

# LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

## Resource Pack

NOVEL WRITTEN BY: DH LAWRENCE  
ADAPTED FOR STAGE BY: CIARAN McCONVILLE  
PRODUCED BY: TILTED WIG



**Tilted Wig**  
productions

Tilted Wig Productions on Facebook  
[www.tiltedwigproductions.com](http://www.tiltedwigproductions.com)  
[@tiltedwiguk](https://twitter.com/tiltedwiguk)

## Welcome!

This Education Pack has been put together for teachers, students and drama groups in order to encourage students to explore the process of adapting this story for the stage and to understand how we approach ensemble storytelling on stage. This pack encourages discussion, practical participation and research. We want to encourage all to read the book and watch the play, so we have created this with the intention of sharing the joy of exploring everything that surrounds the story, and the excitement of staging a theatrical production. We really hope this is useful to you and enjoyable to all who use it.

Enjoy the show!

**Tilted Wig**  
productions

PS Let us know what you think!

<http://www.tiltedwigproductions.com>

[info@tiltedwigproductions.com](mailto:info@tiltedwigproductions.com)

[@tiltedwiguk](#)

[Tilted Wig Productions on Facebook](#)

# Contents Page

THE COMPANY.....	3
QUICK CHAT WITH OUR PRODUCERS.....	4
TILTED WIG TIMELINE.....	5
SYNOPSIS OF OUR NARRATIVE.....	6
THE AUTHOR – BIOGRAPHY OF D.H LAWRENCE.....	7
THE AUTHOR – DH LAWRENCE TIMELINE.....	8,9
CHARACTERS IN OUR PLAY.....	10-11
GET INVOLVED! CHARACTER DESCRIPTION TASK.....	10
GET INVOLVED! DOUBLING UP TASK.....	12
THEMES.....	12-19
GET INVOLVED! – ENEMY AT THE GATE GAME.....	14
GET INVOLVED! STATUS IMPROVISATION EXERCISE.....	16
GET INVOLVED! TALK ABOUT TOWN DEVISING TASK.....	17
GET INVOLVED! MELODY MAKER TASK.....	18
GET INVOLVED! CREATING PLACE & TIME DISCUSSION.....	18
GET INVOLVED! DIRECTING INTIMATE SCENES DISCUSSION.....	19
GET INVOLVED! RESEARCH TASK – PTSD.....	19
GET INVOLVED! WHAT WOMEN WANT DISCUSSION.....	20
Q&A WITH THE ADAPTOR AND DIRECTOR.....	20-26
GET INVOLVED! DISCUSSION – THE OBSCENITY TRIAL.....	21
Q&A WITH THE COMPOSER.....	27-29
ACTOR Q&A.....	29-31
SET DESIGN.....	32-33
REFERENCES AND USEFUL LINKS.....	34-35

## The Production Company

Katherine Senior and Matthew Parish formed Tilted Wig Productions in 2017. Katherine and Matthew have 12 years experience producing and touring plays throughout the UK with Creative Cow – a Devon-based theatre company they co-founded in 2007.

From the very beginning of our careers as actors touring the depths of the British countryside, setting up shows in pubs and skittle alleys – and wherever else anyone would take us – we have worked hard to create a professional ensemble company of actors.

Our shows now tour to some of the biggest theatres in the UK, yet that same ethos is still the driving force behind Tilted Wig Productions.

Whether Tilted Wig is producing a classic play or an exciting new adaptation, for each production they aim to bring together a vibrant and innovative creative team.

Over the years Katherine and Matthew have formed strong relationships with top venues all over the country, and with their inaugural production of GREAT EXPECTATIONS they were proud to co-produce for the very first time with Malvern Theatres. 2019 will see them co-produce with Malvern Theatres again and also Churchill Theatre, Bromley on THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY and Philip Meeks play MURDER, MARGARET AND ME, which tells the fascinating story of the relationship between murder mystery author Agatha Christie and actress Margaret Rutherford.

2020 begins with this exciting tour across the length and breadth of the UK of Ciaran McConville's LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER adaptation.

# Design of a Decade

## Tilted Wig Production **Timeline 2010-2020**

(Including productions with Creative Cow)

2020



**LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER**

2019



**MURDER, MARGARET AND ME**



**THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY**

2018



**GREAT EXPECTATIONS**

2017



**OUR MAN IN HAVANA**

2016



**TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT**

2015



**A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

2014



**SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER**

2013



**CHARLEY'S AUNT**

2012



**BORN IN THE GARDENS**

2011



**HARD TIMES**

2010



**DUMB SHOW**



**LOOK BACK IN ANGER**

## Quick chat with The Producers

**Which bit of the producing process do you enjoy the most?** There are so many elements to running a theatre company. We started out as actors so I suppose you could say we are actor-managers as in days past. While Matthew has turned his focus very much on the producing side of the company, I still act in the plays we tour (when parenting duties allow!) and I also do quite a bit of the design, artwork and creative side of things. This partnership has worked well in the last 12 years and makes the job mostly enjoyable! Bringing a new company together is always very exciting. Casting and introducing new creatives to the team and keeping it fresh and vibrant is an integral part of building a company for each project. This ensures we don't get stale and introverted which is also key. Of course one of the most enjoyable parts is the first night of a show, teetering on the edge and wondering if all the hard work will pay off and we send our audiences home with perhaps something more than what they came with.

**What is the hardest or most complicated thing about producing a tour and why do you think touring is important?** I don't know what the hardest part of touring is. I suppose it is complicated to juggle the venues in to a logistically suitable tour and it is always tough to bring the show in on an affordable budget. When you hear "commercial" producer the thought tends to be that there is a lot of money but it is the opposite – we have no funding and so have relied solely on box office for all 23 of the shows we have toured. For the third time we are co producing with Churchill Theatre, Bromley. We are able to share the risk. I think this is an important part of the future of touring. In this vein, collaborating with theatres is vital because it will keep touring theatre alive in the regions and this is crucial for a diverse programme of quality visiting companies that comes at a more affordable ticket price to London

## Synopsis of our play

When Clifford Chatterley returns from the war a wounded hero, his young bride Connie does her best to care for him. Neglected and alone, she instigates a love affair with the game-keeper, Mellors, a relationship that bridges the social divide and challenges convention. In touch, they find simplest of truths. In lust, they risk the greatest of scandals.

Lawrence's most sensual of novels was first published in 1928, but only in 1960 did an uncensored version become available, leading to one of the most famous trials of the century.

## The author: DH LAWRENCE BIOGRAPHY (1885-1930)

David Herbert Lawrence is best known as an author, whose novels were recognised as landmark works of English Literature in the twentieth century. Lawrence also wrote eight plays, literary criticism and numerous pieces of travel writing. Only two of his plays were performed during his lifetime.

Born in Eastwood, a coal mining town in Nottinghamshire (1885), his father was an illiterate coal miner and mother a former school teacher .

Lawrence won a scholarship to Nottingham High School and, after a time working as a factory clerk then a teaching assistant, followed in his mother's footsteps to pursue teaching, gaining a teaching qualification from the University of Nottingham.

Although teaching was in his blood, Lawrence's true passion was writing. He won a short story competition in 1907 which gave him the confidence to pursue this. His first novel, *The White Peacock* (1910) saw him find some literary fame and popular works followed including *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Rainbow* (1915), *Women in Love* (1920) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) – which was banned in the UK until 1960, gaining him a reputation as a 'pornographer'. *The Rainbow* was investigated for obscenity shortly after it was published.

Lawrence's own life was as dramatic as his work. Travelling to Germany in 1912 with his then partner, Frieda Von Richtofen, Lawrence was briefly detained on suspicion of being a spy. Von Richtofen was the wife of Lawrence's former Professor at Nottingham University and was also an aristocrat by birth. Her titled background and Lawrence's humble beginnings are often thought to be reflected in the social class dynamic between game keeper Mellors and Lady Chatterley. Lawrence and Von Richtofen married in 1914. The couple travelled the world together, sparking Lawrence's travel writing. The outbreak of the First World War meant they had to return to England until the War was over. In 1919 the couple moved abroad and never returned to England. The two shared a tempestuous marriage and it is thought that Von Richtofen felt entitled to have many affairs. Lawrence was also dogged by ill health, mainly chest conditions, and he died from tuberculosis in France, 1930.

