Aberystwyth Arts Centre Productions

Kindertransport
By Diane Samuels

Education Pack by Gill Ogden
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction for teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical background to the Kindertransport</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal accounts: Real life child refugee stories – then .... And now</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN declaration of the Rights of the Child</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with the cast and character exercises:</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn</td>
<td>Erin Geraghty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Abigail Hollick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lil</td>
<td>Gerri Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva</td>
<td>Sarah Savage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helga</td>
<td>Sarah Savage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratcatcher</td>
<td>Isabel Scott Plummer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ratcatcher and the Pied Piper of Hamelin story</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Browning’s poem</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Theatre works:</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with the creative team:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>Diane Samuels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Dan Danson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer</td>
<td>Ruth Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Elizabeth Purnell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage managers</td>
<td>Rachel Burgess &amp; Sammy Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing the play</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So you want to work in theatre?</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review writing</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Scene Study and Exercises</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This education resource has been compiled to accompany Aberystwyth Arts Centre’s touring production of Diane Samuel’s play *Kindertransport*.

The pack is designed to facilitate further learning and discussion following a visit to the performance and also suggests curriculum links to the content of the play. A wealth of resources are available to teachers on World War II and the Holocaust, so whilst some background is included here, the focus of this pack is the issues arising directly from the play itself and also the artistic interpretation, process and preparation for the production.

Pages 5 – 18 are particularly useful for history students.
Pages 18 – 25 focus on issues relevant to Citizenship, PSE and RE.
The remainder of the resource (pages 26 – 58) focuses on the interpretation and exploration of the text and is particularly useful for pupils studying English or Theatre Studies, including sections on design of interest to Visual Art students. However, all the material is of general interest to any pupils who have seen the play and wish to discover more about it.

An interactive web page is available for those who have seen the play to discuss it with writer Diane Samuels and to post questions. Pupils are also encouraged to post reviews of the play. The address is:
http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/kindertransport.shtml
You can download additional copies of this pack from:
http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/information/schoolsinformation.shtml

Please contact me should you have any questions or comments about the resource pack or about the support available to schools from Aberystwyth Arts Centre’s Performing Arts department.
I would like to thank the cast and creative team as well as Diane for their contributions to the resource pack, Victoria Smathers for proofing and tidying, and Rhys Fowler for the webpage.

Gill Ogden
Performing Arts Officer  ggo@aber.ac.uk  01970 621512
Autumn 2008
WHAT WAS THE KINDERTRANSPORT?
The German word ‘Kindertransport’ translated into English means ‘the transportation of children’. It was how Jewish parents, in desperation, tried to get their children to safety out of the increasingly hostile Nazi regime.
In the nine months before World War II began, nearly 10,000 unaccompanied Jewish and other children escaped from Germany on trains headed for the freedom of Britain. All hoped it would be a brief separation, for most it was the final farewell.
The last train left Germany just two days before the start of war.

Historical background: Life Before the Holocaust

Anti-Semitism
The Nazis used propaganda campaigns to promote the party's virulent hatred of Jews. This attitude towards Jews is known as anti-Semitism. It can take different forms - institutional, physical or verbal.

- The Nazis wanted to portray the Jews as sub-human, inferior beings who were interested primarily in their own economic gain or in communism. The Nazis built upon the negative myths of the Jewish race which had existed for centuries.

Anti-Jewish Decrees:
During the early 1930s, at the time of the Nazi rise to power, Germany was experiencing great economic and social hardship. The country:

- had to pay enormous compensation to the Allies as a result of losing WWI
- had to adhere to the Treaty of Versailles, whereby they could no longer have a large army and had to give up land
- experienced severe inflation and economic instability
- experienced great unemployment
Hitler used the Jews as a scapegoat, blaming them for Germany's economic and social problems. The Nazi party promised to resolve these issues, and in 1932 won 37% of the vote.

The persecution of the Jews began systematically, shortly after Hitler came to power. The Nazis introduced anti-Jewish decrees, which gradually eliminated the rights of Jewish citizens. Jews were regularly persecuted and humiliated. Many members of the German public were bystanders and did nothing to condemn the Nazi racial policies. This may have been due to the fact that they were content with other Nazi policies, which appeared to improve the disastrous financial and economic conditions in Germany. People were also afraid to speak out, as they were terrified of the brutality of the Nazis.

All Jews and non-Aryans were excluded from Germany society. They could no longer hold government jobs, own property or run their own businesses. In 1935, when the government passed the Nuremberg Laws that declared that only Aryans could be German citizens. The Nazis believed that the 'pure-blooded' German was racially superior, and that a struggle for survival existed between the German race and those races considered to be inferior. They saw Jews, Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), black people and the disabled as a serious biological threat to the purity of the German-Aryan race, which they called the 'Master Race'. The Nazis idea of a perfect Aryan was someone with Nordic feature such as being tall or having blonde hair or blue-eyes.
The Rise of Nazism


1935  Nuremburg Laws. Jews are deprived of German citizenship. It is illegal for Jews and gypsies to marry or have any sexual relations with Aryans.

1936  Jews may no longer vote. Jewish doctors barred from practising medicine in government institutions.

1937  Many Jewish students forced out of German schools. Restrictions are placed on Jews travelling abroad. All Jewish street names are to be replaced. Decree forcing all Jews to transfer all retail business into Aryan hands.

1938  All Jews must carry identity cards at all times. All Jews must add “Israel” or “Sarah” to their name. Kristallnacht: In a single night, Kristallnacht, or Night of the Breaking Glass, saw the destruction of more than 200 Synagogues, and the ransacking of tens of thousands of Jewish businesses and homes. It marked the beginning of the campaign to eradicate Jews in Germany and served as a prelude to the Holocaust that was to follow.

1939  All Jews must hand in their radios to the Police.

1940  Jews are no longer have telephones.

1941  Every Jewish person must wear a yellow Star of David.

1941  Jews forbidden to keep dogs, cats, birds.

1942  Blind or deaf Jews may no longer wear arm-bands identifying their condition in traffic.
Occupation:

- The German occupation of Europe began in March 1938 with the annexation of Austria (Anschluss). The occupation of Poland on September 3rd 1939 was the trigger for the start of WWII.
- As other countries were occupied, the Nazis quickly established the anti-Jewish decrees. These included compulsory wearing of yellow stars and the establishment of the ghettos.
- In June 1941, Hitler broke his pact (10 years of non-aggression) with the Soviet Union and ordered an invasion using overwhelming force.
- 2000 SS, Gestapo and German police were joined by Romanians, Ukrainians, Latvians and Lithuanians who followed the German army of 5.5 million men. They formed mobile killing squads called Einsatzgruppen and were responsible for the murder of approximately 2 million Jews and thousands of Roma and Sinti (Gypsies). This was the start of the Holocaust.

The difficulties of leaving Germany and Austria

Although Hitler wanted to be rid of the Jews, he made it increasingly difficult for them to transfer their money and possessions out of the country in order to start a new life elsewhere. The Nazis force many of the Jews to leave their jobs and confiscated more and more of their belongings, reducing them to poverty.

At a time of world-wide economic depression and political unrest, most countries did not want to deal with the additional problems of admitting large numbers of refugees. They did not want the extra burden of people who were poor, elderly or unskilled. And they did not want to risk rousing anti-Semitism in their own countries.

So where could the Jews of Germany and Austria escape to? They would need practical skills and knowledge of a foreign language to find work abroad. They would have to decide which family members they could take with them, and what to do with their homes and possessions. They would have to raise the money for departure and resettlement.

“No country, we were told, would accept us unless we possessed some practical skill… Plumbers, carpenters, tillers, electricians, landworkers:

They would be permitted to emigrate… Even if on started for some profession, one had to throw such ideals out of one’s mind.”

Desperate to leave Nazi-occupied territories, many Germans and Austrians began to place small advertisements in British newspapers, appealing for sponsors to employ them even if they had been highly qualified professionals such as doctors and lawyers, they were now willing to offer their services as domestic servants or gardeners. If only they could find someone to employ them abroad, this would be their passport to freedom.
Britain and Jewish Refugees
The British were shocked by news of the treatment of German and Austrian Jews and many wanted to help. However, the refugee problem was enormous and sponsors were hard to find.

After one group of refugees arrived in Britain, an editorial in the *Daily Express* newspaper (19 June 1939) reflected popular feelings of the time:

“This example is not a precedent.

There is no room for any more refugees in this country.”

The democratic nations of the world formed committees with representatives from many countries. They held conferences to find a refuge for the Jews but all efforts failed. Increasingly, the Jews were trapped.

The search for a country of refuge
At Evian Les-Baines, France in July 1938 delegates from 32 nations met to consider how they could help refugees from Germany and the newly annexed Austria. A conference was called into being by President Roosevelt, comprising ambassadors, ministers, envoys and other senior diplomats. Countries represented included Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Columbia, Denmark, Great Britain, USA, France, Belgium, Sweden, Norway and countries of Latin America and Africa.

“The Nations of Asylum” (as the countries named they) showed great skill in finding obstacles to accepting Jewish refugees who were now in grave danger. Some countries declared that they had already reached saturation point and others said that their countrymen feared provoking an anti-Semitic reaction. Some countries also put forward conditions which placed impossible restrictions such as:

- Only agricultural workers would be accepted.
- Only those individuals who could prove they had been baptised would be accepted.

Children who arrived in Great Britain on Children's Transports) from Germany and Austria take a meal in Harwich. Great Britain, December 14, 1938.

- *Wide World Photo*
Kindertransport
As the lives of German Jews were increasingly threatened, the need to rescue them became even more desperate. On 15 November 1938, a delegation from the Council of German Jewry called on the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, to plead for help – at least for the children.
The British government gave its permission for Jewish and non-Aryan children up to the age of 17 years to come to Britain. Permission was granted only if children had a guarantee of £50 (a great deal of money in those days) so that the people of Britain wouldn’t have to support them financially. For most children, the CBF World Jewish Relief provided that guarantee. It was agreed that Jewish organisations would raise the money for travel and resettlement. They would also ensure that the children were dispersed throughout Britain and were trained and educated with a view to returning to their own countries and to be reunited with their families.

