Adrian Lester: 1991

As You Like It
Education Pack

About this pack

This teaching resource focuses on Cheek by Jowl's all-male production of *As You Like It*, which performed all over the world between 1991 and 1995 with Adrian Lester playing Rosalind alongside casts including Tom Hollander, Simon Coates, Scott Handy, and Patrick Toomey. You will find John Haynes' photographs of these perfomances throughout this pack At the ends of chapters, you will find targeted exercises for teachers to use with students in:

- English classrooms for GCSE and beyond
- Drama classrooms and rehearsals

The following digital resources are integrated throughout the chapters. Click on the orange boxes wherever you see them to follow the links.

The Open University's 1995 documentary about Cheek by Jowl's production of *As You Like It*

Cheek by Jowl's online archive, including production images, design notes, and rehearsal scripts

'Not True, But Useful...', Cheek by Jowl's podcast, about acting, directing, and designing the classics

'Who Am I This Time?', a podcast in which actors David Morrissey and Adrian Lester discuss this production

About Cheek by Jowl

Cheek by Jowl is an international theatre company, founded in 1981 by director Declan Donnellan and designer Nick Ormerod. The company is an Artistic Associate of the Barbican, and a National Portfolio Organisation for the Arts Council England. In the last four decades, they have directed productions in multiple languages, which have performed in 50 countries and 400 cities all over the world. They have an enduring fascination for Shakespeare's work, alongside other great classic writers like Chekhov, Pushkin, Racine, Webster, and Sophocles. They have a reputation for bringing 'fresh life to the classics using intense, vivid performances like a laser of light to set the text ablaze' (The Guardian).

Together, Declan and Nick have developed a unique approach to theatre making and acting. Their constantly evolving methodology prioritises the actors' interaction with the space around them, and is all about discovering a sense of liveness onstage. At the heart of all their work is belief that acting is an ingrained human behaviour, and that we all perform different versions of ourselves in different contexts every day. Watching an actor perform the part of someone else reminds us that we all contain multitudes.

'The actor by the sheer art of acting defends a world that not only tolerates difference, but also rejoices in the variety of human nature'

Declan Donnellan

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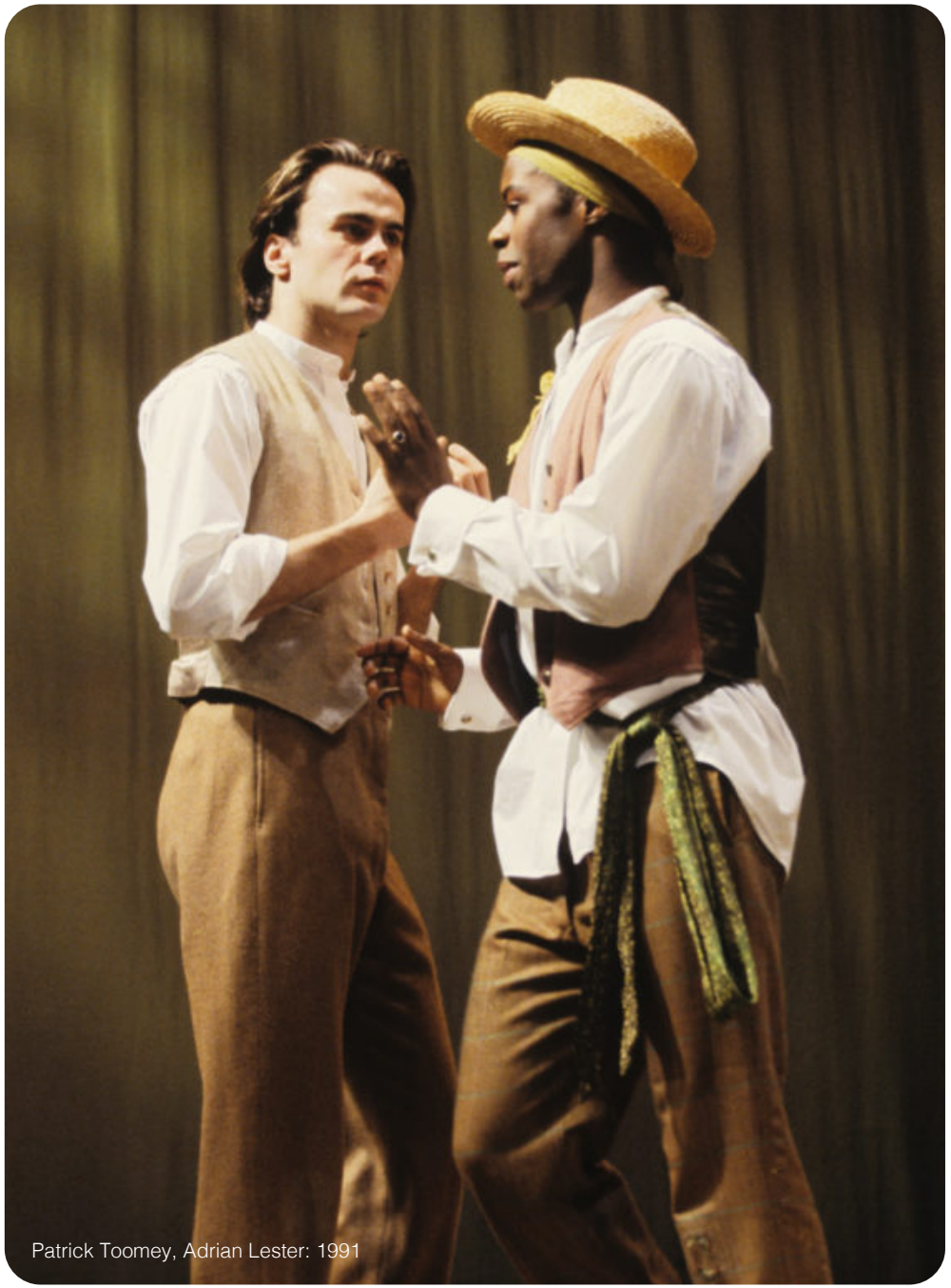


Patrick Toomey, Adrian Lester: 1991


Simon Coates, Adrian Lester: 1994

Synopsis

Act I

The play opens as a young man, Orlando, complains to his servant, Adam, that his eldest brother, Oliver, is humiliating him. Oliver is refusing Orlando an education, and denying him a part in the inheritance from their recently deceased father, Sir Rowland de Bois. Orlando decides to better his fortunes by challenging the court wrestler, Charles. In secret, Oliver asks Charles to injure Orlando as badly as he can.

There is a new Duke at court: Duke Frederick, who has just overthrown his own brother, Duke Senior, and banished him to the Forest of Arden. Frederick has allowed his neice Rosalind to stay at court as a companion to his daughter, Celia.

Orlando wrestles Charles as Celia and Rosalind watch on. Orlando beats the odds to win the match. Rosalind falls in love with the young stranger and gives him a chain to wear around his neck.

Act II

Orlando discovers that Oliver is plotting to kill him, and escapes with Adam to the Forest of Arden. Duke Frederick suddenly banishes Rosalind. Celia refuses to abandon her cousin, and they also run away together to the forest. They disguise themselves for safety. Rosalind dresses up as a young shepherd called Ganymede and Celia as his sister Aliena. The court fool, Touchstone, follows them.

Act III

As Rosalind and Celia trudge through the Forest of Arden in their disguises, they come across a shepherd called Silvius. He is tormented with love for Phoebe, a shepherdess who keeps rejecting him. Elsewhere in the forest, Orlando desperately seeks food for the elderly Adam, who has collapsed with exhaustion. He stumbles across Rosalind's father, the exiled Duke Senior, and his followers, who are living a new life in the forest. They welcome Orlando and Adam into their band.

Orlando pins love poems to Rosalind onto the trees. She finds the poems, but when she and Orlando do meet, he fails to recognise her in her disguise as Ganymede. She decides to test him by proposing to cure him of his love. As Ganymede, she tells him to come every day and woo her as if she is Rosalind (which of course, she actually is). Phoebe becomes infatuated with Rosalind-as-Ganymede, to Silvius' anguish. Touchstone has also found romance in the forest, falling in love with a country girl called Audrey. They agree to marry.

Adrian Lester, Simon Coates: 1994

Adrian Lester, Scott Handy: 1994

Act IV

Rosalind-as-Ganymede challenges one of Duke Senior's followers, Jaques, about his cynicism and melancholy. She is angry because Orlando is an hour late for his pretend date with 'Rosalind'. When he finally arrives, Rosalind teaches him to take responsibility for his desires. They hold a pretend wedding, but Orlando has to leave again immediately to rejoin the Duke. Rosalind tells Celia that under her disguise she tormented by her love for Orlando. Meanwhile, Phoebe tries to woo the man she thinks is Ganymede (but is in fact Rosalind), and Rosalind tries to persuade her to marry Silvius.

