I was stuck that our protagonist of Jim Hawkins was at most thirteen years old and in this adaptation a young girl. Gender aside, the fact that a child would witness such bloodshed in the story seemed psychologically overwhelming. I leaned on the idea that as someone reads the novel, they may not truly picture the death as gruesome with blood dripping from weapons and the murdered victims. As I thought and discussed with these designers that I wanted this show to ultimately be family friendly and accessible to all, I decided to cut all representation of blood from the show. This decision stood out as a strong one in that though the actors had to hide their wounds with physicality, the costuming was not burdened with washing out blood from costumes and properties was able to better focus on their larger projects of puppets and pyrotechnics.

### *Lighting Design*

Using the playable space that the set designer was creating, the lighting designer worked from the script to create research images for each location. The lighting design emphasized the play of warmth and cool lighting with darkness surrounding the stage. Key moments were lit to help propel the story rather than large washes of light to cover

the length of the stage. Stars and navigation by them were a recurring theme throughout the show. The lighting design started with them and worked with the scenic designer to incorporate lights to mimic stars over the audience as well as the stage. It was important in our discussions that we not ignore lighting the audience as well. I wanted the audience to feel as though they were going on an adventure and the lighting design was excited to incorporate them in her design. See Figure D.17.

Her inspirational images started with the feelings associated with each scene. For the Admiral Benbow Inn she pulled images of an English pub and warm lighting. Star gobos were a large focus for the start of the show as Jim Hawkins introduces herself as the narrator under a starry sky. The harbor scene then incorporated more sea greens and more eerie shadows as this is the moment the pirates join the goodie crew on their adventure. This then transforms into the warm wood tones found on the ship that Jim calls home. Gobos of rigging were lit upon the sails and the stage was broken up by patterns of light to denote different spaces in the ship's interior. One of the largest supports of light was in the storm scene in Act 1 where the waves seem to take over the ship and Jim is threatened with a near drowning. The lighting designer used mover lights with wave gobos to have the waves physically wash from side to side on the stage floor that supported the actor's movement in the portrayal of that effect on stage. See Figure D.18.

As we moved to the island the lighting designer played with warm yellows and oranges to denote the sweltering beach of the island compared with the greens and marsh teals of the interior of the island as we moved towards the caverns containing the treasure. The caverns themselves had a bright grey to purple with swooping cavern walls

projected on the sails that were permanently in the space. This brought our eyes down to the pirates searching for treasure and allowing us a dimensionality to the space not initially provided in the scenic design. This play of light, color, and gobo-ed imaged allowed for the transitions on the island to be done through cues rather than large physical shifts as found in Act 1. See Figure D.19.

### *Sound Design*

The sound design for *Treasure Island* was centered on a cinematic understanding of building the storybook feel of the world based off the novel. The sound designer worked to incorporate sounds that would create an aural world for the audience and play. At our first initial meetings, the sound designer was excited about the placement of speakers. The placement of speakers became very important as there was minimal backstage space to store speakers. As we continued to talk about the envelopment idea of the audience coming along on the adventure with us, his focus became on how we could aurally transform the world around them.

There were key moments we wanted sound to focus on as the designer built the world. The ship would include the rocking of wooden posts and how large sailing ships seem to groan and moan as they deal with the pressure of waves. The storm would also become a key moment to support as thunder rolled with lightning from our light design and the waves sounded as though they are crashing and growing until Long John Silver calls off the storm. The island is vividly described in the script and novel, and we wanted to incorporate the glooping noises of a living breathing island to our overall picture.

Due to the nature that the parrot was being puppeteered by one of the actors, I also needed recordings of the parrot. As the end of Act 1 ends with a gunshot aimed at

the parrot and Jim climbing in the rigging to gain the effect of height, I asked for the bird's lines to be recorded and come from a speaker in the catwalks of the theatre. Though the recording was easily undertaken, the sound levels were difficult to adjust in the space. Additionally, there was so much going on during that scene that the noise from actors and their fight choreography was quite loud and we had to work to adjust the sound to hear the bird fluttering throughout the catwalks and chanting 'pieces of eight.'

In addition to practical sounds, we knew the actual sound selection would grow and there was collaboration to build a Spotify playlist<sup>2</sup>. The sound designer had a great sense that there should be constant music and sound to support the play of the story. The designer worked to create comedic moments highlighted with jingles and tense moments in our stage fights with more ominous sounds. There was consistent play with music and sound effects to bring us through the world of the show.

### *Music Direction*

The overall sound and music blended with the vocal singing led by the actors. I also had a music director and music supervisor on the production team. In the script there were sea shanties written into the scenes of the show that seemed to cue major scenic transitions. As we did not have access to the original music, I worked with the music supervisor to find similar lyrics or themes of sea shanties in the public domain. She helped format the sea shanties we selected into music recordings and lyrics to match the space of the preexisting songs. She was able to format all of these prior to leaving for winter break so that the cast could come back for the first day of rehearsal fully

---

<sup>2</sup> Listen Here: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7op0hlYXFdxwSUtQiu0iaA?si=e345d9cfa7954d65>

memorized. You can find the song selection and lyrics in Appendix D. When we returned from break and started rehearsals the music director then took over and was able to work harmonies and select parts for the cast. The sea shanties were sung during all of our scenic transitions and helped us maintain the energy of the story through that work.

### *Designing and Staging the Scenic Transitions*

The scenic transitions were one of our cast and designers' most significant challenges. Working on a thrust stage in a magical realism show did not allow a traditional crew to come onto the set and change the scenic elements as we moved from one location to another. Though sea shanties were provided in our script their use alone was not significant enough to cover the work it would take to manipulate two staircases, two poopdecks, and six floor pieces in addition to properties and set decorations.

Scenic transitions included inn to harbor, harbor to ship, ship to island, and island back to inn. This was an engaging process as it was a mix from traditional scenic transitions led by a crew to a partially devised process as we played with the actors' very physical characters. These scenic transitions were more than moving from one location to the next but they were in fact building the space as the story went on. This was a major design challenge created by our scenic designer that all of the pieces on stage would be added and then struck away not wasting space or time. We started this process by putting all of the set pieces where they start in a scene and then matched actors to their nearest set piece. On our first run we had to simply play to determine how the piece moved through the space and how many people we really needed to manipulate each piece. Our stage managers were crucial in holding the ground plans and helping me to direct the correct pieces to their correct locations. The actors and supporting crew worked just the traffic



patterns first. We worked just the mechanical moves of the pieces first and created traffic patterns for set piece and actor.

The next addition was the sea shanty for each transition. This was led by our music director, a cast member in the show. They ran the song, planned the part entrances and a pitch leader to start the music. As they moved the set we then ran again the transition considering our character's physicality's and the percussive rhythm found in each song highlighting it with the stomp of feet and the kicks that knocked in the physical brakes for the moving pieces.

As our large set pieces moved about on stage, a large challenge we faced was the pieces were on wheels they also needed to come to a hard stop to support the movement and stage combat that was performed on them. The technical design team provided us with wedge brake systems that we had to incorporate in our scenic transitions. These wedges had to be kicked into place by the actors and if improperly done the pieces were subject to movement which could prove a danger to others. We had to train the actors on how to kick them in and where to set them in place. The rhythm of kicking the brakes in became a musical element that drove the sea shanties and fit into the working world of our play.

Lastly, we added lighting to meld from one location to the other through the piece. This provided a bright light and color to support the play of the music. As with the history of sea shanties, they were used to highlight the work we had to do as a crew to move to the next location. Sound design also helped to support our pitch and rhythm by playing longer tonal pieces under singing to support the length of time needed for the transition. These transitions were quite lovely images symbolizing the work done on

ships as a crew and helped form our sense of community and carried the energy of the show into the next scene. See Figure D.20.

### *Tech Rehearsals*

As we moved into technical rehearsals, the cast looked forward to incorporating all the additional technical elements. Technical rehearsals (tech rehearsals) are one of the final steps of the rehearsal process. They consist of dry techs, wet techs, cue to cues, and dress rehearsals. A dry tech is a rehearsal where typically, just the crew of the show work the mechanics behind the addition of all of the technical elements. A wet tech is a rehearsal where the actors are introduced to the mechanics of the technical elements. A cue to cue is a rehearsal where the show progresses just from one sound or light cue to the next. This is mainly for the director's and stage manager's benefit to incorporate the designs of the show seamlessly and get a feel of the technical pace of the show. A dress rehearsal is a rehearsal that has the actors get into costume and adjust their blocking or the designs of the costumes. For *Treasure Island*, the rehearsal process included a cue to cue and a series of dress rehearsals.

This show could have benefitted from a dry tech, but that is something we realized afterwards. We moved into a scheduled two-day cue to cue that quickly turned into three days. This ate up a dress rehearsal. For the technical schedule this left one dress without an invited audience. In technical rehearsals, we added additional crew members for backstage, light and sound cues, spotlights, our pyrotechnic elements involved with the guns and explosive of a pirate, and full costumes, hair, and make-up. We faced multiple challenges incorporating all of these elements.

Our first challenge was adding enough crew to support our production. Crew members typically sign on for Baylor's mainstage theatre productions through their technical elements' classes. We originally had a large interest pool to pull from but as other acting projects were assigned through classes during the beginning of semester the pool dwindled completely. As our department is project heavy it was difficult to find students willing to assist us. We eventually found two more crew members and one part-time that would join us at intermission as we were borrowing here from the following mainstage production already in rehearsal.

Since we only had two full additional crew members this did not lighten the workload of the assistant stage managers. One assistant stage manager who had been working the trapdoor during rehearsal would then maintain this job for the full run. The other assistant stage manager took care of all of the backstage tasks and managed the calls of the actors. One crew member then was in charge of most prop tracking and assisted the backstage assistant stage manager in the clearing and catching of props, furniture, and scenic elements. The other crew member became our gun wrangler and was single handedly in charge of loading and reloading the pyrotechnics of the gun and tracking it while it was off stage for safety reasons.

Due to the lack of crew members, when we came to our first full run of the performance with tech we ran into a large roadblock at intermission. During intermission, we transition the entire set from ship to island. After talking with their mentor, the stage managers and I came up with the idea to again utilize our actors for the first part of the transition. Luckily, I had started this whole show with a collaborative spirit and they were all willing to step in and help. The stage managers then created a nine-step process to

transition the set with the limited help. Though we advertised a fifteen-minute intermission, it was always minimum twenty minutes, but our audience was forgiving with our interactive intermission.

Though the assistant stage manager was continuing to work the trap door for the technical rehearsals and the performances there were still challenges. For one, the trapdoor is secured with bolts when it is closed and despite the sound design and music we could audibly hear the bolts slide home. Also, I had thought that there would be specific covering for the trapdoor when we arrived at the island but when we got the set dressing to cover the set, there was nothing specific for the trapdoor. The trapdoor was so obviously a square hole in the ground and stood out compared to the rest of the set. At the time this was discovered, there was nothing that could really be done. We had extra netting that was being used to dress the island and we draped that around the front of the trapdoor to attempt to hide the hole.

As we proceeded through cue to cue, we quickly realized that transitioning scene to scene on the island was quite fast. This was great in terms of pacing but in terms of closing the trap door we needed time. We had to call hold several times in cue to cue and in our first runs to protect the actors and crew below from falling through the trapdoor. Out of an abundance of caution I made the decision to reblock all of Act 2 to have the actors avoid ever stepping on the trapdoor, on the off chance the crew below could not finish bolting it close.

The final concern I faced in technical rehearsals was the costuming of Ben Gunn. At cue to cue the actors received their costumes for the first time. Due to the large scope of the show, the costume department was not done creating the final dresses for Jim and

the Doctor for the final scene. I knew that going into cue to cue. My real concern was in seeing Ben Gunn emerge from the trap door for the first time. His top tunic was longer than the design I was presented with and the actor actually tripped over the material. This character is highly physical and not only comes out of and dive through the trap door but also jumps, crawls, and runs around the stage and the island floor. His costume was large and cumbersome at first and I brought my concerns with the costume designer. She discussed shortening the top to stay out of the actor's way. However, I was really excited about the design she had originally proposed, and I pulled it up to show her the comparison. As they had built this costume and were pressed for time we talked through a solution. The costume top was shortened to mimic more of the original design, and I was very pleased with the final result.

### *Conclusion*

Overall, the design process went smoothly, and we remained on the same page throughout. This was an incredibly exciting collaborative venture following this new design process and so magically incorporating the design work to help support the story. As the main build time for the set was prior to the start of rehearsals, though the ask of the show was large we stayed ahead of schedule and were able to put a great deal of focus into the spectacle of the overall piece. By final designs, we were eager to share the sensorial world of the play with the cast and future audience.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Working Towards Performance: Auditions through Rehearsals

#### *Introduction*

Staging *Treasure Island* was a high adventure. Starting the process with visualized designs and a unified production team gave a strong start. As a production on the university mainstage, I had an entire department excited about joining and supporting this story. That there would be challenges would due to the considerable scope of this production, I had no doubt. I could not have prepared for all of them. I also knew that we would be active in assessing issues with the team I assembled and work together to push forward. From the onset, I was not looking for perfection but an opportunity to learn. This production would be grounded in a rehearsal process that would incorporate our performative discoveries with the visual world of *Treasure Island* already underway.

#### *Auditions*

The entire theatre department was given a packet for the initial auditions that included a director's note on themes I wanted to focus on with this story, a character breakdown, doubling, and audition requirements. I provided five monologues from other adaptations of *Treasure Island* and asked the students to select one that would best present the pirate they wanted to bring to the stage. I also asked that they rehearse and perform thirty seconds of a sea shanty of their choice and provided some possibilities. At the time of auditions, I did not ask for specific accents but encouraged creativity in voice and presentation style. Auditions were originally scheduled for November 4<sup>th</sup> but due to

personal circumstances, I rescheduled them to November 11<sup>th</sup>. The auditions were announced on Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. With the reschedule, the students had roughly three weeks to prepare.

Prior to the audition date, there was a great amount of interest in the show. I met individually with over thirty students to discuss the auditions and what I was looking for in specific roles. It was exciting to talk about the show with enthusiastic potential cast members. These conversations also started some initial character development as the students asked questions specific to certain characters. This questioning helped me gain valuable insight to how the students were reading the characters and how I should work to shape them in rehearsals.

As *Treasure Island* was the first show of the spring semester for Baylor's mainstage season, my show was the first to audition. I saw four auditions every ten minutes. The stage management team was already assembled; we met briefly for the first time right before auditions to talk about the structure of the evening. The stage manager would send them in as small groups, and they would present their piece one at a time on stage and unmasked. In some cases, due to COVID-19, this was the first time I was even associating faces with performers.

Overall, I was pleased with the auditions. I watched eighty-nine auditions. The students brought in their *Treasure Island* monologues and sang sea shanties, with some even incorporating musical instruments and dance performances. Callback auditions were scheduled to be held three days later, on Sunday November 14<sup>th</sup>, so the callback list needed to go out quickly to give the students time to prepare for an additional ask. Due to the nature of auditions being in person, the dramaturg, accent coach, and my directing

and writing mentor were in the audition room with me. As the students were brought in small groups, we were able to discuss the students on a case-by-case basis as the auditions went along. I made a shortlist of whom I wanted to see back through my notes, and the decision was sent out the following day.

Outside of the leads of Jim, Long John Silver, and Benn Gunn the show was ensemble-based, so it was important for me to see the actors portray their own unique physicality and play with the script provided. I watched for bold, physical character traits, energy, endurance, and a loud voice during auditions. Due to the nature of the theatre space being in thrust staging and the tight rehearsal calendar beginning after Winter Break, I needed a cast that would come in with a great deal of potential. I wouldn't have the time to work with everyone individually and needed the actors to advocate for themselves and join into the process with their own ideas.

Callbacks were held in the Mabey Theatre. I was looking for individuals who could band together as an ensemble and a pirate crew. I asked the actors to come back on Sunday and have memorized the forty-two seconds of the made TikTok famous sea shanty, *The Wellerman* by Nathan Evans and Company.<sup>31</sup> The callback list was broken down into two parts, callbacks for lead roles including Jim, Doctor, Squire, Long John Silver, and Ben Gunn, as well as callbacks for ensemble to fill out the rest of the pirate and goodie crew roles. I called the full list for the top of callbacks and broke them into groups. I then placed the actors into smaller pirate crews and gave them about 15 minutes to devise a working movement piece to the timing and rhythm of *The Wellerman*. I was

---

<sup>1</sup> Evans, Nathan. *The Wellerman*. Universal Music Operations Limited. 2021.  
<https://open.spotify.com/track/54OBgO0Xwu20Jak9TMXbR7?si=082fb3f9294049ca>



looking for physicality, unique character traits, and the ability to adapt to the rhythm and work together.