Time was of the essence. It was vital that as many children as possible were rescued before the outbreak of war which would halt the transportation. It was clear that only a portion of the children in danger could benefit from this operation as the tensions of an impending war grew stronger every day. Decisions had to be made regarding which children would be given priority to go on the transport to Britain.

Refugee girl, part of a Children's Transport (Kindertransport), shortly after arrival in Harwich. Great Britain, December 2, 1938.
— Bibliotheque Historique de la Ville de Paris
The last goodbye
The exodus of children from Germany and Austria became known as “the Kinderstransport”. Between the beginning of December 1938 and the end of August 1939, nearly 10,000 Jewish and non-Aryan children found refuge in Britain. Priority was given to orphans, children from one-parent families, children whose parents were in concentration camps and boys threatened with deportation to the camps. They travelled on block visas in parties of several hundred, and arrived in Britain at a rate of about one thousand a month.
The parents faced a terrible moment when the time came to say goodbye to their children. They did not know when they would be reunited or how the children would manage on the long journey to a foreign and very different country.
The children were often confused and afraid. Only the older ones knew exactly why they were parting. They feared the fate of the parents they were leaving behind. Younger children were sometimes comforted by being told they were simply going on a holiday and it would be long before they saw their parents again.

“When I came home my mother said I must go to England on Monday 26th January.... The train arrived. I said goodbye quickly to my parents and to my sisters and brothers and relative. It was very hard and we cried. Then the train puffed out.”
(Written by a 10 year old boy).

Arrival in Britain
The main route taken by the children was by train to the Hook of Holland, and then by boat to Harwich. Most of the children then went by train to Liverpool Street Station, in London.
The first Kindertransport boat docked in Parkeston Quay, Harwich at 5.30 am on Friday 2nd December 1938, after a very long journey of several days across Europe. Some children were quiet and apprehensive. They had arrived in an unfamiliar country, unable to speak English and were completely dependant on the goodwill of
unknown people. Confused and lonely, the young refugees wondered about the safety of the parents they had left behind and about what the future held for them.

**Fostering**
The refugee children were housed in reception centres – often former holiday camps – such as Dovercourt Camp near Harwich, Pakefield Holiday Camp in Lowestoft and Barham House in Broadstairs. A few children who arrived on the early transports from Germany and Austria had "guaranteed" homes with family or friends in England. The Jewish Refugee Committee decided to place younger children in private foster homes, while older children were often housed in long-term hostels, funded by the Refugee Committee. Every Sunday prospective foster parents gathered at the centre, anxiously trying to find a child who would fit in with the family and its needs. This was often a very worrying time for the children. Many who had come with brothers or sister feared the possibility of being split up or being unhappy in their new homes.

Children’s experiences varied greatly – some were very lucky and were fostered by very kind, loving individuals. Others suffered badly and were treated indifferently and sometimes with cruelty. It was hard to obtain domestic staff during the war, so families that were used to having servants sometimes exploited their foster children as cheap labour instead.

**The end of the war**
After the end of the war in 1945 the shocking reality of the enormous human suffering and loss of life was revealed. Six million Jews had died in concentration camps at the hands of the Nazis. Most of the young people who had come to Britain on the Kindertransport now learned that they would never see their parents again. Many had to face the fact that they were the only survivors of their families, having lost parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents and cousins.

For the younger children the realisation of what had happened was lengthy and painful. Their families, lives, identities and dreams had been destroyed. Now many were alone.

**Identity & Reunion**
Many Kindertransport refugees felt confused about their own identity, especially those who had been adopted by non-Jewish families, or who had found it difficult to adjust to “the English” way of life. The reunion highlighted that for some the issue of identity had never been fully resolved.

“I came over when I was three and a half. I still don’t know where I belong. I was brought up in the Midlands. I went to a Christian school. I was no longer considered German, I was no considered English. I certainly wasn’t Jewish – my Jewish background was not nurtured. I am neither German nor English. I would like to know what is my identity?”

A refugee quoted in… *And the Policeman Smiled* by Barry Turner.

Personal Accounts

Anonymous

"Now, I remember very well preparing to come over to England. My mother explained it all to me. I didn't fully understand about Hitler, but I just understood we had to get out. We had to keep it from my paternal grandmother because the scene she would have made would have been too horrific, and she would have tried to stop me leaving, so we had to keep up a charade, to pretend that I wasn't going and I would be seeing her the next week. And my mother and I packed two cases, we were each allowed two, and into one she put all the family linen; there was a great deal of embroidered work which her mother had done, very beautiful stuff. And I was able to choose my clothes and my toys and she helped me as best she could, and prepared me as best she could. She also taught me a little bit of English, but not very much, I only knew one or two phrases. I was six and a half."

Greta Rudkin

Grete Rudkin was born Grete Glauber in Vienna in 1930. She grew up in an apartment on Augarten Strasse. Her mother, Elsa Glauber, was unmarried but had a boyfriend called Wilhelm Knapp who helped her to bring up Grete. Knapp was also Elsa's cousin, and Grete knew him as Uncle Willi. In 1939, Elsa sent Grete to England on the Kindertransport. Their Catholic neighbour Marie Miserowsky, a friend of the family whom they knew by the nickname of 'Tetamamma', helped to make the necessary arrangements. Like thousands of other Jewish children from across Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia, Grete took the train to Holland and then a ferry to England, escaping just in time to avoid the worst horrors of Nazism.
Grete came to stay with Olive Rudkin, a Quaker schoolteacher who lived in Enfield. She attended local schools - Enfield Collegiate School and then Enfield County School for Girls - where she was soon doing well at her work. Like many London children, Grete was evacuated out of the city to avoid the German bombing raids. She went to Dartmouth, where she enjoyed the clean country air. Being a Christian, Olive Rudkin was not able to continue Grete's education in the Jewish religion. In fact, she took Grete with her to church. Many of the refugee children who came on the Kindertransport lost touch with their religion in this way, which was often a cause for concern among the authorities.

Elsa Glauber remained in Austria, although there is evidence that she was in Poland by late 1942. She did not survive the war. Willi Knapp went to Nice in the south of France, where he stayed after the war. Grete took British citizenship and was adopted by Olive Rudkin, becoming Grete Rudkin. She trained and worked as a primary school teacher, until her death in 1972.

Sigi Faith
Travelling to visit my grandparents in Poland as an eight-year-old I found very exciting; snow, droskhas, sledges, halva, but in December 1938 my mother promised me an even greater adventure. I was to be sent to England and, what is more, she said the Queen would be waiting for me with a bunch of flowers on my arrival. At that time, there was little to hold me in Hamburg, when our schooling was virtually ended, our synagogues destroyed, and where every shop, cinema, swimming pool, theatre and sweet shop had a notice saying Jews Unwanted. So, when a group of sad parents gathered at Hamburg Hauptbahnhof to see their children off, the solemnity of the occasion did not strike me. My mother kissed me and left me in time to wave me goodbye from the platform as our train passed through the next station, Hamburg-Altona.

I sat in a packed compartment of children of mixed ages. Uniformed men kept entering our compartment, but our journey was uneventful until we crossed the Dutch border when there was singing and jubilation. We were then shepherded aboard a boat at the Hook of Holland bound for Harwich, arriving the following morning. We were shown into a shed, where we were all handed hard-boiled eggs and sandwiches. Some of the older boys prayed – I was ten years old and did not know how to pray, nor quite understand why. I ate my sandwiches and whatever happened to the Queen.

That same night, we were taken to Butlins Holiday Camp in Lowestoft, given two blankets and a wash bowl and shown into freezing wooden huts with two beds. I was one of about twenty who caught scarlet fever within a week and spent some six weeks at Colchester Isolation Hospital. I was then taken in by a kindly old lady in her guest house for convalescence. It was here that on my first walk, a lady came up to me and pressed a shilling into my hand.

The ten of us were then taken to a disused Victorian workhouse called Barham House in Claydon, near Ipswich. The house had been converted to house some 800 boys and was just perfect for a 10 year old – no discipline, attendance at meals was optional and it was much more fun building a raft and drifting in the nearby river. The house was a selection centre where boys where sent to adopting parents etc. My
turn came at the end of September 1939. I was adopted as a boarder by Oswestry School in Shropshire, a small public school established in 1407. Some of the tradition seemed to have changed little since, but the dormitory was absolute luxury after Barham House. The only problem was that I could not speak the language, but I learned English quickly. The school provided humanity in microcosm – there was the bully, the bright, the dull, the strong, the weak. Boys ho one moment beat the life out of each other in the playground only minutes later appeared in their white surplices and starched white collars singing and looking like white angels in the school chapel. The culture gap between them and myself was vast, but the gap was bridged and I emerged Head Boy six years later. I left the school feeling very much like any other school leaver, but particularly grateful for my good fortune, the opportunities given to me and the generosity and kindness shown by so many.

In 1949 my good fortune was complete when I was reunited with my parents, who had managed to survive the war by escaping on the last boat out of Europe to Shanghai.

Sigi Faith

Other Examples of Mass Child Evacuations

The Spanish Civil War: On the 23rd of May, 1937, four thousand Basque children arrived in Southampton. They had fled from Spain to escape the Spanish Civil War. The children, together with the 95 women teachers, 120 female helpers and 15 priests who accompanied them, spent their first two months under canvas near Southampton. From here they were dispersed to a variety of accommodations throughout the country. Two homes in South Wales took in the refugees: Sketty Hall, in Swansea, and Cambria House in Caerleon.

There was no financial aid from the government, so the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief undertook to raise ten shillings (50p) a week per child for maintenance. Basque children were taken to homes all over the UK: the Welsh miners played an active role in the rescue of the children through their Miners Aid to Spain campaign.
Evacuation In Britain During World War II
When the war began in September 1939 the government knew that large cities would be the target for German bombs and that casualties would be high. Evacuation was introduced to move school children, teachers, mothers with children under the age of five and disabled people out of the cities to the countryside where there was little risk of bombing raids.