Oliver enters the forest to try and find Orlando. Wild beasts attack him, but Orlando happens to be passing and bravely steps in to save him, wounding himself in the process. The two brothers are reconciled. Oliver goes to get help, carrying a handkerchief stained with Orlando's blood. When Rosalind sees it, she faints, and Oliver realises that there may be more to Ganymede than first meets the eye. Oliver and Celia (still disguised as Aliena) fall in love.

Act V

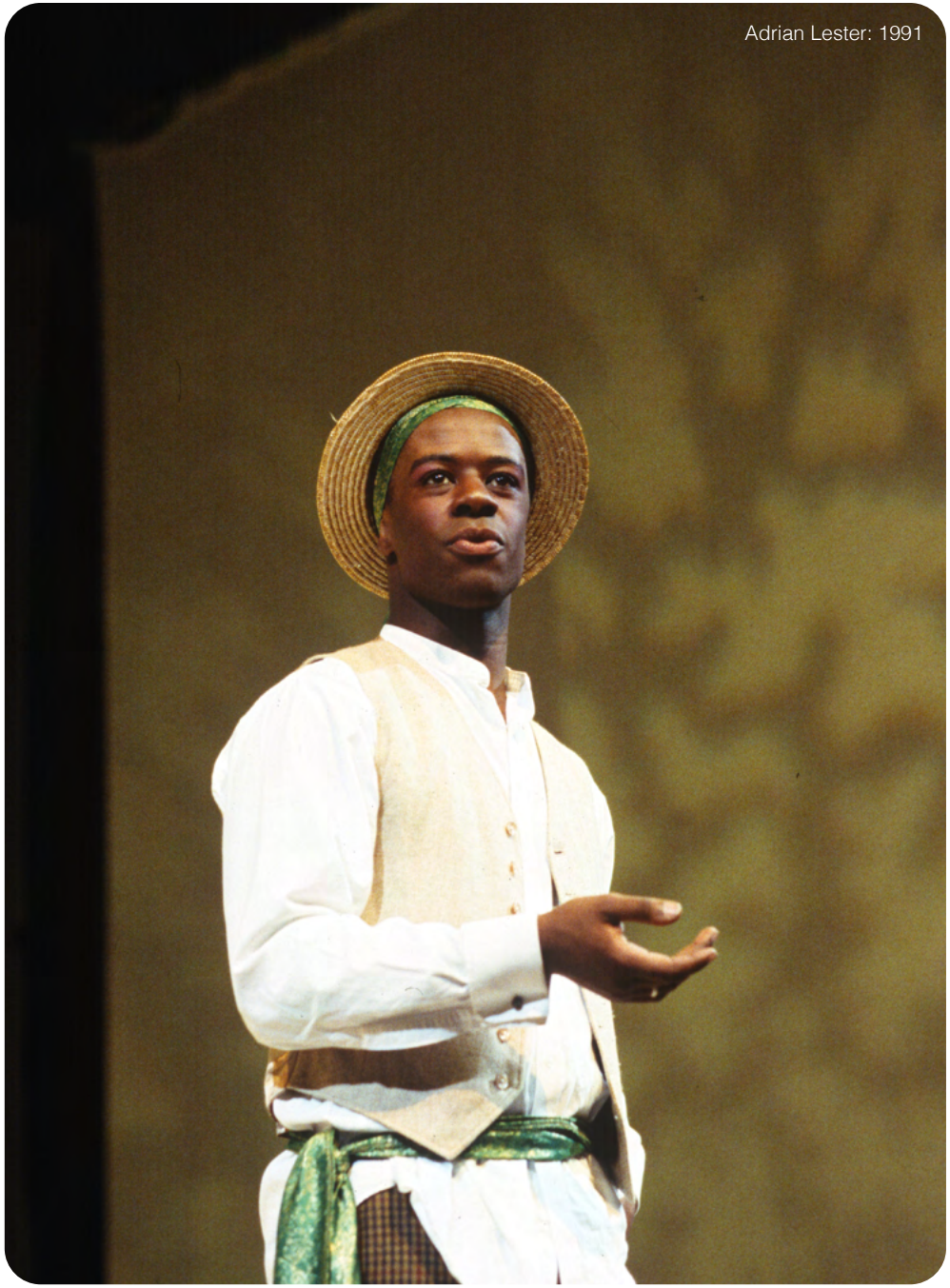
Audrey's former suitor William arrives to try and win back her heart, and Touchstone threatens to kill him if he stands in the way of their wedding. Oliver and Celia-as-Aliena agree to marry the following day. Oliver, changed by his experiences in the forest, agrees to give his father's estate to Orlando and live in the woods with his new bride Aliena, not yet realising that she is really Celia, Duke Frederick's daughter.

Rosalind decides to clear up the mess. As Ganymede, she tells Orlando that she will use magic to arrange a wedding with the real Rosalind. She tells Phoebe that if she (Ganymede) ever marries a woman, it will be her; and if they don't get married, Pheobe must agree to marry Silvius instead. She asks everyone to meet the following day.

Rosalind reveals her true identity to Orlando, the shepherds and her father the Duke. She marries Orlando. Phoebe grudgingly accepts Silvius, Celia marries Oliver, and Touchstone marries Audrey.

In the middle of the quadruple weddings, Oliver and Orlando's brother appears from the court to announce that Duke Frederick has abdicated, and Duke Senior is restored to his former power. In the Cheek by Jowl production, the company added a silent moment in which Duke Senior hands the dukedom over to Orlando, and Orlando in turn gives it to Rosalind.

The play closes with a jubilant dance followed by an epilogue delivered by the actor playing Rosalind. He asks the audience to applaud, and reminds us that he is, after all, a male actor.



Adrian Lester: 1991

Historical context

As You Like It was most likely first performed by William Shakespeare's company, The Lord Chamberlain's Men, in 1599. It was probably one of the very first productions in their brand new theatre, The Globe. In middle of a snowstorm in the final days of 1598, the company had been forced to dismantle their former theatre in Shoreditch when they ran in trouble with their landlord. William Shakespeare, along with his actors, took the building apart with their own hands and carried the timber over the Thames river to the Southbank, where they used it to build a brand new theatre.

The Globe involved a major investment from the company members, who had put their own money into it as a shared business venture. They needed a season of plays from their star writer which would turn a quick profit. Shakespeare turned out a series of blockbuster new scripts for The Globe's first season, including *Henry V* and *Julius Caesar*, and the crowd-pleasing comedy *As You Like It* was most likely among them. The play is recorded in August 1600 in the register of the Stationers' Company, the organisation responsible for publishing in London, which suggests it was first performed as one of The Globe's opening productions in the year beforehand.

The company included around ten actors. We still know many of their names, including Robert Armin, Richard Burbage, John Heminges, Augustine Phillips, Henry Condell, and Richard Cowley. They were all shareholders in the company. *As You Like It* contains a spread of roles and interlocking storylines in order to provide satisfying roles for each of these actors and play to their strengths. Robert Armin, for example, was known for his dry humour, and Shakespeare probably wrote Touchstone for him. The female parts of Rosalind, Celia, Audrey, and Phoebe were played by boy actors with unbroken voices, who each lived with one of the adult actors and worked as their apprentice.

There are scarce records about the lives and names of the child actors working for The Lord Chamberlain's men, but we can makes some guesses about them from the details hidden in the plays. It is likely that in the late 1590s there was a star pair of boys in the company, one of who was very tall and the other very short. In *As You Like It,* Rosalind says that she 'more than common tall' (Act I Scene 3), and Celia is described as 'low' (Act IV Scene 3). A few years earlier, in 1595, Shakespeare wrote another pair of mismatched teenage girls into *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Helena and Hermia, who are described as being like 'a painted maypole' and 'an acorn' (Act III Scene 2). Perhaps these description refer to the same couple of brilliant boy actors in both plays.

The late 18th century biographer George Steevens wrote that The Globe had a Latin motto written above the door, 'totus mundus agit histrionem' or 'all the world is performing a play'. The first line of Jaques famous speech from Act II Scene 7 of *As You Like It*, starting 'all the world's a stage', is almost a direct translation. Shakespeare may have been making a nod to his audience, echoing the branding of his company's theatre inside one of the first major productions on their new stage. Steevens also records a theatrical legend that Shakespeare himself played the role of Adam in the first performance.[1]

1 G. Steevens and S. Jonson, *The Plays of Shakspeare with the Corrections and Illustrations of Various Commentators,* 1773

Shakespeare's Sources

James Shapiro: extract from *1599, A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare,*


Joe Dixon, Adrian Lester: 1994

Shakespeare took the plot of *As You Like It* from Thomas Lodge's prose romance *Rosalind*. In the late 1580s Lodge had signed on for a profiteering voyage to the Canary Islands, taking along for idle hours a copy of a fourteenth-century poem called *The Tale of Gamylon*, thought at the time to be by Chaucer. In 1590 Lodge published a greatly revised version, transforming an all-male outlaw story into a pastoral romance laced with Petrarchan lyrics. *Rosalind* was so popular that it went through three more editions by the time that Shakespeare gave it his full attention, in 1599. We don't know which edition he used, but given the extent of his indebtedness he must have owned or borrowed a copy. Part of *Rosalind*'s appeal a decade after its publication was nostalgic: it was a product of a golden moment in Elizabethan history, the period following England's great triumph over the Spanish Armada in 1588.

