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Book James Lapine
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Into The Woods

Music & Lyrics Stephen Sondheim
Book James Lapine

Creative Team

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Musical Direction Richard Healey
Musical Staging Sally Scurrell & Steve Wooldridge
Set Design Dave Borthwick
Assistant Director (Young Cast) Linda Wooldridge
Lighting Design Dan Scarlett
Sound Design Jake Moore
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Stage Manager Duncan Broatch
Deputy Stage Manager Will Dowe
Assistant Stage Manager Rachel Doy
Production Manager Steve Wooldridge
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This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd. on behalf of Music Theatre International Of New York.
The plot of *Into the Woods* is novel indeed. Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine have intertwined the stories of various familiar fairy tales with an original story of a childless Baker and his Wife, who are the focus of the story by attempting to reverse a curse on their family in order to have a child. Thus creating a single, even bigger fairy tale.

In **Act One**, the characters set out to achieve their goal of living "Happily Ever After" through familiar routes. Cinderella goes to the Ball and captures the heart of Prince Charming, Jack climbs the Beanstalk and finds a land of Giants and Gold, Little Red Riding Hood survives her clash with the wolf at Grandma's house, and Rapunzel manages to escape her tower with the aid of a handsome prince who climbs her long hair.

The Baker and his wife must enter the woods to assemble the ingredients for a potion required by their neighbour, the Witch, to remove a curse preventing them from having a child. In their search, the Baker and his wife meet up with Jack, Red Riding Hood, and the Wolf, as well as Cinderella, Rapunzel, and their respective Princes.

These characters are all busy with their own fairy tales, but each possesses one ingredient for the potion. Those ingredients are: A Slipper As Pure As Gold, which the Baker’s wife gets from Cinderella, A Cow As White As Milk, which the Baker buys from Jack in exchange for the fateful magic beans, A Cape As Red As Blood, which the Baker gets from Little Red Riding Hood in exchange for freeing her and Granny from the Wolf, and Hair As Yellow As Corn, which they get from Rapunzel. The ingredients are gathered, and the spell works, stripping the Witch of her power, but restoring her beauty. By the end of Act One, the curse is lifted, Jack kills the giant and is rich from stolen gold, the Wolf is killed, each damsel gets her respective Prince. At the end of Act I, all characters seem poised to live "Happily Ever After", but do they?

In **Act Two**, all the characters must deal with what happens after "Happily Ever After". As they face a genuine threat to their community, they realise that all actions have consequences. They are forced into the Wood to escape the giant’s wife, who has come down to earth on an errant beanstalk to get revenge for her husband’s untimely demise.

After a good deal of squabbling, some characters are killed and the Baker decides it’s time they take responsibility. They realise that their lives are inescapably interdependent, but it is also that interdependence that is their greatest strength, so the group finally bands together to dispose of the giant’s wife. Like all fairy tales, there are some overt messages in all this that we are invited to take home with us.
The stories of the Brothers Grimm have been read at bedsides and seen in cinemas all over the world. Snow White, Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella are still vivid characters today, but their popularity began 200 years ago when, in the December of 1812, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (known as Die Brüder Grimm) published their *Kinder-und Hausmärchen* (*Children's and Household Tales*). The influence and appeal of these stories is now worldwide. The Brothers Grimm harvested their stories from friends, old books and the oral tradition of telling stories. They even took to walking the countryside, seeking out peasants in their fields and cottages and taking down their stories word for word. The Grimms sought to celebrate and argue for the necessity of storytelling to create bonds among people to share their experiences through stories. Many of the tales date back thousands of years and have variations in other languages and cultures. For instance Cinderella (Aschenputtel in German meaning 'girl of the ashes') is said to derive from an Egyptian story called Rhodopis.