Evacuation was voluntary and the government expected more than 3 million people to take advantage of the scheme. However, by the end of September 1939 only 1.5 million people had been evacuated and most of those returned to their homes when there were no bombing raids. When the Battle of Britain and the Blitz began in 1940, evacuation was re-introduced.

The children to be evacuated assembled in the school playground. They all wore name tags and had to carry their gas mask as well as their belongings. After saying goodbye to their parents they travelled by train or by coach to their destination where they met the people who were to house them. Most of those evacuated had no idea what their life as an evacuee would be like nor when they would see their parents again.

Gladys Aylward (Chinese name: 艾偉德, pinyin: Ai wei de) (February 24, 1902–January 3, 1970) was a Protestant missionary to China

Her determination was such that, in 1930, she spent her life savings on a passage to Yuncheng, Shanxi Province, China, where she founded The Inn of the Eight Happinesse. For a time she served as an assistant to the Chinese government as a "foot inspector" by touring the countryside to enforce the new law against footbinding young Chinese girls. She met with much success in a field that had produced much resistance, including sometimes violence against the inspectors.

In 1938, the region was invaded by Japanese forces, and Aylward led ninety-four children to safety over the mountains. She remained in China after World War II, later moving back to England.

Is Evacuation best for children?

The International Committee of the Red Cross, reflecting on its experience with evacuations during World War II, concluded in 1945 that except in medical emergencies, children would be better served and remain more secure if helped in their own country rather than overseas. It was observed that evacuees were often homesick and found it difficult to readapt to their home countries when repatriated.

Yet evacuation persisted. During the Greek civil war between 23,000 and 28,000 children were separated from their parents and sent abroad. For a variety of reasons, only one quarter of these children ever returned.
During the Nigerian civil war (1967) roughly 4,500 children were evacuated to Gabon. Other examples include the evacuation of Finnish children to Sweden, of Cuban children to the USA, the Vietnamese airlift of children to the USA, and attempts to evacuate Kmer children from Thailand. The reasons have all been similar – concern for the security of the children, personal, political military, ideological organisational and even financial motives – usually led by outside relief agencies claiming it to be in the best interests of the children.

There are many cases where evacuations clearly saved children’s lives, such as the Kindertransport, but the process is problematic for children and the effects of evacuation have often been more severe than the dangers from which children were evacuated, resulting in issues such as names and identities being lost and even abuse and slavery.

CHILD REFUGEES TODAY

‘At it’s heart, the play is about the universal and timeless aspect of human experience: the separation of a child from its parent. Every person on earth, whatever their age, can relate to that’ Diane Samuels

According to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country.

The concept of a refugee was expanded by the Conventions’ 1967 Protocol and by regional conventions in Africa and Latin America to include persons who had fled war or other violence in their home country. A person who is seeking to be recognized as a refugee is an asylum seeker.
UK 'failing' child asylum seekers

Child asylum seekers need better care, says the report

Refugee children fleeing from persecution to the UK are being dumped in unsuitable accommodation without proper support, says a report by the Refugee Council.

Many have fled "unimaginably horrific" situations having witnessed torture or the murder of family members, according to a report commissioned by the organisation and Save the Children.

But on arrival in Britain they face a "lottery" in access to services, due to a "general lack of co-ordination" in provision, the report found. Many children, some as young as 15, are housed in bed and breakfasts and expected to look after themselves as adults. Last year, 2,735 unaccompanied children applied for asylum in the UK.

The report - entitled Separated Children in the UK - investigated what happens to children once they reach the UK. It examined how the immigration system and social services treated them, what legal representation was offered and the standard of accommodation provided.

Although the UK fared better than other European countries in some respects, the report highlighted areas of "significant concern", such as anomalies in government funding to local authorities. Many children are granted only temporary immigration status, which can heighten fears they will be returned.

Fear of racial violence in the UK can add to the trauma they had already experienced, the report suggested. The report's authors called for greater co-ordination between government departments to ensure high quality care.

Judy Lister, of Save the Children, said: "The level of support an unaccompanied refugee child receives from the local authority can be a lottery and one of the most worrying practices is that of placing young people in unsupported accommodation. "The UK currently lacks a strategic approach to the reception and care of separated children. "This needs to be addressed if we are to stop vulnerable children falling through the net."

'Priority' cases

Margaret Lally, of the Refugee Council, said: "Separated refugee children are not getting the same level of care as any other child would receive under UK childcare legislation. "But we should never forget that any child is a child first and foremost and a refugee second. "We have a duty to these children under domestic and international law and they must be protected."

A Home Office spokesman said unaccompanied child refugees were given priority over other asylum seekers.

"The government fully appreciates the potential vulnerability of unaccompanied children and the distress they may experience while awaiting a decision. "That is why particular priority and care will always be given to the handling of these applications.

"Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are assessed by local authorities on the same basis as any other child presenting as a possible child in need. "Unaccompanied minors are not detained other than in the most exceptional circumstances and when it is in their best interests and then only overnight with appropriate care."
Farid's Story

My name's Farid Ahmad. I am from Afghanistan. It's a very beautiful country in the heart of Asia. It has very nice, peaceful, hospitable, brave, innocent, war-threatened and poor people.

"I am from Ningarhar, the border province of Afghanistan and Pakistan. We were living a peaceful life. Everyone was happy, everything was OK. Suddenly a plan was made by the Russians and they invaded our homeland.

"A war started, a holy war against the Russians. My father started fighting for his country as a pure Afghan.

"They fought with the Russians for more than 10 years and won. When the Russians left our country our leaders started fighting with each other for some purposes and some causes which had bad effects.

"I was a very small boy during this time. I was a kid who didn't know anything. We lost our father. My mother searched for my father. She asked many people, she had many problems, everything was destroyed, our lives were in danger, our future was destroyed because we lost our father.

"He was missing for a long time. Then some people told my mother that my father had been killed. This was the worst day in our family life.

"Then some people told us our father was alive. We waited for him but never heard anything from him anymore. My mother confirmed that our father had died. That was the darkest period in our history. We didn't have anyone to look after us.

"We were Muslims but not restricted Muslims, our family were social people. My parents wanted to give us a modern life and a modern future. They wanted us to study not only Islam but modern studies and much more.

"My brothers and sisters were studying but we still had feelings about our father because we never saw his live body or dead body.

Taliban

"Then the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, they stopped women from working, studying and having a normal life.

"Our problems became more and more. We didn't have anyone to give us something to make a living although we were from the Khan family.

"Khan in Afghanistan means landlords and people with much power, money and strength.

"At this time, I, my brothers and sisters were studying at school. We were studying English language courses and computer courses.

"My elder brother Nisar Ahmad left our beloved country and came to the UK because he didn't want to fight against our own Afghan brothers. My mother didn't want him to go on fighting.
"When I was 15, I was old enough to look after my family. But my mother was afraid and made arrangements for me to leave and join my brother.

"I remember the day when I left my family. I looked at my brothers and sisters and they could all see me crying because we didn't know when we would see each other again.

"I love my family, I love my country and my people with whom I could never fight. It's impossible to fire even one bullet towards my Afghan brothers even if they're wrong. That's why my mother wanted me to leave Afghanistan.

"On my way to the UK I faced hundreds of problems. I walked for several hours in deserts, mountain, in dark nights, in forests, rain, cold weather and hunger.

"I spent many nights underground without any bed or blanket with very little food to survive on. I feared and worried for my life. But I was not upset for myself because I am a man and a man never gives up. I think I was on my way for more than two months.

"Now on TV I am watching my country and my people being attacked by the United States. My people are again facing a very big problem.

"Now I do not know the whereabouts of my family and I miss them very much.

"Some people say they're in Pakistan, others say they're in Iran or Afghanistan. I am here in the UK. I feel safe but I am not happy. I miss my brothers and sisters and my mother very much.

"I hate terrorism, killing of innocent people and shooting of human beings. I'll never do anything wrong according to humanitarian law.

"I want the world to hear my story because I want to tell them that Afghanistan is a very nice country with nice people and nice culture.

"Our people do not want to fight, they do not want to kill each other but I don't know what the causes are of the fighting.

"I don't know how one Afghan can kill another Afghan. Our religion doesn't tell us to kill any innocent human beings, it teaches us peace, love, freedom, justice and human rights.

"People in Afghanistan are very poor, they do not have shelter. Sometimes they only eat once a day or once every two days.

"I pray to my God to help Afghanistan, they are fed up of fighting, of all the problems and being refugees."

**DISCUSSION:** Read the stories above about child asylum seekers and the UN Declaration of Rights of the Child printed below.

- Do you think we in the UK are doing enough to support and protect child asylum seekers?
- If not, what could government do better?
- How can we as individuals try to improve the situation?
- Prepare an exhibition or assembly presentation on the theme of child asylum seekers using the stories here and any others you can find on the web or from newspapers?
Declaration of the Rights of the Child

Proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 1386(XIV) of 20 November 1959

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Whereas the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth,

Whereas the need for such special safeguards has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924, and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the statutes of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Whereas mankind owes to the child the best it has to give,

Now therefore,

The General Assembly

Proclaims this Declaration of the Rights of the Child to the end that he may have a happy childhood and enjoy for his own good and for the good of society the rights and freedoms herein set forth, and calls upon parents, upon men and women as individuals, and upon voluntary organizations, local authorities and national Governments to recognize these rights and strive for their observance by legislative and other measures progressively taken in accordance with the following principles:

Principle 1
The child shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration. Every child, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family.

Principle 2
The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.
Principle 3
The child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality.

Principle 4
The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end, special care and protection shall be provided both to him and to his mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care. The child shall have the right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.

Principle 5
The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.