The nostalgia exercised its hold on Shakespeare as well. Like many of the other sources Shakespeare turned to this year, *Rosalind* dates from around the time that he moved to London and began writing. A decade into his career, as his work began to turn in new directions, Shakespeare needed to take his bearings. He found himself reflecting back to that time when he had first fully immersed himself in the literary culture, measuring how much had changed, what kind of writing was no longer possible.

For the past decade Elizabethan playwrights in search of stories to turn into plays had passed *Rosalind* by; it didn't seem to have enough plot to sustain a comedy. Not even Lodge, who was a competent playwright, tried his hand at dramatising it. Though flimsy, *Rosalind*'s narrative stretched just far enough for Shakespeare's needs. He borrows wholesale the story of how the lovers end up in the woods as well as the sub-plot of political

usurpation and restoration that frames Lodge's work; and he retains all of the main characters, though he changes a few names (including that of Lodge's hero – Rosader – to Orlando).

Shakespeare intuitively saw what Lodge failed to develop. Part of the problem was that *Rosalind* was sorely lacking in irony and humour; and while the material was all there, opportunity after opportunity had been squandered. Lodge had had the wonderful idea of Rosalind cross-dressing as a young man named Ganymede (with all the suggestive homoerotic associations that went with the name of Jove's beloved cup-bearer) and, in this guise, flirtatiously role-play with the man she loves: 'I will represent Rosalind and thou shalt be as thou art, Rosader.' But in Lodge this mostly serves as an excuse for the two to launch into poetic duets like 'The Wooing Eclogue Betwixt Rosalind and Rosader'. Lodge also invents the lovers' mock marriage, with Rosalind still disguised as a man.

But from Shakespeare's perspective, Lodge failed to see how much more could have been done with this and other extraordinarily rich scenarios. Why other dramatists didn't recognise this potential says a good deal about Shakespeare's particular gifts as reviser as well as about his deep understanding of how comedy worked. It also suggests that there was some truth to Robert Greene's jealous attack on Shakespeare, in 1592, when he warned his fellow playwrights to beware of this young rival, an 'upstart crow, beautified with our feathers'. He saw how easily Shakespeare could ransack others' styles, making those he imitated feel passed by…

... Lodge's story – with its cross-dressed heroine, its mix of high and low, and its movement from city to country and back again – already contained many of the basic ingredients of Shakespearean comedy. And its minimal plot was elastic enough to allow Shakespeare to complicate the play's movement without damaging its basic choreography. To that end, Shakespeare crowds it with a larger cast of characters, including the melancholy Jaques, the clownish fool Touchstone and the rustics William and Audrey. The storyline follows a series of seemingly random encounters in the woods: Rosalind and Orlando run into Jaques, who in turn confronts Touchstone, who challenges William and woos Audrey, and so on. Their brief encounters turn into sparring matches in which everything from the philosophical to the mundane is debated, as characters from court and country find themselves drawn to and mystified by each other. There's a lot more talk than action. By the end, the lovers are coupled up and political threats removed. Lodge's story ends in three weddings; Shakespeare can't resist adding a fourth.

About the only words Shakespeare takes virtually unchanged from *Rosalind* come from its Preface, where Lodge tells his readers, 'If you like it, so; and yet I will be yours in duty, if you be mine in favour.' Shortened and thoroughly transformed in its implications, it worked nicely as a title: *As You Like It*. The words encapsulate what Shakespeare is up to here, seemingly offering the audience just the kind of conventional story they went to the playhouse to see, yet at the same time expanding the horizons of what they thought they were looking for in a comedy.

Rehearsing Shakespeare

Cheek by Jowl's approach is rooted in collaboration with actors. When possible, they start their productions with a process called 'going into the woods'. Several weeks before rehearsals start, and before Declan and Nick make any decisions about the design and direction of the production, the whole company goes away to a rural location to explore the play together.

The actors create etudes (improvised performance experiments) which explore important human experiences within the world of the play. These etudes involve as little spoken text as possible in order to focus on the physical, embodied human experiences in the play. Declan and Nick take their inspiration for the direction of the play from watching these etudes. By the time official rehearsals come around, Nick has created a design which responds directly to the actors' discoveries.

'The design that Nick then presents at the early part of the rehearsal period has actually grown from the grassroots up, so it's a much more organic thing. It's not like something we impose from our secret director/ designer discussions!… and it has the authority that comes from organic things that are allowed to grow.'

Declan Donnellan

Listen to actors Adrian Lester and David Morrissey discuss Cheek by Jowl rehearsals from 23:06 in 'Who Am I This Time?'

'Meaning only gets you so far. The body gets you further… every word needs to be continually reborn through the body'

Declan Donnellan

Before the main rehearsals start, Declan and Nick ask the actors learn the script by heart. They can then start exploring the text on its feet immediately, connecting with the space and find a physical language for interacting with each other. Through movement, the meaning of the words reveal themselves as rehearsals go on.

Valentine Catzéflis and Xavier Boiffier in rehearsal for *Périclès, Prince de Tyr*
Photo by Patrick Baldwin

From 'Not True, But Useful'. Listen to Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod talk about going 'into the woods'.

Exercises for English students

Big chunks of Shakespearean language can feel very intimidating when we encounter them for the first time. This exercise is designed to help students quickly grasp the dynamics of Shakespeare's speeches and have fun bringing it to life. It is adapted from an exercise which Cheek by Jowl actors use in rehearsal to bring the space to life and explore a speech with their bodies before having to pin down the meanings of the words.

The text-in-space exercise

This is an exercise to help students understand the text in three dimenions, and it works for any Shakespeare text you are studying. Let's take this speech as an example. In it Orlando complains to his servant, Adam, that his brother has been treating him badly.

For this exercise, you will need:

- white paper
- coloured pens or pencils
- coloured board markers
- printed copies of the speech for each student

ORLANDO:

As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion bequeathed me by will but poor a thousand crowns, and, as thou sayest, charged my brother, on his blessing, to breed me well: and there begins my sadness. My brother Jacques he keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of his profit: for my part, he keeps me rustically at home, or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept; for call you that keeping for a gentleman of my birth, that differs not from the stalling of an ox? His horses are bred better; for, besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage, and to that end riders dearly hired: but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth; for the which his animals on his dunghills are as much bound to him as I. Besides this nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me: he lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education. This is it, Adam, that grieves me; and the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude: I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it.

(Act I Scene 1)

1. Ask your class to come up with a list of all the living and personified things which Orlando talks about in this speech. Write the list up on the board, with each item in a different colour. An example list for this speech might look like:

Me (Orlando himself)
Adam
Orlando's eldest brother (Oliver)
Orlando's other brother (Jaques)
Orlando's father
An ox
His brother's horses
The animals on the dunghills
The hinds (servants)
Nature

2. Divide the class into as many groups as there are sentences in the speech. Assign each group a sentence, and give them a couple of minutes to highlight every time Orlando mentions one of the things on this list, marking each one with the colour you have assigned for it. Ask them to pay attention to every 'me', 'his' and 'you', and highlight them all. Here's an example of a highlighted sentence:

> **My brother Jaques** **he** keeps at school, and report speaks goldenly of **his** profit: for **my** part, **he** keeps **me** rustically at home, or, to speak more properly, stays **me** here at home unkept; for call **you** that keeping for **a gentleman of my birth,** that differs not from the stalling of **an ox?**

3. While they are doing this, write the each things on the list in their assigned colour on a separate piece of paper. Leave out 'me'. Ask students around the room to hold up the signs.

4. Ask a volunteer from each group to stand up and say their sentence slowly. As they speak it aloud, they must point at the correct sign-holder every time they reach a highlighted word. Every time they Orlando refers to himself with 'me', 'my', 'I', the speaker must point at themselves. This will be a fun challenge: the speaker will find that every few words Orlando is talking about something new. Encourage your students to have fun acting the sentence out.

5. Go through the groups in order until you have heard the whole speech. Then ask the class to reflect on Orlando's family dynamics, what he is trying to communicate to Adam, what his problem is.

By the end of this text-in-space exercise, your students should have gained an instinctive understanding of the speech without needing to have mastered Shakespearean language first. It will also help reveal how physical the text is. It is also a useful reminder about how Shakespeare never intended his plays to be read on a page, but rather performed by bodies in space.

Exercises for acting students

Cheek by Jowl use all sorts of exercises to help actors bring the text to life in three dimensions. The emphasis is always on discovering the script through movement, and helping the actor be attentive to the outside space.