The facts of the Grimm brothers’ lives are not remarkable. Jakob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) were the eldest surviving sons of Philipp Wilhelm Grimm, a prosperous lawyer in Hanau near Frankfurt am Main. Many of the originals were violent and sexual but most adaptations of the stories make them less so. In the Grimms’ original, Snow White’s stepmother dies as she is forced to dance in red-hot metal shoes at Snow White’s wedding. Rapunzel’s long hair is used to bring up a prince to her tower cell for a sexual liaison which leads to pregnancy. The Frog Prince is not kissed by the princess but thrown against the wall in anger by her. While many in Britain will have first experienced the tales in Ladybird Books, others will have seen some of the Walt Disney films that brought the stories into the televisual era of the 20th century.

There is no psychology in a fairy tale. The characters have little internal life, if people are good then they are good and if bad, they are bad. Their motives are clear and obvious. In the musical *Into The Woods* the characters are seen to have more depth but there is also the debunking of the ‘Disnification’ of characters such as Cinderella’s Prince who is a clear predator.

It has been an absolute pleasure revisiting these stories, stories that I first read in the original German as part of my degree and I sincerely hope that the art of storytelling never gets lost in an age of computers and the worldwide web.

---

Steve Wooldridge
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(in order of appearance)

Children in the Forest
Rosie Krolak, Freya Sessions, Charlie Fisk-Bryant, Jasmine Butcher, Eloise Seal
Tom Beattie, Rachel Lucock, Jack Brett, Stephanie Brown, Paul Stone, Clare Dungey, Helen Wheatley, Amy Restall, Bronwyn Cooper, Graham Dowe, Molly Scurrrell, Shelley Clempson, Rosie Beattie, Phil Cory, Michael Platt, Joe Leat, Laura Lucock, Tom Mayhew, Lee Ling, Joe Leat, Adrian Russell, Linzi Mott, Linda Wooldridge, Phoebe Scurrrell, Vicky Jam, Adrian Russell, Michael Platt, Graham Dowe, Leeann Ling

Narrator
Tom Beattie

Cinderella
Rachel Lucock

The Lad
Jack
Jack Brett

Jack’s Mother
Stephanie Brown

The Baker
Paul Stone

The Baker’s Wife
Clare Dungey

Cinderella’s Stepmother
Helen Wheatley

Lucinda
Amy Restall

Florinda
Bronwyn Cooper

Cinderella’s Father
Graham Dowe

Little Red Riding Hood
Molly Scurrrell

The Witch
Shelley Clempson

Cinderella’s Mother
Helen Wheatley

The Mysterious Man
Phil Cory

First Wolf
Michael Platt

Second Wolf
Joe Leat

Rapunzel
Laura Lucock

Rapunzel’s Prince
Tom Mayhew

Granny
Lee Ling

Cinderella’s Prince
Joe Leat

The Steward
Adrian Russell

Golden Harp
Linzi Mott

The Giant
Linda Wooldridge

Sleeping Beauty
Phoebe Scurrrell

Snow White
Vicky Jam

Puppeteers
Adrian Russell, Michael Platt, Graham Dowe, Leeann Ling

Musicians

Piano: Richard Healey
Violin: Steven Weale
Cello: Claire Hollocks
Flute/Piccolo: Clare Shemming
Clarinet: Cliff Whybrow
Bassoon: Steve Lock
Trumpet: John Jermy
Synth: Joe Cleary
Bass: Kevin Butcher
Percussion: Gerry Gillings

Musical Numbers

Act One

Prologue: Into The Woods     Company
Hello Little Girl     Wolves and Red Riding Hood
I Guess this is Goodbye     Jack
Maybe They’re Magic     Baker’s Wife
Our Little World     The Witch and Rapunzel
I Know Things Now     Red Riding Hood
A Very Nice Prince     Cinderella and Baker’s Wife
Giants in the Sky     Jack
Agony     The Two Princes
It Takes Two     The Baker and His Wife
Stay With Me     The Witch
On the Steps Of The Palace     Cinderella
Ever After     The Narrator and Company

Act Two

Prologue: So Happy     Company
Agony (Reprise)     The Two Princes
The Witches Lament     The Witch
Any Moment     Cinderella and the Baker’s Wife
Moments In The Woods     The Baker’s Wife
Your Fault     Jack, Baker’s Wife, Witch, Cinderella, Red Riding Hood
Last Midnight     The Witch
No More     The Baker and the Mysterious Man
No One Is Alone     Cinderella, Baker, Jack, Red Riding Hood
Finale     Company
"If life were made of moments..."
Clare Dungey (Baker's Wife)

An epic show and a fantastic production team, cast and crew!