Baron Philippe de Rothschild, a close friend of the Lawrences, acquired the copyright to *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and released it in 1960, once his film version had been released. The first play of the novel was performed in London in 1961.

Lawrence's work is often autobiographical and he favoured writing about working class characters who often spoke in Nottinghamshire dialect, reflecting his own upbringing. His novels are concerned with exploring class and social barriers, sexual orientation and the conflict between natural human instinct and individual needs versus industrial developments and societal constraints.

## Timeline of Lawrence's life and works

Dates	Life events
<b>1885</b>	Born Eastwood, Nottinghamshire 11 September.
<b>1891-1901</b>	Educated at Beauvale Board School, Eastwood, and Nottingham High School.
<b>1902-1906</b>	Pupil teacher (later assistant teacher) at British School, Eastwood and part-time student at Ilkeston Pupil-Teacher Centre.
<b>1906-1908</b>	Student at University College, Nottingham. <i>Prelude</i> published under Jessie Chambers' name (1907) <span style="float: right;">A</span>
<b>1908-1912</b>	Teaching post at Davidson Road School, Croydon. Engaged to Louie Burrows. Death of mother, Lydia Lawrence. First poems and stories in <i>The English Review</i> <i>The White Peacock</i> (1911) Breaks off engagement and resigns after lengthy illness.
<b>1912-1914</b>	Returns to Nottinghamshire. Meets Frieda Weekley and elopes with her to Germany and Italy. <b>Works published:</b> <i>The Trespasser</i> (1912), <i>Love and Others</i> (1913) and <i>Sons and Lovers</i> (1913) published.
<b>1914-1919</b>	Returns to England and marries Frieda (July 1914). Confined to England for duration of war. Lives in many places including Cornwall (Tregarthen) and Derbyshire (Middleton-by-Wirksworth). Rananim and the social revolution. Prosecution and suppression of <i>The Rainbow</i> (1915). <b>Works published:</b> <i>The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd</i> (1914) <i>The Prussian Officer and other stories</i> (1914) <i>The Rainbow</i> (1915) <i>Twilight in Italy</i> (1916) <i>Amores</i> (1916) <i>Look! We have come through!</i> (1917) <i>New Poems</i> (1918)
<b>1919-1922</b>	Travels to Italy, settling at Fontana Vecchia, Taormina, Sicily. <b>Works published:</b> <i>Bay : a book of poems</i> (1919) <i>Touch and Go</i> (1920) <i>Women in Love</i> (1920) <i>The Lost Girl</i> (1920) <i>Movements in European History</i> (1921) <i>Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious</i> (1921) <i>Sea and Sardinia</i> (1921) <i>Tortoises</i> (1921)



<p><b>1922-1924</b></p>	<p>Travels to Ceylon and Australia. Then to America and settles at Taos, New Mexico. In 1923 visits Mexico and settles in Chapala. Visits New York and Los Angeles. Travels to England (December). In 1924 travels to England, France, Switzerland, Germany and Austria before returning to New Mexico. Death of father, Arthur Lawrence.</p> <p><b>Works published:</b></p> <p><i>Aaron's Rod</i> (1922) <i>Fantasia of the Unconscious</i> (1922) <i>England, my England and other stories</i> (1922) <i>The Ladybird, the Fox, the Captain's Doll</i> (1923) <i>Studies in Classic American Literature</i> (1923) <i>Kangaroo</i> (1923) <i>Birds, Beasts and Flowers</i> (1923) <i>The Boy in the Bush</i> (1924)</p>
<p><b>1924-1925</b></p>	<p>In Mexico City but returns to Taos after serious illness. <b>Works published:</b> <i>St Mawr</i> (1925) <i>Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine</i> (1925)</p>
<p><b>1925-1926</b></p>	<p>Travels mainly in Italy, spending 3 months at Villa Bernarda, Spotorno. Finally settles at Villa Mirenda, Scandicci, near Florence. Last trip to Britain includes brief visit to Eastwood area</p>
<p><b>1927-1928</b></p>	<p>Visits to Switzerland, Germany, France, Spain and Italy. Lady Chatterley's Lover attacked in press and appearance of pirated copies. Copies of Lady Chatterley and Pansies (typescript) seized by police. Paintings seized from exhibition at Warren Gallery, London. Moves to South of France end of 1929. <b>Works published:</b></p> <p><i>The Escaped Cock (The Man who Died)</i> (1928/29) <i>The Woman who Rode Away and other stories</i> (1928) <i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i> (1928) <i>Collected Poems</i> (1928) <i>Rawdon's Roof</i> (1929) <i>Pansies</i> (1929) <i>Pornography and Obscenity</i> (1929)</p>
<p><b>1930</b></p>	<p>Dies at Vence in South of France on 2 March.</p>

## SOME OF THE CHARACTERS IN OUR PLAY

### CONNIE|CLIFFORD|MELLORS|TOMMY|MICHAELIS|IVY|CHORUS

**Constance ‘Connie’ Chatterley** Intelligent, quick-witted, emotionally intuitive and deeply felt, Connie is a charismatic, educated young woman. Before the war, her progressive parents supported an adolescence of travel and free love. She spent time in Dresden with her sister, where she met poets and musicians. During the war she met Clifford Chatterley. She fell in love with his assuredness and elegance. They got engaged in 1917. He was badly injured at the front and spent eighteen months in hospital. Perhaps naively, she felt like they could reclaim the life they had before he was injured, **but his psychological wounds have led to a gulf between them.** She feels isolated, cheated at times. Anger comes quickly. With Clifford’s deterioration, she’s become more aware of the rapidity of her own aging. She takes solace in the park that surrounds Wragby Hall. She longs to be a mother. Perhaps more than anything, **she longs to feel something again; to feel alive in a pure and uncomplicated way, to feel wanted and understood, to feel tenderness and tender in her relationships.**

**Clifford Chatterley** From an old family well known in Derbyshire, Clifford has become the inheritor of a large estate, since his older brother was killed in the war. He has also inherited the (relatively minor) title of Baronet, and **feels the responsibility and entitlement of aristocracy.** He is well educated, part of a Cambridge set before the war, **but many of his friends have died. Others have drifted from him since his injury.** On leave during the war, he met Constance and fell for her, for her intellect as much as her beauty. He was badly hurt in early 1918, losing much of the movement in his legs. The psychological aftermath of profound trauma has been even more difficult for him. **He suffers night terrors and the world seems increasingly terrifying. His great fear is that he will become irrelevant, letting down his family’s name and legacy.** He turns his mind to writing novels, where he finds some commercial success. Eventually, he focuses on the management and running of the collieries owned by the Chatterley estate. **He sees the workers almost as a farmer might see cattle; a challenge to be met with strength and single-mindedness.** His relationship with Connie is complex. He has come to fear her. **She represents an ideal he simply can’t fulfil. If he can**

### Get involved!

#### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION TASK

Choose one character from this list and create your own character description. You should include the following • Age • Nickname/s • Character traits • Back story – how did they get to where we see them in the production?

Read them out to the rest of the group without saying the name of the character you have chosen and the group should try and guess what character you have chosen to describe from LADY CHATTERLEY’S LOVER.

own her in the same way as he can own the land around him, perhaps he can tame that fear.

### Oliver Mellors

Aged 38, **educated and could have chosen a middle-class life, but since the war he prefers to cut himself off from society.** He's now gamekeeper at Wragby, an estate he knew as a child. He's from South Yorks or Derbyshire. **Adopts the broad vernacular when he feels threatened. He's afraid of being vulnerable, or of loving, afraid he'll hurt someone.** There's a quick temper, but it comes from past wounds. During the war he developed a close relationship with a colonel, who promoted him to lieutenant. He faced disapproval from other officers, but didn't mind too much. He came home only to break up with his wife. She moved in very quickly with another man. He continued to serve his colonel in India, but was demoted back to private when the colonel was killed. **So he came back to Wragby to immerse himself in nature. At heart, he's tender, loving, progressive.**

**Tommy Dukes** Tommy is a family friend of the Chatterleys and fond of both Clifford and his late brother. He is part of a Cambridge-Mayfair set of upper class intelligentsia. He loves shooting weekends at country estates and late-night discussions over port and a cigar. He's kind, too, and loyal to his friends. He sees Connie's loneliness and he worries for Clifford.