‘There are exercises to do this, and I make them up as I go along in the theatre. But they are only provisional! People ask me for my exercises, as if there is some sort of magic secret in them, but there isn’t any’

Declan Donnellan

Declan and Nick’s advice to actors and directors is to design your own exercises to suit the needs of your rehearsal room, and keep developing them as you learn new things from each project. The following suggestions are simply starting points for your imagination. They are the kinds of things Cheek by Jowl do in the first days of rehearsals to release the actors from the anxiety of dealing with Shakespeare’s language, and help them to discover a physical life for the text.

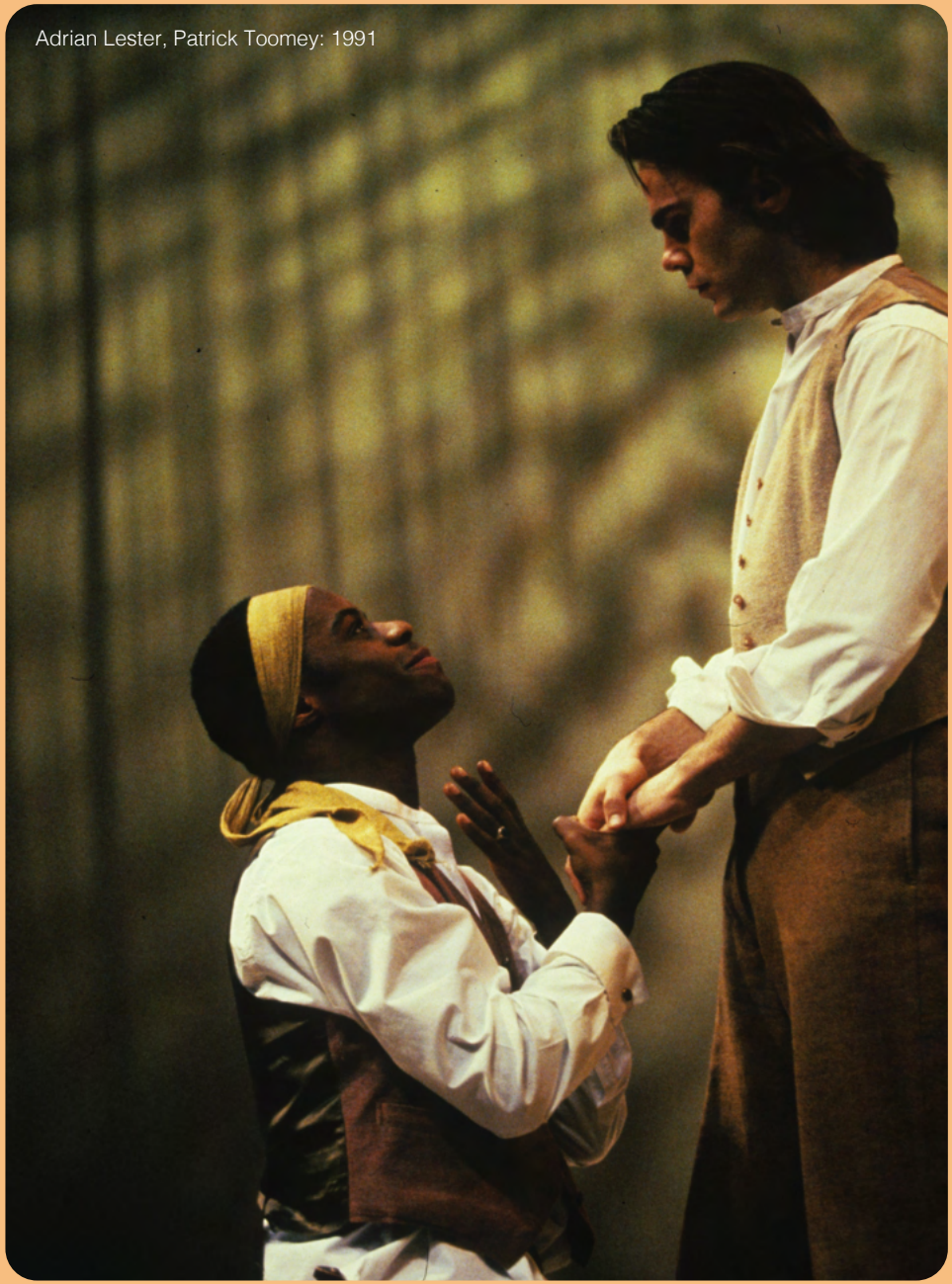
Move, move, move

Do everything you can to get the company comfortable moving with and around each other. Simple playground games are deceptively useful for this: you’ll often find Cheek by Jowl companies playing grandmother’s footsteps, tag, and wink murder on the first day of rehearsals. They might also start by learning a dance with the company’s movement director. It doesn’t matter if this dance gets scrapped by the final performance, because the only point for today is to get the actors’ bodies limber, moving easily and joyfully around each other. You should choose whatever games will work best for the dynamics of the room, but the aim is to get the company to turn their attention outwards, towards the space. Avoid sitting down at a table to talk about the script.

Reacting to the space

Everything we do is a reaction, and this is a useful key for actors. In every second, we receive signals from the bodies and the space around us, and respond with our movement and voice. This is an exercise to help actors physically experience the charged space around their character.

The teacher or director gives the company the task of posing for a group photograph. They then ask them to leave the room, and come in one by one in order of status, from lowest to highest, and arrange themselves around the other bodies as the group pose grows. This will help the actors’ bodies react to the space and the other people in it, and turn their attention to world outside them.


Adrian Lester, Patrick Toomey: 1991

Text in motion

As director or teacher, ask the actors to walk around the space, keeping the space between them as equal as possible. After a while, give an instruction for one character to touch another. For example, you might say, 'Rosalind, touch your father'. The actor follows the instruction and keeps moving. It's important to name the character, not the actor. Repeat the instruction until the web of connections in the play is established. Then, you might say 'Orlando, line please'. As the actor walks around, they should say the first line that pops into their head. It can come from anywhere in the play. The rule is that, as they speak, they must move and touch anyone they mention as the whole group keeps walking around the room. It doesn't matter if the person they are talking about isn't actually that scene. The rule is that for every name, 'him', 'her', 'they', and so on, the actor must move and touch the person they are referring to. The director continues, 'Phoebe, line… Jaques, line… Celia, line…'

You can keep doing this exercise every day, gradually adding more lines at each iteration. You can ask for other actors to continue the scene if they know the next line, continuing to move around each other and touch the people they are talking about. The company should continue the scene for as long possible. When silence falls, you can prompt another actor to begin a new sequence.

Eventually, whole scenes will appear organically with the text embodied in movement. Through this exercise, the company encounters the script physically without having to sit down to do table work.

Dealing with Verse

Shakespeare wrote *As You Like It* in a mixture of iambic pentameter verse and prose. In Shakespeare's plays, verse is often spoken by characters with a high social status, and vice-versa with prose. He also switches between verse to prose to reflect the different social rules of the space the characters find themselves in. For example, in this play, the characters largely speak in verse at the formal environment of the court, but in prose when they are in the permissive atmosphere of the forest.

Playing with Rhythm

Fiona Shaw

Rhythm is the key to the subconscious. By discovering the rhythm of the line, you discover the emotional life of the speaker at that moment… I think people believe that because prose is what we use in modern speech that there isn't a rhythm to it. In fact there is a tremendous rhythm to prose. And we will find in *As You Like It* that when people are speaking in prose, which they do notably when they are in the forest and they are relaxed and free, that they break up the speeches according to thought on thought on thought on thought, and it is the thought which drives the next line forward. The joy of verse is that the rhythm itself of the language insists that you keep on going into the next bit. So you have a line like,

HAMLET:

To be or not to be that is the question
Whether tis nobler in the mind…
(Act III Scene 1)

In 'to be or not to be', you have at the end of the line a feminine ending, so that instead of going 'To be or not to be that is the quest..' It goes 'quest-**ion'**, which encourages you to think, 'ooh, what's beyond that '-**ion**'?'...

Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune...

So there is a kind of momentum in verse that has an emotional power, which is often associated, as it is in *As You Like It,* with stress or strain. So in *As You Like It,* when the Duke comes to banish his niece Rosalind, he speaks in verse and she replies in verse, and they both break up each other's language. They break up each other's verse line in their panic to interrupt each other, but they stay in verse, and the sense is that if they didn't stay in verse they would not be able to contain the amount of emotion that they have got to speak.

Watch an extract from this scene (Act I Scene 3) from 0:46 in The Open University documentary

You will see that in a verse line, you will always have ti-tum ti-tum ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum**, but that will be broken if it doesn't suit the emotional power of what is being said.