Opportunity is not a lengthy visitor' and I grabbed the experience of working with Gallery with both hands!

It has been challenging but such fun. It's good to do things that scare you!

Rosie Beattie (Cinderella's mother & Ensemble)

I've learned a lot in the woods, that there are giants in the sky, that slotted spoons don't hold much soup and that I'm officially old enough to be a Grandmother!

Leeann Ling (Granny)

This is my first time working with Gallery Players and it has been an exciting adventure.

Linzi Mott (Harp and Ensemble)

I saw Into the Woods at the Minack theatre Cornwall when I was 7 and I never forgot it. To have my moment in the woods is a wish come true.

Molly Scurrell (Red Riding Hood)

I never thought I'd get to say 'Totes amaze' in a show and wear fake tan! Playing one of the evil sisters has been great fun.

Amy Restall (Lucinda)

"If life were made of moments..."
then into The Woods is certainly a big one!
An epic show and a fantastic production team, cast and crew!

Clare Dungey (Baker's Wife)

'Opportunity is not a lengthy visitor' and I grabbed the experience of working with Gallery with both hands!

It has been challenging but such fun. It's good to do things that scare you!

Rosie Beattie (Cinderella's mother & Ensemble)

Broadway, West End and the Wolsey for the second time. Essex, Manchester and Chelsea meet as one.
Sondheim as you have never seen him before!

Bronwyn Cooper (Florinda)

I've learned a lot in the woods, that there are giants in the sky, that slotted spoons don't hold much soup and that I'm officially old enough to be a Grandmother!

Leeann Ling (Granny)

Into the Woods has been the most challenging show I have ever done but I'm sure it will be the most memorable.
You will never read childhood fairy tales in the same light after this one!

Rachel Lucock (Cinderella)

There's a lot of words!' Graham Dowe (Cinderella's father and Ensemble)

Graham Dowe (Cinderella's father and Ensemble)
The difference between a cow and a bean is a bean can begin an adventure and what an adventure it has bean!

Journeying back to the Woods nineteen years older, has been a challenge but just as delightful and fulfilling an experience. Loved it!

Stephanie Brown (Jack’s Mother)

What a treat to be performing alongside some of my absolute favourite local performers. And, though it’s fearful, though it’s deep, though it’s dark and though we may lose the path, I have discovered even more magic in the woods!

Paul Stone (The Baker)

If you go down to the woods today, you won’t be seeing a Teddy Bear’s picnic!

Phil Cory (The Mysterious Man – oooooooo!)

When I think of beans, it brings a smile to my face! Being the witch has certainly been an adventure for me but so glad I went ‘Into the Woods’.

Shelley Clempson (The Witch)

This my second outing ‘Into The Woods’: my first visit was as Cinderella, nineteen years ago. Both visits were scary but great fun!

Helen Wheatley (Stepmother)

Having a wander and dalliance in the woods has been unbearable bliss!

Phil Cory (The Mysterious Man – oooooooo!)

I don’t remember Fairy Tales being like this! Good Old Sondheim! Adrian Russell (Steward, Milky White and The Hen)

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Shelley Clempson (The Witch)
Writing the score for 'Into the Woods' was, as usual, a painstaking process for Sondheim. His hyper-critical nature stems from an obsessive intellect that demands him to question the choices he makes on every step of the creative journey. For 'Into the Woods', Sondheim's initial thought was to create specific musical identities for each of the show's characters: the Witch would perform rap music; the Wolf, blues; Jack, folk songs; and Cinderella, operetta. These forms soon proved too confining and were abandoned. Sondheim's subsequent idea was to compose lots of "ditties" (his word, not mine). Little eight-, sixteen- and thirty-two-bar tunes that would be cartoonish in style. He termed them "moral travelling songs" and their purpose was to be funny, fast and light in the first act, whilst being less frivolous and darker in the second act. A relatively simple musical reflection of the book's narrative journey, but with this tapestry of constantly flowing progressions of short phrases of melody, the marriage of Sondheim's music and lyrics elevate the permutations of the intertwining story lines beyond the simplicity of the moral fable.