**Michaelis** Michaelis describes himself as a 'Dublin Street Rat'. He grew up with nationalist sympathies, but found success and celebrity as a writer and began to seek the affirmation of the English upper classes. Perhaps because of his estrangement from Ireland, he is desperate to be loved. He's fearful of isolation. **He didn't fight in the war and feels the shame of that when he's around Clifford. Beneath the charm and wit of a bon-vivant, is a well of self-loathing. He longs for intimacy, but with lust comes guilt and self-flagellation.** He has an addictive personality. But for all that, he's attractive and holds himself well in company.

**Ivy** Ivy is a local girl, born and bred in Tevershall. Her childhood sweetheart was Ted Bolton. She married him before the war. After 1914, he opted to stay in the colliery, taking on the work that three men might struggle to achieve in peace time. She watched his physical decline, watched him go grey as a young man. And when he was killed in an explosion in the colliery, she retreated into herself for a while. She feels enormous rage about his needless death. Perhaps to save herself, **she trained as a nurse and worked in several hospitals, on wards filled with the wounded from France.** After the war, she returned to Tevershall and became a parish nurse, then employed as a private carer for Clifford. Her love for him is complicated. **She is in awe of his intellect, pities him for his disability, hates and admires him for his disdain of the working classes.** Ultimately, as his deterioration becomes more evident, **she wants to protect him and care for him.** She wants to avoid him becoming another Ted. She will lie next to him at night and stroke his hair when he has night terrors. She also has a complicated relationship with Connie, based part in envy, part in disapproval, and part in awe.

**Chorus** Played by three of the cast, the Chorus are the ghosts of Clifford's war. They inhabit the same ruins that he does. They rejoice in the tranquillity of nature as it grows through the footboards and iron sidings of the trenches. They long for intimacy and tenderness, just like Connie. They suffer the same trauma as Clifford. They feel rage like Ivy.

### Get involved!

#### DOUBLING UP

Some of the actors in our cast multi-role, playing more than one character. This requires skill to convince the audience they are playing a different person in the story and avoid confusion.

If you have already seen the play, pair up with a partner and select one of the actors who performed multiple roles.

Reflect on how they achieved this and describe to your partner who they played and how they achieved the character transformation. Think about any changes in •Voice (accent, pitch) •Physicality (posture, the way they moved, the dynamics of how they move, speed, energy) •Costume (is a more stylised, Brechtian approach being used? A change of hat or coat for a change of character?)

If you haven't seen the play yet, look out for how the actor approaches the change of characterisation.

## Themes and socio historical context

### National psyche after the **FIRST WORLD WAR** (28 July 1914 – 11 November 1918)

*We are among the ruins.*

*Two Years.*

*Two Years since the war ended.*

*And not a man or woman breathing remains unchanged.*

England is battered and bruised after the First World War. Everyone was affected by the loss of a friend or family member. Those who came home from the trenches were psychologically scarred and the impact of their trauma spreads across whole family units.

*The bruise of too great a shock. She feels it in her too. An inward dread.  
An emptiness.*

The emptiness Connie feels is filled by her sexually fulfilling and mutually respectful relationship with Mellors. He in turns finds comfort and life once more.

*Mellors: I thought I had done with life and now it's begun again.*

Their affair however, brings its own anxieties and fears. Both Mellors and Clifford experience **post traumatic stress disorder** as well as physical injuries which they feel dent their masculinity. This is highlighted in the woodland scene when Clifford falls from his wheelchair into the mud after refusing helps and Mellors experiences difficulty moving the weight of the wheelchair from the mud due to the pneumonia he contracted during the war. Clifford's fall into the mud triggers a panicked flashback for both of them.

*Clifford: "...for Christ's sake get me out of the mud"*

*Mellors: "It's alright Colonel, I mean, Sir Clifford. It's alright"*

*Clifford: "I thought...I thought...."*

*Mellors: "I know"*

*Clifford "For a moment" ..."*

*Mellors: "I know"*

The war however, did present opportunities, specifically for working class women. Ivy, Clifford's nurse in the story, benefited from the education and training as a nurse she was able to undertake, which increased her earning capacity and independence.

*Ivy: Still, the war was a blessing, financially. It were a blessing for a lot of women who couldn't make ends meet."*

Across the country an estimated two million women stepped in to fill many jobs, such as factory work making ammunition for the war front and farm jobs to cope with the country's food shortage. Although they were paid half the wages of their male counterparts, women proved themselves valuable in the work place and more than capable of performing roles outside of domestic duties and service. Their efforts did much to support the women's suffrage movement. Prior to the First World War, many of these women and 58% of the adult male population were unable to vote. The **1918 Representation of the People Act** was implemented, a fundamental change to the voting system and the fight for equality.

Once the war was over and the men returned, women had to relinquish their new found independence and jobs. Ivy is optimistic, despite becoming a widow as a result of the war. She acts as a conduit between the safety of Wragby Hall to his colliery. Despite his view of the workers, Ivy encourages Clifford to look to the future of industry, technology and change. He embraces this new interest but cannot let go of his prejudice towards the workers and his urge to maintain his entitled status and the honour of the 'family name' and producing a son and heir, by any means that he feels acceptable within his own moral code.

*Clifford: 'We've poisoned our classes with education. It's sheer hypocrisy to say they can rule themselves"*

## Get involved!

### ENEMY AT THE GATE

The focus and intensity of participating in this exercise is not even a fraction close to the trauma experienced by the soldiers during the First World War, but this is an introductory way of thinking about the intensity of the world Mellors and Clifford are living through in the opening of our play.

This is an adaptation of the popular children's game *Grandma's Footsteps*

- Select one player to be 'the Enemy' and stand at the opposite end of the room
- The other players – however many you can fit across the width of the room facing the Enemy – line up horizontally. These are 'the Soldiers'. Their objective is to reach the other side of the room undetected by the Enemy whenever the Enemy decides to turn around. All Soldiers must freeze until the Enemy turns to face the other direction again. To win the game. One of the Soldiers must reach the Enemy undetected and tap them on the shoulder.
- If the Enemy spots any of the Soldiers moving or hears them speak once they have spun around, the whole troop has to return to the start. How do the Soldiers who get spotted feel about being responsible for their colleagues having to start again?
- Set a timer to add a sense of urgency to the game and increase the stakes. For example, 3 minutes. If the Soldiers haven't reached the enemy gate by then it is an automatic victory for the Enemy. How does it feel to play the Enemy vs a Soldier.

#### Variations to the game

- Introduce text to a round of the game "*Every breath you draw is a breath longer than you were meant to take*" with the aim of speaking in unison. Does the pace and tone of the delivery vary at different points of the game?
- Try a round where you assign 'an Officer' who wordlessly signals and controls the volume of the speech and pace of the Soldier's movement. Introduce levels for the for the Soldiers e.g crawling on the ground. How does it feel to be the Officer responsible for the strategic approach?
- Before a round, soldiers could be advised to imagine that the ground is frosty, icy and covered with twigs. One twig snap could alert the enemy to spin round. How does this effect the way they tread? Imagine the ground is thick mud. The consistency of treacle. Does this effect the way they deliver the line as well as the way they move? Why?

## Social class

In the early twentieth century it was very rare to see two people from different social statuses marry. Many families disowned and disinherited members of their family if they felt they had married 'beneath' them. Status and wealth were the main attributes people respected in society when it came to marriage and many marriages were arranged to benefit the future advancement of family name, status and wealth, to be benefit both parties.

Clifford and Hilda both display disdain and prejudice attitudes towards the working classes. Clifford sees the workers as intellectually inferior. When he encourages Connie to become pregnant by another man, to suit his desire to continue the Charterley name, he automatically assumes Connie would not want to have physical relations with anyone who is socially 'inferior'.

*Clifford: You wouldn't consider the wrong type of person.*

Hilda displays a more complex and hypocritical attitude;

*Hilda: I'm on the side of the working classes in a political crisis, but Connie, that's different from sleeping with them.*

Mellors is upset by Hilda's attitude towards him and in his moments of insecurity worries that Connie shares the same view and is just using him to father a child and that the world will never allow them to stay together.