So, very simply, Sonnet 71 goes

No **long**er **mourn** for **me** when **I** am **dead**

And you wonder why it is such a terribly plain rhythm, until you get onto the next line:

Than **you** shall **hear** the **sur**ly **sull**en **bell**
Give **warn**ing **to** the **world** that **I** am **fled**
From **this** vile **world** with **vil**est **worms** to **dwell**;

It's completely on the rhythm, but it suits it, because it is all about a bell going doing, doing, doing. If it were in apposition to the bell, it would be saying something else. So sometimes he goes with the rhythm, sometimes he goes against it. At the beginning of *Macbeth*, you have three witches come on who completely speak in the alternative rhythm. Instead of going ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum,** they go **tum**-ti t **tum**-ti **tum**-ti with:

FIRST WITCH:
When shall **we** three **meet** ag**ain**?
In **thun**der, **light**ning, **or** in **rain**?

SECOND WITCH:
When the **hur**ly**bur**ly's **done**,
When the **batt**le's **lost** and **won**.

THIRD WITCH:
That will **be** ere the **set** of **sun**.

FIRST WITCH:
Where the **place**?

SECOND WITCH:
Up**on** the **heath**.

THIRD WITCH:
There **to** meet **with** Mac**beth**.

FIRST WITCH:
Fair is **foul** and **foul** is **fair**
Ho**ver** through the **fog** and **fil**thy **air**[1]

(Act I Scene 1)

1 Fiona Shaw in 'As You Like It - Approaching Literature' [film documentary], The Open University, 1995

Verse and Jazz

Declan Donnellan

There's nothing particularly grandiose or highbrow about verse in itself. Let's just think calmly about verse. Verse is connected with intonation, so I naturally will stress some syllables rather than others. We use stress and consequently the basis of verse all the time. So you could say for example, 'that actress is **ab**solutely fantastic', or you could say 'that actress is absolutely fan**tas**tic.' And you may or may not separate out the syllables. It's to do with how and when the stressed syllable falls.

In blank verse, it's very often built on an iamb (ti-**tum** ti-**tum**). What happens in the verse is that the audience and the actor acquires an expectation of a rhythm, which may or may not be satisfied. So it's a bit like jazz. Jazz is absolutely dependent on square time, four-four time, because it's only the breaking of that expectation that gives the energy to the music. So you have a form that you can break.

And verse works exactly like that. Verse in iambic pentameters has the expected ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum** ti-**tum,** and then the writer or the speaker plays on that theme, they vary the theme or they go into counter-point - they go against that theme. But it's the expectation of a rhythm that is obeyed or denied.

You have a lot more choice in verse. And it's the difference between the expectation and what's actually delivered, that's what gives you your strength. Verse manipulates an anticipation. All I'm trying to say is don't be frightened of verse. It's actually something we do naturally.

From 'Not True, But Useful...' Listen to Declan Donnellan talk more about text and verse from 18:23 in this episode

Exercises for English students

As a class, read this exchange between Rosalind and Celia. Moments before, Duke Frederick has told Rosalind the devastating news that she is banished from court. This is what the cousins say to each other as soon as the Duke has left.

Watch actors Adrian Lester and Simon Coates play this scene from 30:25 in this documentary

Consider the following questions:

Up until this point in the play, when Rosalind and Celia are alone together, they speak to each other informally in prose. This is the first time they speak in verse when they are by themselves. What has changed between them? Why has this changed the way they are speaking to each other?

Who is speaking more in this scene? Who is hardly speaking at all? Why?

In the last two lines, they slip back into prose again. What is it about this moment that has made them change the way they talk to each other in the middle of the scene?

Notice that in the first four exchanges, Rosalind and Celia complete each other's verse lines. When one stops, the other one immediately picks up the rhythm and completes the line of iambic pentameter. Try reading it out loud, beating out the pentameter as you go, not allowing for a pause between the two speakers. How does following the rhythm like this change the way we hear the scene and understand the dynamic between the cousins?

CELIA:
O my poor Rosalind, whither wilt thou go?
Wilt thou change fathers? I will give thee mine.
I charge thee be not thou more griev'd than I am.

ROSALIND:
I have more cause.

CELIA:
Thou hast not, cousin,
Prithee be cheerful. Know'st thou not the Duke
Hath banish'd me, his daughter?

ROSALIND:
That he hath not.

CELIA:
No, hath not? Rosalind lacks, then, the love
Which teacheth thee that thou and I am one.
Shall we be sund'red? Shall we part, sweet girl?
No. Let my father seek another heir.
Therefore devise with me how we may fly,
Whither to go, and what to bear with us;
And do not seek to take your charge upon you,
To bear your griefs yourself, and leave me out;
For, by this heaven, now at our sorrows pale,
Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee.

ROSALIND:
Why, whither shall we go?

CELIA:
To seek my uncle in the forest of Arden.

(Act I Scene 3)

Exercises for acting students

‘This is what a character is doing all the time: playing with a tiny corner of control in the face of a massive, continuously changing space.’

Declan Donnellan

A fundamental idea in Cheek by Jowl’s work is that experience of all characters in all plays is that they are out of control, and they don’t like it. The universe around us is chaotic, dangerous, and changing horribly fast, and every single second we are struggling against it to make themselves feel safe. Surrendering to the rhythm of the text can help the actor experience this sense of time and space hurtling faster than they want it to go. The verse is like a steam train pulling them through the scene. The actor’s job is to jump on board. These exercises should help the actor discover that there is free energy ready-to-go in the verse.

The super-charged second syllable

The first stressed syllable in the iambic pentameter line is incredibly useful to the actor. It’s usually the second syllable, the ‘tum’ on ‘ti-tum’. It’s a little explosion of energy which keeps the momentum going from the line before. Ask the actors to walk to and fro between two walls which have ten strides distance between them, following this pattern.

ONE - touch the wall
TWO - turn and point at the opposite wall
THREE - **FOUR** - **FIVE** - **SIX** - **SEVEN** - **EIGHT** - **NINE** - **TEN** - take a step on each number towards the opposite wall
ONE - touch the opposite wall
TWO - turn and point… and so on

Ask them to repeat it a few times until they are used to it, always making sure they touch the wall on **ONE**, and turn and point on **TWO**. They should not let any pauses creep in between **TEN** and **ONE**, but keep looping the pattern steadily. Next choose a piece of verse text - for example, Celia’s words in Act I Scene 3:

Shall we be sund’red? Shall we part, sweet girl?
No. Let my father seek another heir.
Therefore devise with me how we may fly,
Whither to go, and what to bear with us;
And do not seek to take your charge upon you,
To bear your griefs yourself, and leave me out;
For, by this heaven, now at our sorrows pale,
Say what thou canst, I’ll go along with thee.

Ask the actors to separate the text into individual syllables, and follow the pattern again. For example, the first three lines would go

SHALL - touch the wall
WE - turn and point
BE - **SUND** - **RED** - **SHALL** - **WE** - **PART** - **SWEET** - **GIRL** - take a step on each syllable
NO - touch the wall
LET - turn and point
MY - **FATH** - **ER** - **SEEK** - **AN** - **OTH** - **ER** - **HEIR** - take a step on each syllable
THERE - touch the wall
FORE - turn and point
DEV - **ISE** - **WITH** - **ME** - **HOW** - **WE** - **MAY** - **FLY** - take a step on each syllable

Remember, during this exercise the actor must not pause, but keep the rhythm going steadily. They should discover that the second syllable (the one on which they turn and point) helps propel them through the line. They will feel that the words and the thoughts are travelling faster than the character is comfortable with.

Breathing at the end of the thought

In Cheek by Jowl rehearsals, Declan encourages actors not to breathe until the end of the thought. Some thoughts are long, others very short, and this dictates the character's personal rhythm.

An actor's body will naturally prompt them to breathe where it feels comfortable, but it is useful to remember that the character is never feeling comfortable. They are struggling to fit the complexity of their ideas into words, struggling to bridge the gap with the person they are talking to, and struggling to control the dangerous space around them. They don't have time to breathe when it feels comfortable! The actor has to break the comfort of their own rhythm.


Adrian Lester, Simon Coates: 1994

Watch actors Adrian Lester and Simon Coates play this scene from 30:25 in this documentary

The actor should divide up the speech into the separate thoughts (different actors will see divisions in different places, and that's fine). For example, in Celia's speech from Act I Scene 3, you might find these four thoughts.

> Shall we be sund'red? Shall we part, sweet girl?
>
> No.
>
> Let my father seek another heir.
>
> Therefore devise with me how we may fly,
> Whither to go, and what to bear with us;
> And do not seek to take your charge upon you,
> To bear your griefs yourself, and leave me out;
> For, by this heaven, now at our sorrows pale,
> Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee.

The actor should try speaking each thought all the way to the end, only breathing where the thought ends. You might notice that the second thought is only one word, and the fourth one is six lines long. Shakespeare often does this, writing long weaving complex thoughts which take up several lines. The actor finds they have to take a deep lungful of air and keep going right until the very last word of the thought. They will quickly discover that the words are part of the character's full-body struggle to control the space. Surrendering to the rhythm of the text will help the actor put the character in this exciting place of feeling out of control. This exercise also helps the actor separate the text into distinctly different thoughts and stops it from becoming generalised.