"The structure of the score is, in a sense, like Merrily," says Sondheim, "in that it's modular. In terms of style, the songs are more like Forum than anything else, because it's farce and full of surprises and incidents and mistaken identities ... The whole point of about writing music for folk tales is to make sure they have morals without getting too preachy." James Lapine admitted his biggest surprise of all was that the tester audience was not as familiar with the actual basic fairytales as he had originally imagined they would be. Consequently, a great deal of time was spent ensuring that the details of the stories was told appropriately in the prologue. Sondheim said, "The whole prologue is a series of sixteen vignettes, each of which has a musical structure, and then there's the one tune ('Into the Woods') that keeps popping up, which becomes the major theme of the evening."

One of Sondheim's primary objectives was to integrate the songs so completely into the fabric of the book that they very rarely stop the action of the piece. "There were some numbers that built to a climax, like 'Agony,' but for others I wrote complete songs and then snipped them away into fragments and blended them in." This idea of 'snipping away' would be a recurrent one, as 'Second Midnight' was drastically shortened after previews. The Witch's original diatribe in the second act become 'Your Fault' and 'Boom Crunch!' became 'Last Midnight'. The thought process behind these changes always stems from one question, however; how can a moment in time be emotionally richer? Sondheim is the master at imbuing scenes and songs with depth, vitality, colour... the list goes on. Even now, the writers are not entirely happy. Lapine says, "I always wanted the song 'Children Will Listen' to build to an incredible anthem that would end the show but Steve didn't agree. I think he had a fear that it would become sentimental, so he went back to a reprise of 'Into the Woods' instead. I'm sorry about that." The question of sentimentality is a long-standing Sondheim issue and one that I will touch on again later. The compulsion to create, refine and improve however, is only borne out of the search for perfection.

Paul Gemignani, Sondheim's longtime musical director, emphasises, "There is a kind of Disney thought-pattern to much of the show, and I mean that in the best sense. For instance, when someone dies, you hear a little sad music. The Witch has specific chords. The underscoring points out certain things. The the score is deceptively simple. There are all kinds of colours and a complex rhythmic intensity. It's written as a chamber music piece, and the challenge is to make it sound crystalline."
This is a challenge that extends beyond the song-writing and into the colour of the music as a whole. Jonathan Tunick, Sondheim's longstanding orchestrator said, "Orchestrating Steve's music is extremely difficult. (His) songs have difficult intervals and sometimes he gets into pretty tricky harmony, pretty dissonant harmony. But Steve tends to avoid stock patterns." This is in no small part down to the unique interplay between the music and the lyric. The union of the two is the secret and the key to Sondheim’s language. The lyric drives the musical vernacula and the direction of the musical pattern. Again, Tunick elucidates, "I don't think the lyric is something different from the music. I try not to work in musical terms. I'll always orchestrate to the lyric rather than saying, 'Let's take bar four on the second beat.' I'll go for the lyric because that's what expresses what's happening, more than the note, which is abstract."

The dramatic intention behind the sentiment, the subtext, the pattern of delivery in the speech all culminate to provide the compositional elements. I could wax lyrical in thesis-mode for hours, but suffice it to say that perhaps this complex union is why Sondheim’s music is often perceived as inaccessible and provokes the, "I didn't come out singing the songs". response Coupled with the classic, "You can't whistle any of the tunes," these two phrases also have Tunick on his high horse: "People who are looking for something easy to listen to will look for simple, even rhythmic pulses, patterns and phrases. Steve’s music is unique, but people complain that it isn't memorable. I know how to achieve that. Play it over and over again."