*Mellors: I've got books on those shelves you've never read. Philosophy, history, poetry. Why do you people always think everyone else is less than you?*

*Mellors: All around us there's briars and thorns. The whole thing is set up to stop a man like me from being with a woman like you.*

Connie seems to be the only character who is liberally minded and does not share this narrow view point on inter-class relationships.

*Connie: I am not answerable to a 'thing'. I make my own decisions. I choose for me. And I choose to love you.*

Despite her bravery, Connie does attempt to cover up the truth that Mellors is the father of her child, by asking Michaelis if he will claim parentage. This is to protect Clifford's sensibilities and maintain the family name, perhaps from a sense of guilt.

Even the townsfolk of Tevershall seem to disapprove of relationships between two different social status and class;

*Mellors: "What when folks find out? Think how lowered you will feel, one of your husbands servants".*

*Mellors: Nothing frightens me more than folk..*

Despite the reactions of the people around them, the purity of Connie and Mellors relationship transgresses social boundaries. The healing power of their union and

how it reactivates life within them both after a period of depression highlights the futility of the class divide that Clifford is desperate to cling to and society seems to value.

## Get involved!

### STATUS IMPROVISATION

As a group, discuss the different levels of status in society, and how an individual's status can change. A group of people will often respond to each other in a manner dictated by their perceived status. To demonstrate this, divide the group in half. Half are the actors and half the audience:

- Each actor is given a numbered playing card between 1-10; 10 being the highest possible status and 1 the lowest.
- The actors hold their cards to their foreheads, so they do not know the value of their own card, but everyone else does.
- Improvise a scene, such as a party, in which actors treat the other actors as though they have the status of their card's value. For example, if they have a low number, they might be ignored and if they have a high number they should be treated with respect.
- After the improvisation, the actors have to guess their own status.

- Then let the audience have a go at acting and vice versa. Questions to consider: -How can you use your body to show a character's status? -What happens if you give a character with low status a physical advantage, e.g. by standing and leaning over somebody? -Look at people in your everyday life, such as your teachers, parents and friends. How do we understand peoples' status in society?



## Get involved!

### Talk About Town – Devising exercise

- In groups of 5 or 6, decide on a social, public environment in the mining town of Tevershall, where the play takes place. This could be a pub, post office, bus stop...you decide.
- Each member of your group should choose a character for themselves. Decide who they are and what their role is in the town. You could be a landlady, shopkeeper, postman, shopper, schoolteacher, maid from Wragby Hall etc.
- Each person decide on if this a stressful or relaxed environment for their character.
- Create a tableaux that of this location, remember if your character is stressed or relaxed and to show this in your physicality, how you interact with others and your facial expression
- Share your tableaux with other groups. Try to guess each others location and occupation of each character.
- Return to your groups. One of the characters in your group has spotted Lady Chatterley at Wragby Hall visiting the Gamekeeper's cottage on several occasions. Decide who this is going to be and who they tell this piece of gossip to. This character should decide how they deliver the piece of gossip. Are they whispering it secretly? Are they concerned? Scandalised? Mocking? Who do they tell the gossip to? Do they announce it to the whole group?
- The person/people who receive the news should decide how they react to this news. Everyone else not involved should continue with their normal business.
- Create a second tableaux of this scene, introducing the line *'I've seen Lady Chatterley up at Wragby Hall visiting the Gamekeeper's cottage in the woods on several occasion'* and everyone's reactions. The reaction should be quick and sharp before everyone freezes into new positions.
- Share this scene and watch other groups perform their tableaux.
- Finally return to your groups and decide on someone to play Mellors or Connie. Have them enter the location and decide how everyone reacts. Each character should decide on a word to say that they feel when they see Mellors or Connie and if they step away or towards them. Decide on a sequence of order, who speaks and moves when and how audible are they?
- Share this tableaux with other groups. Reflect how it feels to be Mellors or Connie entering this public space.
- Extension – can you link these three tableaux seamlessly together now to create a full scene? Keep hold of the stylised movement and dynamics you created in the tableaux and see how that supports the scene. Try it again in a purely naturalistic way. Which do you prefer? Perform your scenes and see which way the audience prefer and why.

## Nature vs Industry

Place is very important to the characters in this play. The maintenance of Wragby Hall symbolizes something for Clifford to focus on and hide within, the woods become a natural place of connection and healing for Connie and Mellors and yet the unsettling threat and glower of the burning colliery in the town of Tevershall is always present;

*Connie: The steam of boredom and anger poisoning the air.*

Industry was seen as a destructive force by Lawrence, devouring the heart of the countryside, and as with his story set in the Midlands, the heart of the country. He

was concerned about technological advancement taking over and destroying human passion, natural instincts and human behaviour. His message in *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER* can be interpreted that humans need to get out of their heads and into their hearts and bodies. The healing power of the woods and the physical relationship between Connie and Mellors certainly supports this theory.

### Get involved!

#### Melody Maker

Music and sound design is so important in establishing mood, atmosphere and even change of location. *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER* has an original score composed by Eamonn O'Dwyer.

If you were the sound designer for this production, what music genre or soundscape would you use? Is there a particular band or artist whose work you think would support the themes of the production?

If you play an instrument and write music, why not try creating a melody/motif that describes one of the characters or themes that inspired you from *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER* and play it to the rest of your group.

### Get Involved!

#### DISCUSSION

##### CREATING TIME AND PLACE

The action of *LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER* takes place over a period of years and moved quickly along. How does the design of this production make use of the ensemble to move the action along and aid the scene transitions?

How did this production use sound and lighting design to establish location and a sense of mood and atmosphere?

The set of our production is heavily inspired by the trenches during the First World War. Why do you think that is?

If you were to design a set for this production on tour, discuss as a group how would you design the set, sound and lighting to be able to portray the trenches/Wragby Hall/ the woodland/ Mellors' Cottage/the colliery?

Bear in mind practical logistics as well as creativity - it will need to be dismantled and rebuilt quickly in each different touring location.

## Female sexual agency and masculinity

Connie and Hilda, both in the play and the novel talk openly and candidly about their sex life and sexual appetite. This was bold for the time it was written. It was seen as distasteful and promiscuous for women to talk about sex, let alone their sexual preferences. Although he is willing to commit adultery with her, Connie is criticised by Michaelis for her sexual agency but with Mellors, Connie finds mutual respect and satisfaction.

Toxic masculinity is a theme which our production is concerned with. Clifford feels emasculated because of his paralysis, Michaelis is self-deprecating because of his pacifism and refusal to fight. The soldiers in the trenches feel fear and shame because of this. British people were meant to maintain a 'stiff upper lip' and yet the large majority of the population after the First World War were suffering from physical and mental wounds.

Mellors is the only male character to find contentment within the world of the play and it is interesting to note he is not afraid to speak of his fears and admit to being frightened;

*Connie: You are the only one with the courage to say you are scared.*

### Get involved!

#### DISCUSSION

##### PTSD

- How do you think fighting in the First World War impacted Mellors and Clifford upon their return to England? Research the term Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and consider the strain this places on the relationships of the characters
- How has not fighting in the war affected Michaelis' behaviour and opinion of himself?

### Get involved!

#### DISCUSSION

##### Intimate scenes on stage

The novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is famous for sexual content, sparking international outcry from censors. Scenes of this nature performed on stage can be difficult to approach and uncomfortable for both actors and audiences if not handled sensitively. How did our production use the chorus to support the intimate scenes? What was the impact?

The performing arts and TV and film industries are more and more consulting 'Intimacy Directors' to support the director and actors choreograph intimate scenes. A recent and welcome development to the rehearsal room. Why do you think the role of an Intimacy Director is important?

How many other ways can you think of staging scenes to achieve the intimacy of the relationship on stage, without being graphic? Consider use of ensemble movement, music, style, symbolism and lighting.

## Get involved!

### DISCUSSION

#### WHAT WOMEN WANT

Connie's journey to find a physical and mentally satisfying connection was shocking to readers in the 1920s – because she was a woman taking control of her desires. Can you think of any plays or novels written in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where the behaviour or attitudes of a character caused controversy because they were female? How do you feel about that?