Tom Hollander:1991

Theme in Focus: Gender

In *As You Like It,* Shakespeare explores the idea that our gender is not a fixed identity, but a performance which we change in reaction to the world around us.This idea that we perform ourselves, and that we are different people in different contexts, is central to Cheek by Jowl's acting ethos.

'I think it's very good to see a character as being something that's shifting. But there is something else, and that is that Shakespeare was brilliant and maddeningly foresightful because he understood the idea that human beings are actors very, very early on in his career. He talks about people acting all the time. And I think that is what we do: we have different parts that we play. It doesn't mean that we're liars. But it does mean that if we say we are one thing, or if we get frightened that we should be one thing, we can end up feeling fraudulent. And that's very, very bad. We start to feel ashamed of the fact that we can be many different things. It's not good.'

Declan Donnellan

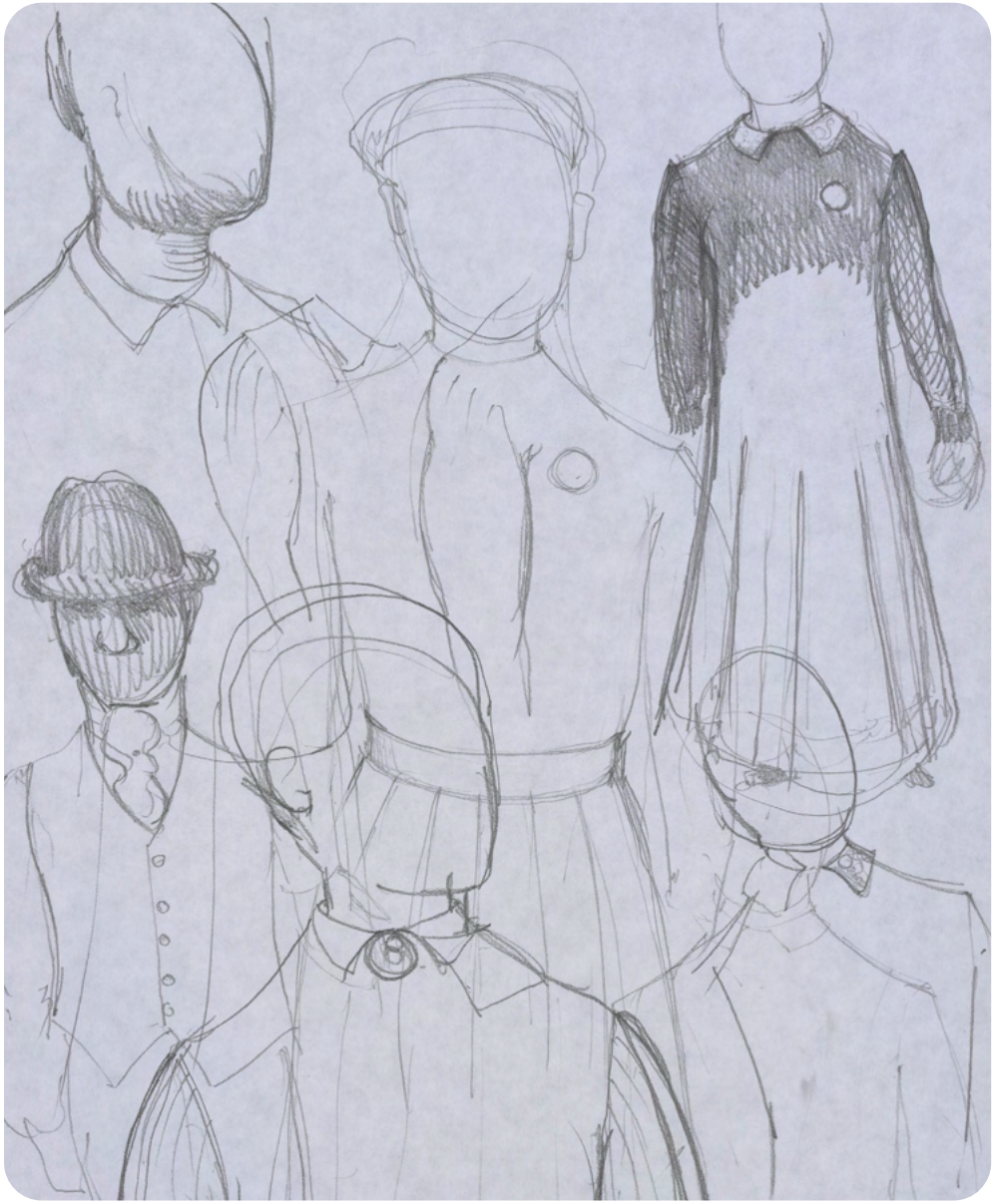
From 'Not True, But Useful..'
Listen to this extract from 2:59 this episode

Over the course of *As You Like It,* Shakespeare deliberately complicates and confuses gender. He wrote it for a boy actor to play the part of a teenage girl, Rosalind, who in turn disguises herself as a boy, Ganymede, who then pretends to be Rosalind, only to reveal herself as the true Rosalind, and then in the final epilogue reminds the audience he is a boy actor. In short, it is a play in which a boy acts a girl who acts a boy who acts a girl, who then reveals she is a girl, only to reveal he is a boy. The Cheek by Jowl production underlined the performance of gender in this play by returning to Shakespeare's original all-male casting. At the very start of the play, the whole company entered in identical masculine clothing of trousers and shirts. The first words were taken from Jaques' speech from Act II Scene 7:

> All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players;
> They have their exits and their entrances;
> And one man in his time plays many parts.

On the word 'men', all the actors playing men moved to the left of the stage, and on 'women', the actors playing women moved to the right. The very first moment of the play reminded the audience that the female characters were being played by men, and established a gender queerness at the heart of the production. Over the course of the production, the female characters then appeared in increasingly more feminine clothing until they finally appeared in wedding dresses at the end of the play. This slow development exposed the ambiguities involved in the performance of gender, which were far more profound than simply a costume.

Look at Nick Ormerod's original costume sketches in Cheek by Jowl's digital archive



Nick Ormerod

'We made the transition by presenting all the actors as male actors in black trousers and white shirts. And then only very gradually did we see the first two women as Rosalind and Celia, dressed not really in women's clothes. They were dressed like priests almost, in robes. I feel that to introduce them immediately in women's clothes is, to our contemporary audience, asking for a laugh basically. So to introduce the idea quite slowly, and display your cards, you know, so we showed them all as men, and then suggested that they're going to play women. And then eventually we do see them dressed as women.'

Declan Donnellan

'And it's a site of anxiety, it certainly was in those days, you know, 30 years ago. Men dressed as women gets a laugh. But it's also a comedy. So you need to be quite disciplined to make sure we never laugh at this, but not that. You have to steer the audience that way.'

From 'Not True, But Useful...' Listen to this discussion on gender and costumes from 8:16 in this episode

Queer Performance

Peter Kirwan, extract from *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl*

As You Like It, as with *Twelfth Night* before it, used its all-male cast to place emphasis on identity creation and negotiation as central to human interaction. The productions were both hailed as progressive, both in queer terms and (in the case of *As You Like It*) for its integrated cast, Adrian Lester's performance marking the first time a black actor of any gender has taken the role in the UK, and the first time since 1975 'that a male actor of colour was cast in a traditionally white leading role by a national company' (Shaughnessy 2017:187).[1] In the context of Cheek by Jowl's work, meanwhile, both productions foregrounded the potential of the closely knit ensemble for opening up a play. The work of the collective, producing gender identities within it, allowed the company to explore emotional connections and complexities rarely discovered in productions of either play…

Lester's delivery of *As You Like It*'s epilogue ended the play on a note of celebratory ambiguity. In a winning delivery of what sounded genuinely like an impromptu speech, full of laughter and hesitations, Lester turned on the charm, flirting with the audience and asking them to forgive the play. But then, Lester paused, took off his earrings and his headscarf, leaving his head lowered for a moment to stare impassively at the audience. Speaking in his naturally deeper voice 'for the first time in the show' (Shaughnessy 2017: 189), and with short hair, lipstick and necklace all complicating his gender presentation, Lester intoned, 'If I were a woman' (Epilogue 16-17); the conditional, perhaps deliberately retelling Touchstone's 'Much virtue in if' (5.4.101), representing for Holmes 'the mutability of identity over time and space' (2012: 134).[2] The sudden seriousness of the final lines, delivered with the subtlest of smiles but a hint of sadness, drew attention to the conditionality of the performed body


David Hobbs, Adrian Lester: 1994

and the possibilities and limitations inherent in gendered identity. 'if', finally, came back to the stakes at the heart of Cheek by Jowl's practice, with 'If I were' shadowed by the unspoken opposite: 'If I were not'. 'The invocation of the theatrical,' Mazer argues, 'both foregrounds the performativity of gender and erases it… the biological markers of the actor's gender identity are both essential and inescapable and t the same time visible and occasionally irrelevant' (2008: 100-1).[3] For Rosalind (as for Celia, Maria, Viola, Olivia, and the rest), whether their gendered identity was constructed by the men who saw them or whether it was claimed by themselves, the blurring of gender boundaries celebrated and questioned the performative possibilities of playing with 'if'.

