

A WATERMILL THEATRE AND METTA THEATRE PRODUCTION



SHERLOCK HOLMES

AND THE POISON WOOD

Book & Lyrics
P BURTON-MORGAN

Music & Lyrics
BEN GLASSTONE



Access Pack

THE
WATERMILL
THEATRE
outreach

Introduction

This access pack is designed for visitors to our performance of *Sherlock Holmes and the Poison Wood* to help you prepare for your visit.

It contains lots of images along with helpful information about the theatre and the performance itself.

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Would you like a familiarisation visit?

We can arrange for you to come to the theatre to look around the space and find your seat before the day.

To organise this, or for any other questions, please call Matty on **01635 570934** or email **outreach@watermill.org.uk**

Visiting The Watermill Theatre

Welcome to **The Watermill Theatre**.

There is **parking at the theatre** in our gravel car park. Blue badge holders can park in the row closest to the theatre. Please display your Blue Badge.

There are lots of animals that live at The Watermill. You may see ducks, swans, or Hazel the dog.

The picture below is what The Watermill Theatre looks like. Going through the doors under the 'Watermill Theatre' sign will take you to the Box Office.



Duck!

There is a **bar** and a **restaurant** where you can buy drinks, food and programmes.



If you need to go to the **toilet**, look for the signs or ask an usher for directions. The ushers will all be wearing black, and have name tags on.



Female toilet



Male toilet



Accessible toilet



Before the show starts an usher may ring a bell and call out an announcement.

The ushers in the theatre will help you find which seat to sit in.

During the performance

It can be noisy during the play. **You may want to bring ear defenders or ear plugs that you can wear during the show.**



Part way through the show there will be an **interval**. People will clap and the main lights in the theatre will come on.

During the interval, snacks, drinks and ice creams will be on sale.

It's okay if you feel happy or sad during the show. Some people may laugh or cry depending on how they feel.



At the end of the show, everyone will clap their hands to say thank you to the actors and backstage crew.

When the clapping has stopped and the actors have left the stage, this means the play is finished.

What you will see on stage

This is some examples of what the stage and theatre will look like throughout the play:



What you will see on stage

To help you prepare for your visit, below we have detailed some things to expect during the performance. If you'd prefer not to know what's going to happen then don't read any further!

Atmosphere

We use a very small amount of mist, called 'haze', to make the lights stand out even more. Haze is safe to breathe and doesn't have a strong smell.

Captions

The whole play is captioned, meaning the words and lyrics that are said and sung in the play can also be seen at the top of the stage. There is a picture below to show you what this looks like.

Projection

Often, there will also be words and pictures projected onto the back of the stage:

Captions



Projection



What you will see on stage

Sound

There are lots of instruments in the play, and some of them are kept and played at the front, near the audience. The instruments include electric guitars and violins.

The actors all have microphones on their costumes or heads, which makes their voices louder and fill the theatre more.

Lights

There are lots of lights on the ceiling pointing at the stage, in different colours.

There are neon lights around the side of the stage that can be quite bright briefly at times.

Key moments of sound, light and projection:

After the first scene in the protest camp, there are big red and blue lights that flash slowly on stage, along with the sound of a police car siren.

When Sherlock is singing about biscuits, the projections on the back of the stage flash slowly between white and black.

After Sherlock confronts Yorri in hospital, there is some flashing white lights and projections, and the loud sound of a heart monitor stopping.

During the 'online trolls' songs, when Watson is looking for Sherlock in the woods, and when Sherlock and Watson run through a tunnel the actors shine torch/phone light towards the audience.

What you will see on stage

A modern adaptation

This production is set in the year 2024. This means there may be differences to the traditional Sherlock Holmes stories such as their clothes, the technology and the things they say.

Content

Some of the themes in the play are:

The experience of living with disordered eating - Sherlock has a negative relationship with food due to his upbringing.

Abusive parenting - Moriarty is cruel to her child and we learn that Sherlock was badly treated by his mother.

Cyber bullying - Sherlock and Watson receive online hate.

Hate crimes - There are several moments where people are hated because of who they are (race etc.)

Suicide - Yorri attempts to take their own life towards the end of the play, after Sherlock and Watson confront them at their home.

Anxiety & Mental breakdown - for example, when Watson experiences these after she becomes the target of online abuse.

Climate grief - Yorri and the other protestors talk about the environment being at risk.

Murder - Zephyr dies off stage. Sherlock and Yorri both appear to die. Someone attempts to murder Lestrade.

Some of the characters also say things that are not kind to each other. This includes shouting at each other, and using some racist, ableist, transphobic or fatphobic language.

The characters

Sherlock Holmes

A clever and stubborn young man, that doesn't like modern tech. He is a talented guitarist, and very good at solving puzzles and crimes. He has never properly learned to care for himself, and has a complex relationship with food (an undiagnosed eating disorder). He always wears black, even when in disguise.



On this show, we have two actors taking turns playing Sherlock. You will see one of the actors pictured above in the role!

Dr Amanda Watson

A media savvy Instagram influencer and social media star and nutritionist. She has two children who we don't meet in the play, and is also Sherlock's landlady and detective partner.