## Q & A with the Director and Adaptor

### IN CONVERSATION WITH

### CIARAN MCCONVILLE

#### ORIGINS AND ADAPTATION PROCESS

**When did you decide to adapt *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as a play text? What appealed to you about the story to pursue bringing it to life on the stage?**

Last year, I was introduced to Katherine and Matthew at Tilted Wig Productions, who specialise in adapting literary novels to the stage. We threw some ideas around, but relatively quickly landed on *Lady Chatterley*. I loved D.H. Lawrence when I was a teenager. I really remember first reading *The Odour of Chrysanthemums*, about the wife of a miner waiting for him to return home from work, assuming that he's out drinking, only to discover that he's been killed. I found that such a haunting story, and beautiful too. **There's a kind of fierce sadness about Lawrence's characters.** I read more at university, but was still struck re-reading *Lady Chatterley* for this project by the detail of his descriptions, the complexity of the relationships and the radicalism of his ideas. *Lady Chatterley* is definitely problematic. Misogyny sits alongside progressive feminism without much effort at reconciling them. You get the impression of a writer at odds with the whole world, including himself. The scene in which Mellors shows Connie the newly born pheasant chicks sort of sits at the heart of it – a tender love of nature against an almost misanthropic awkwardness.

The book is famous for its eroticism and earthy language, which led to the prosecution of publishers Penguin in 1960 when they printed an unexpurgated version (the jury threw out the case after just a few hours of deliberation and it became a landmark for freedom of speech).

**For me, though, it's the deep wounds that afflict the characters which are interesting to adapt. There's so much unspoken conflict, so much hurt, and still**

there's the need to connect and heal. And that's reflected in nature, within the woods of Wragby and the burning pithead at Tevershall.

### Is this your first time working with Tilted Wig?

It is. I was at the Rose Theatre Kingston for nearly ten years. Literally the day I announced I was leaving I bumped into Daniel Goode in the café. He's a wonderful and very kind actor who I had worked with on a couple of shows there. He got his phone out of his pocket and immediately emailed Katherine and Matthew at Tilted Wig, giving me the nicest reference. That kind of thing almost never happens! I saw their beautiful production of *Dorian Gray* when it was on tour and I'm thrilled to work with them.

### This is not your first-time adapting novels for the stage (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Oliver Twist*, *Frankenstein*). How do you approach such a mammoth task? Has anything different this time?

Inspiration never happens in a vacuum. I'm terrible at the day-to-day of writing. I'm not particularly disciplined and it takes me ours of faffing to get into the 'zone'. When I'm writing I try not to think too much about the genius of the author whose shoulders I'm standing on. It would be easy to read Orwell, Dickens or Shelley – and indeed Lawrence – and shrink away from the story because of the stature of the writer. But playwriting is a different beast, and I'm never offering up a definitive adaptation, just something that stems from my own emotional response and the world around me today. **I really like writing ensemble theatre with a focus on the storytelling.**

Partly, I want the whole cast to feel equally challenged, but also I think there's something satisfying in seeing a type of storytelling that's not bound by naturalism. Lawrence's writing is really poetic, his politics radical, his messages complex. If he'd wanted his original to be a play for the stage, I'm sure he'd have done a brilliant job at it! So I don't feel bound to try and recreate his novel. The theatre is such a different medium. **The rules of actor-led storytelling are nothing like the omniscient narrator of a novel.**

## Get Involved!

### DISCUSSION

#### The Obscenity Trail

Penguin Books were taken to court in 1960 over publishing an uncensored version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The trial last for six days. Prosecutor Mervyn Griffith-Jones famously asked at the trial;

"Would you approve of your young sons, young daughters - because girls can read as well as boys - reading this book? Is it a book you would have lying around your own house? Is it a book that you would even wish your wife or your servants to read?"

But Penguin Books were quickly found not guilty by a jury and sales of the book soared. Why do you think this is? What is the significance of the 1960s and the change in sexual attitudes and social class?

The copy of the book brought to the trial each day by Judge Sir Laurence Byrne reportedly sold for £56,000 at auction in 2018.

### What considerations does a writer need to bear in mind when adapting page for stage? Especially in a touring context?

I'm not sure when you first put words on the page you should think about anything but the world of the story and the characters who inhabit it. There's something really wonderful about writing a stage direction with absolutely no idea how it might be realised. And equally, there's something freeing about letting the prose sit in the background, like a habitat, so you can focus on the immediate needs of the two characters who are talking to each other.

Further down the line, of course, you think about the parameters of the production, cast size and budget. That leads to revisions, but it's a really creative part of the process.

The big considerations for touring need to come from the director and producer. You're asking a group of people to set up a company away from home and throw themselves into a piece of work that requires vulnerability, intimacy and a huge amount of trust. It's important that everyone feels respected from the outset. So I think valuing the actor's choices and ensuring they never feel dictated to is vital. You don't really know who's going to get on with each other, but you can do everyone possible to ensure the process is respectful and kind.

And finally, of course, there's a budget. All theatre - whether it's a big musical you might see in the West End, or a play staged above a pub - aims to put every pound of its capital onto the stage. So that means everyone works very hard to achieve the design and tell the story effectively.

### **As both writer and director of the piece, does this come with any challenges? How do you balance these different skills?**

Yes, definitely. It's really satisfying doing both, but I think it's also important as a writer to have some projects directed by other people, and as a director to work with other people's writing. Otherwise, you end up getting too stuck in your own process. You learn by finding variety in projects and people.

As a writer, there's a lovely (terrifying) moment when you pass over the script. The initial table-read is great, hearing the thing aloud for the first time, and then there's a chance to make a few changes after that, but basically your script belongs to the company staging it - the actors, director and designer. So as a writer-director, it's important to be very objective. If something isn't working, I hope I'm never precious about it. If someone's idea is better than mine (and it often is) I hope I'll listen to it.

I'm not sure about balancing the skills between director and writer. I've never thought about that. I definitely have two personalities! Right now I'm sitting in a library with my script and I'm my 'quiet' self, a little caffeinated, avoiding eye contact with anyone else in the room, listening to classical music on my headphones. The director, however, is a facilitator, outgoing, enquiring and always confident. I can let my writer-self get anxious, or sad, or a bit naval gazey, but my director-self has to make the rehearsal room a playground for the actors. I like doing both!

## **CASTING AND DIRECTING**

### **Recently you have had an exciting round of auditions for *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. What is the casting process like?**

I get nervous about meeting people for the first time, but once everyone's in the room it's okay. I try and put people at ease by asking about their journey (we all like to complain about trains) and talking about recent projects. Then we have a read of

the 'sides', or excerpts from the script, and I usually ask the actor what she may have found interesting about it. Then I give a few thoughts, which may be rooted in backstory, or a particular event or switch in the scene, and we have another read. I know what it's like to be on the other side of the table, and the prep that actors have to do for auditions, often at really short notice. So I do my best to make it a nice meeting and I always thank the actor for coming. I try and email feedback if it's a no. We did a day of casting about a week ago and the standard was amazing. It's not always about one person being better than another. You see their own personalities coming through and think, is that the direction we're interested in taking for this particular story?

### **What qualities do you look for from actors who will join the company?**

Above all, I look for people who are kind, grounded and positive. I'm really put off by arrogance or defensiveness – but actually you rarely encounter that from actors. I want to work with people who are excited by feedback, who have thoughts of their own, and who have clearly done a lot of prep both on their sides and in understanding the story as a whole.

### **What role do the Chorus play in this adaptation?**

As I write this, it's kind of a work in progress. So it may have changed by the time you use these words in an education pack. At the moment, I'm thinking the chorus are the dead soldiers of the trench in which we're setting the play. **They are looking on at the survivors and urging Connie towards some kind of escape from this awful scar in the land.** The book doesn't set any of its action in the war, but it was written so soon afterwards (less than a decade) that **the trauma of the First World War really permeates every relationship in the story.** So it makes sense that the chorus are part of that too. I don't want a chorus that isn't invested in the action, so if they're 'haunting' the characters, there has to be some escape or catharsis in it for them, too.

As I say, a work in progress...!

### **As Director, what does an average working day for you look like?**

Blimey. I don't know. Today I've been dealing with another production of mine that is currently in performance. It has a huge cast, so of course there's a lot of the day-to-day, from illness to family tragedy. It's always a reminder that you're directing people, not plays.