Principle 6
The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall, wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsibility of his parents, and, in any case, in an atmosphere of affection and of moral and material security; a child of tender years shall not, save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother. Society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support. Payment of State and other assistance towards the maintenance of children of large families is desirable.

Principle 7
The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture and enable him, on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society.

The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents.

The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as education; society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right.

Principle 8
The child shall in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief.

Principle 9
The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be the subject of traffic, in any form.

The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development.

Principle 10
The child shall be protected from practices which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discrimination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.
**Kinderstransport – Character Profiles**

**LIL – Gerri Smith**

**Describe your idea of Lil as a character**
Down to earth, Loving, Kind, Strong

**Why did she decide to take Eva in?**
She had read of the Jewish “situation”. She loves children and wanted to do something to help.

**Why do you think she is so protective of Evelyn?**
She considers Evelyn She knows of her traumatic time leaving her parents. She has tried to make up for it all of Evelyn’s life with her. She realises that Evelyn is “Vulnerable”. She considers Evelyn to be her daughter and she is therefore responsible for her happiness – or unhappiness as the case might be.

| EVELYN: | You've always done too much. |
| LIL:    | How could I ever do enough?  |
| EVELYN: | You took too much            |
| LIL:    | How did I take?              |
| EVELYN: | Too much of me               |
| LIL:    | What d'you mean by that?     |
| EVELYN: | I wasn't your child          |
| LIL:    | As good as …                 |
| EVELYN: | You made me betray her       |
| LIL:    | I got you through it. Never forget that, Evelyn |

**Discussion:**
Do you agree that Lil ‘took too much’ in her relationship with Eva?
EVELYN - Erin Geraghty

How would you describe Evelyn as a person?
Evelyn is very middleclass, very “correct”. She keeps everything very organised. She has control issues, a degree of OCD in her attempts to keep her house/life “neat & tidy”. She tries hard to be a good mother and loves her daughter.

Evelyn is a character with issues from her past that she has not dealt with; what would you say these are and how do they show themselves in her behaviour?
Evelyn has deep seated fears and guilt from her past. Fear: that one day she will be sent back to Germany or ostracised; that her daughter and mother (Lil) will find out that she rejected her German mother (Helga). Guilt: for escaping the Nazi horrors that her parents and others suffered; for rejecting Helga when she came for her; for not telling Lil, Faith, or her husband.

Pipe music. The shadow of the RATCATCHER looms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVA:</th>
<th>He’s coming.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVELYN:</td>
<td>Stop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVA:</td>
<td>His eyes are sharp as knives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVELYN:</td>
<td>Be quiet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVA:</td>
<td>He’ll cut off my nose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVELYN:</td>
<td>He’s not coming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVA:</td>
<td>He’ll burn my fingers till they melt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVELYN:</td>
<td>You’ve not done anything wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVA:</td>
<td>He’ll pull out my hair one piece at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVELYN:</td>
<td>You’re a good girl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVA:</td>
<td>Don’t let him come. Please!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion: people who survive major disasters often suffer from ‘Survivor Guilt’. Think about the ways in which Evelyn deals with her guilt and how it manifests itself in her behaviour.
How do you think Faith sees herself, and how different is she from the character the audience comes to know?
I think Faith is confused and feels rejected by her Mum. She is aware that she is being indecisive and that this upsets her Mum, but she doesn’t understand what she is doing wrong why her Mum behaves in such a manic and distracted manner. She sees herself as unhappy, lost and confused.
The audience may view her as over-privileged, spoilt, middle-class girl who needs to stop giving her mum such a hard time. They will see her as a young and immature girl who displays very needy and insecure behaviour.
When Evelyn’s past is revealed I think they will see Faith as a girl who has felt very hurt and responsible for her Mum’s pain. Faith then becomes more sensitive and is able to think about her Mum’s feelings before her own.
She grows in confidence and is able to leave home and respect her Mum’s wishes.

How many times do you think Faith has tried to leave home and why she has found it difficult?
I think that Faith has actually tried to leave home once before, but there have been many more discussions on the subject. I think she is confused and that is why she is finding it so hard to leave home. On the one hand she still feels young and wants to stay a child and avoid the responsibilities that come with independence, but on the other hand she feels guilty about her tense and complex relationship with her Mum and perhaps feels that by staying at home she can sort out their problems and become closer to her Mum (who she feels is distanced from her).

What do you think Faith most wants that she feels she doesn’t get from her family? What do you think is the story of her father?
I think that Faith wants her mother to listen to her and have faith in her! She feels like her Mum is always telling her off for being messy and she can’t do anything right. I don’t think her Mum is that affectionate towards her and her Mum always walks out on her whenever they disagree. Faith most wants a hug and to understand why her
Mum cleans obsessively and refuses to confront their issues. I guess, above all, she wants a closer, more honest and open relationship with her Mum. I don’t think Faith sees her father that regularly. I get the impression that they do not have that close a relationship and she simply receives cheques from him, rather than emotional support and advice.

**Has any research helped you in preparing to play Faith?**
Thinking about the day I left home and my personal family relationships has been very helpful. I also think about any similar feelings I have experienced – I think the day one leaves home is surprisingly tough! I also watched a documentary on the Kindertransport children and the Holocaust – this has helped my understanding of Faith’s passion to delve into her family history and discover more about being Jewish.

**What do you think happens to Faith after the end of the play?**
I think Faith embarks on a journey of self-discovery and travels to Germany and/or perhaps New York to meet distant relatives. I think she learns more about the Jewish faith and about the Kindertransport. I think she matures, grows in independence and becomes more separate from her Mother. I think she becomes more decisive, enjoys college and slowly her relationship with her Mother becomes less fractious, and they learn to communicate.
I think she becomes less demanding of her Mum and respects her Mum’s desire to not speak about her past too much. Ultimately, Faith becomes more sensitive and her own person.

**Exercise:** In groups of four or five, carry out a ‘hot-seating exercise’ where one person plays Faith and the rest ask her questions about her feelings – try doing the exercise at different stages in the play, for example at the start, when she has just discovered her mother’s secret, and after the argument with Lil and her mother. Remember, there are no ‘right and wrong’ answers – hot-seating gives you a chance to imagine the inner life of the character and how you might feel in a similar situation. Some issues to consider:
- Why is Faith so disturbed and angry about her discovery of the secret her mother has kept from her?
- Why has she found it so difficult to leave home?
- How has the secret affected her childhood and her adult life up to this moment?
- Can she forgive Evelyn for having hidden such an important story from her?
- Did Evelyn leave the things in the loft because she really wants Faith to discover the secret?

| FAITH: | I have never been a good enough daughter. |
| EVELYN: | What are you talking about? |
| FAITH: | I've always thought it was my fault that you were so unhappy |
| EVELYN: | I am not unhappy. Heavens knows why you are. |
| FAITH: | Because of you. |
How do you think Helga deals with sending Eva away on the Kindertransport?
How easy do you think the decision was?
I think she focusses on the practical side – showing Eva how to sew buttons on her coat – as this is a way of containing her emotions. It also reassures her that Eva will ‘cope’ without her if she prepares her to be self-sufficient.
The decision to send Eva away was probably heartbreaking, yet Helga believes it to be for the best. She wants to protect her child from danger (and possible death) like every good mother would. I think it’s the hardest decision she’s had to make in her life so far.
Helga also has to live in the hope that she will be reunited with her daughter at some point, although I think she has no idea when this will be, despite telling Eva that they will only be separated ‘for a month or two’.

What do you think happens after she has to leave Eva for a second time when she is 16?
I think Helga moves to New York to be with Onkel Klaus and any surviving members of her family. She knows that Eva won’t follow her there. Presumably this separation is as painful as their first one 7 years before., but I think Helga’s experiences have changed her so profoundly that she might be able to accept this final separation more easily.
It’s difficult to imagine her creating a new life and possibly a new family in the States, but that may be what happens.

How did you prepare physically and vocally to play the character?
Vocally I had to learn how to speak English with a German accent for the scenes with Eva when I meet her in Liverpool at the hotel.
I’ve been watching DVD’s like ‘Downfall’ and a Kindertransport documentary, in order to hear this accent.
Physically I did my usual stretching routines but I also had to go through a process of discovering how Helga’s physical state would have been changed after being in the concentration camp and how best to portray that.
**Eva**

**How would you sum up Eva’s character?**

She’s a very ‘switched on’ 9 year old’ intelligent, and doesn’t let things pass by. She’s unusually perceptive for her age, strong and determined, though she has a lot of love in her heart. Her survival instinct is strong and she needs to be quite ruthless to protect herself and look after herself. Her frequent tears are an expression of her confusion and frustration, and of the lack of control over life that many children suffer. She has a complete mix of emotions and sense of injustice; as a child she doesn’t know how to deal with these.

**How does Eva adapt to her new home?**

I play it as if she appears to adapt very well on the surface – Lil adores her, she’s kind and her friend and Eva knows she is fortunate. But she has deep underlying guilt and we see this as she struggles to organise the permits and the jobs for her parents. She feels it’s her responsibility to save them, which is a lot to carry on a 9 year old’s shoulders. When she waits for them at the station, it’s hard for her to accept that her parent’s aren’t coming. She has terrifying moments when she cries and is frightened; there’s a lot of utter fear we don’t actually see. She’s emotionally very unstable.

**How does she make the decision to not go with Helga, her German mother, when she is 17?**

She has found herself and doesn’t want to go back. She doesn’t feel for her mother anymore. She has problems with the choice her mother made and really she would have wanted to stay with her when she was 9 instead of being sent away. As a child, she had to find a way to survive, and to do that she had to reject her old life.

**What does the Ratcatcher meant Eva?**

He embodies all her fears. He is the metaphorical language in the play for everything negative in her life. She feels she has to be grateful or the Ratcatcher will get her, as in the old story. Stories have great meaning for you as a child, they are powerful, and this one has hideous echoes for Eva.

