

SYDNEY THEATRE CO COMMUNITIES



On Cue

STC acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which the Company gathers. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and we extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with whom we work and with whom we share stories.

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Compiled by Lisa Mumford.

The activities and resources contained in this document are designed for educators as the starting point for developing more comprehensive lessons for this production. Lisa Mumford is the Education Projects Officers for the Sydney Theatre Company. You can contact Lisa on lmumford@sydneytheatre.com.au

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About On Cue and STC

ABOUT ON CUE

STC Ed has a suite of resources located on our website to enrich and strengthen teaching and learning surrounding the plays in the STC season.

Each school show will be accompanied by an On Cue e-publication which will feature essential information for teachers and students, such as curriculum links, information about the playwright, synopsis, character analysis, thematic analysis and suggested learning experiences.

For more in-depth digital resources surrounding productions, please visit the STC Ed page on our website.

Such resources include:

- Director documentaries
- Design sketchbooks

ABOUT SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY

In 1980, STC's first Artistic Director Richard Wherrett defined STC's mission as to provide "first class theatrical entertainment for the people of Sydney – theatre that is grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging and fun."

Almost 40 years later, that ethos still rings true. STC offers a diverse program of distinctive theatre of vision and scale at its harbourside home venue, The Wharf; Roslyn Packer Theatre at Walsh Bay; and Sydney Opera House, as its resident theatre company.

STC has a proud heritage as a creative hub and incubator for Australian theatre and theatre makers, developing and producing eclectic Australian works, interpretations of classic repertoire and great international writing. STC strives to create theatre experiences that reflect Sydney's distinctive personality and engage audiences.

Strongly committed to engagement in the community, STC's Education and Communities programs aim to inspire theatre appreciation and participation not only in theatres but also in schools, community halls; wherever people get together. STC offers an innovative School Drama™ program; partners with groups in metropolitan Sydney, regional centres and rural areas; and reaches beyond NSW with touring productions throughout Australia. Through these partnerships and initiatives, STC plays a part in ensuring a creative, forward thinking and sociable future by engaging with young people, students and teachers. The theatre careers of many of Australia's internationally renowned artists have been launched and fostered at STC, including Mel Gibson, Judy Davis, Hugo Weaving, Toni Collette, Rose Byrne, Benedict Andrews and Cate Blanchett.

STC often collaborates with international artists and companies and, in recent years, the company's international profile has grown significantly with productions touring extensively to great acclaim.

STC is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, by its arts funding and advisory body, and by the New South Wales Government through Create NSW.

sydneytheatre.com.au



Curriculum Links



Sofia Nolan and Catherine Van-Davies in Sydney Theatre Company's *Playing Beatrice Bow*, 2021. © Daniel Boud

DRAMA STAGES 4 & 5

- Dramatic Forms and Performance Styles: Realism/Scripted Drama

DRAMA STAGE 6

- Improvisation, Playbuilding and Acting
- Elements of Production in Performance
- Theatrical Traditions and Performance Styles: Realism

ENGLISH STAGES 4 & 5

- Appropriation of an Australian novella
- Textual Concepts: Genre, Imagery, Character, Narrative, Point of View, Context, Representation