Some days involve pottering about the kitchen listening to Radio Four and thinking about writing... Others involve teaching short courses or weekly tutorials. And some days, the really good ones, I'm in rehearsal or tech (the bit when all the creatives add their work).

Of course, I'd love to do more. As with any freelance job, it's really varied and there are lots of highs and lows. But the best bits involve working with other people.

### **Who have you collaborated with so far? (Producers, set designer, costume designer, composer) How do you start the conversation about the vision of the piece? Has anything evolved since your initial concept?**

I've talked lots with the producers about a concept for the adaptation. I've written a first draft, which I'm now reshaping. I've got the wonderful Eamonn O'Dwyer on board as a composer and he's reading the script this week. He and I have worked

together lots before, so we have a kind of shorthand for stuff, which is useful. He's asking me questions which I can't answer yet, but that's great.

At the moment, we're talking to designers and that conversation usually involves a face-to-face and a chance to see how we might work together and whether the designer thinks it's all achievable on the budget and within the timeframe.

### **What is your artistic aim for the relationship between performers and the audience to be during the performance?**

We're playing some beautiful theatres on this tour, with fabulous proscenium arches which were designed to frame the work in the way you might frame a painting, something to look at from a slight distance. But what I really want is to draw the audience in, to make them feel like they're as close to the action as the chorus. Whenever I work on a play, I hope it will move people and make them laugh. I hope they'll care about the characters to the point of wanting to intervene when they see them hurt. I hope they'll find someone to cheer on. And I hope the play will stay with them after.

We ask a lot of our audiences. We ask them to sit in a room with a bunch of strangers and let go of their busy lives for a bit. It's a huge deal. Where else could you get a thousand strangers to do that? It's a powerful thing. So I want to share a story that feels at the very least involving. I don't want all those barriers of period drama to get in the way. And I'm not particularly interested in focusing on the sexual part of the story – partly because I don't live in a time where those limits need to be pushed in the way that Lawrence wanted to push them – and partly because I'm more interested in the emotional needs of the characters.

**This is a story about the way that trauma scatters us like little gas molecules and the absolute human need we have to come together again and connect – to genuinely and profoundly connect.** Sometimes the damage is too great for that, but mostly it's not, at least if there's tenderness. I think that theme speaks to the very heart of literature and storytelling, don't you?

If the first thing the audience do when the houselights go back on is check their phones, I'll probably be a bit disappointed in myself. I mean, I'll still be grateful, but really it's that moment afterwards of catching your breath and looking at the person next to you and seeing if they feel like you do – that exhilaration of being part of something, of a bit of live storytelling, that is so compelling. That's what I'm aiming for! You'll have to tell me whether I've achieved it!

## **THEMES**

### **The play begins with a harrowing scene, Clifford leads soldiers on the front line in the First World War. The novel references the impact of the First World War on society but does not set any action during the war. Why did you introduce this scene?**

The book begins with Constance and Clifford sort of midway into their marriage. There's some exposition about their life before, and the war is of course referenced in all the characters' stories. I suppose I wanted to make that more explicit. If this is a story about living 'among the ruins' then I think it's important and interesting to see what created that ruin. Clifford's injury is not only physical, and I wanted to explore what else made it impossible for him to mend, so there's a suggestion in the first scene that cutting himself off from life, from a 'felt' life, is the only way he can be a soldier.



It's also a different way of opening the story. The novel is of course about the effects of the First World War, but I think there's an expectation of drawing room drama set in the confines of Wragby Hall, and I wanted to get away from that at the outset.

**This production and the novel are set in the East Midlands. We see a contrast between Old England that Clifford is desperate to retain, with the stately Wragby Hall, the constant glowering and noise from the Colliery, hinting at the unsettled workers and the natural, peaceful woodland inhabited by Connie and Mellor's. How important is a sense of 'place' in this production?**

Hugely, I think. And you put it very well in your question. Lawrence was himself interested in the juxtaposition between industrial England and the sense of something more ancient, rooted in some part in nature and in some part in his own sense of a rightful order of things. No one else can describe a woodland like he can. He was one of the great, great modernist writers, I think. And of course this is a story about scars. We scar the landscape with our industry, much of which is built to fuel the Military Industrial Complex, and we scar ourselves with conflict. **So this is a story about the healing power of nature, whether that's the trees in Wragby Park, or the full, physical life embraced by Connie.**

There's a sense of time as well as place. The period after the war was deeply unsettled. A cultural revolution took place which led to changes in the class system and of course a huge shift in gender politics. Both the old establishment and the big industrialists were terrified of the unions and that the Bolshevik movement behind the violent founding of the Soviet Union would spread to the west.

The War changed everything. It took us from an epoch of absolutism to one of uncertainty, and it did so very quickly.

**What are the themes of the play that you think will resonate with an audience in 2020?**

I'm not sure. I guess the conversations we're having around gender and sexuality in 2020 feel very prominent in this story. Women are still far too often – indeed systematically – treated as someone else's property. The taboos around female sexual satisfaction are still very much there. Male promiscuity is seen as a sort of conquest, but it's a very different story for women. I know people who have got divorced and the woman has been treated so much more harshly than the man. So there's all that! Things have changed so much over the last century, but there's a long way to go before we reach genuine equality.

**I'm also interested in the theme of toxic masculinity. I think this notion of 'the masculine ideal' is so artificial.** It really screws guys up, because it takes so little for the whole façade to fall away. And then the sense of failure very quickly turns to self-loathing. **The main cause of death among men my age in this country is suicide.** That's crazy for a generation born in peacetime and raised in the sort of comfort not really known in the history of civilisation. So why is that? What is a man, really? What did those boys feel in the mud of the trenches, waiting to charge into No Man's Land? **And how could they possibly be expected to get over that trauma?**

**How do you want the audience to feel when they leave the auditorium?**

In need of a drink? Elated? Pleased that they're not any of the characters in the story...? But also sympathetic towards the characters. Clifford is pretty messed up, but I

don't think he's a villain. If we don't feel anything for him, it's kind of a failing in the story.

Honestly, I want them to feel like it was an entertaining evening and time well spent. I can't second guess how people will feel, and in a way that's not my job. They may be affected by the experience they had parking the car, or their day at work, or they may be nervous because they're on a first date (a bold choice if so), or they might think English is their least favourite subject and they wish they didn't have to miss triple science for this... All I can do, and all the cast can do, is tell a story well.

## REHEARSAL PROCESS

### **How will you approach the first rehearsal with the company? Do you always use the same approach for day one of rehearsals?**

No I don't really have a process that I impose on other people. I do break the script into Units of Action based around the structure of the scene, but that's so we can navigate it easily together, and so that we can refer to sections and know what we're all talking about. I think each actor will take the approach that works for them. Some actors like to do a lot of Stanislavski-based work in their prep, and I really support that. I like Uta Hagen's Character Questions and the detail that sort of work can bring. Michael Chekhov's Moveable Centres and Psychological Gestures can also produce some interesting results for some actors. And actually, I like me a bit of animal work!

In terms of a first day... I'm not sure yet! I guess we'll read the script and have a discussion about all the different elements and I'll try and sound like I know what I'm talking about, but I'll also be gauging what the actors want and need. I'll probably bring biscuits to show I care.

### **How do you work in the rehearsal room? Will this piece be heavily devised with the cast?**

We don't have a huge amount of time, so the script will be pretty set when we start, but that doesn't mean I'm not open to new ideas. I think any director is crazy not to respect what actors bring to storytelling, so I'm sure there'll be changes to help story clarity and avoid clunky transitions within the scenes and between them. But I mean, I don't tend to play crazy games or get actors drawing their feelings in crayon. I think that can be really alienating for a lot of actors, whose creativity is very personal and takes place in the gaps between standing up and rehearsing a scene. Sometimes 'play' can become a little forceful, so it's about finding the balance and creating an environment that's both safe and explorative.

I try and ask questions of the actors. I try not to block (ie tell people to stand in particular places) too early, because I'm interested to see where their instincts take them. Detailed staging tends to come later, and it's not properly choreographed until we're lighting the show in technical rehearsals.