The second part of our callbacks was more traditional. I also asked the actors to look over a selection of sides from the script and come prepared to play various pirate roles. I would direct them to look at a specific character or trait I was interested in seeing them perform. They did not need to be memorized, but I asked that they come prepared to play, fight, get dirty, and seek adventure.

I was thrilled with the outcome of callbacks. Their time working together resulted in dynamic performances and ensemble work. This group of actors displayed interpreted scenes of a shark attack, raising sails, pirate mutinies through great physicality and ownership of space. It was disheartening that I could only take eighteen cast members on the next stage of adventure.

At the side reading portion of the callbacks is where my image for the cast really started to fall into place. I assigned several of the actors to read for specific roles. If they were assigned a side to read, they would go out to hallway or lobby with the stage management until I was ready to see their scene. If I had not assigned them a part to read yet, they stayed in the audience to watch the callbacks. This was a great trick to see and hear a live audiences' reactions to the choices being made on stage. The stage management team helped me run these callbacks smoothly and kept me aware of time and tabs on the varied location of the actors.

My directing and writing advisor, dramaturg, and a fellow MFA graduate student from my cohort, attended the callback auditions. We took breaks a few times during the auditions to discuss the trajectory I was going. During these breaks, I also released people

that I know longer needed to see as I was attempting to winnow the list down to just actors and actresses that I was considering for Jim and Long John Silver. Their relationship was essential as I was looking for a pseudo parent/child relationship. I was also looking for the actress playing Jim to carry the story as a child and I was looking for endurance and duality of personality in the actor playing Long John Silver. The ultimate decisions were mine, but it was very helpful to hear the faculty and graduate students with me corroborate my ideas.

The atmosphere of callbacks was energetic and playful. I thought that casting Jim and Long John Silver would be the most challenging, but after coaching the auditions and running the final pairs, I knew immediately when their relationships clicked on stage. The ensemble proved the most difficult as I had many amazing choices to choose from. Feedback from those called back after the fact informed me that these auditions were one of the most fun they had and that they also really had no idea what I thought when they left the room.

I met with my directing and writing mentors and fellow graduate cohort directly after to make the cast list. My writing mentor was also casting the next mainstage show following mine and was interested to see who I would choose as that might affect his casting decisions. Even here I was considering my director's concept. The ribs to me symbolized community formation, and I wanted the casting decisions to reflect the community we were a part of here at Baylor University. I had also consulted with the dramaturg, and we had discussed in detail the inclusive nature and diversity of pirates. Pirate crews were made from the people who had no other choice, and the community drive of this show was that it was for everyone. I wanted this sense of "everyone" to be

reflected in the pirates and the entire cast. This show was written to be intentional diverse and inclusive, and I wanted the cast to mirror that opportunity. I very quickly announced who I felt should be in the cast and my decision was passed onto the department.

### *First Read Through*

Before we went off for winter break, I gathered the cast for a read-through and design presentation. On December 6<sup>th</sup> the Monday leading into finals week we met as a full cast and design team for the first time. We started off the evening by having the designers present their final designs so that the cast could start to visualize the world we were about to create. Then we had a presentation by our dramaturg. She shared the actor packet that was available virtually and its website link where we could always have access to post questions or personal research; the dramaturg would update this over time.

Lastly, before we started the read through, I shared my director's concept. I was excited about the idea that this concept would you unite us as performers and designers. I continued by explaining that this show was large. I chose this cast because they brought in so many ideas for their physicality, their enthusiasm for the show, and their instincts to rely on pushing forward. This was an introduction to a process; we would work to build what we could leading to performance. This would run similar to a devised process in that we would expect to be present and try new things and create options for ourselves. We would then take the best of our work and present that at performance time.

Then we began a traditional read through. The cast asked about accents and as we had not yet discussed them. I asked that they speak in their normal voice for the read-through, but they were welcome if they wanted to play with something. It was so fun to hear the text in the actor's voices and just watch as they fed off the energy in the room.

We read through the show once and then gave instructions that they should come back from break fully memorized, in accents, and that the music would be provided to them to work on. We also left for break with the cast being asked to not cut their hair and the men of the cast to not trim their facial hair.

### *Dialect Work*

As the cast would be memorizing their lines over break, I sent them home and asked them to learn the Hampshire dialect. In our department, we have resources available for the students to work remotely and we also have a performance faculty member who specializes in vocalization and as an accent coach. He made himself available on a case-by-case basis to practice the dialects and I met with him to discuss the overall sound of the show. Though the Hampshire accent has the hard ‘R’ sound that we associate with pirates, the accent did not necessarily work for everyone in the world of the play. After meeting with this faculty member, we decided to introduce Standard British dialect to our goodie crew cast members as well as the pirate Dick the Dandy. This also included Ben Gunn who we suggested could also play with some cockney. Grandma could also play with both cockney and Standard British as well. As most of the cast had left town for break, these decisions were sent via email and the cast members agreed this felt a better fit for their role and made the adjustments.

### *COVID-19*

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, we returned from break and had an all-call for rehearsal. There was some hesitancy about the all-call on my part. With the COVID-19 pandemic going on, there was a lot of changes happening in terms of mask mandates, university testing

sites, and COVID test availability. As much as I wanted to start this process, I was nervous about the risk I was putting on the cast, stage management, and myself in as we started this production. Prior to the start of school, the University sent an email out that they were considering starting school remotely for the entire month of January and would reassess at the start of February. This decision would cancel all in-person academic requirements and stop or vastly change the intended rehearsal process for the show. The chair of the department reached out to the University on behalf and returned with that the decision has not been finalized but suggested and that we should wait to see before reevaluating our rehearsal calendar. Three days later, the University decided to resume normal in-person classes for January 18th. The mask mandate would stay in effect for January but be reassessed come February. We were on to start rehearsal, but we would keep a strict adherence to mask policies following university and department guidelines.

My second hesitation in making the all-call was due to the idea of “bursting the bubble.” The students and I had all traveled home for break and there was a risk that we could bring the illness into rehearsal. There is a large morale boost that you cannot beat when you bring a cast together after a long time and though I had work we could all do, I bounced the idea around with my directing mentor about if I should work the smallest scenes first. There is no strict itinerary on when you block the scenes and in what order, but to not start our first day with the whole cast would really miss the mark on the idea that we were building a collaborative ensemble. In addition to this, the actors were undoubtedly going to start attending classes, visiting with friends, and attending on campus events with their organizations so rehearsal was at least a safe space where masks

were required, and we could all work together. If a cast member were to contract COVID they would have to remain home in isolation for five days.

As we returned to school it was asked that we test for COVID as a preventative measure to return to classes. After testing all eighteen cast members, three members of our stage management team (one stage manager and two assistant stage managers), the dramaturg, and myself we only had one cast member test positive at the return of break. They would miss the first full week of rehearsal, but the stage management would remain diligent in tracking their blocking and filling in physically as the actor on stage until they returned. This was, thankfully, our only known exposure to COVID-19 during rehearsals and the performance run of the show. We included this cast member in several zoom rehearsals where they could watch the rehearsal via camera and recorded the music rehearsals to practice their harmonies and parts at home. We worked diligently to make sure this cast member felt involved in all they felt up to as they regained health.

### *First Rehearsals*

Our first rehearsal called the entire cast. The stage manager reserved two spaces for us to work, the Mabey theatre to run blocking on the stage and with almost 80% of the set provided for us and a classroom that had a piano so that the music director could split off and take half of the cast to run the music. As this was such a large show with heavy demands on physicality and the technical elements of the piece, we started blocking on the first day in lieu of traditional table work. Table work is typically a period of time set at the beginning of the rehearsal process to bring everyone to the same page about when the script is speaking on and the contextual language and items we need to be aware of as a cast and crew moving forward. As our dramaturg had already presented to us her actor

packet and we maintained a digital callboard of updates the tablework was really being maintained in conjunction with rehearsals rather than during. My goal for the first week was to block all of Act 1 and then block all of Act 2 by Tuesday the following week. We would be bringing in our fight director at that time to start heavy stage combat rehearsals and we needed to be prepared to shift gears and incorporate that work.

During blocking rehearsals, as we introduced more characters into each scene we took the time to discuss with the actors who they thought they were and why their character was entering the story. As this is so literary based, the entrance of a character was always with the intention to drive the story. We phrased a lot of our discussion around questions we wanted to ask and explore, either physically through blocking or historically with our dramaturg. It was such a gift to have a production dramaturg on our team and she popped into several rehearsals to act as a consistent resource for individual character development in such a large ensemble show. Questions we worked through in the first few days were how our casting choices were so significant in terms of presenting time period. The Doctor and Captain of our ship were female and though that was not impossible at the time it would have been rare. How could we reflect the hard work they would have had to endure to gain this powerful position in their community?

### *Music Rehearsals*

From the beginning of the design process, I knew that we would be incorporating music and the singing of sea shanties into our production. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, I met with our music faculty mentor for this show to talk about assigning a music director out of the casting. We discussed that the incorporation of sea shanties would carry the show's energy from location to location. They were meant to support the story and should be

thematically selected to match the tone of one scene into another. We talked that the actors I would ultimately cast were most likely musically talented and at minimum quite capable of carrying their voice musically. I was not looking for perfection or a choral sound. I was looking for these sea shanties to guide the show's rhythm and work. The casts sound could be rough and interspersed with interjections and some speaking tones as they were an actively working crew. I worked with the music mentor, music supervisor, and music director (both students in the cast) to select the songs and their placement throughout the script.

One thing about the script was that it had music written into it. The addition of sea shanties was not entirely a new idea. The main problem was that the music written into the script was from the original production held at the National Theatre in London. This meant that we would have to apply for the rights to use it. Though I did reach out to the contact provided, I never heard back. This moved the music supervisor and I to the public domain and Spotify to find the lyrics and musical rhythm of the songs we incorporated into the show.

### *Transitions*

Since transitioning the set would take time and physical strength, we started working them on the second day of rehearsal. We had most of our set built by day one, so we began to think about the mechanics of transitioning the set with the actors. I scheduled a music rehearsal to work the sea shanties used in this specific transition the day before. As I had a large moving staircase, two poopdecks, the inn piece, and six floor pieces that you could drag, in addition to props and set dressings that we on the way, the rehearsal revolved around traffic patterns. We started by specifying where each piece



started and finished. Once we had the traffic pattern, I then asked that the cast to sing their sea shanty at the same time. The first run was flat but there was a lot of creative potential. We then talked about and worked adding in body percussion of slamming the pieces, stomping, and even banging props on the wooden surfaces. We had movement, music, and working rhythm that hit at an exact time with this addition. There was still work to do but the idea was there as we continued on with the rest of the rehearsals.

### *Dead Bodies*

We had thirteen deaths scripted into the show. Though this can start to sound morbid, the reality was that we had actor bodies on stage that we needed to clear. Though this was always something I knew would need to be choreographed; I didn't anticipate the problems that would arise. One was that due to the doubling of the cast, the first death on stage, by the actor who played Bill Bones, also came in quickly as a pirate Dick the Dandy. As the actor could not be moved any earlier due to the timing of the previous scene and the lines in the current one, we blocked that I would have two of the pirates carry off the dead character at this moment and I reassigned the lines to the actor playing George Badger for this one scene. For the story arc, this worked because, in Act 2, George Badger makes a bid for leadership against Long John Silver. His command in this scene was then strengthened to help us add more groundwork for later in the show.

Another character death that caused concern was the death of Blind Pew. In the stage directions of the script it's said that Israel Hands turns on their fellow pirate "finishes him off with a knife."<sup>2</sup> In discussion with the fight director about the show's

---

<sup>2</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, London: Samuel French, 2016. Pg. 24

scope of weapons we determined that Israel Hands was geared to be an explosives expert. After also making the decision that I would not be incorporating blood in the show, a close knife fight ending in a death would have been quite difficult for our audience to suspend their disbelief, in my opinion. For this production, we determined that Israel Hands would shoot Blind Pew as they left to escape. This was discussed in length with the props mentor and fight director prior to rehearsal starting. Several problems arose as we worked on the multi-level set. One was that I had initially blocked Blind Pew to come from one of the tallest platforms from on stage, the actor then had to manipulate a staircase and then be in the way without helping the other pirates search the inn for Flint's Fist. Two, was even though we blocked the shot, we had a dead body again left on stage. Script-wise this worked out as the goodie crew quickly arrives to help Grandma and Jim but we had to make space in the fast-paced lines to remove the body before other characters' blocking was effected.

As the Blind Pew character developed, they ended up with a fully hooded costume and had beads decoratively covering their eyes since they were blind. In some regards, this made the actor fully blind, and they shut their eyes for long periods of time while on set. They were also equipped with a staff to use as a walking stick and so we spent time with the fight director to physically manipulate this actor on stage safely but effectively showcase that he was losing control of the situation and therefore needed to be killed. In a re-blocking session later in the process, I had the actor come from a stage floor entrance and moved their death by shooting to the lowest step on the platform to keep them more grounded and used the support of the rest of the pirate cast on stage to guide him safely through choreography.

## *Stage Combat*

Towards the end of November through the beginning of December, I started meeting with the fight director to discuss the stage combat needs of the show. Before our first meeting, I had pulled out eleven scenes that I thought would benefit from his expertise and opinion about the blocking I planned to craft with the cast. When I met with the fight director, he had one more and I had ultimately shown him a few more moments I would like him to check in on for me. We had listed out all of the fights, the basic idea of what needed to be covered in blocking to match the script, the moments that allowed space for our own creativity, and the assignment of weapons to each pirate and goodie crew member as needed if not specified in the script. There were two large combat moments that needed focus and added creativity: the knife and sword fight between Black Dog and Bill Bones and the almost full cast mutiny fight at the end of Act 1 when the Walrus crew takes the ship from the goodie crew.

On Wednesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> in the second week of rehearsal, we brought in the fight director and his assistants to help workshop the stage combat and choreograph these large fights. Due to the nature of the large moving set, the intricate and fanciful costumes, and the varied skills and talents of the cast members involved this took a significant amount of time. We spent almost twenty-five hours of rehearsal on combat and covered this roughly over seven days. We were able to divide and conquer; I took cast members into a separate rehearsal space to work on smaller moments, and stage combat could take place on the stage. The outcome of these fights drove the story and highlighted key talents of our cast and fight choreographers.

### *Dramaturgy in Rehearsal*

I asked our dramaturg to come visit during week 3 of rehearsals. I asked her to talk with the cast about the adaptation aspect that connected Robert Louis Stevenson's work through Bryony Lavery's. Now that we had the full show blocked, we were now at a point in our process to go back and work on the details and more grounded tablework for the show. The dramaturg led the discussion stating that Stevenson really created the narrative and adventure of *Treasure Island* for himself. Bryony Lavery then really worked to expand that sense of adventure and invite everyone to be a part of the story.

We moved to a character conversation about now that we have this great physicality, we can start to think internally about what is driving the goals of these characters. A key element that sparked great discourse with the cast is that she reminded them that most of the characters had existing relationships before the play started. This information then starts to inform your position in the world. If the cast saw two characters as friends in this scene, we need to think back on how and what this relationship was founded on and where we can move that forward. Her final gift to the cast was that she created a list of questions to inspire each character. An example of a few are the following:

Questions to inspire you:

- Job Anderson, when faced with drowning in the barrel, why does he decide to stay loyal to his wife?
- Why does Red Ruth agree to join the mutiny and then go back?
- What are other things the Long John Silver (LJS) want as much as treasure?
- Why does the Squire not have a good gauge of people and trust suspicious people?
- Why does the Captain not so easily trust?
- Why might the Doctor and the Captain find common ground?
- What individual qualities does Jim admire in the adults around her?

From this discussion, we began the designer run and found still more exciting choices in this first full run of the show. Afterwards I created a list of scenes that needed more work and that was our intended to plan for the rest of the week.

### *Snow Day and Dramaturgy*

On February 3rd and 4th, Waco, TX was hit with an ice and snowstorm that required the university to cancel all in-person meetings and moved to virtual work for two days. At the mid-way point of our process this was at first a crushing blow to have rehearsal canceled. We were on such a great energy high, and losing that team momentum felt catastrophic. If COVID-19 taught me anything, it's that though not ideal the world of zoom and virtual communication does have opportunities for real engagement and connection. I sent an email out to the cast after the university decided to cancel school and offered that we should take this time as a break from rehearsal to rest as this was a very taxing show. I also offered that the dramaturg and I would hold an open zoom session the length of rehearsal and be made available to talk with cast members about their characters or any questions they might have.

Though at first looked at as inconvenient, this opportunity was something I was seriously thankful for. At the start of the February 3<sup>rd</sup> zoom rehearsal I held a brief meeting with the dramaturg. We talked about the run she had seen that Monday and some notes she had as an outside observer that I found really enlightening. Then, in twenty-minute intervals, we met with the cast members.