**Exercise:** Imagine that Helga wrote letters to Eva all her life even though she didn’t receive replies; choose 3 stages in Eva/Evelyn’s life and compose the letter that Helga might have written to her – for example; when she was born, the day after she left to go on the Kindertransport, following the last time they met when Eva is grown up.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{HELGA: } & \text{ Hitler started the job and you finished it. You cut off my fingers and pulled out my hair one strand at a time.} \\
\text{EVELYN: } & \text{ You were the Ratcatcher. Those were his eyes, his face...} \\
\text{HELGA: } & \text{ You hung me out of the window by my ears and broke my soul into shreds} \\
\text{EVELYN: } & \text{ You threw me into the sea with all your baggage on my shoulders.} \\
\text{HELGA: } & \text{ How could I swim ashore with so much heaviness on me? I was drowning in leagues and leagues of salty water} \\
\text{HELGA: } & \text{ I have bled oceans out of my eyes} \\
\text{EVELYN: } & \text{ I had to let go to float}
\end{align*}
\]
RATCATCHER

What do you think the Ratcatcher is?
- He is the living embodiment of the other character’s fears.
- He controls. He commands fear in others.
- He is an entity that haunts. He controls or releases memories to induce fear.
- He is not human.
- He is like an “Angel of Death”. His reason for being is to punish ingratitude.
- He exists for each individual in a different guise.
- He always exists but is not always visible.

How did you prepare, physically and vocally to play the Ratcatcher?
Doing standard or ‘my usual’ exercises both physically and vocally to leave myself flexible and open to meet the demands of wherever the rehearsal process led. There is the idea that the Ratcatcher is very physical and animal-like…. So keeping lithe and flexible to move freely is important.
Vocally – using different accents for different characters; working on these independently from recordings and phonetic sheets.
Keeping healthy and fit generally is essential – an obvious thing to say, but one is always mindful of looking after oneself.
The Image of Rats in Nazi Anti-Semitic Propaganda

The political party who perhaps had the greatest recourse to such imagery in modern history was the National Socialist Party in Germany.

Again and again, as well as portraying Jewish people as unclean and microscopically small organisms, National Socialist propagandists portrayed them as small unclean animals or insects. A party manual called upon all good Aryans to squash Jews and members of other ‘inferior races’ like ‘roaches on a dirty wall.’ Goebbels wrote: ‘It is true that the Jew is a human being, but so is a flea a living being - one that is none too pleasant . . . our duty towards both ourselves and our conscience is to render it harmless. It is the same with the Jews.’

The film Der Ewige Jude, which formed part of a propaganda programme designed to justify to the German people the deportations of Jews which were already taking place, included a powerful montage sequence in which Jews were compared to rats. In the words of the commentary, ‘rats … have followed men like parasites from the very beginning … They are cunning, cowardly and fierce, and usually appear in large packs. In the animal world they represent the element of subterranean destruction.’

Having noted that rats spread disease and destruction, the commentary suggested that they occupied a position ‘not dissimilar to the place that Jews have among men’. At this point in the film, footage of rats squirming through sewers is followed first by the image of a rat crawling up through a drain-cover into the street and then by shots of Jewish people crowded together in ghettos.

In the Security Service report on the film, the comparison of the Jewish people to rats was held to be ‘particularly impressive’.

There is, of course, nothing intrinsically anti-semitic (or racist) about the image of the rat. However, presenting images of Jews as unclean insects or rodents was perhaps the most effective way not only of arousing and confirming anti-semitic hatred but of directly inciting physical violence by stirring some of people’s deepest fears and anxieties. The same idea was used in ‘instant’ propaganda exercises to prepare for mass murder. According to one account, peasants recruited by the Germans in occupied countries in order to help in mass murders were given an intensive training course which lasted only a few hours, and which consisted in the study of pictures representing Jews as small repulsive beasts.

Discussion: Here are two other examples of the use of animal imagery to characterise a particular group in society:

Loan-shark, gutter-snipe, black sheep, …

…. Can you suggest more?
THE PIED PIPER STORY

In 1284, while the town of Hamelin was suffering from a rat infestation, a man dressed in pied (multi-coloured) garments appeared, claiming to be a rat-catcher. He promised the townsmen a solution for their problem with the rats. The townsmen in turn promised to pay him for the removal of the rats. The man accepted, and thus played a musical pipe to lure the rats with a song into the Weser River, where all of them drowned. Despite his success, the people didn’t keep their promise and refused to pay the rat-catcher. The man left the town angrily, but returned some time later, seeking revenge.

On St. John’s Day, while the inhabitants were in church, he played his pipe again, this time attracting the children of Hamelin. One hundred and thirty boys and girls followed him out of the town, where they were lured into a cave and never seen again. Depending on the version, at most two children remained behind (one of whom was lame and could not follow quickly enough, the other one was deaf and followed the other children out of curiosity) who informed the villagers of what had happened when they came out of the church.

Other versions (but not the traditional ones) claim that the Piper lured the children into the river and let them drown like the rats or led the children to a cave on Köppen Hill or Koppelberg Hill (outside of Hamelin) or a place called Koppenberg Mountain[^3] and returned them after payment or that he returned the children after the villagers paid several times the original amount of gold.

**History of the Story**

The earliest mention of the story seems to have been on a stained glass window placed in the Church of Hamelin c. 1300. The window was described in several accounts between the 14th century and the 17th century, to have been destroyed in 1660. Based on the surviving descriptions, a modern reconstruction of the window has been created by Hans Dobbertin (historian). It features the colourful figure of the Pied Piper and several figures of children dressed in white.

This window is generally considered to have been created in memory of a tragic historical event for the city. Also, Hamelin town records start with this event. The earliest written record is from the town chronicles in an entry from 1384 which states:
"It is 10 years since our children left"

Although research has been conducted for centuries, no explanation for the historical event is agreed upon (see below). In any case, the rats were first added to the story in a version from c. 1559; they are absent from previous accounts.

**Ideas about the origin of the legend**

Theories that have gained some support can be grouped into the following categories:

- The children were kidnapped by a psychopath.
- The children fell victim to an accident, either drowning in the river Weser or being buried in a landslide.
- The children contracted some disease such as the Black Death during an epidemic and were led out of town to die in order to protect the rest of the city's population from contracting it.
- Another possibility would be the outbreaks of dancing mania, or communal dancing mania, which are recorded in a number of European towns during the period of general distress which followed the Black Death.
- The Pied Piper was seen as a symbol of Death itself.
- The children left the city to be part of a pilgrimage, a military campaign, or even a new Children's crusade (which occurred in 1212, not long before) but never returned to their parents. These theories see the unnamed Piper as their leader or a recruiting agent.
- The children willingly abandoned their parents and Hamelin in order to become the founders of their own villages during the colonization of Eastern Europe. Several European villages and cities founded around this time have been suggested as the result of their efforts as settlers. This claim is supported by corresponding placenames in both the region around Hamelin and the eastern colonies where names such as Querhameln ("mill village Hamelin") exist. Again the Piper is seen as their leader.
- The children emigrated in 1284

i.e. the Pied Piper of Hamelin was a recruiter for the colonization of Eastern Europe which took part in the 13th century and that he led away a big part of the young generation of Hamelin to a region in Eastern Europe. Added speculation on the migration is based on the idea that by the 13th century the area had too many people resulting in the oldest son owning all the land and power, leaving the rest as serfs. In any case, the motivation to leave was high and very much like the motivation for emigration to America in the 18th century i.e. freedom, opportunity, and land.

I

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
   The river Weser, deep and wide,
   Washes its wall on the southern side;
   A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
   Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
   From vermin, was a pity.

II

Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
   And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
   And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
   By drowning their speaking
   With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

III

At last the people in a body
   To the Town Hall came flocking:
" 'T is clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
   And as for our Corporation - shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease?
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV

An hour they sat in council;
   At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell,
   I wish I were a mile hence!
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain -
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh, for a trap, a trap, a trap!
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber-door but a gentle tap?
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "What's that?"
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!"

V

"Come in!" - the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure!
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in;
There was no guessing his kith and kin:
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: "It's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone!"

VI

He advanced to the council-table:
And "Please, your honours," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same cheque;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
"Yet," said he, "poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats;
And as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders?"
"One? fifty thousand!" - was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VIII

Into the street the Piper stept,
    Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
    In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow his pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled.
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
    Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
    Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
    And step by step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
    Wherein all plunged and perished!
- Save one, who, stout as Julias Caeser,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
to Rat-land home his commentary:
Which was, "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe,
And a moving away of pickle tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks:
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or psaltery
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice!
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!'
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone,
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!'
- I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles,
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
of the rats!" - when suddenly, up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

IX

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue.
So did the corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!
"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,
"Our business was ended at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think;
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,
"No trifling, I can't wait, beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor,
With him I proved no bargain-driver.
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe after another fashion."

XI

"How?" cried the Mayor, "D'ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again,
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling;
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by,
- Could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However, he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed,
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all? No! one was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say, -
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles' wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!"

XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin!
  There came into many a burgher's pate
    A text which says that heaven's gate
      Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in!
The Mayor sent East, West, North and South
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
    Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
    And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 't was a lost endeavor,
And Piper and dancers were gone forever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
    Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
"And so long after what happened here
    On the Twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:"
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street -
Where anyone playing on pipe or tabor,
Was sure for the future to lose his labor.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
    To shock with mirth a street so solemn.
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away,
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand.

XV

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
Of scores out with all men - especially pipers!
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise!
HOW THEATRE WORKS

The Writer - Diane Samuels

Diane Samuels was born in Liverpool. She now lives in London where she has been writing extensively as a dramatist and author since the early 1990s.

Kindertransport won the Verity Bargate and Meyer-Whitworth Awards, and was first produced by the Soho Theatre Company in 1993. Subsequently it has been translated into many languages, performed in the West End, Off-Broadway and all over the world, and revived in 2007 in a highly acclaimed production by Shared Experience Theatre Company. Her other plays include The True Life Fiction of Mata Hari (Watford Palace Theatre, 2002) and Cinderella’s Daughter (Trestle Theatre tour, 2005). She has also written widely for BBC radio, plays including Swine, Doctor Y, Watch Out for Mister Stalk and Hen Party.