I try to understand the character's need and find a way of expressing it which works for both me and the actor. And I like to ensure we have regular breaks. Because a cup of tea goes a long way.

**What are you looking forward to most about getting started with rehearsals?**

Oh my goodness, just hearing the story out loud and seeing what the actors bring to it. I'm so pleased to have this cast. Phoebe, who plays Connie, used to be a student in the youth theatre I ran at the Rose Theatre Kingston, so I'm also immensely proud that she's playing such a challenging role on this project. I know we'll all be nervous on our first day, but once we've got beyond that and we're really working each of the beats to find the truth in the moment – can you think of a better job in the world?!

## **Q&A with the Composer**

### **IN CONVERSATION WITH EAMONN O'DWYER**

**Have you composed music for other theatre productions?**

Yes, for about 20 different productions over the last 5 years. I've written musicals, plays with songs and created underscore and sound effects for plays too.

**What has been your route into composing for theatre?**

I actually worked as an actor for many years, in West End and touring productions. I am a singer an instrumentalist too, so I often played parts where all those skills were required. After a while directors I knew began to ask me to compose the music for their plays as well as perform in them, and I began to be more interested in the composing than the acting!

**Can you describe what the music in this production of LCL will be like?**

Lady Chatterley's Lover will be a digital score – that means there won't be any live instruments, but I'll create the sounds myself using a variety of software. Some of them will be orchestral samples, so you'll definitely recognise some string or wind instruments.

**Will there be character motifs and themes for the audience to listen out for?**

Perhaps – I've not decided yet! There may well be particular instruments that represent the characters, but ideas like that are often best as a jumping off point for writing the score, rather than a cast-iron rule that holds it all together... sometimes that can end up being a little heavy-handed! I think the music here will be more about conjuring mood than about painting characters.

**Have you been inspired by any particular composers? Does the music reflect the era DH Lawrence was writing in and popular music of the time?**

I'm inspired by all composers! Both Ciaran (the director) and myself have been listening to a lot of Ralph Vaughan-Williams who was a contemporary of Lawrence's. He was a great lover of folk music and wove a lot of British folksong into his writing. I'd like to do something similar with this score, but the challenge is to keep it sounding fresh and contemporary, rather than feel too much like a 'period piece'.

**As a composer, are you also involved in the sound design of the overall production?**

Absolutely. On this particular production I'm also the sound designer, so that means creating all the sound effects – birdsong, machinery, weather etc. It's really fun to combine those with the music that I'm writing, as they have their own rhythms and melodies that you can play against or use – almost like an extra instrument.

**Do you work closely with the Director to establish the tone that is required?**

Very closely! Ciaran and I have collaborated on about 10 shows in the past together, so we have a very good understanding of each other's process. I'll read the script a few times, and make suggestions of where I think music will help drive the story forward or support the narrative. He will also know where he envisages music occurring, particularly for big scene changes and transitions. Obviously then it's a question of trying things out in rehearsal to see what works.

**What is the working process for LCL like? Will the company have a copy of the music to listen to and work with from the start of rehearsals? Will you be playing in the rehearsal room or will you watch rehearsals, composing and evolving the score based on the work you see created and developed?**

Every show is different, as music often has different functions in different shows. For LCL I'll mostly watch in the first few weeks, while the actors find their feet with the story and their characters, and then I'll begin to bring sounds into the rehearsal to see if they're helpful in telling the story, and supporting the arc of the scenes. I won't play live, but I'll have created some tracks in my studio which I can then share in the room.

**Where is the music going to be recorded and who by?**

I'll create all the sounds myself in my studio.

### **What is the difference between composing for music that is designed to be listened to independently and composing music to accompany live, visual theatre?**

When composing for theatre you're always telling a story, or at least, supporting a story that's being told on stage. When writing for the concert hall, I might throw in a melody or a flourish simply because I like it – because it's beautiful or exciting or poignant. But when writing for the theatre, all of those melodies and flourishes have to mean something – they have to not detract from the words being spoken on stage, or from whatever action might be occurring. It often means that theatre music is simpler and leaner, because it's just one part of a much more complicated picture, and not the main event.

### **What impact do you want the music to have on the audience?**

In LCL I'll be particularly trying to draw on the natural world – to highlight the intoxicating power of nature, but also the sense of repression and claustrophobia that Connie feels in her home. There's such a lot that simmers under the surface in this story... I want the audience to feel that it might burst out at any moment.

### **What does an average working day for a composer look like?**

Get up. Write. Sleep. Repeat! Actually it's very varied, as I might have several projects on the go at the same time. Many days I am at home in my studio writing – that can be making tracks or sound effects, or creating written scores for live instrumentalists – but there are often meetings and rehearsals of course, and lots of phone calls and emails too! It really does require a lot of organisation as well as good time management... but I wouldn't have it any other way!

## **Actor Q&A**

### **IN CONVERSATION WITH RUPERT HILL**

#### **What was it that initially drew you to this adaptation?**

I knew very little about the book to be honest. I'm ashamed to say that I think I'd kind of dismissed it as a "50 Shades" of the 1920's! But I read Ciaran's script and I thought it was stunning. Very theatrical and immersive and this really excited me. So much so that prior to my audition I decided to prioritise reading the book, over learning my lines! A risky strategy but it paid off. The book is without a doubt a new favourite of mine. It's without question a masterpiece, way ahead of it's time and devastatingly relevant. To describe it as an erotic novel

would be a woeful misunderstanding. It's a philosophical book about truly being alive and in love. I'm so enthralled that I'm going to be involved in a new retelling.

**A 'Fifty Shades of Grey' for its time period; were you familiar with the controversial history behind the novel before you got involved?**

Yes a bit but I read up about the trials further. The book is very explicit but it amuses me that the very people who sought to have the book banned were also the target of its ridicule. The bourgeois and arrogant position of dictating what people can or can't say in their creative pursuits. So stuffy and boring and meanwhile they completely failed to see what a beautiful and progressive love letter to nature Lawrence had written. Life imitated art here quite profoundly.

**What do you want audiences to take away from the production?**

The book is a beautiful and life affirming piece of work. It asks of us to transcend the tedious trappings of class and social status and seek a higher state of mutual wellbeing through openness and human contact and love. It's a meditative, cathartic journey and I felt utterly joyous after completing the book. I hope through Ciaran's vision that we can create something intense, challenging, raw and ultimately life affirming for our audiences. And also I hope they absolutely love it and tell all their friends!

**Why do you think it's important that we discuss female empowerment and sexuality?**

Because it's utterly absurd that in 2019 we are still discussing female equality in society. Whether it's their continued sexual exploitation in various guises, a pay gap deficit still apparent pretty much across the board or the lack of female political leadership across the planet, this battle is still being fought. Powerful men seem so cocksure that their vision of the world and the human condition is the correct analysis and what Lawrence does is to drown out and quieten those voices and he raises the volume of the female protagonist. We hear her desires, hopes and beliefs and they contradict starkly with that of her husband's and his stifling high society. It is such a feminine book (for want of a better word) that it continues to amaze me that it was actually written by a man.

**Do you think the discussions around social class are still relevant today?**

Absolutely. The rise of populism, nationalism, racism and anti-immigration rhetoric have once again turned the working classes against the migrant as the reason for their downfall. Rather than the collapse of the international markets and the major banks, unregulated by runaway venture capitalist supporting governments. The greatest ever right wing trick! The rich/poor divide is enormous and growing and respect for truth, facts and evidence is waning. Food banks, homelessness and a rise in crime also point towards an expanding imbalance and division in class today. The void between the have and have nots is as glaring, prevalent and toxic today as it's ever been.

## **A lot of people will know you from your appearance in Coronation Street. What is the biggest difference between performing on stage and screen?**

One of the major reasons for leaving the Street was because I missed doing theatre. I was worried that I might've lost that skillset. It's a completely different discipline and requires a different approach and respect. Theatre is playful and dangerous. It's very exciting and humbling too. The audience are complicit to the energy in the room and we all go on a sort of journey together. It's amazing. Acting for camera is amazing too but it's all about the finished product. All about the destination. Theatre is about the journey.

## **What preparations have you done for taking on this iconic literary heartthrob?**

Are you asking if I'm going to the gym? ;)

Well I am. I've been working with a personal trainer on losing some weight and achieving the kind of physique an ex soldier now gamekeeper might have. It was going well till I got flu last week and was bedridden. Although I still lost the weight so every cloud.