HISTORY STAGES 4 & 5

- Australian history and Colonial Sydney
- Making a nation

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

Playing Beatie Bow

BY RUTH PARK

AN ADAPTATION FOR THE STAGE BY KATE MULVANY

WEYLAND/MR BOW/CAST

TONY COGIN

KATHY/CAST

LENA CRUZ

DOVEY/CAST

CLAIRE LOVERING

MARGARET/GRANNY

HEATHER MITCHELL

BEATIE BOW

SOFIA NOLAN

JUDAH/JONAH/CAST

RORY O'KEEFFE

JOHNNY WHITES/CAST

GUY SIMON

ABIGAIL KIRK/CAST

CATHERINE VÂN-DAVIES

GIBBIE/VINNIE/CAST

RYAN YEATES

DIRECTOR

KIP WILLIAMS

SET DESIGNER

DAVID FLEISCHER

COSTUME DESIGNER

RENÉE MULDER

LIGHTING DESIGNER

NICK SCHLIEPER

COMPOSER

CLEMENCE WILLIAMS

SOUND DESIGNER

DAVID BERGMAN

CHORAL DIRECTOR

NATALIE GOONERATNE

ADDITIONAL COMPOSITION

MATTHEW DOYLE

DRAMATURG

COURTNEY STEWART

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

KENNETH MORALEDA

**FIGHT & MOVEMENT
& INTIMACY DIRECTOR**

NIGEL POULTON

VOICE AND TEXT COACH

DANIELLE ROFFE

PRODUCTION MANAGER

GENEVIEVE JONES

STAGE MANAGER

MINKA STEVENS

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER

KATIE HANKIN

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

BROOKE KISS

LIGHTING SUPERVISOR

KYLE MOREY

LIGHTING OPERATOR

DOUG NIEBLING

SOUND SUPERVISOR

HAYLEY FORWARD

SOUND OPERATOR

SAM HARPER

MIC TECHNICIAN

LAUREN PETERS

**STAGING SUPERVISOR/ FLOOR
MECHANIST**

DAVID TONGS

FLOOR MECHANIST

NATHAN SEYMOUR

COSTUME COORDINATOR

SAM PERKINS

WARDROBE SUPERVISOR

SIMONE EDWARDS

WIG STYLIST

TONI PAUL

REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHER

PRUDENCE UPTON

*THIS PLAY PREMIERED AT THE WHARF 1
THEATRE ON 26 FEBRUARY 2021*

*PLAYING BEATIE BOW WAS DEVELOPED
AND PRODUCED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
THE AUSTRALIAN WRITERS' GUILD DAVID
WILLIAMSON PRIZE.*

3 HOURS, INCLUDING INTERVAL

From the Director

KIP WILLIAMS

I was 10 years old when I first visited STC at The Wharf. As you might expect, it's an important memory for me for many reasons but, at the time, my primary excitement as I made my way from Circular Quay down to Hickson Road was the realisation, "Wow, this is where *Playing Beatie Bow* is set!" I had recently been assigned the book by an English teacher and it had swiftly become my favourite novel. The novel was the first time that the history and complexity of my city had been revealed to me through art, and it was thrilling to be there in The Rocks, amongst *Alice-in-Wonderland*-like alleyways and the evocative mishmash of old and new, and feel the story coming to life. Returning home to The Wharf with this show, after an absence of almost three years, while the building has been renovated, has huge significance for me.

There can be no doubt that Ruth Park is one of our greatest writers. Her background as a journalist and the fact that she was born in New Zealand and only moved to Sydney in her mid-twenties gave her a rare ability to see this city as both an outsider and an insider. This point of view gives her work remarkable breadth, insight, detail and truth. There are no punches pulled in her storytelling.

The Harp in the South novels are an excellent example of this skill. They engage and interrogate big ideas: family, community, the immigrant narrative, and the formation of a national identity, but they also provide us a wonderfully detailed and realistic tour of Surry Hills and the growth of our city at a key point in its history. Park paints a big canvas but her brushwork is delicate and precise.

Our 2018 production of *The Harp in the South: Part One and Part Two*, also adapted by the prodigiously talented Kate Mulvany, was a hugely meaningful and happy moment for me as a director. Kate has an extraordinary ability to interpret Park's imagination. This combined with her remarkable gifts for connecting actors and audiences through story, in ways that both move us and make us laugh, made her the perfect adapter for *Harp*. We're so lucky that Kate took on another of Park's classics.

Reflecting on what makes *Playing Beatie Bow* so special, I think first of Abigail, who sees herself, like so many of us do at her age, as an outsider. Her journey towards self-discovery and self determination and her burgeoning relationship resonated with me and I'm sure I'm not the only one who felt this when reading about her exploits. From an artistic point of view, her perspective also offers an ideal standpoint (wide-eyed and full of wonder with a healthy dose of teenage cynicism) through which to reflect on growth and change, the growth and change we go through as individuals but also the way families and communities transform.

The combination of Ruth and Kate is a very rare and magical mix, both overflow with insight, generosity and sensitivity; both revel in bringing to life the ties that bind us as a community. In recent times, because of the effects of the pandemic, I've felt those connections to be hugely under strain and, therefore, more important than ever. *Playing Beatie Bow* – because it's a story that stretches across centuries – is a beautiful study of the way communities and perspectives shift and also the ways they stay the same. There is an amazing moment in Kate's adaptation that sees Abigail sitting at the edge of the Harbour, looking out across the water as it was in the 1870s, while remembering what the view looks like in 2021 – it's a moving moment in which history folds in on itself.