Sondheim himself is acutely aware of the friction that surrounds his work and his awareness once again reveals his concerns over sentimentality. "Over the years," he said recently, "my work has at times been considered cold. I find that people sometimes mistake sentimentality for feeling. I believe in sentiment but not sentimentality. Of course, what's sentimental is often in the ear of the beholder. Quite often the stuff I write is not simple and I can’t help thinking that one of the continuing problems plaguing theatre is the obvious split between popular and theatrical music. It has widened over the last twenty years because the notion of popular music, which has to do with the singer, not the song. In trying to cultivate a young audience, how can I tell them musical theatre is just a different day of looking at things? They haven’t been exposed to it. It’s not what they require from music. It’s not easy, but writing never has been."

Sondheim’s craft is to open the souls of his characters and it is, I suppose, inevitable that his own soul is bared in doing so. It would seem though that the journey is one worth exploring, given the plethora of adventures he has taken us on. From Frogs to Forums, and Barbers to Bakers the essence of the characters has come from within. It is not always the most comfortable of places to be however, sentimentalist or otherwise. Reflecting on the writing process of 'Into the Woods,' Lapine said, "I was worried about 'No One Is Alone' because it came from a personal and genuine heartfelt place for Steve. It was an extremely hard song for him to write and it was equally hard for him to play to us. It's very scary when you start getting close to what you really feel and put it on paper." Scary for Sondheim, but delicious for those of us eager for a window into the sentimental old soul.

Let’s hope the great man has more stories to tell. If his focus is indeed to 'cultivate a young audience' for the theatre, then the spinning of the yarns and the weaving of the fables is a great place to start, after all, 'Children Will Listen'.

Richard Healey - Musical Director
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**Into The Woods** is one of those rare musicals that not only has beautiful music, a compelling and engaging story but a wealth of messages and a huge feel good factor. I fell in love with this musical when I played the Narrator many years ago; I had never come across a musical which is so rich in its storyline and so observant about people and what makes them tick. It has been an absolute pleasure to revisit it.

**Into The Woods** premiered on Broadway in 1986. The musical won several Tony Awards, including Best Score, Best Book, and Best Actress in a Musical, in a year dominated by *The Phantom of the Opera*. Since then **Into the Woods** has become one of Stephen Sondheim’s most frequently performed works.

At its core, **Into the Woods** is not so much about fantasy as it is about reality. The impetus for the musical came when Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine decided to write a musical creating an entirely new fairy tale. They discovered, however, that it made more sense to weave together a story from existing fairy tales for the first act; then the second act would explore what happens after "happily ever after". They chose family fairy tale characters for the main storyline: Cinderella, Jack and his Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood and her wolf, the Princes Charming, and a Witch. The creators added two original characters to the mix: a childless Baker and his Wife. According to Lapine, what came out of the sources was a "quest fairy-tale musical", wherein each character has a specific goal to be completed to attain happiness. Jack is seeking a friend, Cinderella wants someone to love her, and the Princes are looking for brides. These characters must venture into the woods to fulfil their "wishes" and eventually learn responsibility to others.

The primary focus of the musical is the quest that the Baker and his Wife undertake seeking items to break the spell keeping them childless. These items bring them into contact with every other character and story onstage. The ‘Woods’ are a dominant symbol. They are not the traditional pastoral forest, but are threatening, scary and perilous. While they are the place where wishes can be fulfilled, there is a cost and a consequence to every wish and action, even if not immediately obvious to the wisher. It remains for the characters to discover the effect of their actions on others, a lesson necessary for surviving in the woods. Moreover, the woods are representative of the transition between childhood and maturity. Like adolescence, they are scary and filled with angst, emerging sexuality, self-discovery and definition, and even death.

There are so many themes woven into the narrative; loss (‘Sometimes people leave you half way through the woods’), connecting to others and supporting each other (‘No-one is alone’), wish fulfilment, overcoming our fears and many more. But for me the one that struck me most was that of children and what we pass on to them. And, taking a leaf out of the recent Regents Park production which won the Olivier for Best Revival in 2010, this is the one I decided to concentrate on. I have put in a prologue with young performers, which contains many pre-echoes of the story which the young Narrator pulls from his imagination after his friends leave him alone in the woods.