Mellors was my favourite character when I read the book and his vision of what a man should be completely blew my mind. He thinks men should be gentle, loving and compassionate. He thinks that's real masculinity. I want to bring this kind of thinking into the performance alongside the dark brooding anger and sadness of the man. I think it's these mysterious contradictions that make him so compelling. And the fact that he listens to what women think and what they want. He's a dude.

## **What are you most looking forward to while on tour?**

I have two little girls so I tend to watch a lot of kids television. I have a backlog of books and films that I need to get through, so whilst I'm not looking forward to being away from my girls. I am quite looking forward to catching up on some more grown up material (that sounds weird!).

Also looking forward to going on some long walks in places like Malvern and the Lake District.

## **What would your dream role be?**

I just like the unexpected diversity of this job. You never know what's coming next. I recently played a communist revolutionary in a Bertolt Brecht radio dramatization and now I'm playing a Yorkshireman Gamekeeper. It's the best thing about the job. It's always unexpected.

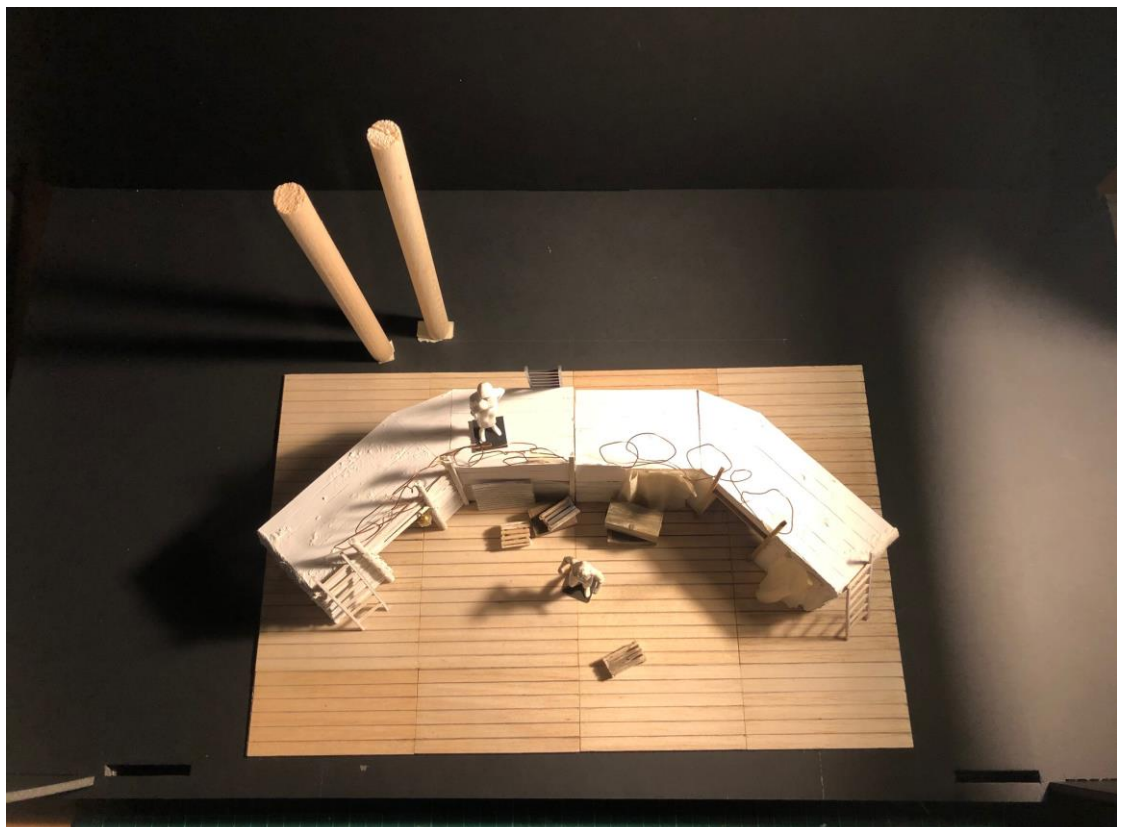
## **What's next for you after the tour?**

Nothing yet, we'll have to wait and see. I do have a couple of potential directing jobs next year though which is exciting for me because I've only just started dipping my toe into this side of the business and I love it.

# LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER SET DESIGN

BY KATIE LIAS

## MODEL BOX IMAGES

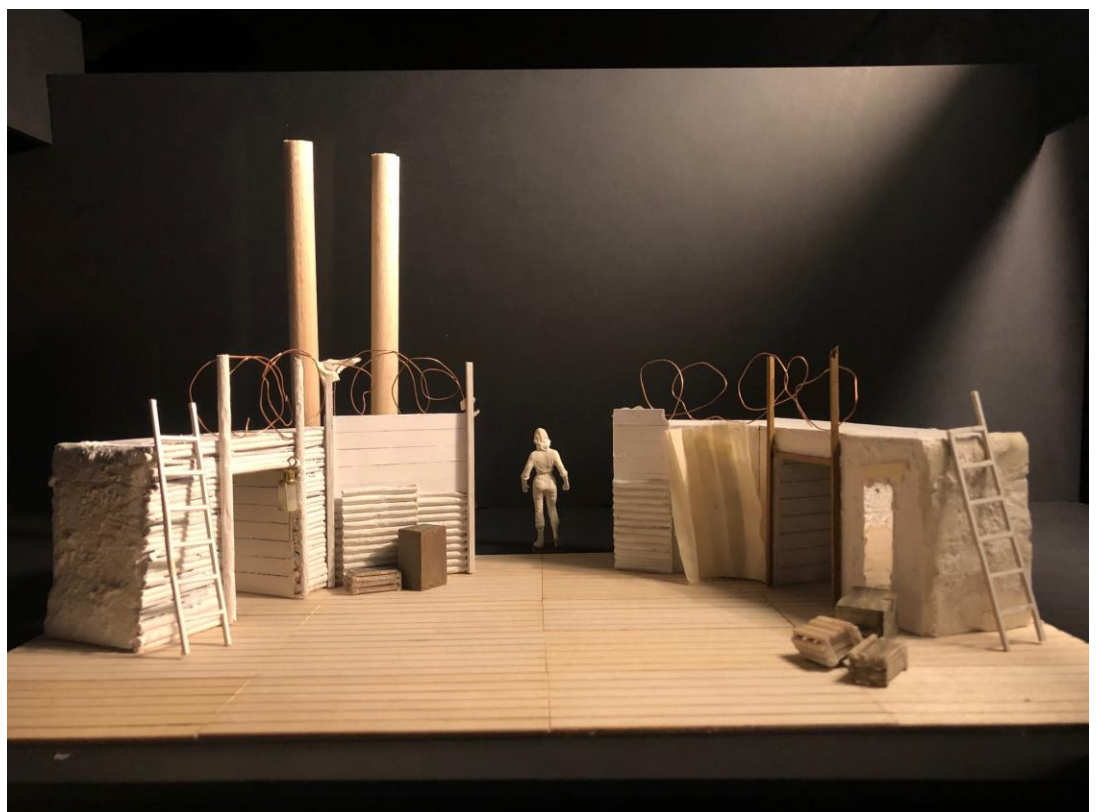




# LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER SET DESIGN

BY KATIE LIAS

## MODEL BOX IMAGES



## References and **useful links for research**

First World War

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/first-world-war/>

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/>

Women working during First World War

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqhyb9q/articles/zj8my9q>

**Voting rights**

<https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/millions-working-class-men-got-vote-100-years-ago-513641>

<https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/millions-working-class-men-got-vote-100-years-ago-513641>

[https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-herit-)

[herit-age/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/overview/suffragette-swartime/](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-herit-age/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/overview/suffragette-swartime/)

DH Lawrence and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/collections/indepth/lawrence/extended>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jul/15/classics.dhlawrencebiography/contents.aspx>

<https://time.com/4087851/lady-chatterleys-lover-1960/>

<https://www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item105907.html><https://www.britannica.com/biography/D-H-Lawrence>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2010/oct/22/dh-lawrence-lady-chatterley-trial>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-46044066>