1 R. Shaughnessy, *As You Like It: Shakespeare in Performance,* 2017.
2 J. Holmes, 'Adrian Lester', in J, Russell Brown (ed.),*The Routledge Companion to Actors' Shakespeare*, 2012.

3 C. Mazer, 'Rosalind's Breast', in J.C. Bulman (ed.), *Shakespeare Re-Dressed,* 2008..

All-male casting in 1991

Declan and Nick say that their creative decisions are made on hunches. They try not to explain ideas or insist on a meaning, leaving it up to the audience's imaginations. This allows productions to be resonant for the audience's interpretation. This gender-queer all-male production of *As You Like It* was particularly resonant in the early 1990s, in the context of the recently passed Section 28, a law which banned schools and councils from teaching children about homosexuality, along with the wave of homophobia that followed the AIDS crisis. In this all-male production, gender and sexuality refused to sit neatly within a heteronormative binary in a celebration of the diverse and shifting nature of our identities.

'You could feel the tension, and it was always at the point where I kissed Orlando at the end. You could feel the audience do a little intake of breath… we played in one country I think a week or two weeks after the law against homosexuality had been repealed. And when we kissed then there was a dead silence. And then suddenly the whole place erupted in applause, and people stood up and stamped their feet and cheered, and we hadn't even finished the play yet. So there were all sorts of reactions.'

Adrian Lester

From 'Who Am I This Time?' Listen to Adrian Lester talking about this production from 20:28 in this episode

'It reminds you that this person is actually male at the end of it, which with the audience - it stops their intellect, and just goes straight through to their emotions, because we enter a world of otherness where actually I do not exist. This person does not exist, it can't exist. So I have de-politicised myself, if you like. And from this safe position, using Shakespeare's words, he can say things about love and sexuality that really do hit home, because there are not coming from a woman, and they are not coming from a man.'

Adrian Lester

From The Open University Documentary. Watch this interview with Adrian Lester and Declan Donnellan from 6:06

Simon Coates, Adrian Lester: 1994

Exercises for English students

As a class, watch the following two extracts from the production.

Watch from 23:16, with Adrian Lester playing Rosalind, and Simon Coates playing Celia in Act I Scene 3

Simon Coates, Adrian Lester, Scott Handy: 1994

Watch from 8:20, with Adrian Lester playing Rosalind and Scott Handy playing Orlando in Act IV Scene 1

Performing gender

Discuss the following questions:

In the first scene, make a list of all ways in which the actors are performing femininity or masculinity. What is it in their dress, their gestures, their voices, their movements, which appears feminine or masculine?

Do the same for the second scene. You might notice that there is a mixture of masculine and feminine elements of performance in the same character.

Notice that in both scenes Adrian Lester plays Rosalind, but they are two different Rosalinds. The first is Adrian-playing-Rosalind, the second is Adrian-playing-Rosalind-playing-Ganymede-playing-Rosalind. What do you notice about the way Adrian Lester changes the way he performs Rosalind between the two scenes? What is she revealing or hiding about her identity in each scene?

What do you think defines gender? Is it something we are, or the way that we behave, or a mixture of the two? Is it fixed or fluid?

Exercises for acting students

‘During the early rehearsals for As You Like It I remember being caught up with the fact that I had to be ‘every woman’. I suppose it was fear really. I hadn’t grasped any specific elements of character in relation to her sex. I was afraid of looking foolish and therefore a bit basic and heavy-handed in my approach - women do this, women walk like this, women’s voices are like this, etc etc. Unfortunately, the more I tried to do that, the more stilted and stereotyped my work was becoming. It was during the second week of rehearsals that I had a kind of epiphany, an understanding that has bled into all the characters I have subsequently played. I realised I wasn’t playing a woman per se, I was playing Rosalind. I went home and had a good long hard look at myself in the mirror. If I was a young woman, I would feel that I was too tall, because I was just over six foot. I would feel that my voice is too low, that I was completely flat chested and asexual… I would feel that I was completely unattractive. As soon as I knew these things to be true for the character I started down a path where I could uncover the detail of Rosalind behind the words on the page… and that gave me my Rosalind: incredibly quick witted, bookish, glasses wearing, collapsed-chested, shrinking in height, not really wanting to look anyone in the eye. I had a thing, a long scarf, same colour as my dress which pulled my features back, softened my cheekbones and forced me to be aware of my head movement as if I had long hair. I made her hold onto her book
as if it were her safe space.’[1]

Adrian Lester

Performing gender

In the Cheek by Jowl production, Adrian Lester did not hide the fact that he was a male actor. Instead, he used the physical facts of own body to create life for Rosalind, using what he saw as masculine about himself to inform how she felt about her own sense of femininity. Adrian’s mirror exercise is useful for any role, whether or not the actor is playing a different gender to their own. It draws on another idea which is central to all Cheek by Jowl rehearsals: all characters tend to have a difficult relationship with themselves, and are always trying to transform into a person they wish they could be.

Ask the actors to look into a mirror, and ask what their character sees in their reflection that they wish they could change. Do they wish they were taller, shorter, less shy, less awkward, more masculine, more feminine? How does this change the way they stand, move, and speak? Then, ask them to try a run of a scene, exploring their discoveries. It is worth reminding your actors that they are not the same person as their character. The character can be uncomfortable with what they see in the mirror without actor disliking themselves.

If you think your actors need support in experiencing this distinction, make sure you point this out to the group before you do the exercise, and end the session on a positive note. For example, you could ask the actors to look into the mirror again through their own eyes, and celebrate what they see there.

1 Adrian Lester in an interview with Peter Kirwan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl,* 2019.

Theme in Focus: Love

‘We realised when we were doing the play that it is about young people falling in and out of love, and that my personal experience of young love is something that was really rather painful… It’s quite vicious, and there is an inner violence about it.’

Declan Donnellan

From The Open University documentary
Watch this extract from 9:32

Scott Toomey, Adrian Lester: 1991

Adrian Lester: 1991

Love and Anger

Adrian Lester

I remember pulling Declan to one side after rehearsals and saying, ‘she’s angry. She’s really, really angry. I mean deeply angry with him. Maybe for something he hasn’t done. All these scenes where she is pretending to be Rosalind, if it’s done as a play, it doesn’t work. There is something wrong.’ And Declan went away and thought about it for a while. And then we came back into rehearsals, and he said, ‘I know why she’s angry… it’s because he doesn’t see her. He sees what he wants her to be.’ And I thought that was genius. And then we did this moment where I reveal myself… I turn around take my hat off and say ‘it’s me’, and he doesn’t know that it’s me. And he pushes me back like I’m this guy in the forest and he’s going ‘what are you doing mate?!’ And in that moment she turns and says ‘I’ll teach you…’ She’s in pain and she doesn’t want to be without him, but every time he turns up she’s punishing him for not understanding what she’s really like, what a real woman is like. And he has no idea.