Kate's adaptation is also exciting because it picks up some of the



Kate Mulvany, Kenneth Moraleda and Kip Williams. © Daniel Boud

things that aren't so close to the surface in the original novel. In this production we're mindful that all of the action of the story takes place in Tallawoladah, on Gadigal land, and that many aspects of this city's heritage have been overlooked by or excluded from the history books.

One of the central themes of *Playing Beatie Bow* is the way the truths of history reveal themselves when we put aside our preconceptions and observe events from the perspectives of others. So, given that we are updating the story for our time, we felt it was our responsibility to continue that project. Through consultation and collaboration, we have tried to build a work of art that recognises the 'real' Sydney. Kate and I have also been interested in shining a light on the complexity of the character of Beatie, who through her radical insistence on claiming an unwritten narrative (leaving the life of housewife and mother to pursue education) has all the makings of a feminist icon. I'm in awe of the way that Kate has taken Ruth's breadcrumb of the 'spawife' and woven a deeper narrative about the power of women and how it passes through time and generations.

Magic is, of course, at the heart of this work. And so much of that magic will be brought to life by the remarkably talented and boundary-pushing creative team of *Playing Beatie Bow*.

Some of them – David Fleischer, Renée Mulder and Nick Schlieper – I've been working with for many years, including on *Harp*; others are more recent partnerships – Clemence Williams and David Bergman, who respectively designed the amazing score and video in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* last year. Some are brand new creative collaborations for me, including our Choral Director Natalie Gooneratne, Muruwari composer and educator Matthew Doyle, Dramaturg and brand new Richard Wherrett Fellow Courtney Stewart and Assistant Director Kenneth Moraleda (a member of our Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP) Director's Initiative). Together we hope to invite you, the audience, to build a world with us – in doing so extending the collaborative spirit of this play beyond the people working behind the scenes to everyone – this is a shared story.

Playing Beatie Bow is a story about finding one's voice. That this show, which is set just around the corner, is the first to reopen our home at The Wharf after its refurbishment, is a thrilling opportunity to celebrate a place that has been central to the development of so many artists and to the history of Australian theatre. It also provides us with the chance to look to the future of STC, and to continue to push the work we do to new heights. It brings me great joy to have a cast

who runs the gamut of STC experience. From the iconic Heather Mitchell who's one of The Wharf's longest serving artists, through to Tony Cugin and Lena Cruz, Catherine Van-Davies, Guy Simon and Claire Lovering who've each had stand out performances with the Company, to Rory O'Keeffe, Sofia Nolan and Ryan Yeates who will be making their STC debuts. It feels very significant to have them all together, laughing and singing, in this pivotal moment.

It's also very special to be reopening this building with a story of and for all ages, including young people. It is my great hope that young people, like myself in the late-90s, come to The Wharf to discover the magic of Beatie Bow, and see this building as a place for their voice and the voices of future generations.

All of us at STC feel very privileged to be back working in this beautiful building and we are so grateful to be sharing this journey into the past, and the future, with you. Welcome home.

Kip Wilkins



Ryan Yeates in Sydney Theatre Company's *Playing Beatie Bow*, 2021. © Daniel Boud



Rehearsal set for *Playing Beatie Bow*. © Daniel Boud

From the Adaptor

KATE MULVANY

Ruth Park drops breadcrumbs. As you walk along the pathways of her vast and varied work, it's easy to be dazzled by the big ideas – the imaginative leaps, the feminist insights, the swathes of history, the epic love stories, and the diverse and ever-shifting communities. But look closer at that pathway, and you'll see it's also speckled with delicious morsels of information that season the narrative even further. Seemingly throwaway references to “Infant Phenomenons” and disease-addled ships named “Corona”, ostrich-plumed “high-steppers” and “grass of Parnassus” – all of these are mentioned only once or twice in *Playing Beatie Bow*, but they cannot be ignored. When you shine a light on them, they become jewels in a treasure chest of time – with every gem polished and placed by Ruth Park herself. She watches from afar, waiting to see if you'll notice them glinting.