The first actress we met with was the Doctor. She brought beautifully structured questions about her role in Jim's life. We discussed the balance of professionalism of the occupation and the maternal instincts this might inspire for the character towards Jim. We

talked about her oath in some way to work to not allow anyone in the goodie crew to suffer and her care and control she attempts to maintain throughout Act 2 even when she's lost all control. The actress seemed geared to continue to work on these subtleties and her presence when we returned to rehearsal was dynamic and bold.

The second actress we met with was the Captain. Gender inclusivity was a strong undercurrent that ran the length of the show and I knew the playwright's full scope of work. It was exciting to see this actress take on the role of Captain and discover what it meant to lead a full ship as female at this time. We discussed this was not just a female emulating a male but that there would have been a great deal of work and respect for her character to get to this role in their lifetime. This was such an incredible opportunity to see this character's growth when we went back to in-person rehearsals. There was this connection as the Captain saw the adventurous nature of Jim as a quality she also carried for herself. This Captain weighed the risks and fought for her ship and her crew until her own death in Act 2 where she stood between Long John Silver and her goodie crew.

The final actress we spoke to that evening was the one playing Jim. She was really struck by the inspiration question that our dramaturg asked at the beginning of our designer run: What individual qualities does Jim admire in the adults around her? Having reread the script, she came to the meeting highlighting why Jim would look up to the adults around her. She had stated that it was most obvious in the script her budding relationship and friendship with Long John Silver, but the women in her life and the pirates that formed her community had admirable qualities as well and would influence the upbringing of her character. As much as we had talked about inclusivity in representation and gender, Jim was also our invitation for children to see themselves on

the adventure. Something the actress wanted to explore was how she could incorporate more childlike moments into the story as an adult actress playing Jim. We discussed that maybe as we go back to work on the community scenes that like these admirable qualities the actress discovered, the character Jim would recognize them in her relationship with these other characters. When we went back to in-person rehearsal she found little games Jim would play with the regulars of the inn. When Jim went on the ship, she followed different pirate crew members and discovered more about the world and the ship she loved so much.

The actor playing Ben Gunn met with us next. This was one of the most physically demanding characters in the show as their scripted qualities included them being scrawny and comfortably rolling and crawling and climbing through the island's tunnel system. This character also had odd switches in their language that they would seem to talk to themselves and quickly filter through a wide range of emotions without prompting. It created a quirky character on paper and a large creative undertaking in person. This actor came in with questions about the cabin boy's experience prior to showing up in Act 2. We discussed that Ben Gunn would be familiar with all of the pirates and would have worked alongside them on *The Walrus*. His friendship with Long John Silver mirrors that of Jim and that Ben Gunn's and Jim's stories could easily be reversed. The dramaturg pointed out that Robert Louis Stevenson had also written the novel *Kidnapped*, and for all intents and purposes of our production we could assume that Ben Gunn inspired or was from that story. The actor was excited about showcasing moments where Ben Gunn's intelligence could shine as we moved forward. Ben Gunn ultimately creates the entire plan of killing the pirates by having them crash the treasure

around them and thus he saves the goodie crew. Ben Gunn also goes home with the goodie crew and we would look forward to developing his relationship with the other cast members in that final scene where he'd find a newfound family.

The final actor that met during this time (everyone met with us at some point in and out of rehearsal) was the actor doubled as Bill Bones and Dick the Dandy. He started our discussion by asking and answering why Bill Bones was so different from the rest of the pirate crew. A decision was made prior to the start of the show that Bill Bones had chose to run from the life of piracy and keep the other pirates from the treasure. There was also something innate about Bones that he was protective of Jim and Grandma even though he feared the pirates were on the way to him with the Black Spot and death. We discussed that in the hierarchy of the ship he would have traditionally been next in line over Long John Silver at the death of Captain Flint. We imagined that he would have known about the choice to send the six out to bury the treasure and witnessed the decisions and murder when they did not return. We imagined that maybe Bill Bones cared something for Ben Gunn and the loss of him, (as far as his character knew) might have shifted Bones' trajectory. When he meets Jim, like Silver, he might have seen a kindred spirit.

We also moved our discussion to incorporate Dick the Dandy. We amusedly realized that Dick the Dandy and Bill Bones would have known each other in real life, and it was funny to think that in this production we had one actor playing both. In our talks from rehearsal and some initial impressions, I thought that maybe Dick the Dandy had chosen the life of piracy because he was a third or fourth son of the aristocracy and something had happened to make force him to leave that community. Though that



backstory could have been dramaturgically supported, the actor was interested in explaining Dick's skill with knife work and knife throwing. We discussed with choices led by the actor that Dick was really a hired hitman and he had worked for the aristocracy. They had always looked down on him as lower than, and as he gained skill and compensation for his work, he took on mannerisms of the people he killed and worked for. This backstory was not so clearly printed for the audience to interpret but for the actor it really grounded their work. We ended our conversation by again bringing up that George Badger bids for leadership against Long John Silver and this was really Dick the Dandy's push. When we returned to rehearsal, we worked with the actors playing George Badger and Long John Silver to talk about setting up a tone of dissention between the two that Dick the Dandy could then pull apart in that bid for leadership in Act 2.

Overall, this "lost" time was crucial to the success of the show and the rest of our rehearsal process. I would like to think that as we incorporated the dramaturg so far, we would have found these types of discussions in rehearsal. Reflecting, I'm grateful for the time and the questions that guided our rehearsal when we returned to the stage.

### *Incorporating the Ensemble*

The next phase of our rehearsal process was incorporating more cast members to the smaller scenes. This was such an ensemble heavy show, but the text only included a few characters speaking in each scene. To flesh out the environment where these conversations were happening, inside a bustling inn, a working ship, and an amorphous island, we needed to incorporate the larger ensemble on stage.

### *Shadow Pirates*

In Act 1 Scene 2, as Jim narrates to the audience, she explains her fear of the one-legged man that Bill Bones warns is coming. In her lines she quotes, “He stays. He drinks mightily and watches always for this one-legged seafaring man who now lives in my nightmares! I think how he might have lost his leg!!!!”<sup>3</sup> The script then gives us time and stage directions to incorporate a dream like moment for Red Ruth to appear and supposedly chop off legs of the community. With the great height of the bridge along the back of the set, I was really interested in this becoming a moment of shadow play. In my discussions with the lighting designer, I talked about the possibility of doing heavy back or side lighting to allow the actors to just play in silhouette. With this idea, I worked with the actresses playing Red Ruth and Joan the Goat and the actors playing Job Anderson, Ben Gunn, George Badger, and Killigrew the Kind to enter this scene as more generic townspeople who might appear as regulars in the inn. I met with costuming to okay this addition and with them on board we got to work. Red Ruth is reported to be consistently hungry or eating throughout the script, with the use of large baguette we had the idea that she would “cut” the legs off these individuals in shadow and use the length of bread like an axe. The actors of Joan, George, and Killigrew played with this idea and responded to loss of their appendage with different falls and vocal reactions. As this moment is so quick as soon as Red Ruth had hit everyone in line the lights would change and the characters would laugh out of it as though they were drunks entering into the inn for a night out.

---

<sup>3</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, London: Samuel French, 2016. Pg. 4.

Jim's lines continue by saying, "Or was he always a monstrous kind of creature who never had but one leg and that in the middle of his body!" The actors playing Job Anderson and Ben Gunn were utilized in this same shadow moment, but I had Job Anderson push a cart (made by the props team) carrying the other actor onto the stage into the light. We used a long bottle with a stolen shoe from Job to look like a third appendage coming out of the character's stomach. With the lights switched back on, the actors played this moment as drunks playing keep away with the shoe and entered the scene bringing their own alcohol to the gathering.

In Act 1 Scene 5, Bones has just finished fighting with Black Dog. Bones has narrowly escaped with his life and the defeated pirate threatens to return with the rest of the crew. Jim has seen this and compromises with Bones that if he answers her questions about the Black Spot, she will give the grog he desperately asks for. This moment could have easily been staged between the two actors at the top of the inn, which would have been strong. However, I really saw this as an opportunity to utilize my devised theatre training to employ physical and visual storytelling with other actors as Bones explains the ghosts that haunt him. I utilized the actors playing Red Ruth, Job Anderson, Lucky Micky, Joan the Goat, Killigrew the Kind, George Badger, and Ben Gunn (playing himself) to create what I called "shadow pirates."

During rehearsal, I devised a short movement piece with the seven actors. We started by playing with the idea of a ghost walk inspired by the Suzuki practice. As in a Suzuki practice, we rooted our power and energy in their lower half of the bodies and pushed their center of gravities forward giving them an eerie pace of movement that appeared as though the actors were gliding or floating. As they were called in the story,

they represented a visual image of the crew that Bones lost when he last visited Treasure Island.

As Jim withholds grog, Bones then spills his secrets about the six trekking off to the island, the one-legged man, and the black spot that Bones says, “It is the thing that will enter my head and heart and take me through the doors of hell!”<sup>4</sup> As a group, we moved to work in the movement studio where the lighting could be dim and with the help of the assistant stage manager we used cellphone flashlights to create the side lighting we were anticipating. We wanted to create a visual image of the island, the one-legged man, and the black spot. As we played with the shadows made in the light, we created moving images to represent each.

### *A Storm of a Scene*

In Act 1 Scene 12, a large storm threatens the ship and the crew on it. I initially only called the actors playing Jim and Long John Silver to first block this scene. Though the focus is on Jim and Long John Silver saving her from the storm the text implied that there were a variety of characters on ship also being affected by the storm. I had a variety of ideas for this scene about how we could play with the movement of the storm. As I talked to the actors playing Jim and Long John Silver, I talked about the idea that the other pirates could really help play to create the waves crashing onto the deck of the ship. I started talking with the actors that as they said the lines, I blocked the other actors to drag the floor pieces apart and together. This created the effect that the waves were really breaking up the ship and highlighted the threat of the storm. After already talking to the

---

<sup>4</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, London: Samuel French, 2016. Pg. 16.

sound and lighting designer, I knew they planned to collaborate to create a storm environment with lightning and thunder and wave gobos crossing the stage floor with the mover light fixtures.

At our second rehearsal for this scene, I added in the rest of the cast. I incorporated the speaking pirates and others I knew had previously left the scene before and assigned them each to a floor piece. Our set was unique in that the set pieces were on plastic slide pieces so they could easily be dragged on the stage floor. I talked to the pirate actors and explained that we could pull and push the pieces apart to mimic the waves pressure on the ship. As we ran the lines again with Jim and Long John Silver and incorporated the movement of the floor pieces, we were starting to physically visualize the storm.

After a tech run, we went back into rehearsal, and I talked to the actors about watching the movement of the mover lights. They were rocking the wave images from stage left to stage right and we could match the movement with the set pieces. Then I incorporated more actors to the two large staircases on leading up to the bridge to allow those actors to make those set pieces rock back and forth in conjunction with their own bodies as they tried to accomplish tasks on the set. This was then all led by the Captain placed at the helm. From her height on set, she would be able to watch the floor pieces below and could move to the same rhythm. Then the goodie crew up there with her could match their own body pitches from side to side so they all seemed to be riding the same swell of a wave. The last incorporation was that I used the actor playing Grey, whose consistent comedic trait was that people forgot about him, could then come and pull the

sails up and down on their rope and pulley system making the entire set and crew look as though they are all wrapped up in the storm.

### *Serious Playground Injury*

We encountered some problems with blocking and the braking system of the set. To halt these large pieces, wedge blocks were used to be kicked into each side of the moving piece to bring it to a braked stop. During transition, the actors were in charge of moving the set pieces and braking them into place. In a touch up rehearsal, we were running the tag blocking once more. For this run through, a brake ended up dead center of the exit from the bottom step. As the pirates ran a “tag-like” blocking of a scene, the actor playing Killigrew the Kind accidentally landed on the misplaced brake. Having also had a previously injured ankle the impact of the jump on that angle caused injury to the actor. We held immediately, and the stage manager and I rushed to the actor. We asked if he wanted us to call medical services and he said “no” but he was breathing through some pain. I sent an assistant stage manager to get an ice pack and some water and instructed the stage manager to put everyone on break and get them to clear the space for the actor to determine how they wanted us to proceed. The actor ended up being able to move themselves with some assistance to a chair in the audience and were driven home by another actor. They didn’t want us to call anyone currently, but they planned to check with their doctor in the morning. I filed an incident report with the University and informed our theatre department's technical director and production manager. We then made plans to talk to the technical director about the brake system and discussed with the actors and stage management team moving the set that all brakes needed to be placed in the corners of the piece and never in the apparent walkway of the set and staircase. After

an almost half-hour break, we resumed the rehearsal and worked through smaller sections of the act after releasing several actors from rehearsal after the incident.

### *Actor Physicality*

Working with the actor playing Ben Gunn was an amazing opportunity to work distinct physicality. We knew from the text that Ben Gunn had only talked to himself for the past three years and that his physical trait of scrawniness had allowed him to escape through the tunnels found underneath the island. When the actor and I met for the first time, we really discussed this kind of wild frantic energy that the character innately had in their own speech patterns. I really wanted to focus on this in a physical way too. We started out talking about the world that Ben Gunn lived in and we felt that he would be really comfortable close to the ground since he had enjoyed living in the tunnels for so long. We thought his center of gravity would be held much lower as a child. We knew that his flexibility would be a lot higher than that of an adult and so we played with the idea that he might roll and crawl across the ground matching the tunnel physicality with the life above. This rehearsal was a workout. The actor initially played with frog-like movements for the character but it didn't seem to grasp all of the qualities of Ben Gunn. Also, the frog jumps didn't fit with the tunnel world and we needed a physicality that spoke to a life of scavenging. Also, we knew his costume was being influenced from the island around him. Therefore, we knew that he was familiar with the foliage on the ground level of the set.

A real struggle was matching the language with the physicality. We met in the movement studio during our first rehearsal to use the dance floor for softer padding while stage combat had taken over stage. We were thinking about the language and our

metaphor was that Ben Gunn was really experiencing that time in your life when all of your emotions are at the forefront of your mind, like the Disney movie *Inside Out*. He was racing, so his thoughts were racing and his speech was exasperated, excited, and quick. We played with the idea that his thoughts would escape him. His language is sporadic in the text itself, switching from emotion on a dime, and sometimes asking and answering his own questions.

He combined these ideas with the text that influenced him to work with a low physicality. We knew that this character chose to dive headfirst into the tunnels from reading the script. Starting from this point, we started the scene of blocking as though he had just emerged from the tunnel. Keeping buoyancy and a lack of body tension, we were able to capture a physicality of rolls and tucks that made him seem light and frantic while also controlled as an actor to hit the specified blocking. For his blocking we really talked in terms of areas. This allowed the actor to follow their own instincts as he arrived at the correct pimple of the island. As we rolled around, we were quite excited about the ways he could search for cheese, scare the pirates, and find his newfound friend Jim.

### *Dramaturgy and Character Building*

In our run throughs, we would spend the time to stop and work scenes as problems arose. Especially, as we had blocked the entire show so quickly to start building in the mechanics, the run throughs really acted as our opportunity to stop and refocus. Our dramaturg came into several rehearsals, but one was to speak with me about the pirates. I really wanted each of the pirates to have distinct physicality since their characters worked more as a unit. Their lines would create full sentences together and



other than their limited dialogue, their names were the biggest clues into their backgrounds.

From auditions, I had cast the show with actors who continuously made strong physical choices. The dramaturg helped us remain focused to go back and layer the many relationships in play through the script. We talked about who within the pirates might have friendships over others. We talked about that as a group of outsiders who might also still feel left out. Outside of Long John Silver, the pirates also needed to determine their relationships with the goodie crew. Who might they want to save in the defection of the Walrus crew from the Hispaniola? What is your relationship to Squire who has money and no work ethic and the Doctor and Captain who have work ethic but are not the initial leaders of the crew? Who do you look to as you search the caverns for treasure? As a superstitious lot, who do you decide could help you and who would hurt you? These large questions led us to our work with George Badger. This actor has a strong sense of the use of their body to take up space and support an ensemble. He also had many questions on how to connect his name of Badger to his physicality. We worked with the idea that a badger weaves his body and spine to move and how might that simply effect Badger's own posture. We also talked about how this character might burrow and hide and steal like a Badger but for his own gain. In Act 2 he bids for leadership of the Walrus against Long John Silver. In the novel, his character is more fleshed out to make this charge but, in the script, Lavery's writing style of only keeping the essentials drops to just a showing of mistrust between Badger and Silver.

We then incorporated some moments of tension between Silver and Badger as we worked back from their introductions. As I worked with the actor playing Badger, we

also found moments for this character to crawl from under the set piece, find intriguing entrances from a new location every time, and play with found and stolen objects throughout their combat and onto the island.