For younger audiences, her plays include One Hundred Million Footsteps (Quicksilver Theatre Company); Chalk Circle and How to Beat a Giant (Unicorn Theatre). Diane has wide experience of teaching creative writing, lecturing at the universities of Birmingham, Reading, Oxford and Goldsmiths College, London. She runs a regular writers’ group and is writer-in-residence at Grafton Primary School in Islington, north London.
DIRECTING – Dan Danson

What interested you in the task of directing Kindertransport?

I was attracted to the play for several reasons. Firstly, on a historical level, I have always had a fascination of the Second World War. Even though I wasn’t born until 1969 I very much feel as though I grew up in its shadow. My grandparents on both sides lived and fought through it and my parents grew up in the aftermath. There is no doubt that that period has defined the world we live in today.

On reading the play I was also affected from the point of view of being a parent. My own son is 9 years old, the same age as Eva when she is sent away on the Kindertransport. I have questioned what my own actions might have been if I was in the situation Eva’s parents were in. Would I be strong enough to send my child away, knowing I may never see them again, only hoping they might at least be safe? Would sending them away be the best thing to do? I don’t know. What would my son’s reaction or level of understanding of that decision be? Even with the benefit of hindsight it is a very difficult decision.

Central to the play is mother and daughter relationships. As a male director, the chance to work with five female actors on very strong interrelated roles exploring these relationships appealed to me from a father - son perspective.

From a theatrical point of view, I was interested in the interplay between the past and present, memory and imagination and how these worlds can co-exist.

How did you imagine the staging of the production?

For me, it was clear that everything that we see is taking place in the attic room of Evelyn’s house. The memories of the past and the Ratcatcher inhabit that space. They are locked away and hidden from everyone except Evelyn. In this sense the attic could represent Evelyn’s mind: where memory and imagination haunt her and shape her present and future, no matter how much she tries to keep them hidden.

It is important then that the set should not change into a railway station or into Eva’s home in Hamburg in 1939 but that those past memories exist in the present. So my discussions with the designer focused on balancing the domestic setting with the world of the past, imagination and the magical: a space where Eva and Helga exist with the Ratcatcher. We knew that the room would need to be full of things collected by Evelyn and that those objects would form the setting for the scenes that appear to take place outside of the attic. And it was important not to make the room seem too naturalistic; that we recognise the setting but that it had the possibility to transform as it is affected by the memories contained in the attic. We also wanted to not separate the space into different areas (i.e. a space for the memories and a space for the present action.) we wanted the past and present to merge.

To correlate to the ages of characters and the historical events, the play has to be set in the mid to late 1980’s. However, the 1980’s period is not an important element in any other respect and so we chose to ignore it without contradicting the reality of that time.

How are you advising the actors on their characterisations?

I don’t think a director really advises the actors on their characterisations. That is to say the director casts actors most suitable for the roles based on an impression of the characters in
the play. That impression is established by the words the characters say (or don’t say), their actions, what other characters say to them and or about them, and what the other characters do to and/or act towards them. Of course the actor may have a different impression of the character by interpreting the words and actions of the character differently. The rehearsal period is then a process of breaking down and examining the words and actions of a character in the context of the rest of the play, exploring different interpretations, to finally manifest a characterisation which the director and actor agree is ‘true’ to the play.

What do you think the play has to say to audiences today?

Kindertransport not only stands as a testament to the historical events explored but also demonstrates the far reaching impact such events have on the lives of ordinary people. When we look back on history we often focus on the forces creating the events that determine peoples futures. However people caught up by events beyond their control also have to make decisions as to how they will survive and shape their futures. This play explores the consequences of these types of decisions (e.g. Helga sending Eva to safety, Evelyn deciding to stay in England and rejecting her mother, and Evelyn choosing to hide her past from her daughter.) The Ratcatcher represents the force or the fear of events changing Eva’s life but the crux of the play is the impact of these decisions taken in response to the circumstances.

The play examines the importance of the past on the present. Evelyn’s past is a traumatic one, which she denies and tries to hide from. Faith’s past is seemingly an ordinary childhood but when we first meet her she clearly has issues with her mother and their relationship. Of course Faith uncovers her mothers secret past and realises that this is at the heart of the difficulties with their relationship. This discovery will now influence their future relationship.

Everyone has a lineage whether known or unknown that shapes the person they are and I think the play definitely leaves you thinking about your own family history, present and future.

What is the greatest challenge in directing Kindertransport?

The biggest challenge is finding the life of the play. For me, this lies in the relationship between the present, past and the imagined or fictional. We knew that we would not really know what this would be until we put all the scenes together. For example, we have rehearsed the scenes with Eva and Helga in isolation, as with the scenes with Faith and Evelyn, but when you combine the two so that the memory scenes and the present scenes exist together, how does that affect the different characters’ journeys? Add into this the Ratcatcher who traverses both worlds and the life of the play starts to unfold. What makes this a challenge is that these discoveries take place during the latter part of rehearsals, when the pressure of the first night begins to play its part on the production and everyone is keen to know and fix what they will be doing. Keeping things open to these late discoveries is therefore a key challenge.

And what is the most enjoyable or rewarding?

It is most rewarding when all the elements of the production, such as the lighting, the sound, props, costume, set and actors come together having been developing independently, and the play as you imagined it begins to emerge. When you then put it all in front of an audience, the play then becomes truly alive. That’s when you start to make the most exciting discoveries.
What is the process leading to the first design proposal for a play?

Every play is different and how I approach it depends on the working relationship with the director. I like to be open to new ways of working because it often gives unexpected and creative results. The collaboration between director and designer is very important. For me a sensitive and honest response to script is a vital starting point, and then I begin to collect things that seem relevant or provoking. Something will suggest a colour, texture or shape; they might be from newspapers, photographs, objects or bits of material. Fine art work can be very inspiring and help me to think more tangentially. There are lots of conversations between the director and designer, it helps to be able to discuss ideas and work out between you what feels right for the way you want to approach the play. At times an idea for clothes will come before the space, or vice versa. I work through ideas by sketching and modelling, working at 1:25 scale in a model of the theatre space. Sometimes I go through lots of different ideas or sometimes an idea will feel right from the beginning. A model of the set and costume images are used to help describe the design to the rest of the company. Often there is a moment of crisis where I take everything out and start again. Every design develops in a unique way and it is good to be able to keep the process going through rehearsals so the design evolves with the discoveries made, this is especially true of the clothes.
What sort of research did you do for the design for Kindertransport?
Reading Kindertransport interested me in exploring the ideas of memory and myth, how to create the atmosphere of a memory of the late 30s, made alive. I looked at texture, layering and collage as a way of expressing the different worlds that co-exist in the play. I collected old letters and photographs, scraps of old wallpaper and broken bits of lino. I researched all the locations and situations that happen in the play, and also allowed this research to take me onto new things not so obviously related.

I tried to find a way of exploring the feeling of being enclosed and claustrophobic up an attic full of locked away secrets, whilst allowing the bustling, crowded open space of a train station or dockside to come flooding in.

How a character can move between these worlds and how a character from the present time in the play could have a conversation with someone from her past. I looked at architecture, images of houses blown open from air raids, and of the glass roofs of stations. At one point the rafters of a roof reminded me of the rib cage and I researched structures and sculptures exploring that idea.

The Ratcatcher is a mythical character in the play that perhaps only exists in Eva’s imagination, but also appears a bit like a puppet master. I read about the fairytale of the Ratcatcher and researched other early Germanic folk tales and folk costume. The description of him in the play has strong arms with fingers with spiky nails, which began to suggest shapes for the set. I liked the idea of him lurking in the shadows.

I looked at ways that the character’s clothes might help develop the idea of memory, and be different from a straight re-creation of the period. I studied clothes of the period, looking at images of different social classes and at children’s clothes. It was very poignant looking at images from the holocaust. Often photographs of real people are much more revealing and emotive as you get an idea of quirks and little personal details that don’t come across from costume books. As the design developed I tried to retain the spirit of the original discussions with the director and my instinctive responses to keep the design alive.
COMPOSER/SOUND DESIGN – Elizabeth Purnell

How do you decide what kind of music to compose for a theatre production? After meetings with the producer, director and designer I make a general decision about the style and feel of the music and sound. I very rarely write music which fits the period – often abstract and timeless music which fits just as well, even, for instance, in an Elizabethan play. I often choose a simple motif to represent an aspect or person and have it recurring.

Music which is incorporated in the play (for example in Shakespeare) is approached in a different way than that for scene change music or underscoring, in that it is heard by the characters, rather than being ‘invisible’ to the performers.

What has inspired you in recording the music and soundtrack for Kindertransport?
The music and sound design are as one in this play – the sound world of noisy trains is vital for the atmosphere and feel of the pre-war world of the little girl, Eva. These sounds mingle with textures and unsettling musical tones which arise out of these sounds.

The instruments in use are taken from the play – the penny whistle that the Ratcatcher plays, Eva’s mouth organ, and some sounds from within the piano (scraping strings etc) which is part of the set.

Eva sing a traditional German nursery rhyme (Hip Hop Rider) in Act I, the tune of which forms the basis of most of the musical material. In this way, a single tune vital to the play can be used throughout, with simple variations. This recognisable theme therefore provides coherence and a sort of leitmotif which ‘glues’ all the parts of the play together.
STAGE MANAGEMENT - Rachel Burgess and Sammi

What does the Stage Manager do?
On a day-to-day basis the stage manager's role involves facilitating the needs of the director, designers, cast and crew and overseeing the budgeting, scheduling and running the production.

This involves arranging production meetings, hiring rehearsal, storage and construction venues as well as arranging transport and accommodation for company members.

We are in constant communication with each department for the production team to provide assistance and ensure that deadlines are met.