In the finale of Act 2 the Witch sings ‘What do you leave to your child when you’re dead, only whatever you put in its head, things that your father and mother have said, that were left to them too. Careful what you say!’ This epitomises what Sidney Poitier said in his autobiography about the way we care for our children, ‘The mark of a man is the way he cares for his children and what he leaves behind in them’.

I would like to thank everybody involved in staging this production: the cast who have worked tirelessly and my talented production team and crew; we have had a great time!

Steve Wooldridge
Director
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**Gallery Players** were formed in 1985 by Pat Taplin to produce rarely performed plays and musicals that larger companies would find uneconomic or which only use a few actors. The company quickly established a reputation for quality and excellence. Our aims are broadly speaking:

To exploit a niche for staging productions that are progressive and exciting in both content and execution.

To embrace both new and established works.

To act as vehicle for engaging new talent as well as established members.

To foster a group of actors and technicians that are truly a community.

To foster links with schools and colleges.

We generally stage three productions a year, one of which is a musical.

Performing lesser known shows is always difficult, particularly when it comes to building an audience and balancing the books, but by sticking to our aims we have grown an audience, that, hopefully, trust us to produce interesting work.

Although we have a strong pool of performers new blood and talent is always welcome as are people who want to work on the technical side.

The company is run by a small steering group: Dave Borthwick, Helen Clarke, Richard Healey, Steve Taplin and Steve Wooldridge.

We encourage other directors to take the reins of their own pet projects, allowing them to cast freely and create individual shows with the backing of our excellent technical and production crew. Our only insistence is that the final show should entertain and stimulate our discerning audience and should exude that sense of professionalism we strive for.

Gallery have won several awards including the NODA Eastern Area Shield for Best Production with ‘Carnival’ in 1999 and the Councillors Cup in 2000 and 2003 for ‘The Bakers Wife’ and ‘Kiss Me Like You Mean It’. 

Please visit our website at www.galleryplayers.co.uk for details of all our shows past and future. Please sign up with your email address if you would like us to keep you informed of what we are doing or if you would like to join us!

Our Motto is **‘Making Theatre Exciting’** which we like to think we do, most of the time!

**Past Shows:**


**Acknowledgments**

- Mike and Zena Steward
- David Henshall and Andrew Clarke
- Wayne Savage, Evening Star, Stephen Foster
- BBC Radio Suffolk
- The Buttermarket Centre
- Chris Finbow, Museum Street Methodist Church
- Max Raffe and 13 Ipswich Sea Scouts
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**Production Manager** Steve Wooldridge

**Production Photography** Lucy Taylor

**Programme Design, Flyers and Posters** Steve Taplin

**Programme Content** Steve Wooldridge, Richard Healey

**Lighting Operator** Glen Criddle

**Sound Operator** James Cook

**Stage Assistant** Ron Bloomfield

**Front of House Manager** Mike Wadman

**Front of House Assistants** Colin & Margaret Mudd, Helen & Indy Clarke, Sue Goodall, Elaine Dowe

**Dressers** Janet Cant, Wendy Cooper

**Stage Combat & Falls Advisor** Elizabeth Talbot

**Chaperones** Julie Fisk, Margaret Mudd, Lisa Butler, Thomas Haigh, Laura & Marian Dickons

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**FORTHCOMING PRODUCTION:** Autumn 2013

**THE HISTORY BOYS** by Alan Bennett, Sir John Mills Theatre.
Forthcoming shows from

Oct 23rd - Nov 2nd 2013
Sir John Mills Theatre
Ipswich

THE
HiSTORY
BOYS
by alan bennett

Oh, What a Lovely War!

March 2014
Sir John Mills Theatre
Ipswich
to mark the centenary of the
commencement of the 'Great War'
1914-1918

by Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop,
Charles Chilton, Gerry Raffles
and Members of the Original Cast

For more information visit our website and sign up for our 'email newsletters' www.galleryplayers.co.uk