### *Technical Rehearsals*

As we moved into technical rehearsals, the cast was generally very excited to add this final piece to our process before performances. With such a large show, we went into a two-day cue to cue that turned into three days. I felt the cast was prepared for this step but with the size of the cast and the amount of technical aspects added was at first a little overwhelming. We started by running our full fight call which took about an hour and half the first go round. We then moved to meet with our pyrotechnician with the actors shooting the gun and discussed the safety and blocking of each of those three shots. We worked them with all the cast on stage to get the appropriate staging and space for the shot to always be fired at a distance. Though it's more of a firecracker pop at the end, it is always better to err on the side of caution by allowing more distance than not. Many details of the technical elements added have been addressed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. In technical rehearsals our challenges centered around finalizations of these technical elements. The sound and lighting designers had the opportunity to collaborate with the actors as they made decisions moving from rehearsal into performance.

The process ran relatively smoothly but with over 100 light cues and even more sound cues for each act the cue to cue lasted over three days. We finally went into a full-dress rehearsal on that Friday before opening and that would be the last opportunity to work without an audience. We had invited the University's next mainstage cast to see the

show on the following dress rehearsal and department preview would be the following Monday.

### *COVID-19 Masking Policy*

As I mentioned, due to the University policy the actors and crew had been fully masked for the entire rehearsal process. Regarding the department policy, I was allowed to make the decision to unmask for technical rehearsals to manage their reactions and see the full look of the show with hair and make-up. Unmasking for the first time was bizarre. For the most part, I had not even seen the actors faces since auditions. As we were doing fight call for the first time without them, I made the comment that they needed to act with their face too. The company laughed; some giggles and lightheartedness were apparent.

The actors would now be allowed to remain unmasked for all technical rehearsals and the performances of the show. However, I was firm that they needed to put their masks back on once they left the stage and all crew members, technicians, and stage managers working on the production would always wear masks. Coincidentally, the University was also reevaluating their own mask policy and the Monday of our department preview they lifted the mask policy. Our stage management and costume crew would continue to remain masked for our department policy due to their interaction with the actors in close quarters. We would also still post signs stating that we highly encouraged our audience to remain masked for the performance.

### *Conclusion*

The rehearsal as process was highly successful as we incorporated so fully the backstory to over 20 characters through an ensemble of 18 actors. Their willingness to play with the magical qualities of this storybook adventure was beautifully blended into the large spectacle of the show's technical elements. The goal was to inspire the cast and crew that as we were telling a story about community, they were also exploring that idea in this collaborative process. We were also furthering Hutcheon's idea of adaptation as process in our own way. We would not have been able to include all the elements that the National Theatre could on their first production of *Treasure Island*. Instead, we were able to utilize the text to support our style of this presentational story and bring the audience along with us.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Performances: Critiques and Reflections

#### *Introduction*

Baylor University Theatre's production of *Treasure Island* opened on February 22, 2022 and held six performances between the 22<sup>nd</sup> through 27<sup>th</sup> of February with approximately 1200 people in attendance. *Treasure Island* hosted a sold-out audience for the entire run of the show. In addition, one of the performances was interpreted into American Sign Language (ASL). This chapter explores the performances of the show and audience response, critiques from the Baylor Theatre faculty, and my own self-reflection on this project. The goal of this chapter is to reflect on the process of directing *Treasure Island* and to consider the effectiveness of the overall production.

#### *Performances and Audience Response*

On Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, tickets went on sale for *Treasure Island*. By mid-day that same Monday we had sold-out our entire Sunday performance. By the weekend we had sold out Saturday and by the following Wednesday the entire run was sold out. We were working going into Baylor's first sold out run of a performance since before COVID-19. The excitement was palpable.

Moving from technical rehearsals to the performance run was quite a feat. As the addition of the technical elements was so large, it really felt like the first few performances were further rehearsals. As a process-oriented director, performance was always going to be presenting where we were right then and there would always be room

for improvement. Our flow into opening night was rather interesting as we had live audiences for our two final dress rehearsals as well. The Sunday before opening we invited the cast of Baylor Theatre's next mainstage production to attend since they would not be able to see the show due to their rehearsal conflicts. On the Monday before opening, we hosted a small department preview and invited students and faculty to see the show. After a packed technical rehearsal schedule and then these invited audience runs, I did not have enough time to work everything I would have liked as we attempted to seamlessly combine the mechanical and performative elements of the show.

As we moved into opening night energy was high. The cast was so excited to share the story with a full audience that we had all been preparing for. The audience was very quiet that night. The cast reflected after that they expected more laughter and that as a presentational performance, they expected more energetic response from the audience. From my observation, I felt as though the audience looked to be mostly Baylor students. There are several introduction to theatre courses that were requiring their students to see our production and I know that that also helped drive our ticket sales. If this was a someone's first theatre experience, or even their first experience in a long time due to COVID-19, an "audience aware" show might seem a little jarring. The audience seemed to be happy to talk to each other about the show as you could audibly hear them gasping and whispering as the pirates were introduced, gun shots were fired, or tense moments led by music were played out. However, they were quiet to react out loud or laugh at the comedy of the piece.

In terms of the performance side, I had several notes that I reached out to the cast and crew individually about as things we just hadn't quite addressed enough times in tech

to get it right. As I was waiting in the lobby to say goodbye to the cast and then go to check in with stage management, a gentlemen came up to speak to me after being told that I was the director for the piece. He was a previous technical director for Baylor Theatre, and he wanted to congratulate me on the show and the beauty of my transitions. He expressed that with all that was going on stage and the large size of the transition itself he was thrilled at the intricacy of incorporating sea shanties and the movement of the cast as a crew to make the large scenic shifts. As this was an element we had worked tirelessly on, and I knew that it would either halt or continue the flow of energy of the show it was great to hear that for night one we had succeeded.

### *Challenging Middle Runs*

For night two and three of the performances we grappled with two major issues during the runs. On Wednesday, February 23 during the transition after the defection scene, we have an actor drowned on stage in a barrel of grog. As I've said, moving the dead bodies off stage was a persistent directorial challenge. Our blocking was that during the transition lighting, I had two pirates carry the body offstage as the other scenic pieces moved on stage to go into the large mutiny scene at the end of Act 1. To check the path of their exit, the actor looked back and ran headfirst into the cross bracing of the bridge platform. At intermission, the actor checked in with stage management and reported feeling dizzy and was sporting a decent goose egg on their head.

Our protocol for actor injury is to reach out to medical services and the campus police for them to be checked out before they continue with the run. In this instance, it took a while for us to reach the appropriate medical services. Baylor rerouted our call to EMS and then back to Baylor police. As head injuries can be very serious, I immediately

moved to taking control of what I could in the situation. I left the injured actor with the EMT, production manager, and stage manager. I directed the assistant stage managers and remaining crew to continue with the scenic transition and I called all the remaining cast into the movement studio. I briefly explained that the actor had been injured and that though I felt they would ultimately be fine, we needed to make a contingency plan if they could not continue with the performance tonight. I pulled out the script and we quickly ran through some line changes. We talked about how to reblock the remaining scenic transition and the lift of one final dead character. The cast responded with alacrity and calm. Right as we broke up the meeting, the production manager came to speak to me and informed us the actor had been medically cleared to continue. After talking with the actor, I made it clear that they had no obligation to perform. They could rest tonight and come back tomorrow stronger. The actor said they understood but would like to perform. We ended up extending intermission an additional fifteen minutes. Our audience never said a word about the inconvenience and the house manager reported that no one left or had a concern about the extended wait.

On Wednesday, stage management and myself called to check on the actor and they reported that they felt fine and confident to continue the run. I called in the fight director to show up for fight call in addition to our two fight captains to observe the actor and be on the lookout for concerns or be ready to address the blocking of the fight if the actor changed how they were feeling. After checking with the actor, they requested no changes and proceeded with the show.

Wednesday night's performance we dealt with another accident. In the scene towards the beginning of Act 1, Black Dog comes to demand the return of Flint's Fist



from Bones in the end. In the blocking we have the actor playing Black Dog slam a bottle of grog that they have been handed by Jim on a crate for emphasis. Later in that same scene, they also slam down a grog stein on the same barrel. When the actor went to slam the grog stein, the reverberation from the impact must have caused the glass to shatter. To the audience, it looked as though in anger the character had shattered a bottle of grog at the beginning of the fight. Unfortunately, as this scene also has a long fight sequence followed by other stage combat moments in that space on stage the water and glass was a huge concern.

As I had a large ensemble cast, I was able to direct stage management to ask the actress playing Mrs. Crossley to go on and clean the floor in character. We sent her with a wet cloth, hand broom, and dustpan. She was able to get most of the glass and clear out before the heavy sword fight started. When we transitioned into the harbor scene, once the actor playing Grey was hired, as he's a character that is easily ignored, he finished the job. At intermission stage management was able to do a full clean up and mopped the stage.

The audience reception after was that many people thought it was a part of the action and that we had paid for breakable glass for the stage. Though some reported that they noticed Mrs. Crossley cleaning, few reported that Grey also cleaned. Those that did thought it was a part of the joke that he would blend into the background and be able to clean the mess on stage.

### *War and a Need for an Adventure*

On Thursday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Americans learned that Russia had invaded the Ukraine and was planning to attack major cities. In Waco, Texas on the opposite side of

the world we were facing another potential snow day and the University had canceled class for the morning with a return to campus allowed by 2pm. Overall, the casts and my impression of the audience was that they seemed subdued. I briefly talked to them backstage at intermission. We had a sold-out show and audience had arrived despite the road challenges and the world news we had all received that day. I really believed this was our opportunity to cherish how much of a privilege what we are doing is, that we needed to tell this story about forming strong community more than ever and that we were impacting the people that came to see our show.

I sent an email to our cast following the run to reflect on what we had just gone through and to boost morale as we went into the weekend performances,

Wow, we are halfway there! I can't believe it! I want to send a quick note to you because I never really get to talk to all of you at once anymore. The worst part about directing is that I've worked so closely with all of you and at performance they just want me to disappear. (Sorry I can't.) I just want to say how PROUD I am of you! That every night I'm still so thrilled to share this story.

I want to acknowledge that what we are doing is not easy. I want to acknowledge that the world we live in is in constant turmoil surrounding the idea of community and acceptance. That can seem so heavy. I'm not in any way asking you to ignore your feelings or stresses but I want you to know there is a lot of joy and fun being found in what we are presenting on stage and I think we should lean into that.

Remember on day one, when I told you this is a process. Can we remind ourselves that it still is? We are presenting our best selves where we are now. We anticipate feedback, we anticipate that we are not perfect and we did not plan to be.

Every night someone has asked me if I'm nervous. Every night I say no. Then every night, something new happens and we manage it! We continue to collaborate and work as a team. I'm so impressed with you all! Because then every night plenty of people, even our quietest audience, tell me this is the best show they've ever seen. That they needed an adventure right now. They needed to meet your quirky characters. They needed you! You have an amazing show! It's yours! But remind yourselves that you are not pirates. (haha) You are people and you need to take care of yourself first to be a pirate every night. We need to take care of the set that brings us on our journey. We need to take care of our props that help us find the

treasure we are actually seeking, and we need to take care of our costumes that help us dissociate from the everyday world to enter a storybook about finding community.

Thank you for being the TREASURE I was seeking all along! I'm so proud of you and the work you each add to make this show special. Let's hit this packed weekend at full energy and volume. We have quite a story to share and I hope you remind yourselves about the joy of doing so!

We also received a few patron emails that night as well,

‘Greetings! I attended your Treasure Island production last evening the 24<sup>th</sup> and wanted to email you all to say how fabulous that theatre experience was for me! Wow!!! Everything, from the lobby to lighting was outstanding and excellent!!!! I love a great performance, costumes, sets, make-up, expressions, etc. as it brings me joy to observe every little detail on stage. I could not believe how talented each and every one was in their role.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for blessing me with such a fun outing last night. May you all be blessed in every way in all your endeavors!’

It was nice to receive support unprompted and that we had accomplished our job as storytellers even if it was only for one person. Though I know based off feedback from family and friends and the cast and crew’s family that they needed this too.

### *Weekend Runs*

We needed an energy restart as we went into the weekend performances.

Typically, the crowds are more friendly and exuberant, and we needed to pick up the pace. The weekend shows were our best runs. We performed for packed and responsive crowds. They laughed at our jokes, our smaller adlibbed moments. They were entranced with the physicality of the actors and the audibly gasped when they thought Long John Silver would shoot Jim right at the end. For our Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> performance we had ASL interpreters and set up special lights for them. The patrons were family members to one of the cast and I was able to move them to a better seat for a key moment of action involving that cast member so that they could see her. We had a standing

ovation for both the Saturday and Sunday performances, and I was so grateful for the response to a show well done.

### *Critiques*

The faculty feedback for the show was unanimous in the agreement that the show was visually stunning. I was given high praise for the physicality of the actors and the management and leadership shown with performers and designers. The show was cohesive and well received. One theatre faculty member noted that the audience came to have a good time and they did. They explained that the show was well framed with the lobby designs and director note to the overall presentation of the production. The show was exciting visually and I kept the team excited through the length of the full process. This faculty member noted that most of the design aspects worked, however they had some concerns with the costuming. This was parroted by another faculty member in terms that they did not like the hat that Long John Silver wears at the beginning of Act 2. It was large and rather silly and not something we would really expect our development of the character Long John Silver to wear. I understood that but I thought it was a tad silly on purpose. There was a joy in this moment of ridiculousness before we see the cold turn of Long John Silver in Act 2.

Another faculty member felt that I still had some work to do in terms of the transitions. This was noted by an additional faculty member, and that I just needed more time. I would absolutely agree. While I was praised for fitting the puzzle of a set together and incorporating the sea shanties and starting to drive the rhythm of the show, there was more work that could have been done. That was a time constraint. Also, as we didn't add

costuming and all of the technical elements till the week before the performance, which is normal, for this tech heavy show it was not enough time.

Really the main critiques were centered around the added design and technical elements. I have to say that I took this with a grain of salt. As a collaborative director, I was really working to say yes to added elements. I loved the opportunity to work them into the production and try to support them in their addition. It didn't always work and maybe I should have cut them. However, for what the show was and as a process over product oriented, I was happy to receive the feedback as something I would look to change in the future.

My advisor provided a note that from beginning to end the leads hit the right tone of telling the story. This was something I had really worked to incorporate as both would tell you they get into their heads a lot. They worked really hard to build the psychology of the character, but I consistently encouraged them to play with the physicality and remember to play through the story. My advisor noted that Jim was bold over boyish, and this kept that script supported with the confusion of ambiguity of Jim's gender but really solidified that really this show supports the female empowerment undertone of the show.

Many of the faculty exclaimed that I had cast the show well. They didn't have doubts before but that I brought a variety of students actors at different levels of experience forward to tell a united story. One faculty member went so far as to say that this might have been the most physically technical show she had ever seen and was impressed with the mobility of the actors and the set pieces. This established such a strong variety of different forms of physicality played out by the actors. Due to her seat in the audience in section five, some moments were difficult to hear. This is due to thrust

style of the stage and the height of the space carries the actor's voice upwards rather than out to the audience.

Several faculty members talked about the ambition of this thesis project due to the literary nature, the scope, the gender swap from the original story, and the cast size. Ultimately it was a success and worked well for the theatre it was performed in. One noted that occasionally tonally, the characters didn't seem to be in the same play but this was one of the strongest movement pieces they've seen at Baylor in terms of physicality and stage combat, which I share credit with the fight director on that.

The design tech faculty and mentors for the production congratulated me on my communication with the designers. The team effort towards rehearsal, tech, and then performance was wonderful. One faculty member brought forward the idea that though I was present for every performance and that was not typical of a director. It was different having this be my thesis and in an educational setting. For the performance aspect, as a director, I would typically have taken a step back but as I was in the audience every night and was able to jump up and help as the situations addressed earlier transpired. That's not typical and though that shifted the chain of command back to me in that moment I was able to step up during the case where an actor was injured. I could stay objective enough to solve the problems from the outside since I didn't have a set task during performance. The feedback was that of course in the future to let the show play its course without my influence. I will just say that as a part of an educational environment, these weekday performances very much feel like rehearsals still and that might be a disconnect or disassociation I will have to work on.

One designer mentor was pleased with my incorporation of the new design process and the development of vision boards the designers created. I let the designers come to me with their ideas first and got their thoughts and then moved forward. This allowed for space at the table for everyone to feel welcome to come and play. The technical process was quite challenging, the space could have been frenetic and tense, but I kept it focused and calm. I consistently felt as though I was learning alongside them and that these discoveries, even if not fully fleshed out by performance, made us stronger as collaborators.

A musical theatre faculty member appreciated that I talked about my music direction needs early and would encourage me to invite them into my future productions so that they can conceptualize the music needs. For this show, with the sea shanties, I worked with a music supervisor and music director. She loved the input I allowed the designers on the show but some of the displays were so large contextually that she empowered me to say no and ground the choices further. In relation to my music choices and working with a music director and sound designer collaborating in the same space, I could have taken more control over the choices and narrowed their scope.