From ‘Who Am I This Time?’
Listen to this extract from 35:00 in this episode

From 'Not True, But Useful...'
Listen to this extract from 3:18 in this episode


Scott Toomey, Adrian Lester: 1991

Love and Attention

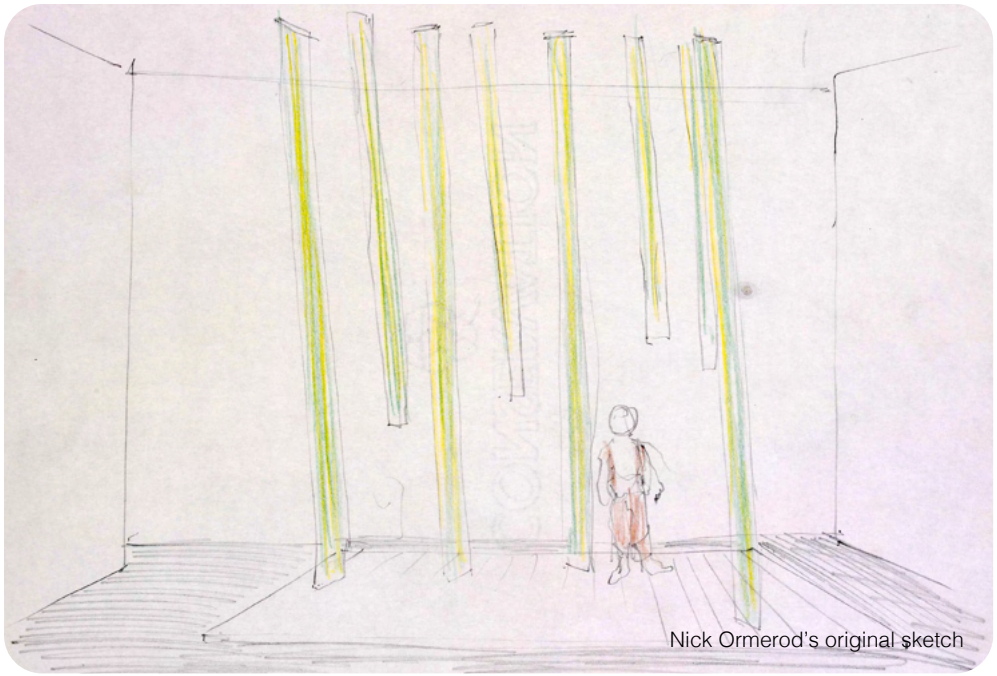
Declan Donnellan

It's not like love can become toxic. Love *is* toxic if it's not coupled with attention. It'll come back to consume you, or the person you believe you are in love with… To begin with, Rosalind is absolutely over the moon that Orlando's in love with her. He's been pinning his poetry on the trees, and she is so delighted she doesn't notice how terrible the poetry is, but Celia does. And after a while, she realises there's a problem that he's in love with love... and he can't see through her disguise. It's probably not a very good disguise, and he can't actually see who's in front of him. But it's not just the fact that he can't really see what's in front of him. It's the fact that he's in love with himself being in love. And he needs to really pay attention to her… And so she gives him desperate lessons through the play in the guise of this young man (whom he still fails to realise is her) of what it is to truly be in love. And she gives him lessons on how to really be attentive to the person whom you love, and how to use the gift, that big sort of hormonal, warm, whooshy feeling that you're given - how to use that to come closer to another human being. And that's not so easy, because everybody loves that feeling of falling in love. Why wouldn't they, you know? But you've really got to do something with it. Otherwise, it's going to go sour, and have terrible consequences… and we hope at the end of the play that he has learned, he does seem to suffer some sort of change, he can change his position and see that the important thing about loving you is that I pay attention to you. The wonderful, wonderful thing about that play is this series of lessons that she gives him. And sometimes they're very witty. They're about dealing with somebody who's impossible. And there's that wonderful quote, you know, 'men have died from time to time and worms have eaten them, but none of them for love.'… And its quite funny because he doesn't see she's there. And that's also terrible.

Design Deep Dive

Nick Ormerod's design for this production was sparse. It was made up of three white walls and a wooden floor, with green strips hanging from the ceiling to suggest trees when the action moved to the forest of Arden. A few number of additional props were added to this when absolutely necessary, such as a circular black throw at the court, a brazier in the forest, and a rope to mark the wrestling ring. Otherwise, the stage was nearly bare.

In many ways, this echoed Shakespeare's original staging at The Globe, which was a bare open stage with three entrance doors at the rear and a balcony above. Because The Lord Chamberlain's men played different plays on different nights, it was impractical to build sets and change them in and out, so everything had to be done using the power of the audience's imagination and the dynamics of the space.



Nick Ormerod's original sketch

Final design: 1991

'In essence, it comes back to what you need for the play. And actually, you don't need anything, apart from a suggestion of the seasons changing, which was the green streamers. So, in the second half it becomes spring and summer. The first half, we're in winter. And they're in the forest and to suggest that we had brazier burning turf and all the men were in overcoats. Essentially that's all you actually need for the piece. And the actors can do the rest'

Nick Ormerod

From 'Not True, But Useful...'
Listen to this extract from 7:18 in this episode

When he is preparing the design, Nick Ormerod sits in rehearsals with a sketchbook, watching the actors exploring the play and coming up with ideas and images in response to their discoveries. Here are some of his early sketches: some ideas made it into the final production, and others were abandoned when they no longer proved useful

Look at more of Nick Ormerod's set and costume design sketches in the Cheek by Jowl digital archive

Exercises for English students

Seeing the scene

Invite your class to looks at Nick Ormerod's different initial design sketches and compare them to the final production images on the right. What has he kept, and what has he got rid of?

Next, choose any scene from the play. Ask them to list in groups any props they would use to bring the scene to life. These could be props which are mentioned in the text, or anything they think might be useful to add. Does it need a letter, a tree, a chain, a weapon? Once they have assembled the list, challenge them to cut it down to only the items they absolutely need. Each group should notice that there are hardly any props in their scene. This is a good reminder that in The Lord Chamberlain Men's first performance of this play at The Globe, they would have had little in the way of props and set, so that they could afford to perform many different productions in the same week.

Discuss the main point of conflict in the scene, and agree on it together. Then ask each group to make one design choice, and one only, which they would add to their scene to help highlight this conflict. Perhaps they might add a bed or a wall, make the size of the stage space smaller or bigger, or change the colour of lights - it's up to the group's imagination. Ask each group to present their design idea to the class, and explain how they think it would deepen the drama of the scene.

Act I: The court

Act II-V: The Forest of Arden

Exercises for acting students

Dynamic space

The open, empty space in the Cheek by Jowl production of *As You Like It* required the actors to use the distance between their bodies to help tell the story. This exercise is designed to help actors use the full dynamics of the space.

Choose a scene, and make sure the actors know their lines already. Define the playing space. To get started, ask the actors in it the scene to move around it together, exploring all the corners and places in it. As they move, invite them to run, crawl, lie down, move around and under objects, and explore as many was as possible that their body can interact with space.

Next, ask one of the actors to move to a spot anywhere in the space. It could be as close as possible to the person they are talking to, it could be crouching in the furthest corner, it could be leaning in the door, or lying face down on the floor. They must ask any another actor in the space:

No, can you see me here?

Patrick Toomey, Joe Dixon: 1991

Each time they ask the question, they can try saying it differently. Don't forget the word 'no'. For mysterious reasons, it always adds conflict to the space, and that is always useful for the actor. When the actor has asked the question, the next one takes their turn immediately. They should jump straight in: try not to let pauses creep in.

Let this keep going for a while, with the actors exploring all the possible dynamics of the space. When they are mid-flow and not expecting it, say 'text'. Without a pause, the actors must jump into the text of the scene. They should have discovered new ways of freely moving and exploiting the space, without having to decide on blocking or fixing their ideas in advance.

Listen to Declan Donnellan talk about the importance of space for actors in this episode of 'Not True, But Useful...'

People

Cast 1991-2

Mike Afford	Corin/Le Beau
Mark Bannister	Oliver
Mark Benton	Silvius
Richard Cant	Audrey
Joe Dixon	Jaques/Charles
Sam Graham	Phebe/Adam
Richard Henders	Jaques de Boys/1st Lord
David Hobbs	Duke Frederick/Duke Senior
Tom Hollander	Celia
Anthony Hunt	Denis/Sir Oliver Martext/2nd Lord
Adrian Lester	Rosalind
Peter Needham	Touchstone
Conrad Nelson	Amiens/Hymen
Patrick Toomey	Orlando

Creative Team 1991-2

Declan Donnellan	Director
Nick Ormerod	Designer
Paddy Cunneen	Composer & Musical Director
Judith Greenwood	Lighting Designer
Sue Lefton	Movement Director
John Waller	Fight Director
Louise Yeomans	Production & Company Stage Manager

Cast 1994-5

Gavin Abbot	Silvius
Richard Cant	Adam/Audrey
Wayne Cater	Phebe
Jonathan Chesterman	Oliver
Simon Coates	Celia
Richard Cant	Audrey
Sean Francis	Jaques de Boys/Le Beau
Scott Handy	Orlando
David Hobbs	Duke Frederick/Duke Senior
Michael Gardiner	Jaques
Paul Kissaun	Charles/Corin
Adrian Lester	Rosalind
Peter Needham	Touchstone
Rhashan Stone	Amiens/William
Stephen Watts	Dennis/Sir Oliver Martext

Creative Team 1994-5

Declan Donnellan	Director
Nick Ormerod	Designer
Paddy Cunneen	Composer & Musical Director
Judith Greenwood	Lighting Designer
Sue Lefton	Movement Director
Fiona Laird	Assistant Director
John Waller	Fight Director
Marcus Bray	Company Stage Manager
Jon Howes	Production Manager
Rachel Dickson	Wardrobe Manager
Paula Spinks	Deputy Stage Manager

The 1991-2 Company

KEY TO PHOTO

1. Nick Ormerod
2. Joe Dixon
3. David Hobbs
4. Declan Donnellan
5. Paddy Cunneen
6. Judith Greenwood
7. Mike Afford
8. Anthony Hunt
9. Conrad Nelson
10. Paul Stewart
11. Maria Gibbons
12. Patrick Toomey
13. Mark Bannister
14. Maria Evans
15. Andrea Hopkinson
16. Tom Hollander
17. Sam Graham
18. Richard Henders
19. Richard Cant
20. Louise Yeomans
21. Barbara Matthews
22. Peter Needham
23. Mark Benton
24. Adrian Lester
25. Lucy Astor
26. Ruth Ingledow

CHEEK BY JOWL

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