One of these breadcrumbs, for me, popped up out of nowhere on page 101 of my dog-eared copy of *Playing Beatie Bow*, on about my third read in preparation for this adaptation. It is the word “spaewife” and it is only mentioned one other time after that in the book. “There ne'er was such a spaewife as Granny in her young days”, says Dovey about her grandmother Alice Tallisker. I was intrigued by this word, and Ruth's use of it – tucked away quietly amidst the rollicking Rocks story. I picked up the word and dived into its etymology. “Spae” is a Nordic-Scots word that means “to foretell” – a word filled with unknown context. And yet “wife”... What does “wife” mean here? What was Ruth trying to tell us by using it? After having the weary matriarch Margaret Darcy scream from the pages of *The Harp in the South* “WHAT'S A BODY BORN FOR?!” suddenly this surprising use of the word “wife” had taken on a new quality between Ruth's books. It wasn't attached to being married to a man or the mother of offspring, like in the *Harp* trilogy. Instead, it seemed to have a uniquely different femme power, and when I looked closer, all of her characters – no matter how they identified – seemed to have this power within them, whether they knew it or not. The power to listen and learn from the lessons whispered on the wind.

You see, Ruth herself was a spaewife. Time and again, her novels have seen into the future, dissected the present and reached into the past with startling accuracy and brutal honesty. And as someone who told the stories of ordinary, working-class communities of diverse individuals, she made sure she never withheld the magic from these people. Instead, they were the keepers of it. She saw the power in their sharing of stories, spells, songs, legends, legacy and culture and she spun a magic throughout her tales that to this day makes for a bewitching journey as a reader. It also makes her work an absolute gift to bring to the stage and to audiences of all ages. Ruth's characters and communities are grimed with hard-worn history. But they also come with a purpose. After the last page is read and the book is closed, her characters still whisper to us, “Will you remember me? Will you pass on my story? Did you pick up the breadcrumbs we dropped? What do our stories mean to you? How will you walk out of our world and into your own? And what story will you leave etched into the Rocks of your time?” To know that stories have been shared for over 60,000 years on the land we are gathered on is awe-inspiring and humbling. To open the new Wharf Theatre in a space that Ruth's stories and characters actually came from is amazing.

And to have artists and audiences become a community in any theatre, if only for a blink of time, is one of the most magical gifts we have now, in our past, and – I hope – the infinite future.

We can all be spaewives. We all have within us the power to honour the ancient stories of the land we walk on, celebrate the people from all walks of life and time that we walk amongst, and ensure those stories and songs are listened to, heeded and take us toward a better future together. I thank the stars for Ruth Park, and I'm so grateful to Rory Niland, Tim Curnow and the Park Estate for trusting me once again with her magnificent words and worlds. Thanks to my English teacher Ms Hammond who first put *Playing Beatie Bow* in my hands when I was 12 years old and made me a Ruth Park fan for life. Thank you to Kip Williams, Polly Rowe and all at Sydney Theatre Company for your ongoing support of Australian artists and stories. Thank you to Courtney Stewart, my incredible dramaturg and sounding board. Thank you to the astounding team of cast and creatives who shared their own stories and legacies and always bring such pride and passion to their work as artists – one of the most ancient (and important) jobs in the world. Thank you to Anne Crawley and all at The Rocks Walking Tours for letting this playwright tag along and harangue them with never-ending questions. Thanks to Matt Webb and the Sydney Festival for the incredible Burrawa tour that showed me an ancient Sydney that should be taught to us all. Thanks to Matthew Doyle for sharing his beautiful Gadigal songs, language and consultation and Phuong Van for her gorgeous lullaby. Thanks to Sam Hagan and Maggie Patton at the State Library of NSW for the maps of Sydney/Tallowoladah.

Thank you to my partner Hamish Michael for putting up with me jabbering and singing in a multitude of accents over the past year of writing this play from COVID lockdown. Finally, thank you to the First Nations people of this country – the original and eternal story-sharers of this land. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land. I hope you enjoy this walk through time down the pathway of past, present and future. Make sure you pick up the breadcrumbs...



Kate Mulvany © Daniel Boud

Plot Synopsis

The Rocks: Sydney's most historic and mysterious suburb. Full of twisting laneways, hidden staircases and the Harbour glinting in the distance, The Rocks is a place where the past and the present co-exist and, from time to time, blur into one another.

Into this world comes Abigail, a fiercely independent teenager who's moved to the suburb with her recently separated mother. Coming to terms with her new normal as well as all the tribulations of being a teenager, Abigail feels at odds with her life and out of place in her new home.