The SM will co-ordinate the safe installation of the show into its opening theatre, and then again at each theatre on the tour. We also have a role backstage during performance with scene changes etc. Organisation is central to the role of the SM but also, as head of backstage crew, our job is to support, help and motivate own team.

What do you most enjoy about the work?
I thoroughly enjoy meeting new people and knowing that everyone is working together as a team to produce a piece of theatre. I love the buzz of the opening night, hearing the audience enter the auditorium to see a new production; being part of the rehearsal process and constantly being set new challenges.

Working on tour means that logistics means that logistics from one venue to another have to be thought out clearly and organised early before rehearsals begin.

By working in stage management you learn so many different things each day, meet so many different people and make friends in the theatre industry.

How did you get into this work?
I auditioned for the national Youth Theatre of Wales and was successful in getting a place on the technical/stage management side. At the beginning I was still very nervous that stage management wasn't going to suit me, but that soon changed and I knew that this was definitely the career path I wanted to take. I then heard about the degree in Stage Management and Technical Theatre at the Welsh College of Music and Drama and was accepted on the course and graduated with a BA.

The rehearsal room
Marketing the Play

Why was the Shani Rhys James painting chosen as the image for Kindertransport?
The illustration used on the poster is by artists Shani Rhys James and is called ‘Departure’. It was chosen as we felt the picture of the mother and daughter alone with their luggage reflected many of the main elements of the play – the mother/daughter relationship, the pain of separation and of travel into the unknown. The play is about mothers and daughters and about displacement; Shani moved to the UK when she was younger from Australia to the which had a big effect on her and that many of Shani's picture are autobiographical. This picture seemed to fit into the mood of the play in a very visually striking way. Also, in the background of the picture you see the shadow of a man, which mirrors the role of the Ratcatcher in the play – ever present and yet unknown.

What are the most important things you have to consider when designing a poster for a play?
When designing a poster for a play, it’s not essential to use an image taken directly from the production. Very often the poster design is prepared a long time in advance of the rehearsal period, even before the actors and actresses have even been auditioned for roles. What’s most important is that is captures a flavour, atmosphere or emotion of the work, to give audiences an insight or feel as to what the production is going to be about. Its also important to keep it visually striking so that it stands out and is noticeable.

What other methods does a theatre marketing officer use to encourage people to visit particular performances?
As well as posters and general displays, press plays an important role in increasing awareness of a production – either an advertisement or an editorial feature. We also send out our brochures every season, and a direct mail letter to all our customers who have visited similar performances in the past. We may occasionally offer discounted tickets to people who buy several performances at the start of the season in a package deal. This is a good way of encouraging people to see things that they may not otherwise have considered.
POSTER ARTIST – Shani Rhys James

On creating work for her exhibition: 'The Black Cot', Aberystwyth Arts Centre, 2004

An object itself might lead the way with a painting, such as the small pram found in a junk shop, which now sits in Rhys-James' studio.

'I did a little tiny painting four inches by four inches of the pram... I was thinking of not even having the child in it, just having the pram, but it's very difficult to leave just an object, for me. There's always this juxtaposition with found objects that trigger off paintings but then associate a person with it. I'm working from the imagination and maybe looking in a mirror for the face.'

'As I've gone on and on and on with the cot, I've become much more free, much more loose with it. It's a very interesting thing, a cot, actually, because it has these bars, and yet we're putting babies in behind these bars because they're dangerous - to themselves.'

The composition - how much did you play around with it?
'I had a big figure here pushing the pram, then I had a mother behind, and then a child, and then I had a figure back here, and then I knocked out all of them and just had nobody, and then I put that little child in.'

'The pram is slightly sinister because you can't see what's in it... and there's also this play on scale - is it a child's pram, or an adult pram?... there's a slight Alice (}
Wonderland) thing about the scale... and I'm interested in Alice as an anarchic little girl in rather grotty clothes who's forced into constraints.'

**Approach to painting**

In starting to paint these objects Rhys-James also engages with the quality and effect of the paint and the surfaces it creates.

'The beauty, the wonderful thing about painting, is that it's so immediate, it's so sensual, and there's this subconscious thing that you don't actually really know what you're doing. You sort of know what you're doing, you start off... but then there's a process of metamorphosis or change - they'll become something different. The paint has a life of its own, the paint has its own energy: you may come to it with an idea, but just by doing a mark, the paint becomes its own beast really... and you start creating your own little world - you know, should I have a door here? have a wardrobe? and will the wardrobe door be open? what will the floor be like?'

'...and then you've got the abstract elements of the paint - the way you're using the paint, you might do it thicker in some places, or thinner. but I don't totally disassociate myself from the object I'm painting, where I think it's just abstract: it's abstract, but it's also a particular cloth (for example), and I want to get that feeling, that something particular of that fabric on that cot because it's a very familiar piece of cloth that I've used time and time again.'

**Personal influences**

The theatre props and stage-sets provide Rhys-James with a world of fantasy and magic transformation: even objects (a cot, pram, etc.) become characters in a play. She also draws on the shock of moving to London and experiencing dark, dingy rooms - places in which to act out these fantasies.

'Being brought up in the theatre, that was a kind of play my parents didn't include me in - but I had my own little game which was with my own fantasies... Seeing them (my parents) do things with costumes and plays and props - because they had props, and they were making little stage-sets - that's probably why I do things with props.'

'London was such a shock to my system - as a child going in to London - I'm still getting over it; because it was such a total and utter transformation from my childhood in Australia, a rural place... my experience of coming to London was being taken away from an amazingly aesthetic childhood, of architects and the Japanese influence of inside-outside buildings, natural flora and fauna... and then coming to London and having this whole thing of poverty, and bedsits. To my mind London isn't the centre of excellence, it's the centre of hell!'

**Artist influences**

Other artists play a big part in Rhys-James' work, from the Old Masters to the present.

Shani Rhys-James is clear about her influences, openly borrowing images from other artists in order to manipulate them in her own way. She sees a parallel between her own painting and installation art: it's simply the difference between
using real objects (with installation art), and transforming these objects into paint. For example, Mona Hatoum’s piece ‘Incommunicado’ (tate.org.uk) features a cot which Rhys-James began to use in her paintings.

Jan Svankmajer’s Alice
As mentioned above, there is a fascination with the idea of scale - the size of people compared with objects - and Rhys James cited Jan Svankmajer’s creation of Alice as a key influence (awn.com).

Louise Bourgeois (tate.org.uk) is an artist whose work also draws heavily on her own life-experiences, using all kinds of objects and materials to conjure atmospheric spaces.

Frances Bacon (tate.org.uk)
'It's very much to do with the way he (Bacon) deals with the London situation... and this idea of the solitary figure in a room is very much to do with Frances Bacon; also cage-like spaces, places of refuge - cots, beds, couches.'

Rembrandt (nationalgallery.org.uk)
Particularly his later works, where he uses the paint more loosely, enjoying the texture of paint on the surface of the canvas. Also Goya, Velazquez, and the way in which these artists paint stories figuratively while using paint in a bold and expressionistic manner.
- So You Want To Work In The Theatre?

Advice from the Kindertransport actors and team

Advice to Actors

: ..,' be on time, and listen!'.....

............'what doesn't kill you makes you a better actor – learn from experience, be
giving, and don't be inhibited'.....

....' Be open and experience as much life as you can because it feeds your
imagination and ability to empathise.....be happy with small parts.....be brave
enough to make mistakes...

..................be 120% sure it's what you want to do, because you will face rejection
on almost a daily basis...ignore the competition, just concentrate on what you're
doing yourself...'  

......'it's going to be hard – have something to fall back on....

How did they become actors?

Erin Geraghty (Evelyn) started as a child performer in a film with Julie Andrews,
then went on to numerous film and TV roles.

Abigail Hollick (Faith) trained at the Drama Studio and studied Drama and English
at Bristol University too and has since performed in a range of TV, film and live
theatre work.

Sarah Savage (Eva) trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and
Isabel Scott Plummer (Hlega) at The Next Stage, Nottingham.

Paul Mundell trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and as well as a range of
theatre, film and TV work has set up his won theatre company, Strange Bedfellows.

Advice to designers and stage managers:

.....'understand your tools and the techniques to make your vision happen...

..................’ See as much theatre as you possibly can!......’

....'always be ORGANISED... and prepared to work very long hours’....
Writing a Review

Reviewing a piece of theatre is a special skill. It requires you to concentrate intensely on every bit of work that has gone into making the play and working out for yourself, in your own opinion, whether you believe it to have been well-created or not.

Of course, opinion is the key word here – what you think or believe and then publish for others to read may not be in agreement with the people around you, and you may encounter criticism from other audience members for making remarks that they disagree with.

Be aware of everything around you – the set and lights make just as much impact as the soundtrack or the actors onstage. A set design that doesn’t really help the audience understand where they are will mean that a very-well delivered script from some very fine actors will be partly lost. You may be distracted from what an actor is saying if you can’t see them very well owing to bad lighting. The best design for a show will count for nothing if the actors cannot be heard or have not grasped the essence of the story they’re telling.

As a reviewer, you are really only an audience member whose opinion is spread further than your friends and family and those who go to see the play with you – therefore you are expected to be able to back up your opinions with strong evidence for your beliefs – be ready to defend your arguments, and go to see a lot of different types of theatre so you get a sense for what works and what does not.

Above all – remember that yours is one of a number of opinions – it is not worth any less than someone who is not publishing their thoughts on the play, but it is not worth any more. If someone disagrees with you, you must be prepared to stand by your argument. Therefore make sure that your arguments are fair. If you see a breathtaking, awe-inspiring show, but some of the key costumes don’t really work, feel free to say it. People are distrustful of reviewers whose reviews are not balanced. If you only write uncritical reviews or reviews that seem to say that you hate everything you see, people won’t trust you. And stand by what you write – after all, as I have continually said, a review is an opinion, committed to writing.