The graduate program director, said “good show.” His notes were geared towards talking about what could happen if I had two more weeks to expand the process. He enjoyed the presentational nature of the show and the interaction between actors and audience. He encouraged with more time there could have been more, or the actors could have made stronger connections with the audience. He enjoyed the transitions but didn’t necessarily connect them to the world of the play. I agree that they weren’t a perfect

match but with more time or stronger guidance in what I wanted from the beginning it could have been accomplished.

One faculty member noted that I had pulled some strong performances from actors in roles that they had not previously seen. I created really heightened physicality for all these individual actors and really brought out new strengths in cast members. They mentioned that though there was a lack of consistency in the dialect work, there were exciting vocal choices being made by the actors and that stood out successfully. I agreed and admitted that I sacrificed the consistency of the dialects to better support the physicality of the actors and the storybook nature of the show. The use of space was very strong, and it was obvious my rehearsal process explored the space. There were so many opportunities made available to me with the set and she saw a great play with all of them rather than playing it safe and only exploring a few options.

### *Post-Mortem*

After every show in our department, we meet as a company to discuss the process of the show and its impact on this and future productions. From this meeting, came two very distinct pieces of information I plan to carry with me as I continue. The first is that not every actor is equipped with the knowledge of actor advocacy. Though that should not necessarily fall on me, there could easily be space in the process to explain the chain of commands and how and who you can reach out to for help. With the injuries sustained by the cast and the varied levels of experience, my collaborative process would have benefited from an actor equity captain in the cast. Due to the educational environment and COVID-19 altering our theatrical practice for the last few years, students did not know all of their options for how to raise concerns. When it came to technical rehearsals,



some felt that they were there to support the tech rather than the story and I believe that was a part of an underlying communication issue.

The second concept I will never forget is that if I have the opportunity to work with a fight director or specialized choreographer again, I will bring them earlier into the design process. The entire production team could have benefitted from hearing the feedback and needs of the fight director at preliminary designs. This could have helped costuming prioritize rehearsal needs and scenic anticipate problems with their build and our sets braking system. Looking back, we could not have known.

Overall, the show was amazingly well received. The faculty unanimously felt that our show had captured the adventure we were setting out on. The large spectacle moments were well choreographed and supported. The largest compliments I received were about my own directing style. That as it was so collaborative that can sometimes lack specific direction. However, I had really proven myself as an adept leader while allowing all the artists involved to present their best selves. Into the tech process though issues arose, I kept the environment calm and addressed issues as they came up.

### *Conclusion*

I think of Jim's quote that culminates the climax of the show with her realization,

Three things...

One... I was not quite grown up enough for some of this yet...

Two...

Grandma!

Grandma... wouldn't take a penny that wasn't hers!

Even when she was starving even when I was starving!

"My dues and not a farthing more!"

O Jim, Grandma would hate you if you were a pirate!

You are Jim Hawkins...

Honest granddaughter to honest Grandma Hawkins and NO  
PIRATE!!!

No pirate at all but  
Three I was a ...  
A pirate fighter holding a pistol from a lying pirate!!!<sup>1</sup>

Directing this play gave me the opportunity to understand adaptive work and that it is a continuous process. Utilizing Hutcheon's theory of adaptation, I was able to make my own adaptive decisions that further pushed the relevancy of the story and the inclusive nature of the script for today's audience. As I theoretically interpreted the play, the actor's brought it to life.

Though this is the largest show I've directed that was also shown to live audience, we did some incredible work as we explored the endless possibilities. Establishing a collaborative process early inspired a rehearsal room and performance that was exciting and accessible. This coming-of-age story mirrored the growing pains the production felt as we navigate live-theatre through the COVID-19 pandemic. Through accidents, snowstorms, and difficult technical rehearsals I found I valued most the detail work and lessons learned to push forward for the next production. I believe the work we created with *Treasure Island* was successful, exciting, and adventurous and I walk away from the experience thankful for it looking forward to how decisions made in this production will influence my direction in the future.

---

<sup>1</sup> Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson. *Treasure Island*. London: Samuel French, 2016. Page 103.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### French Scenes

A French Scene is determined due to entrances and exits of characters and large scenic shifts in the scenes of the play.

Example: Act 1, Scene 14, Pgs. 54-58

French Scene 48

JIM: (heads for the apple barrel...)

Everyone was in the bravest of spirits that night  
we should sight our Treasure Island...

GREY: (on deck...) Look!

Albatross!

Can anybody else see it?

Can anybody here?

Grey here?

(But no one can.)

French Scene 49

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

Drink and the devil had done for the rest

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

The mate was fixed by the bosun's pike

The bosun brained with a marlin spike

The cooky's throat was marked be like

It had been gripped by fingers ten

And there they lay, all good dead men

Like break o'day in a boozing ken

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

French Scene 50

JIM: For once I should like one of the doctor's apples.

(Goes to the apple barrel...)

There was still some in the very bottom of the...

(Climbs in.)

THE MAP!!!

O Clever Doctor!

(SILVER, PARROT, BLACK DOG, KILLIGREW, JOAN, DICK,  
BADGER and HANDS burst in around it...)

French Scene 51

SILVER: Black Dog!

JIM: Black Dog?!

SILVER: Open that barrel!

The map's nowhere to be found!

That cabin girl ain't coughing its location!

Time for mathematics, mutineers!

PARROT: Stand by to go about!

SILVER: Well said, Captain Flint!

French Scene 52

(JOAN THE GOAT, DICK DANDY, and KILLIGREW manhandle in  
JOB ANDERSON, RED RUTH, and LUCKY MICKY.)

Explain the maths, Black Dog.

BLACK DOG: Well, landlubber...?

You going to join along of us...

JOB ANDERSON: I'm joining a mutiny, Black Cat!

BLACK DOG: Black Dog! Join and swim, ploughman?

JOB ANDERSON: I can't swim and I won't join damn your black heart!

SILVER: Drown him!

JOB ANDERSON: Not the sea not the sea!!!

(SILVER points to...)

BLACK DOG: No, not the sea... Swim in this!!!

(They take him, hold him over a barrel of brandy...)

JOB ANDERSON: Not brandy! I swore to lemonade! I swore to my old  
lady I wouldn't take strong spirits...(But they dunk him. He drowns)

JOAN THE GOAT: One less against us, Silver.

French Scene 53

SILVER: Then, get another...i

KILLIGREW: Get the Pie Eater!

RED RUTH: No! I think it weren't me as ate that last pie!

BADGER: I think it were!

BLACK DOG: We're for gold not pie, peasant!

Gold!

ISRAEL HANDS: Me deja filete a este loma de cerdo, Silver! [Let me  
fillet this loin of pork for you, Silver!]

DICK: With us, or against us?

RED RUTH: Squire's been good to me...

BLACK DOG: With us or against us?

SILVER: Against us... any suggestions, Captain Flint...?

PARROT: Peck her eyes out

Peck her eyes out.

BLACK DOG: Eyes and pies with us... or no eye no pies with them?

RED RUTH: Eyes and pies! With!

BLACK DOG: Sit down there along us.

SILVER: Next!

French Scene 54

(They bring LUCKY MICKEY.)

ISRAEL HANDS: (Spanish...) Fillet? Escalope? Rib eye?

BLACK DOG: Lucky Mickey Or Unlucky Mickey?

MICKY: Lucky Mickey!!!

BLACK DOG: Sit down along of us.

SILVER: Two. Odds is turning to evens. How I do love the pleasure of pure mathematics. This deserves grog!!!

RED RUTH: Any biscuit with that...?

French Scene 55

SILVER: We are all that's left alive of The Walrus crew. This treasure is rightfully and fairly ours.

We've lost eyes fingers legs brains

We followed Squire Posh to Bristol, I find you all gainful employment so.

DICK THE DANDY: The crew of The Walrus become...

LUCKY MICKY: The crew of The Hispaniola!!!(Roar of laughter...)

SILVER: Thanks to who?

DICK: Thanks to you John Silver!!

SILVER: We are now the majority... We near the island...(ALL quiet and scared...)

BADGER: Where our six shipmates vanished so strangely...

DICK: And now do seem to...

JOAN: Walk in our heads dush dush dush...

KILLIGREW: Like ghosts...

HANDS: Fantasmas!!!

SILVER: Which is as nothing to who walks my head always!!!

BLACK DOG: Flint!!!

SILVER: Flint my captain! Who I killed in his bed. For why?

BADGER: For treasure, Silver.

SILVER: For treasure for who?

BLACK DOG: For us, Long John.

SILVER: For you I endure in dark of nights our dead captain... watching me...but... we are very near to grasping Flint's Fist... We tread careful, at first sight of that map. We...

JOAN: Dush!

BADGER: But when?

SILVER: The last moment I can manage that's when.

I've set foot already on that island, I know it well! So... We subtract and smile until we shake hands at last with Flint's Fist...Goat and Dog...

find us another swab to persuade...Perhaps...Grey

Dick...

You must jump up, like a sweet lad

And get me one of spindly-girlboy's apples to wet my pipe like...

(And as DICK's hand reaches in barrel and almost touches JIM's face...)

French Scene 56

GREY: Land ho!

## APPENDIX B

### Units

Each French Scene is broken down into several units. Each unit focuses on a subject and has an aggressor and a defender.

#### Example:

French Scene #85 (In Act 2, Scene 7 Pgs. 95-97)

Unit #1: Aggressor – Jim; Defender – Silver

Unit #2: Aggressor – Jim; Defender – Silver

Unit #3: Aggressor – Silver; Defender – Jim

Unit #4: Aggressor – Silver; Defender – Jim

Unit #5: Aggressor – Jim; Defender – Silver

Unit #6: Aggressor – Silver; Defender – Jim

Unit #7: Aggressor – Silver; Defender – Jim



## APPENDIX C

### Stevenson's Map of Treasure Island

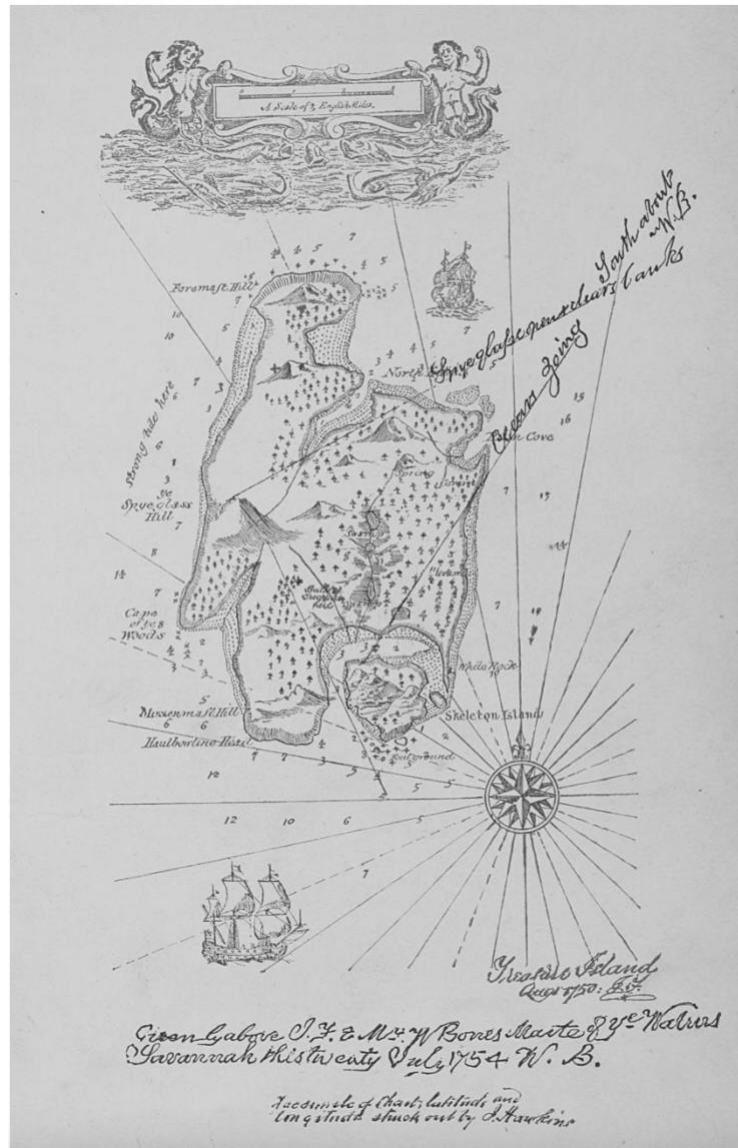


Figure C.1 - Robert Louis Stevenson, map in *Treasure Island* (London: Cassell, 1883)

## APPENDIX D

### Research and Design Images

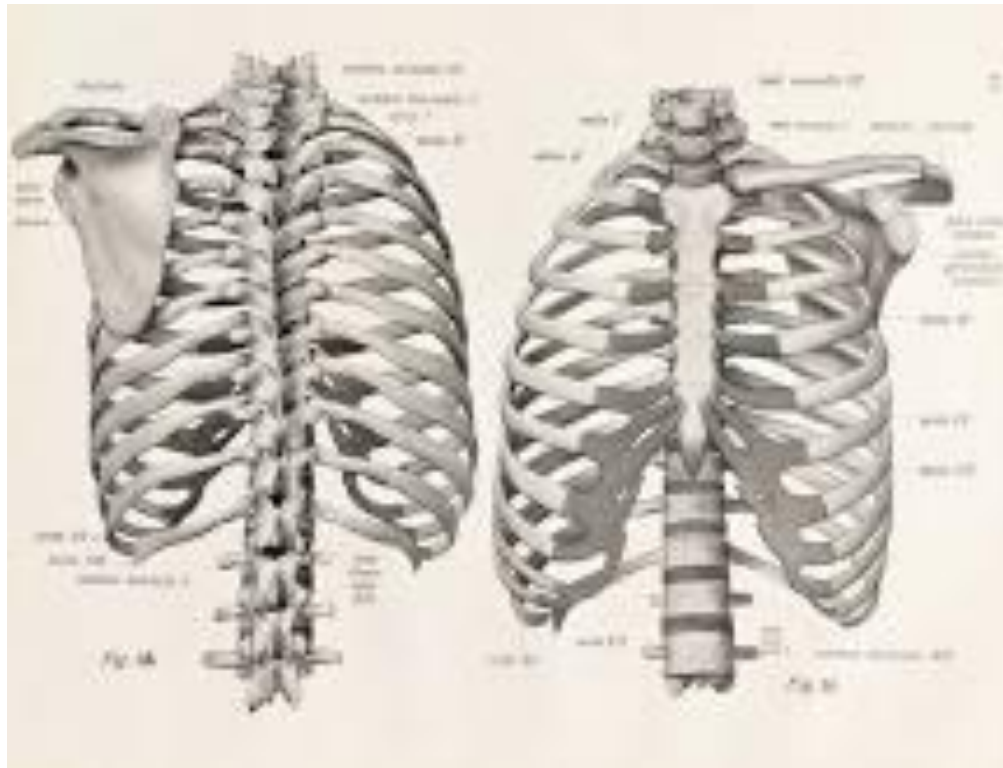


Figure D.1. Research image of a ribcage that helped inspire the directorial concept.



Figure D.2. Research image of skeletons and treasure that helped inspire the directorial concept.



Figure D.3. Research image of a shipwreck ribcage that helped inspire the directorial concept.



Figure D.4 – Lobby display case highlighting the history of piracy and female pirates.



Figure D.5 – The ship model housed in the lobby as an interactive audience display.



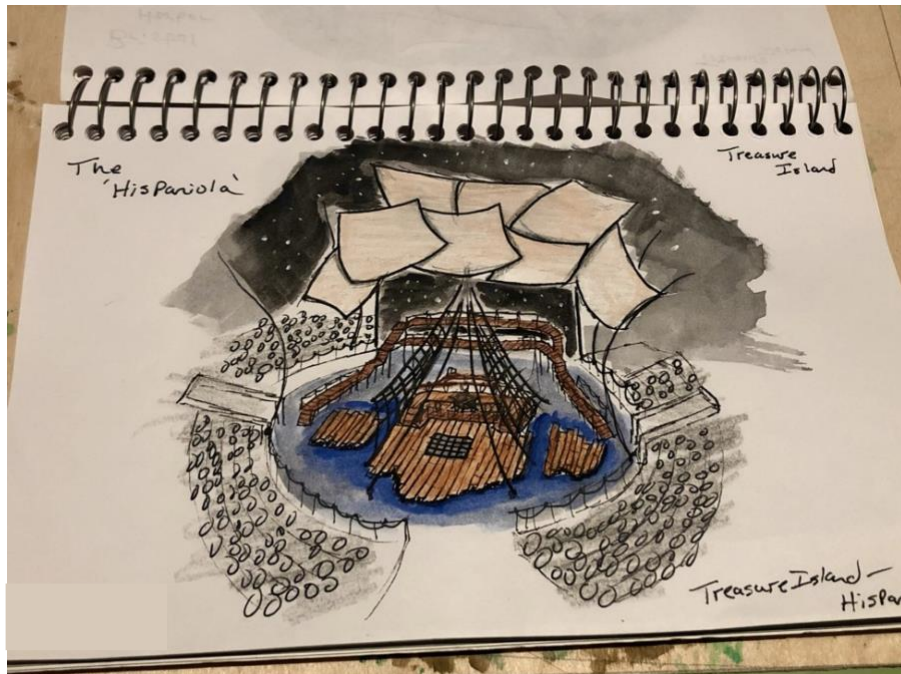


Figure D. 6 – Preliminary sketch of the ship from September 21.