When Abigail follows the haunting spectre of a little girl, she finds herself transported back through the mists of time to The Rocks in 1873. There, with the help of her new companion Beatrice "Beatie" Bow and her family, Abigail embarks on a thrilling adventure to find her way back to the present day and in doing so learns what 'home' really is.



Catherine Ván-Davies, Sofia Nolan and Tony Cogin in Sydney Theatre Company's *Playing Beatie Bow*, 2021. © Daniel Boud

Character Analysis



ABIGAIL

Abigail is a sixteen year old living in The Rocks in the present day. She is a little alternative with a quirky sensibility reflected most obviously through her dress sense. She prefers vintage finds to modern trends, wearing dresses that her peers are confused by. The vintage lace collar that Abigail finds and wears is the talisman that sees her transported back to The Rocks of 1873.

Abigail is at a turning point in her life: she has never fallen in love or experienced a relationship (thus finding herself unable to understand her parents rekindling their relationship), she still passes time in playgrounds but is increasingly conscious of growing older. Abigail feels misunderstood by her mother and her Grandmother, who accuse her of being self-centred. Spending time away from her life, as she time travels to 1873, helps her open her eyes to other people and their lives. In 1873, she similarly experiences intergenerational conflict with Granny, although ultimately they connect over their shared experience of love. This intergenerational conflict propels Abigail's journey to the past and ultimately, her journey of self discovery. Abigail is a character who demonstrates the importance of being yourself and not feeling pressured by peers to be anyone else.

Character Analysis (Cont.)



BEATIE

Beatie is only eleven years old but her and Abigail share similar characteristics and personality traits. They are both fiercely independent and value their individuality and freedom. Beatie wants an education, even though girls in her time were often denied one because it was seen to be too expensive and a waste for girls, who were only going to work in the home performing domestic chores and child rearing. Beatie is resourceful; she finds books and ways to educate herself. She has a strong sense of morality and is upset with Abigail for her relationship with Judah, because he is promised to Dovey. She feels betrayed because her sense of order is disrupted. Beatie and Abigail understand each other through their shared 'gift' and remain friends across time.

Themes

CLASS

The Sydney suburb of The Rocks is presented in two very different historical time periods and as a result, as two very different socio-cultural places. The Rocks of the 1870s, Beatie's home suburb and time, is slum-like. It is a port town in which people do whatever they can to get by, including the criminal activity Abigail encounters in the Suez Canal. The lives of the characters are hard; Beatie wants to go to school but is prohibited, Gibbie seems incurably unwell, and their mother died from an extreme fever. This is in contrast to The Rocks of the present day, where gentrification has seen a huge shift in the socio-cultural demographics of the area's residents. Abigail lives in a modern high rise apartment building and The Rocks is the metropolitan city suburb we know it as today. Margaret says to Kathy "I mean, what's it worth Katherine? Five, five and a half?" about the apartment they live in. She is speaking in millions of dollars, an allusion to the prohibitively expensive nature of Sydney real estate. The characters of The Rocks in 1873 instantly decode Abigail's appearance in terms of her social status: for example, Dovey comments "She's quite the lady, Granny, no doubt... look at this skin. Soft and plush. And

will you see the nails? Pink and clean as Queen Victoria's own." In the play, the clash of these time periods and social classes helps Abigail understand her place in the world and her family, as well as to show the audience some of Sydney's history, and how much has changed from the 19th century to present day.

TIME

Similarities are created between the two time periods of the play in order to show the likeness of the characters and that in spite of the technologies and changes over time, people are not entirely different. This is further emphasised through the use of doubling in the production, where actors play more than one role. For example, the intentional doubling of Judah and Jonah, both played by Rory O'Keeffe, highlights how these characters both connect with Abigail in different time periods. Furthermore, Granny tells Abigail that it was she who saved her long ago, that they are connected by the gift and have met each other before, in the past. This connection establishes the relationships of the characters as being beyond measurable time.

This mercurial experience of time is further underlined



Guy Simon in Sydney Theatre Company's *Playing Beatie Bow*, 2021. © Daniel Boud

Themes (Cont.)

by the audience's own experience in visiting The Wharf to see the production: many audience members will walk through The Rocks to arrive at the theatre, and will make personal connections with the descriptions and depiction of The Rocks on stage.