A few tips –

- **Get in early** – go into the theatre as soon as the doors open and, if the set is on display, get a feel for how it might work
- **Examine Everything** – take time in the show to think about light, sound, set and costume as well as acting
- **Think big but remember details** – your review will sum up a lot of work in very little space, so remember the broad sweep of the play while keeping in mind the little things.
- **Be fair** – Mention good and bad, but remember to resolve it all into a general opinion of the whole play
- **Be concise** – Sum things up without going off on long flights of fancy
- **Stand by your work** – Everyone’s opinion counts. Accept disagreement, but hold fast to your feelings. Agree to disagree.

*Paddy Cooper, freelance theatre reviewer*

An interactive web page is available for those who have seen the play to discuss it with writer Diane Samuels and to post questions. Pupils are also encouraged to post reviews of the play. The address is:

http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/kindertransport.shtml
ACT ONE
Scene One

*Ratcatcher Music.*

Dusty storage room filled with crates, bags, boxes and some old furniture.

EVA, dressed in clothes of the late thirties, is sitting on the floor, reading. The book is a large, hard-backed children’s story book entitled Der Rattenfänger

HELGA, holding a coat, button, needle and thread, is nearby. She is well turned-out in clothes of the late thirties.

EVA: What’s an abyss, Mutti?

HELGA: *(sitting down and ushering EVA to sit next to her)* An abyss is a deep and terrible chasm

EVA: What’s a chasm?

HELGA: A huge gash in the rocks

EVA: What’s a …

EVA puts down the book. Music stops.

HELGA: Eva, sew on your buttons now. Show me that you can do it.

EVA: I can’t get the tread through the needle. It’s too thick. You do it.

HELGA: Lick the thread …

EVA: Do I have to?

HELGA: Yes. Lick the thread.

EVA: I don’t want to sew

HELGA: How else will the buttons get onto the coat?

EVA: The coat’s too big for me.

HELGA: It’s to last next winter too.

EVA: Please.

HELGA: No.

EVA: Why won’t you help me?

HELGA: You have to be able to manage on your own

EVA: Why?

HELGA: Because you do. Now, lick the thread.

EVA licks the thread.

That should flatten it … And hold the needle firmly and place the end of the thread between your fingers … not too near… that’s it …now try to push it through.

EVA concentrates on the needle and thread. HELGA watches.

See. You don’t need me. It’s good.
EVA: I don’t mind having my coat open a bit. Really. I’ve got enough buttons.
HELGA: You’ll miss it when the wind blows
EVA: Can’t I do it later?
HELGA: There’s no ‘later’ left, Eva.
EVA: After the packing, after no my story.
HELGA: Now.

EVA gives in and sews

A key jangles in the door lock. The door opens. EVELYN enters. She carries a tea towel. If she sees HELGA and EVA, even momentarily, she ignores them. She is followed by FAITH

EVELYN: Most of it is junk.
FAITH: You don’t keep junk.
EVELYN: Do you want anything in particular?
FAITH: Not really.
EVELYN: (opening a box) Pans?
FAITH: All those?
EVELYN: Are you intending to cook or eat raw?
FAITH: I was thinking of take-aways …
EVELYN: Have them.

EVELYN hands the box over to FAITH who receives it

What else? Lights, crockery, cutlery, there’s a television somewhere …?
FAITH: You sound like a shop assistant trying to make a sale.
EVELYN: Just don’t be a difficult customer. I told Mum we wouldn’t be long. (She opens a box and takes out a tea cup) Would cups and saucers be of any use?
FAITH: I prefer mugs.
EVELYN: What about for visitors?
FAITH: They can have mugs too.
EVELYN: I’ll give you this set of cups and saucers just in case.
FAITH: Mum, I ….
EVELYN: Here’s a spare tea pot too.
FAITH: I don’t think I need two tea pots.
EVELYN: One might break.
FAITH: You don’t have to do this.
EVELYN: Who else is going to?
FAITH: Dad sent me another cheque.
EVELYN: Would you use a strainer?
FAITH: Not really.
EVELYN: Would you use a strainer?
FAITH: Not really.
EVELYN: Aren’t you meant to save that money?
FAITH: He wouldn’t mind me spending it.
EVELYN: That’s not what we agreed originally.
FAITH: I’m not fourteen any more.
EVELYN: I see.
FAITH: I’d just like to buy some of my own stuff.
EVELYN: I thought you approved of my taste.
FAITH: I do. Your things are beautiful.
EVELYN: I’m glad to hear it
FAITH: You should keep them
EVELYN: They should be used rather than left to moulder in a box.

EVELYN opens a box and takes out a glass. She polishes it.
Glasses?
FAITH: Those must be worth a fortune.
EVELYN: Nothing is too good for my daughter
FAITH: Might be too good for the flat.
EVELYN: You said that you and your friends were very pleased with this one.
FAITH: The rent’s so high for what it is.
EVELYN: (polishing) You said it was a bargain.
FAITH: Maybe you should have come to see it.
EVELYN: You’re quite capable of choosing a place to live without my help.

Pause
FAITH: Maybe it’s not such a good idea to move.
EVELYN concentrates on polishing and replacing glasses
I don’t feel right about it.
EVELYN continues to polish
EVELYN: (scrutinising a glass) This is chipped.
FAITH: What do you think about waiting till I can afford to buy somewhere?
EVELYN: I think if you say you’re going, you should go.
FAITH: I can get the deposit back.
EVELYN: Like you got the deposit back last time?
FAITH: That was different.
EVELYN: It sound remarkably similar to me.
FAITH: I’m not sure I like it.
EVELYN: Oh Faith, for heavens sakes, you’re impossible.
FAITH: If you’d come to see it, you’d know.
EVELYN: (polishing madly) How on earth did that glass get damaged. I put in enough paper
FAITH: I don’t like leaving you on your own …
EVELYN: (holding open another box) Tablecloths?
FAITH sinks her head. EVELYN put them back.
FAITH: Are you angry?
EVELYN: Absolutely not.
FAITH: Are we still friends?
EVELYN: Of course.

EVELYN polishes

FAITH: I don’t want to go.
EVELYN: (still polishing) Will eleven glasses be enough?
FAITH: You can forget about the glasses.
EVELYN: You’ll need something to drink from in your new home.

EVELYN continues to polish. FAITH, helpless, watches

EVA: (sewing) Why aren’t Karla and Heinrich going on one of those trains?
HELGA: Their parents couldn’t get them places.
EVA: Karla said it’s because they didn’t want to send them away.
HELGA: Karla says a lot of silly things.
EVA: Why’s that silly?
HELGA: Of course they would want to send them away if they had places. Any good parent would do that.
EVA: Why?
HELGA: Because any good parent would want to protect their child.
EVA: Can’t you and Vati protect me?
HELGA: Only by sending you away.
EVA: Why will I be safer with strangers?
HELGA: Your English family will be kind.
EVA: But they don’t know me.
HELGA: Eva. This is for the best.
EVA: Will you miss me?
HELGA: Of course I will.
EVA: Will you write to me?
HELGA: I’ve told you. I will do more than miss you and write to you. Vati and I will come. We will not let you leave is behind for very long. Do you think we would really let you go if we thought that we would never see you again?
EVA: How long will it be before you come?
HELGA: Only a month or two. When the silly permits are ready.
EVA: Silly permits.
HELGA: Silly, silly permits.
EVA: The needle’s stuck.
HELGA, with difficulty pulls the needle through.
Finish it off for me.

HELGA: (handing the sewing back to EVA) No.
EVA takes the coat and carries on sewing.
Questions:

- How does the Ratcatcher appear?
- Do you think Helga really believes they will be able to join Eva in England?
- In this excerpt we move backward and forward in time; examine the ways in which sound effects are used in the script. How effectively do you think they help the audience understand the situation as they move from one time period to another? Would you introduce other sound cues?
- In what other ways would the audience be aware which time period they are in?
- What do you learn about the relationship between Evelyn and Faith in this excerpt?
- And what about that between Eva and Helga?

EXERCISES

1. CREATIVE WRITING: PACKING THE CASE
Imagine you have to leave your home and country at short notice with one small case, knowing you will never return – what will you pack in your case? This can be developed into a list poem by writing the line: I carry with me…. followed by a list of the belongings you have selected.

2. DRAMA/MOVEMENT: EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES AND EMOTIONS
Each member of the class or group chooses a character from Kindertransport to work on; think of a series of three physical movements your character might do each day. Try to choose movements which you think tells us something about the character’s inner life or emotions – for example, in the play we see Evelyn polishing and cleaning, as well as smoking when she is upset.
Remember that there is no ‘right or wrong’ with this exercise, which gives you a chance to explore the characters imaginatively and physically.
Work out a movement sequence where you repeat the three movements for your character in exactly the same order and the same way each time. Experiment with fast and slow, exaggerated and small, detailed or vague versions of the moves until you have a small performance you are happy with. In pairs show each other the sequence and ask for feedback. You could then choose a member of the class as choreographer and work out a staged sequence including everyone, entering and performing together at different times and different speeds, or changing together. Rehearse several times and choose a piece of music to accompany the performance.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Kindertransport*, Diane Samuels; Nick Hern Books
*We Came As Children*, ed. Karen Gershon; Macmillan
*The Last Goodbye: The Rescue of Children from Nazi Europe*; The Jewish Museum London
*Into the Arms of Strangers: stories of the Kindertransport*, ed. MJ Harris and D. Oppenheimer; Bloomsbury
*Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust*, Alan Farrier; Hodder and Stoughton

Films
*Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*, Warner Brothers; c/o SJR Jubilee House, Merrion Ave, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 4RL
*The Children Who Cheated the Nazis*; Channel 4; sales@childrenwhocheatedthenazis.co.uk

Websites
www.ushm.org
www.weinerlibrary.co.uk
www.jewishmuseum.org.uk
www.schoolshistory.org.uk/timelineofsecondworldwar.
http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/kindertransport.shtml
http://www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/information/schoolsinformation.shtml
http://www.doollee.com/PlaywrightsS/samuels-diane.html