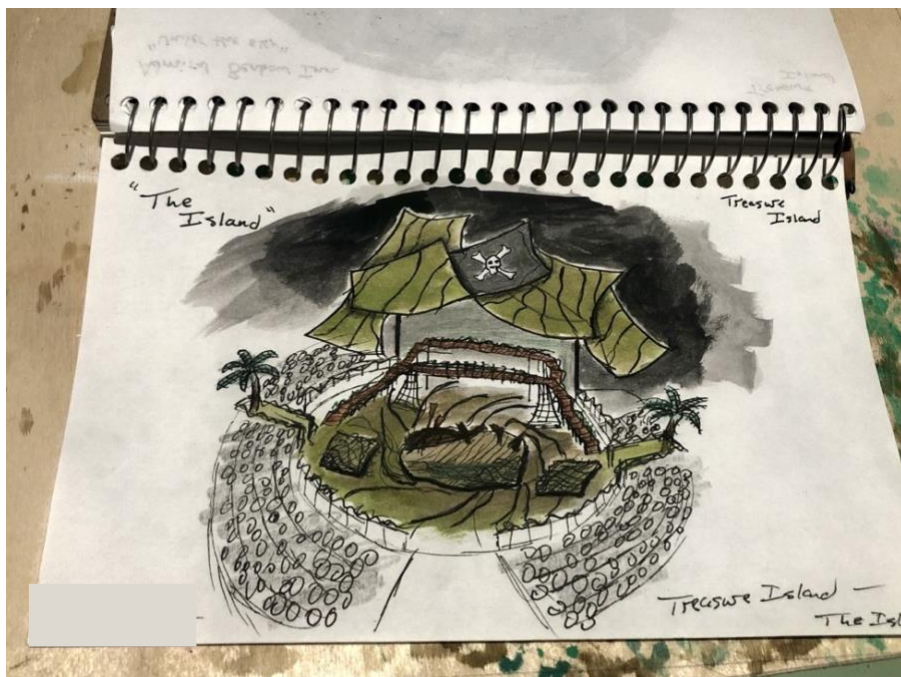


Figure D.7 – Preliminary sketch of the island from September 21

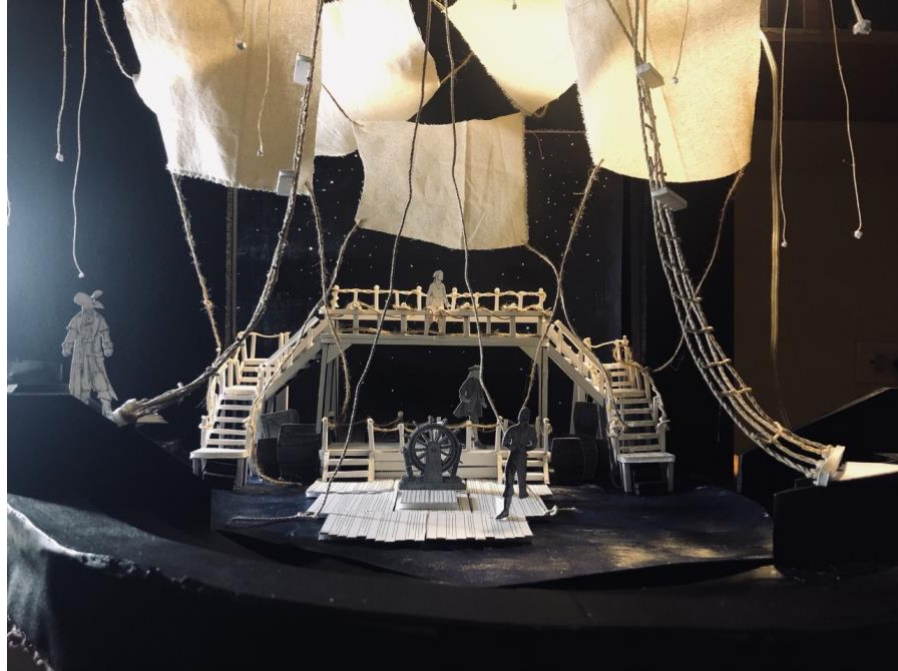


Figure D. 8 – Preliminary design for the ship in Act 1



Figure D.9 – Preliminary design for the island in Act 2

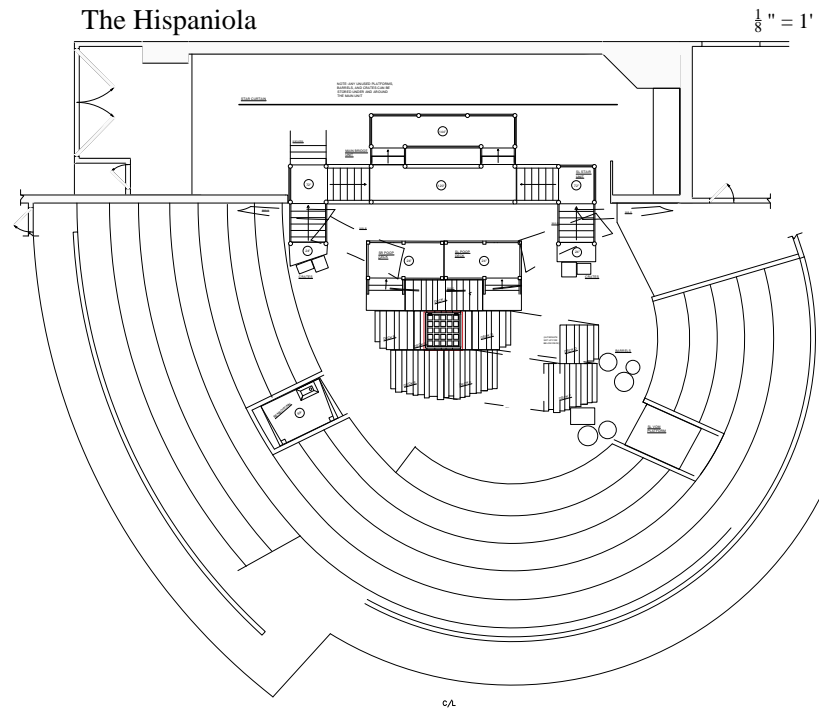


Figure D.10 – Scaled ground plan for the ship.



Figure D.11 – The ship's final set design.





Figure D.12 – Jim and Doctor struggling with the octopus coming out of the sea chest.



Figure D.13 – The chicken, affectionately known as Peggy, being held by Mrs. Crossley.





Figure D.14 – The parrot grabbing the map from Jim with her beak.

Treasure Island  
*Long John Silver*



Figure D.15 – Final costume designs for Long John Silver.



Figure D.16 – Long John Silver stabbing himself in the leg.



Figure D.17 – the hanging rope lines that symbolized stars hung over the house.



Figure D.18 – the storm scene with lighting and set





Figure D.19 – the island lighting



Figure D.20 – An image of active transition from harbor to ship.

## APPENDIX E

### Selected Production Photos

The following production photos were taken during a dress rehearsal and special photo session. They are presented in sequence.



Figure E.1 – “Bright Morning Star A-Rising.”



Figure E.2 – “Sing mt to distraction, would ye?”



Figure E.3 – “Or was he always a monstrous kind of creature who never had but one leg and that in the middle of his body!”





Figure E.4 – “It is the thing that will enter my head and heart”



Figure E.5 – “Tell, or ye die unpeaceful in bed instanter!!!”



Figure E.6 – “I would rather walk through the doors of hell than serve you villains fair, Blind Pew.”



Figure E.7 – “If you leave against my with it will be The Black Spot for all.”





Figure E.8 – “This is not Bones’s chest at all! Flint’s chest and “Flint’s Fist”.”



Figure E.9 – “Anything you wants lifting or eating Sit Captain Ma’am I’m your woman!!!”



Figure E.10 – ‘When I was up on deck... With the stars above me... They called me Long John Silver.’



Figure E.11 – “And I was out in the storm!”



Figure E.12 – “We are not the majority... We near the island...”



Figure E.13 – “We were in shallow calm water. Here the map... just there... the island with its treasure...”





Figure E.14 – “Open that barrel!...The map’s nowhere to be found! That cabin girl ain’t coughing its location!”



Figure E.15 – “These are dangerous men, we are in extreme peril. We must be united.”



Figure E.16 – “One last time...recite me all the coordinates of the treasure map!!!”



Figure E.17 – “It’s flabby flesh.”





Figure E.18 – “I’m Ben Gunn I haven’t spoken to any one but myself these past three years **THREE YEARS!!!** Haven’t you Ben Gunn???”



Figure E.19 – “Latitude north sixty two *big bullet hole* will find the isle...”



Figure E.20 – “Piece o whalebone! With words scrimshawed on it!”



Figure E.21 – “Stay up here by the trap, girl...”





Figure E.22 – “Seize the villain Silver!!! You too not now so Lucky Micky!!!”

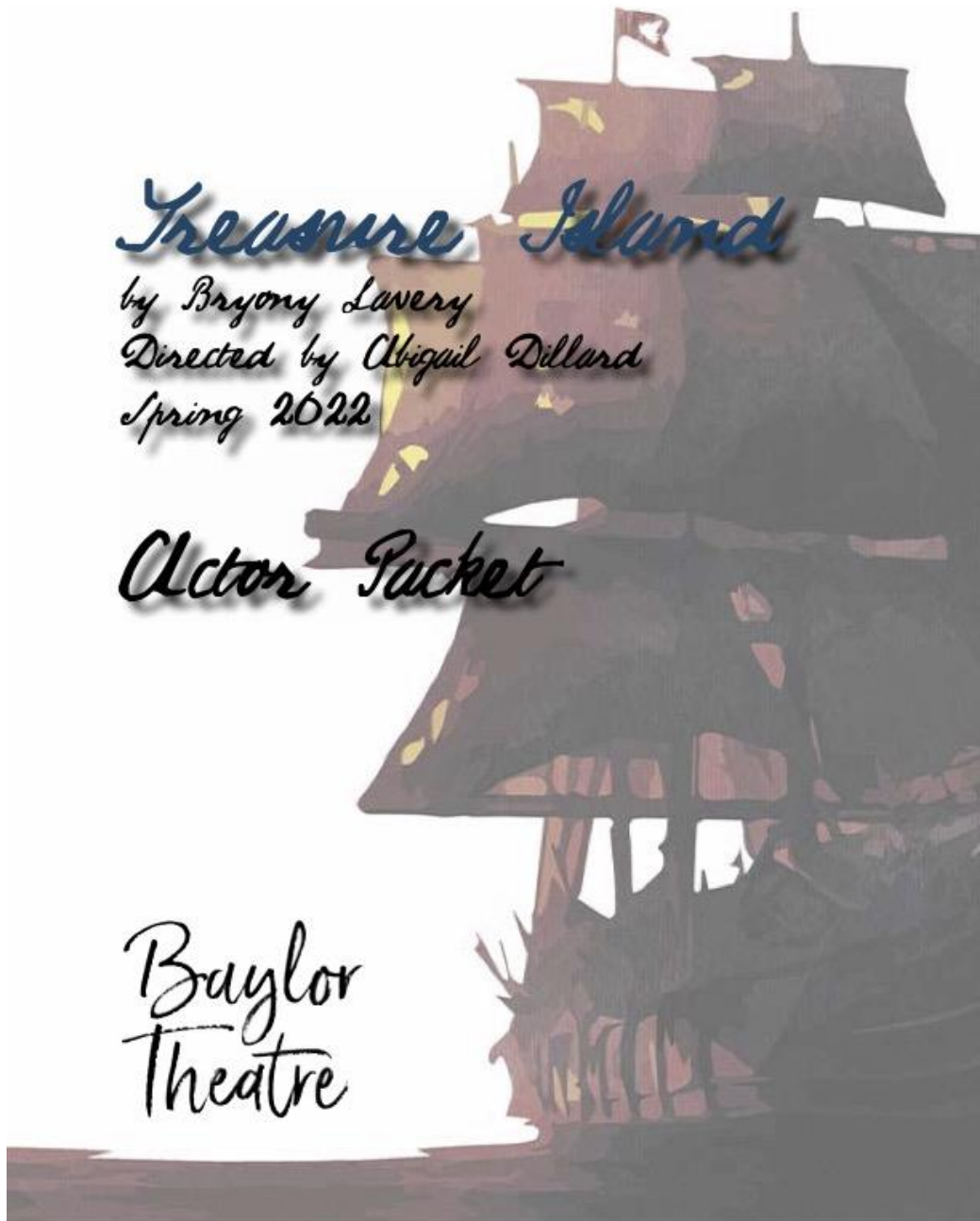


Figure E.23 – Jim: “Now.. the worst nightmares that ever I have are when I hear the surf booming about the coasts, Or start upright in my bed Hearing.”  
Parrot: “Pieces of eight Pieces of eight Pieces of eight.”



APPENDIX F

Actor's Guide and Glossary



## *Table of Contents*

The Novel .....	3,4
Robert Louis Stevenson.....	5
Bryony Lavery.....	5
Treasure Island Characters.....	6
The Golden Age of Piracy .....	7
Piracy & Pirates.....	8-10
Sea Shanties.....	11
Song List.....	11
Ship Terms.....	12
Stars.....	13
Glossary .....	13

*An adventure for all awaits...*



# Treasure Island

## the novel

### Summary from Britannica

The main character, young Jim Hawkins, helps his parents run the Admiral Benbow, an inn near Bristol, England. One day a desperate-looking ruffian, Billy Bones ("the captain"), appears and takes a room. After being visited by a former mate named Black Dog, Billy suffers a stroke. Later, while drinking rum, he tells Jim that he is a pirate and that he has a treasure map. However, Billy fears that another pirate might mark him with a black spot (a summons or threat). Shortly thereafter, Jim's ailing father, who is being tended to by Dr. Livesey, dies. A blind beggar, later revealed to be the pirate Pew, subsequently arrives and puts something in Bones's hand. After Pew leaves, Billy has a fatal stroke.

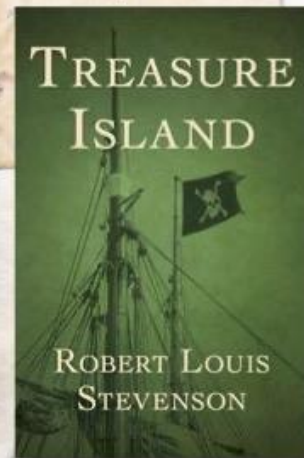
Jim and his mother open Billy's sea chest, taking the money owed to them as well as a packet, before fleeing. A group of pirates led by Pew descends on the inn, but they are soon scared off by the sound of approaching horses; Pew is trampled to death. Believing that the pirates were searching for the packet, Jim seeks out Dr. Livesey, who is with Squire Trelawny. The packet is revealed to contain a treasure map, and the three decide to mount an expedition to Skeleton Island to find the hidden riches. However, they are fooled into hiring some of Billy's former shipmates, including the leader of the pirates, Long John Silver.

During the voyage, Jim overhears Silver and his men planning to steal the treasure once it is found and to kill all of the non-pirates. What follows is a rip-roaring tale of mutiny, treachery, swordfights, and murder as Jim, Dr. Livesey, and the Squire are forced to live by their wits in order to survive against ruthless enemies. They are aided by Captain Smollet and by Ben Gunn, a pirate marooned on Skeleton Island. Jim and the others ultimately prevail over the pirates and return home with the treasure.

3

*Click the image to listen to an Audio book*

*Click the image*  
a LitChart overview of the novel including  
character and chapter breakdowns



# Treasure Island

## the novel

### QUICK FACTS

- ◇ Originally titled: *The Sea Cook: A Story for Boys*
- ◇ Victorian Literature
- ◇ Published from October 1881 to January 1882
- ◇ Originally serialized as *Treasure Island, or the Mutiny of the Hispaniola*
- ◇ Adventure Novel, Children's Book

*Robert Louis Stevenson-*  
It was to be a story  
for boys; no need of  
psychology or fine writ-  
ing.  
Women were excluded.

### THEMES



Adventure



Good



Evil



Fatherhood



Courage



Coming of Age



Deception



Treasure



Pirates

4



# Robert Louis Stevenson

## QUICK FACTS

- ♦ Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson
- ♦ Born in Edinburgh, Scotland
- ♦ Lived Nov. 13 1850 - Dec. 3 1894
- ♦ Was sick with tuberculosis for much of his life.
- ♦ Lived in Samoa at the end of his life and had an unfinished masterpiece *The Beach of Falesá*.