Yorri Tramaly

A non-binary eco warrior/protestor who has been living in a climate protest camp, protesting against the expansion of PopMor - a potato snack manufacturing plant.

The characters

Marlon Lestrade

A bumbling police inspector who is a friend to Sherlock. He is a great lover of food.



Jan Moriarty

A clever but nasty tech billionaire who is the CEO of a company called MorCorp. She is controlling, cold and emotionless. Sherlock's nemesis. Always wears white.



Sasha

A nervous Eastern European lab technician working for Moriarty.



Zephyr

A friendly eco-warrior with a great love of nature.



What happens

ACT 1

The play starts with Sherlock Holmes playing his guitar in his bedroom when his landlady, Amanda Watson comes in with a cup of tea for him. She talks to him about how their social media account is becoming more popular. Sherlock has no interest in this.

One day Yorri, a young climate protestor, turns up imploring them to investigate the recent death of a fellow protestor. She explains that the Police and Inspector Lestrade have decided the death was a case of food poisoning. Sherlock deduces that Moriarty is behind the death however, as the food factory the protesters are up against is owned by her. Sherlock and Watson leave to see Lestrade.

We see Lestrade enjoying his lunch and singing about it when the duo appear in his office. They convince him to reopen the case. Later that day, Watson comes to Sherlock with his morning tea and a biscuit, which he always refuses. Sherlock comes up with a plan to go undercover as a protestor in the camp.

We meet Moriarty in her secret lab and digital HQ, scheming about Sherlock's downfall, and her wider plans for corporate corruption and damage to the global climate.

What happens

Sherlock is strangely successful in his role as a hippie protestor, even Yorri seemingly fails to recognise him. They are gearing up towards some kind of collective action to save the woods and sing a song to Gaia (Mother Earth) when suddenly everyone is doubled over in pain. There has been a mass poisoning and Sherlock becomes a suspect.

Moriarty, in her secret lab, seems aware of what's happening in the woods, but when there's a glitch in her own plans she loses her temper.

Lestrade interrogates Sherlock about the poisoning when the hospital rings, which leaves Sherlock alone, feeling tempted by a biscuit again. Lestrade returns and tells Sherlock that one of the protestors has died. This means the case is now a murder case.

Meanwhile, Moriarty engineers a smear campaign that destroys Watson & Sherlock's social media following - Sherlock and Holmes are 'cancelled'. We see Sherlock try to visit Watson, so they can visit Lestrade together but she is very sad. Her work with Sherlock, and her nutritionist career seemed to be over. She refuses to open the door to Sherlock.

What happens

Watson then receives a call from the hospital. Sherlock is now affected by the poison from the protest camp, his low weight has worsened, and he has been admitted to hospital. Watson goes to visit him and he instructs her to wheel him over to visit Yorri.

Sherlock confronts Yorri who opens up to Sherlock a little. Sherlock's suspicion that Yorri is Moriarty's daughter, named Lyra, is confirmed. He opens up in return but suddenly Sherlock appears to get more sick. He goes into cardiac arrest and appears to die.

ACT TWO

At Sherlock's funeral his shocked friends gather to remember his short but extraordinary life. In the aftermath of his death, Sherlock gets a positive following on social media, as a digital martyr. Some of his most dedicated fans on a forum called Bellingcat think that his death was a hoax.

Yorri goes to see their mother, Moriarty, and the two argue. Yorri threatens to expose all of Moriarty's plans.

What happens

Following the Bellingcat leads, and a hunch of her own, Watson goes back to the protest camp. She finds Sherlock alive and plotting how to expose Moriarty. Watson is furious at her friend and threatens to stop working with and looking after him.



Sherlock finds a food factory where she's that a billion global in the We read a note from Sherlock attached. It is poisoned, but Sherlock and Watson come to the rescue. Recognising Yorri's handwriting, Sherlock and Watson visit donut shops across London. They eventually locate Yorri. Sherlock offers to collaborate with Yorri, whose attempt at poisoning Lestrade was to try and earn their mother's approval. Yorri threatens to kill themselves as they feel cornered and scared, but Sherlock and Watson talk them down. Yorri finally agrees to betray their mother and bring her out into the woods where she can be arrested.

What happens

Sherlock, Watson and Yorri lure Moriarty into the woods. They have Moriarty cornered when she threatens to poison the local water supply with an emergency poison that she carries on her at all times. It is revealed that Yorri had swiped the poison earlier, and without thinking they swallow the vial, sacrificing themselves for the greater good and dying in their mother's arms.

A grieving Moriarty is arrested. Sherlock and Watson have achieved a more healthy balance in their relationship and in their lives. Watson helps Yorri up and it is revealed they faked their death too.

Relaxed Performance - 9th March

Chill-out areas

If you want to leave the auditorium at any time, there is a chill-out area you can visit, called the **Lily Pond Conservatory**. You can go there to relax if you need a little break before going back into the theatre. If you ask an usher, they will show you to this area.



Performance time

Our Relaxed Performance will be on Saturday 9th March and will aim to start at 2.30pm. Sometimes theatre plays can start a few minutes late.

The play will last just over 2 hours from beginning to end, with a break (called an interval) partway through.

Changes to the show

Compared to other performances, there will be some changes to the lighting and sound to create a less intense environment. The auditorium lights will stay on.

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