COMING OF AGE

The story of *Playing Beatie Bow* can be defined as a bildungsroman, which is a literary genre following a lead character as they grow into adulthood. The play follows Abigail through a significant experience which propels her towards adulthood. Her experience in the past shapes her sense of self and helps her to understand the importance of her relationships with her parents and family. She meets Granny and Beatie, who she is magically connected to, and this experience helps her to understand her relationship with her parents and grandmother in the present day, and to become who she is meant to be.

More specifically *Playing Beatie Bow* can be seen as a feminist coming-of-age story, as the play centres on the

stories of the two girls and their respective experiences in different time periods. The experience of being a girl teetering on the edge of adulthood in two different historical periods is used to focus on the universality of this coming-of-age experience.

Many things are very different about Abigail and Beatie's lives but it is the similarities that bring the girls together and help them understand their lives and their place in the world. Both are navigating relationships within their families, managing society's expectations of them, while also trying to determine what they want to do with their lives and understanding their place in the world. In the STC Magazine, playwright Kate Mulvany discusses the characters' coming-of-age. She says:

What I love about Beatie and Abigail as characters, is they are encouraging each other along the path of womanhood and the many varied and distinct aspects of being a woman or a femme. I love that when we go back to the past, we find this young girl, Beatie, who is about as Germaine Greer as you can get in this little 11-year-old body. But at the same time, we can



Sofia Nolan, Catherine Vän-Davies and Rory O'Keeffe in Sydney Theatre Company's *Playing Beatie Bow*, 2021. © Daniel Boud

Themes (Cont.)



Sofia Nolan and Catherine Van-Davies in Sydney Theatre Company's *Playing Beatie Bow*, 2021. © Daniel Boud

move forward into 2021 and find Abigail who's really unsure where she fits in the world as a woman and as a school girl, and is a little confused by the politics around her. And it takes going back in time for her to realise how wonderful it is to be a woman in this world. And also how tough it is too.

But it's not just a feminist novel, of course. It's a coming of age story. It deals with all of the awkwardness of being a teenager who's on the cusp of setting off into their adult life. And that comes with a lot of heartache and a lot of humor. Heartache and humour that's pretty much universal.

MYTH

Story and Myth help us understand ourselves and our place in the world. This is seen in both 1873 and 2021, as Beatie has constructed her version of 'Elfland' to help her understand what she sees when she has travelled to the future, and Abigail has given herself her own name and creates stories from her vintage finds. The story of the gift being born with the seventh grandmother and carried down through the women of the family, the 'spaewives', as they are known, is the story that connects them.

'The Gift' becomes a metaphor for a kind of innate power that these female characters possess. 'The Gift' enables

them to connect with each other and, in doing so, gives them a sense of agency and an ability to understand who they truly are, regardless of external expectations. The women who possess the gift seem to also be in possession of a kind of authenticity; a self-actualisation. While it appears in the play as a kind of magic, and gives them the ability to move back and forward through time, it can be seen as an allegory for internal strength and the ability that these characters have to set themselves on their own journey.

MAGICAL REALISM

The plot hinges on time travel, as Abigail is transported back to the 1870s. This happens through a kind of magic, that exists both simultaneously to, and outside of, the human realm, akin to the mythology surrounding Celtic fairies. They were believed to be neither human nor ghost, instead natural beings with supernatural powers, much like the powers exhibited by Beatie. Although we are in the real world of The Rocks in 2021, through a game, and via a lace collar, at a lamppost on Harrington Street, Abigail travels back in time. The integration of magic into reality creates an imaginative experience for the audience and makes the story of Abigail and Beatie meeting across time possible.

Themes (Cont.)

MUSIC AND SONG

Throughout the play songs and music are used to create mood and atmosphere but also to place the action historically. Shanties, ditties, and folk songs are sung to give character background, historical context, and convey plot. While they share similarities, there are key distinctions between the three. A shanty, or 'sea shanty', was traditionally shouted by sailors during activities like raising the anchor. They feature a lead singer and a

chorus. Ditties, by comparison, are short, simple songs (or even poems), that usually include repeated words or phrases. Perhaps the broadest category is that of folk songs, which range from oral histories, to beloved ballads which tell a culturally-specific story, to their modern iteration that finds a home with country and pop music. Choral singing is also used for scene changes and to create settings.



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