## MOST FAMOUS NOVELS

*Treasure Island*

*Kidnapped*

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

*Click the image*

<http://robert-louis-stevenson.org/>

*Includes timeline, gallery, and much more*



# Bryony Lavery

Bryony Lavery's plays include *Her Aching Heart* (Pink Paper Play of the Year 1992) and *A Wedding Story* (2000). Her play *Frozen*, commissioned by Birmingham Repertory Theatre, won the TMA Best Play Award, the Eileen Anderson Central Television Award, and was then produced on Broadway where it was nominated for 4 Tony awards. She also wrote *Last Easter*, produced in *The Door*, and created adaptations of *Uncle Vanya* and *A Christmas Carol* as an associate artist for The REP. *Stock-*

*holm*, with Frantic Assembly, won the Wolff-Whiting award for Best Play of 2008. Recent work includes *Beautiful Burnout* for the National Theatre of Scotland and Frantic Assembly, which received a Fringe First at Edinburgh; *The Believers* with Frantic Assembly at the Theatre Royal Plymouth and the *Tricycle*; *Kursk with Sound and Fury* at the Young Vic and Sydney Opera House; *Cesario* for the National Theatre; *Thursday* at the Adelaide Festival; *Queen Coal* at the Studio, Sheffield; and an adaptation of *Tales of the City/More Tales of the City* by Armistead Maupin for BBC Radio 4. ([Source](#))

5

# Characters

## Jim's Crew

- ◇ Jim Hawkins, Jr. - An adventurous teen girl who dresses how she wants.
- ◇ Doctor Livesey - A doctor used to having her own way. Proud and respected.
- ◇ Captain Smollett - An honorable sailor who goes by the rules.
- ◇ Squire Trelawney - A squire with a big mouth who laughs at his own jokes.
- ◇ Red Ruth - A salty sea dog who is loyal to the bloody end.
- ◇ Lucky Mickey - A treacherous villager and sailor.
- ◇ Job Anderson - Sailor who is devoted to his wife. Can't swim or hold his liquor.
- ◇ Silent Sue - Silent but physically expressive. Never far from Red Ruth.
- ◇ Grey - Almost forgot to mention him. He's pretty easy to overlook.

## Pirate Crew

- ◇ Long John Silvers - A cook? Lovable rogue, or perhaps a blood-thirsty villain.
- ◇ Captain Flint the Parrot - Loves attention and pieces of eight. PIECES OF EIGHT.
- ◇ Black Dog - A truly black-hearted pirate with little to no redeeming qualities.
- ◇ Israel Hands - A bilingual pirate who lives and dies by their medallion.
- ◇ Joan the Goat - A pirate who likes to headbutt things with her metal head.
- ◇ Dick Dandy - A pirate who likes the finer things in life. Loves himself.
- ◇ Killigrew the Kind - A gentle murderer, if there is such a thing.
- ◇ George Badger - A trouble-making pirate who is quick on the uptake.

## Other Parties

- ◇ Benn Gunn - Marooned cabin boy. Wild and cheese-loving. Lives in tunnels.
- ◇ Grandma - Landlady of the Admiral Benbow Inn. Capable and full of heart.
- ◇ Bill Bones - A man haunted by his past. He knows his time will come.
- ◇ Blind Pew - A blind man. A terrifying villain and "former" pirate.
- ◇ Mrs. Crossley - Pub regular and pious gossip.

*A note on Adaptation: Many characters appear in the novel in a different form. Some are obvious, like Jim, but other like Red Ruth or Grey are a little harder to spot. Red Ruth is adapted from the games-keeper Tom Redruth and Grey is adapted from Abraham Gray. See the link on page 3 for more of a breakdown.*

6



# The Golden Age of Piracy

From MARCUS REDIKER: HISTORIAN (click right)

**The Golden Age of Piracy - 1716-1726,**  
Only about ten years in the 18th century.



This period captured the Victorian imagination and is the period which author Robert Louis Stevenson is referencing in *Treasure Island*.

Piracy created a worldwide crisis, there were about 5,000 - 10,000 total pirates roaming. When you compare this to the average navy of a European country which might have 10,000 sailors total, it becomes even more clear.

Pirates disrupted global shipping patterns and robbed merchant vessels during a time shipping was the main (and sometimes only) means to conduct international trade.

Pirates became a common enemy of many governments. Because of this, a worldwide campaign was launched to capture and hang pirates. However, many common people saw pirates as Robin Hood type figures and would even help break them out of jails.

## THREE PERIODS OF PIRACY:

1) The Buccaneering period (approximately 1650 to 1680), was characterized by Anglo-French seamen based in Jamaica and Tortuga attacking Spanish colonies, and shipping in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific.



2) The Pirate Round (1690s), associated with long-distance voyages from the Americas to rob Muslim and East India Company targets in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.

3) The post-Spanish Succession period (1715 to 1726), when Anglo-American sailors and privateers left unemployed by the end of the War of the Spanish Succession turned *en masse* to piracy in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the North American eastern seaboard, and the West African coast. (source Wikipedia)

7

Click on the pirate to explore [PirateGlossary.com](http://PirateGlossary.com) which has tons of fun pirate facts



# A Pirate's Life

## Article

### PIRATES, PRIVATEERS, CORSAIRS, BUCCANEERS: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

**Pirate** is the most general of the four terms. Originating with the Greek *peiratēs*, meaning brigand, it can be applied to a wide range of nautical misbehavior, including coastal raiding and intercepting ships on high seas.

**Privateer** - A privateer was a pirate with papers.

**Buccaneer** - Specific to the Caribbean and the Pacific coast of Central America. Derived from the French boucan (a grill for smoking meat.)

**Corsair** - Corsairs were essentially privateers, although the term corsair carried an added religious connotation because the conflict was between Muslim and Christian powers.

## Why Become a Pirate?



Click the image

"Pirates: A New History, from Vikings to Somali Raiders" by Peter Lehr

[Excerpt] The decision to turn pirate was usually driven by one of two forces: abject poverty, unemployment, harsh living conditions and a generally bleak future; and, on the other, greed or the lure of easy money. Fleeing from justice was another powerful driver: the 'sea had always served as a refuge for the lawless and criminal elements in society'. The exact mixture of these elements depended not so much on the region but on subregional or even local circumstances which could greatly fluctuate over time.

## Wako Pirates

Did you know that a famous group of historical pirates are called the Wako pirates? No, not Waco, TX, but *wakō*, Chinese (Pinyin) wokou or (Wade-Giles romanization) wo-k'ou. They were any of the groups of marauders who raided the Korean and Chinese coasts between the 13th and 16th centuries.

Originally mainly Japanese, in later times the pirates were of mixed origin; by the early 16th century, the majority of them were probably Chinese. Basing themselves on islands off the Chinese coast, the pirates eventually made their main headquarters on the island of Taiwan, where they remained for over a century.

By the end of the 17th century, with the growth of a strong central power in Japan under the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1867) and in China under the Qing dynasty, most of the piracy was eliminated. ([source](#))

8



# Famous Pirates

Where actual pirates like *Treasure Island*? While some pirates were white men -- many were people of color, women, or both. Pirate ships were sometimes more equitable than land.

**Anne Bonny** aka. Anne Cormac (c.1698 -1782)  
Red-haired Irish pirate, one of the fiercest female pirates.

*Article* [SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE: IF THERE'S A MAN AMONG YE: THE TALE OF PIRATE QUEENS ANNE BONNY AND MARY READ](#)

[Excerpt] A surprising number of women ventured to sea, in many capacities: as servants, prostitutes, laundresses, cooks and—albeit less frequently—as sailors, naval officers, whaling merchants or pirates. Anne herself was likely inspired by a 16th-century Irishwoman named Grace O'Malley, whose fierce visage (she claimed her face was scarred after an attack by an eagle) became infamous along the coast of the Emerald Isle. Still, female pirates remained an anomaly and perceived liability; Blackbeard, for one, banned women from his ship, and if his crew took one captive she was strangled and pitched over the side. Anne refused to be deterred by this sentiment. Upon joining Rackam's crew, she was said to have silenced a disparaging shipmate by stabbing him in the heart.

**Blackbeard** aka. Edward Teach Edward Thatch (c. 1680-1718) (pictured right)  
English pirate who sailed the Caribbean. Basis for characters in *Treasure Island*.



**Black Caesar**  
[Black Pirates and the Tale of Black Caesar](#)

[Excerpt] During the "golden age" of piracy in the late 1600s and early 1700s, a pirate ship was one of the few places a black man could attain power and money in the Western Hemisphere. Some of these black pirates were fugitive slaves in the Caribbean or other coastal areas of the Americas. Others joined pirate crews when their slave ships or plantations were raided; it was often an easy choice between perpetual slavery and freedom through lawlessness. It is estimated that up to one-third of the 10,000 pirates during the golden age of piracy were former slaves.



*Click the image*  
to browse the History of Pirates Podcast and  
learn more about your favorite pirates.



# Famous Pirates



**Mary Read** aka. Mark Read  
(c.1690-1721)  
(pictured with Anne Bonny)

An Englishwoman who was a pirate

[Excerpt] During battles Anne and Mary fought side by side,

wearing billowing jackets and long trousers and handkerchiefs wrapped around their heads, wielding a machete and pistol in either hand. "They were very active on board," another victim later testified, "and willing to do any Thing."

*The most successful pirate in history....*

**Zheng Yi Sao** aka Ching Shih (born Shi Yang)  
(c. 1775-1844)

## History of Yesterday

Among her accomplishments: known as the "Chinese Pirate Queen," former prostitute, leader of the Red Flag Fleet, ruled the South China Sea, defeated the Mandarin Army, after fighting the Portuguese Navy she accepted amnesty from the Chinese Emperor. She had several more children, remarried, and opened a brothel. Died in her sleep at age 69.



*Click on the pirate to explore [PirateGlossary.com](http://PirateGlossary.com) to see the famous pirates section*





# Sea Shanties

## *The Music Theory of The Lok Sea Shanties*

### SEA SONG AND CHANTY HISTORY -

[Shady Isle Pirate Society](#)



[Excerpt] Music has played a central part in life at sea by providing not only entertainment and contributing to the health and morale of seamen but also rhythm and cohesion to the everyday tasks of sailors and fishermen. Sea shanties were rhythmic songs that helped the sailors “keep the time” during work tasks. Pulling line to raise or trim sails, weighing anchor, or the ever-monotonous work on the bilge pumps were all made less mundane by a cheerful song. The more fitting the song, the easier the work, as Richard Dana describes in *Two Years Before The Mast and Twenty Four Years After* (Harvard, 1909):

*We often found a great difference in the effect of the different songs in driving in the hides. Two or three songs would be tried, one after the other, with no effect;—not an inch could be got upon the tackles—when a new song, struck up, seemed to hit the humor of the moment, and drove the tackles “two blocks” at once. “Heave round hearty!” “Heave round hearty!” “Captain gone ashore!” and the like, might do for common pulls, but in an emergency, when we wanted a heavy, “raise-the-dead” pull, which should start the beams of the ship, there was nothing like “Time for us to go!” “Round the corner,” or “Hurrah! hurrah! my hearty bullies!”*

### SEA SHANTIES IN *Treasure Island*:

Bright Morning Star A-Rising  
Fifteen Men on a Deadman's Chest  
Blood Red Roses - [Listen](#)  
Making Leave  
Shanty Man and Company  
We're Far From Home  
Haul Away Joe  
Homeward Bound



*Click the pirate to see the lyrics; click the headphones to listen to a selected spotify with some of these songs.*



# Ship Terms & Flags

## Need Directions?

The right side of the ship is *starboard*, and the left is *port*. To the front of the boat is *the bow* and the direction is *forward*, and towards the back is *the stern* and the direction is *aft*.



*Click on the pirate to explore the anatomy of a ship.*

## WHY DID PIRATES FLY THE JOLLY ROGER - [Scientific America](#)

[Excerpt] A version of the Jolly Roger was widely adopted by pirates for fraternal reasons that ultimately did lead to economic boons as discussed by the Times—some 2,500 men sailed under a version of a black flag bearing the insignia of a white skeleton striking a bleeding heart with one hand and holding a hourglass. The flag was certainly meant to announce their presence, and the pirates, enterprising men that they were, quickly found that they could convey their intent to ships in their path with their banners: black flags indicated that they were pirates and that they would consider providing quarter, while a red flag bearing the described insignia meant that no quarter would be given and the mates meant to fight to the end. However, the imagery chosen for the flag is as much a reflection of the pirates and their lifestyle as it was a reflection of their terrible natures:

*Click on the flag to read more about the Jolly Roger and other Pirate Flags.*



12



# Stars & Glossary



FIND YOUR WAY BY THE STARS [Click here to explore astronomy.com](#)

[Excerpt] The constellation Cassiopeia the Queen can be found high in the northeast on October evenings, not far from Polaris, the North Star. At any time of year, you can use the Big Dipper to find Cassiopeia.

These two star formations are like riders on opposite sides of a Ferris wheel. They're part of a great spinning wheel of stars seen moving counterclockwise around Polaris, the North Star, once each day. As Cassiopeia rises upward, the Big Dipper plunges downward, and vice versa.

Some of you know how to star-hop to Polaris, the North Star, by using the Big Dipper's pointer stars, as displayed on the sky chart below. Because the Big Dipper's handle and Cassiopeia shine on opposite sides of Polaris, an imaginary line from any star on the Big Dipper handle through Polaris reliably points to Cassiopeia. ([Source](#))

13 *glossary - Click on the ship to access the glossary from the play.*



## *Glossary - Treasure Island 2022*

From the text....

### **Treasure:**

1. *Wealth stored or accumulated, esp. In the form of precious metals, gold and silver coins*
2. *A store of anything valuable*
3. *Anything valued and presented as precious*
4. *To hold or keep as precious*

Glossary defined using Merriam-Webster

### **Bearing:**

1. the situation or horizontal direction of one point with respect to another or to the compass
2. a determination of position

### **Belay:**

1. *nautical* - STOP or CANCEL
2. to secure (a rope or cable) by turns around a cleat
3. to secure (a person) at the end of a rope

### **Berth:**

1. a place to sit or sleep especially on a ship or vehicle
2. the place where a ship lies when at anchor or at a wharf

### **Billet:**

1. an official order directing that a member of a military force be provided with board and lodging (as in a private home)
2. to assign lodging to (someone, such as a soldier) by or as if by a billet

### **Blackguards:**

1. a rude or unscrupulous person
2. a person who uses foul or abusive language
3. *obsolete* - the kitchen servants of a household

### **Bristol:**

1. city in west central Connecticut west-southwest of Hartford
2. town and port of entry on Narragansett Bay, eastern Rhode Island
3. city and port on the Avon River near the estuary of the Severn River in southwestern England

**Caracas:**

1. city near the Caribbean coast of Venezuela; the nation's capital

**Coordinates:**

1. any of a set of numbers used in specifying the location of a point on a line, on a surface, or in space

**Cove:**

1. a small sheltered inlet or bay

**Davy Jones:**

1. the bottom of the sea personified

**Degrees:**

1. *mathematics* - a unit of measure for angles equal to an angle with its vertex at the center of a circle and its sides cutting off  $\frac{1}{360}$  of the circumference, also used in navigation

**Doubloon:**

1. an old gold coin of Spain and Spanish America

**Escalope:**

1. a thin slice of boneless meat or fish

**Farthing:**

1. a former British monetary unit equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a penny
2. a coin representing this unit

**Fartleberry:**

1. a shrub or small tree (*Vaccinium arboreum*) of the heath family of the southeastern U.S. having a small hard black berry with stony seeds

**Filete:**

1. *Spanish* (fillete) - b : a piece or slice of boneless meat or fish

**Frigate:**

1. a square-rigged war vessel intermediate between a corvette and a ship of the line

**Galley:**

1. the kitchen and cooking apparatus especially of a ship or airplane

**Gallows:**

1. a frame usually of two upright posts and a transverse beam from which criminals are hanged
2. the punishment of hanging

**Grog:**

1. liquor (such as rum) cut with water and now often served hot with lemon juice and sugar sometimes added

**Havana:**

1. city, port on the Gulf of Mexico, and capital of Cuba

**Hoppers:**

1. *Slang* - one legged person

**Hovel:**

1. an open shed or shelter
2. a small, wretched, and often dirty house

**Indomitable:**

1. incapable of being subdued

**Knot:**

1. a division of the log's line serving to measure a ship's speed
2. one nautical mile per hour
3. one nautical mile —not used technically

**Latitude:**

1. distance north or south of the equator measured in degrees up to 90 degrees

**Mackerel:**

1. a scombroid fish (*Scomber scombrus* of the family Scombridae) of the North Atlantic that is green above with dark blue bars and silvery below and is a commercially important food fish

**Magistrate:**

1. an official entrusted with administration of the laws: such as
  - a. a principal official exercising governmental powers over a major political unit (such as a nation)
  - b. a local official exercising administrative and often judicial functions
  - c. a local judiciary official having limited original jurisdiction especially in criminal cases

**Manacles:**

1. a shackle for the hand or wrist

**Moored:**

1. to make fast with or as if with cables, lines, or anchors : anchor
2. to secure a boat by mooring



**Nackleass**

1. curse word, exact meaning unknown

**Palm Key:**

1. small island off the southern tip of Florida

**Pieces of eight:**

1. an old Spanish peso of eight reales

**Rig capstan:**

1. Rig:
  - a. to fit out with rigging (tackle, equipment, or machinery fitted for a specified purpose)
2. Capstan
  - a. a machine for moving or raising heavy weights that consists of a vertical drum which can be rotated and around which cable is turned

**Scansion:**

1. the analysis of verse to show its meter

**Scotch egg:**

1. a hard-boiled egg wrapped in sausage meat, covered with bread crumbs, and fried

**Sextant:**

1. an instrument for measuring angular distances used especially in navigation to observe altitudes of celestial bodies (as in ascertaining latitude and longitude)

**Snuff:**

1. a preparation of pulverized tobacco to be inhaled through the nostrils, chewed, or placed against the gums

**Sprat:**

1. small European marine fish (*Sprattus sprattus*) of the herring family
2. a young, small, or insignificant person

**Swab:**

1. a mop
2. to clean with or as if with a swab
3. a useless or contemptible person

**Vittles:**

1. supplies of food

## APPENDIX G

### *Treasure Island Lyrics*

#### 1. Bright Morning Star A-Rising

- When: 1.1, page 7
- Cue Line: Start of show
- Who: Tess

***Bright morning star a-rising  
Bright morning star a-rising  
Bright morning star a-rising  
Day is a'breaking in my soul***

#### 2. Fifteen Men on a Deadman's Chest

- When: 1.2, page 10
- Cue Line: Bones: "these landlubbers will drown your voices!!! Sing!"
- Who: Calder starts, inn joins in

***Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum***  
Bones: "Damn you all, sing or I'll cut ye"  
***Drink and the devil had done for the rest***  
Squire: Stop that infernal racket! I can not hear myself drink  
Bones: Sing!  
***Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum***  
Squire: Silence!  
Bones: Sing!  
***Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum Squire: Silence***  
Bones: Sing!!!  
***Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum***

#### 3. Fifteen Men Again

- When: 1.5, page 16
- Cue Line: Bones: "The ghost who sings always in my head"
- Who: the six ghosts

***Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum***

*Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
 Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum - then hum  
 Drink and the devil had done for the rest Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum  
 The mate was fixed by the bosun's pike The bosun brained with a  
 marlinspike The cookey's throat was marked belike It had been gripped  
 by fingers ten  
 And there they lay, all good dead men Like break o'day in a boozing ken  
 Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*

#### 4. Blood Red Roses

- When: transition between 1.8-1.9 (to the harbor), page 27-28
- Who: Calder starts, inn joins, full cast joins
- Cue: Squire: "Doctor, you are always in the right of it. I'll be as silent as the grave!"

*Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.  
 And it's might draughty round Cape Horn  
 Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.  
 Oh! You pinks and posies,  
 Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.  
 I thought I heard the old man say  
 Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.  
 Just one more pull and then belay  
 Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.  
 Oh! You pinks and posies,  
 Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.  
 Oh! You pinks and posies  
 Go down!  
 Go-down! You blood red roses, Go down.*

#### 5. Shanty Medley (Rio Grande, Haul on the Bowline, Little Sally Racket)

- When: 1.10, page 34
- Who: Calder and David start, full cast joins
- Cue: Black Dog: "Crew get very ready! Swabs sail out!"

*Our ship went a-sailing out over the bar  
 Way down Rio!  
 We pointed her head to the old Southern Star And we're bound for the  
 Rio Grande!  
 Our ship went a-sailing out over the bar  
 Way down Rio!  
 We pointed her head to the old Southern Star  
  
 And we're bound for the Rio Grande!*

*We pointed her head to the old Southern Star And we're bound for the  
Rio Grande!*

*Haul on the bowline  
So early in the mornin'  
Haul on the bowline  
The bowlin' haul  
Haul on the bowline  
Before the day is dawnin'  
Haul on the bowline  
The bowline haul!*

Tess: "Oh how I love my ship!!! My Hispaniola! My ship! I love you! I love your deck! Your sails! I love the captain's cabin most! I LOVE her maps"

Eduardo starts -

*Little Sally Racket  
Haul 'em away!  
Pawned her father's jacket  
Haul 'em away!  
Then she went and lost the ticket Haul 'em away!  
To me ho-de-hido  
Haul 'em away!  
Take her by the scruff now  
Haul 'em away!  
Never treat her rough now  
Haul 'em away!  
And that'll be enough now  
Haul 'em away!  
To me ho-de-hido  
Haul 'em away!*

#### 6. Fifteen Men

- When: 1.14 - apple barrel
- Who: The crews
- Cue: Grey: "Look! Albatross! Can anybody else see it? Can anybody hear me? Gray here"

*Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum  
Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum  
Fifteen men on a dead man's chest  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum  
Drink and the devil had done for the rest*

*Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum  
The mate was fixed by the bosun's pike  
The bosun brained with a marlinspike  
The cookey's throat was marked belike  
It had been gripped by fingers ten  
And there they lay, all good dead men  
Like break o'day in a boozing ken  
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*

#### 7. East Indiaman

- When: 1.15 - before the mutiny
- Who: Everyone
- Cue: Captain: "Rig capstan! Weigh anchor!"

Crew: "Aye, aye, Captain"

*illy, ally, illy, ally, oh - cheerily, boys, cherrily  
Bend your backs and give a pull, cherrily I say (I say!)  
It's a long pull and a strong pull  
We'll haul away together, boys  
Belay every inch of slack,  
Belay, boys, belay!*

#### 8. Bones in the Ocean

- When: 2.1 - entering the island
- Who: Goody and Walrus crew
- Cue: top of Act 2

*Oh, I bid farewell to the port and the land  
And I paddle away from brave England's white sands To search for my  
long ago forgotten friends  
To search for the place I hear all sailors end  
As the souls of the dead fill the space of my mind I'll search without  
sleeping 'til peace I can find  
I fear not the weather, I fear not the sea  
I remember the fallen, do they think of me? When their bones in the  
ocean forever will be*

#### 9. Haul Away Joe

- When: 2.3
- Who: Sam Leads, Goody Crew
- Cue: Captain: "Courage Crew! Heave! Haul out the cat! Rig capstan!" -

*Away (Ho!) haul away! we'll haul away together!*

*Away haul away, we'll haul away Joe.  
Well now can't you see the black clouds a-gatherin'.  
Away haul away, we'll haul away Joe.*

#### 10. Bright Morning Star

- When: 2.6 - Jim on the ship
- Who: Tess, then rest of the cast
- Cue: Jim: "Wind direction! South South West! To work!"

Tess only:

*Bright morning star a-rising*

Cast:

*Bright morning stars a-rising*

Jim: "Hoist the staysail"

*Bright morning stars a-rising*

Jim: "Cast off"

*Day is breaking in my soul*

Jim: "You know how to do this!!!"

*Day is breaking in my soul*

Jim: "Oh, a strong tide"

#### 11. Farewell Shanty

- When: 2.8, heading back to the inn
- Who: David starts, Everyone
- Cue: Squire: "Oh thank heaven for that, collect up all that lovely sparkly gold and board ship! To England!!!!"

*Get some sail upon her  
Haul away your halyards  
Haul away your halyards  
'Tis our sailing time  
Get her on her course now  
Haul away your foresheets  
Haul away your foresheets  
'Tis our sailing time  
Waves are breaking under  
Haul away down-channel  
Haul away down-channel  
On the evening tide  
When my time is over  
Haul away to Heaven  
Haul away to Heaven  
ONLY KAITLYN:  
God be at my side*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arun, Vishnu. "Ching Shih: A Prostitute Who Became History's Deadliest Pirate." History of Yesterday. History of Yesterday, September 25, 2020. <https://historyofyesterday.com/ching-shih-a-prostitute-who-became-historys-deadliest-pirate-f596f7fcff23?gi=a8feab0a6da1>.
- "Bildungsroman Examples and Definition." Literary Devices, November 7, 2015. <https://literarydevices.com/bildungsroman/>.
- Brennan, Geraldine. "Treasure Island: Mutiny and Murder for Christmas." Books For Keeps. Richard Hill <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/bfklogo.png>, November 28, 2014. <https://booksforkeeps.co.uk/article/mutiny-and-murder-for-christmas/>.
- Bushell, Sally. "Mapping Victorian Adventure Fiction: Silences, Doublings, and the Ur-Map in *Treasure Island* and *King Solomon's Mines*." *Victorian Studies* 57, no. 4 (2015): 611–37. <https://doi.org/10.2979/victorianstudies.57.4.02>.
- "Bryony Lavery." Drama Online - Bryony Lavery. Bloomsbury Publishing Place. Accessed February 9, 2022. [https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/person?docid=person\\_laveryBryony](https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/person?docid=person_laveryBryony).
- "Calamity." Calamity: Monstrous Regiment. Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre. Accessed February 9, 2022. <https://monstrousregiment.co.uk/productions/calamity/>.
- Citron, Paula. "Theatre Profile: An Interview with Bryony Lavery." Paula Citron, May 8, 2012. <https://paulacitron.ca/theatre/an-interview-with-bryony-lavery/>.
- Clapp, Susannah. "Treasure Island Review – Astonishing Spectacle." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, December 14, 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/dec/14/treasure-island-national-theatre-observer-review>.
- Clarendon, Emma. "Review: Treasure Island, National Theatre Online." Love London Love Culture, April 19, 2020. <https://lovelondonloveculture.com/2020/04/19/review-treasure-island-national-theatre-online/>.

- Cohen, Monica F. "IMITATION FICTION: PIRATE CITINGS IN ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S 'TREASURE ISLAND.'" *Victorian Literature and Culture* 41, no. 1 (2013): 153–73. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24575677>.
- Cohen, Monica F. *Pirating Fictions: Ownership and Creativity in Nineteenth-Century Popular Culture*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018.
- Croft, Susan, and Jessica Higgs. "Bryony Lavery." *Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre*. Accessed February 9, 2022. <https://www.unfinishedhistories.com/interviews/interviewees-l-q/bryony-lavery/>.
- Curtis, Nick. "Playwright Bryony Lavery: 'We Have to Watch Our Backs, Particularly in This Strange Climate'." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, August 25, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/aug/25/byrony-lavery-interview-the-lovely-bones-we-have-to-watch-our-backs>.
- Dryden, Linda, ed. "Derivative Works: Robert Louis Stevenson." Robert Louis Stevenson Website, December 2008. <http://robert-louis-stevenson.org/derivative-works/>.
- Evans, Nathan. *The Wellerman*. Universal Music Operations Limited. 2021. <https://open.spotify.com/track/54OBgO0Xwu20Jak9TMXbR7?si=082fb3f9294049ca>
- Ferguson, Susie. "Treasure Island Learning Pack - Media.bloomsbury.com." *National Theatre: Treasure Island - Learning Guide*. Bloomsbury, 2015. [https://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/nt\\_treasure-island-learning-pack.pdf](https://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/nt_treasure-island-learning-pack.pdf).
- Fisher, Philip. "Theatre Review: Treasure Island at Olivier Theatre (National)." *British Theatre Guide*. British Theatre Guide, August 3, 2020. <https://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/treasure-island-olivier-theatre-11008>.
- Fox, David. "Review: In Frozen - Forgiving the Unforgivable." *Philadelphia Magazine*. Philadelphia Magazine, March 16, 2018. <https://www.phillymag.com/things-to-do/2018/03/16/review-frozen-forgiving-unforgivable/>.
- Friedman, Herbert A. "The Death Card." *Death Cards - Psychological Operations*. Canadian Military Journal, 2014. <https://web.archive.org/web/20140715120241/http://www.psywarrior.com/DeathCardsAce.html>.
- Gardner, Lyn. "Theatre Review: More Light ." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, May 21, 2009. <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2009/may/21/more-light-review>.
- Gladwell, Malcolm. "Something Borrowed." *The New Yorker*, November 15, 2004. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/11/22/something-borrowed>.



- Hickling, Alfred. "Treasure Island Review – Horrors on the High Seas." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, December 6, 2016.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2016/dec/06/treasure-island-review-birmingham-rep-theatre>.
- Higgs, Jessica. "Les Oeufs Malades." Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre. Accessed February 9, 2022.  
<https://www.unfinishedhistories.com/history/companies/les-oeufs-malades/>.
- Hodge, Francis, and Michael McLain. *Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style*. 7th ed. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.
- Hutcheon, Linda, and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Lane, Chloe. "Review: Treasure Island at the National Theatre Online." City Girl Network. City Girl Network, May 19, 2020.  
<https://citygirlnetwork.com/magazine/review-treasure-island-at-the-national-theatre-online>.
- Lavery, Bryony, and Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, London: Samuel French, 2016
- Lawson, Mark. "Rarely is Theatre's Fourth Wall Broken so Jaggedly as in Bryony Lavery's Play, Frozen." New Statesman, June 24, 2021.  
<https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/music-theatre/2018/03/rarely-theatre-s-fourth-wall-broken-so-jaggedly-bryony-lavery-s-play>.
- LitCharts. "Treasure Island Study Guide." LitCharts. Accessed February 10, 2022.  
<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island>.
- MasterClass. "What Is a Bildungsroman? Definition and Examples of Bildungsroman in Literature - 2022." MasterClass. MasterClass, August 30, 2021.  
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-a-bildungsroman-definition-and-examples-of-bildungsroman-in-literature#how-a-bildungsroman-is-structured>.
- Mckinley, Jesse. "Playwright Created a Psychiatrist by Plagiarizing One, Accusers Say." The New York Times. The New York Times, September 25, 2004.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/25/theater/playwright-created-a-psychiatrist-by-plagiarizing-one-accusers-say.html>.
- Medlin, Steve. "The Full Original Pirate Ship Battle Show Outside Treasure Island Hotel Las Vegas 1994." August 2019. YouTube. 10:04.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ai3t1Mw4MmQ>

Moore, Grace. *Pirates and Mutineers of the Nineteenth Century: Swashbucklers and Swindlers*. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2011. Page 213.

“Muppet Treasure Island.” IMDb. IMDb.com, February 16, 1996.  
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0117110/>.

“Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl.” IMDb. IMDb.com, July 9, 2003. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0325980/>.

Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. “The Life: ROBERT LOUIS BALFOUR STEVENSON (1850-1894).” Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. StevensonMuseum.org, June 19, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/robert-louis-stevenson/the-life/>.

Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. “Biographies: The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson.” Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. StevensonMuseum.org, June 23, 2021. <https://stevensonmuseum.org/education/biographies/>.

Sergeant, David. 2016. “‘THE WORST DREAMS THAT EVER I HAVE’: CAPITALISM AND THE ROMANCE IN R. L. STEVENSON’S TREASURE ISLAND.” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 44 (4). Cambridge University Press: 907–23. doi:10.1017/S1060150316000279.  
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/victorian-literature-and-culture/article/abs/worst-dreams-that-ever-i-have-capitalism-and-the-romance-in-r-l-stevensons-treasure-island/3B1B825839821B5640D8A8D85467D6B0>

Simonson, Robert. “Frozen Playwright Lavery Accused of Plagiarism.” Playbill. Playbill Inc. , September 25, 2004. <https://www.playbill.com/article/frozen-playwright-lavery-accused-of-plagiarism-com-122131>.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island*. Edited by John D. Seelye. London: Penguin Books, 2009.

“Theatre: Treasure Island Adapted by Bryony Lavery (Directed by Polly Findlay for National Theatre at Home).” Come To The Pedlar. WordPress.com, April 17, 2020. <https://cometothepedlar.home.blog/2020/04/16/theatre-treasure-island-adapted-by-bryony-lavery-directed-by-polly-findlay-for-national-theatre-at-home/>.

The Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company. “The Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company.” Archives Hub. Accessed March 14, 2022. <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/de1f8ea6-ade0-3d46-a020-71c14c052085>.

“Treasure Planet.” IMDb. IMDb.com, November 27, 2002.  
[https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133240/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133240/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1).

Watson, Harold Francis. *Coasts of Treasure Island: A Study of the Backgrounds and Sources for Robert Louis Stevenson's Romance of the Sea*. San Antonio: Naylor Co., 1969.

Whetstone, David. "The Rarely Performed More Light Was a Tough Challenge for the People's Theatre." ChronicleLive, May 8, 2017.  
<https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/whats-on/theatre-news/rarely-performed-more-light-tough-13004728>.