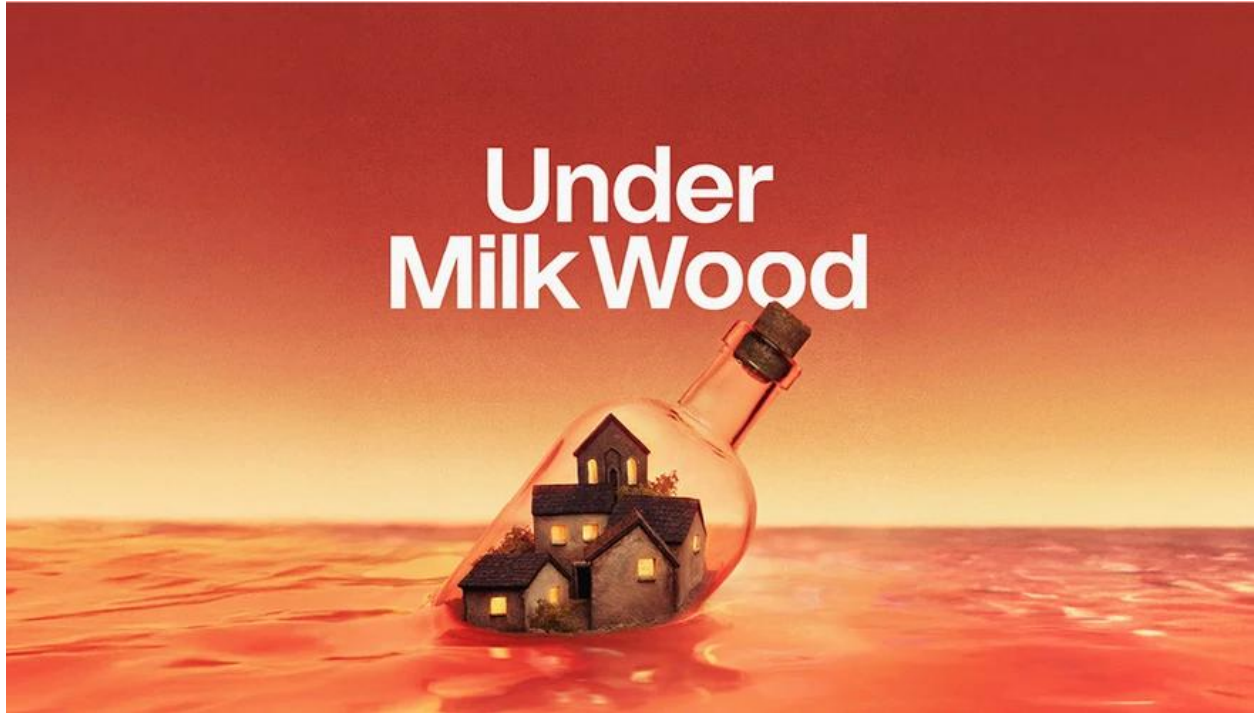


Getting Ready for Under Milk Wood



Welcome!

Welcome to our relaxed guide for Under Milk Wood! We're so happy to share this show with you. This guide is here to help you feel comfortable and ready for the performance. It includes answers to common questions so you can relax and enjoy the show. Everyone's needs are different, so we've added details to make sure you have a great experience. If you have any questions or need more help, feel free to get in touch with us before the show.

Finding Your Way Around & What to Expect

The play is being performed at Theatr Clwyd. Once you have parked or been dropped off, please come inside the theatre. The main entrance is a large automatic door on the right of the building. Please enter this door to get into our building. The door is automatic and will open by itself.



The Welcome Desk

When you are inside, if you need help please head straight ahead to our Welcome Desk. If this is your first time visiting, please do not worry and just ask the friendly team at the Welcome Desk for help! This is what the Welcome Desk looks like:



Food & Drink

Past the Welcome Desk, we have a shop, where you can buy food and drink and take payment for this at our Welcome Desk.

You are also welcome to bring your own refillable water bottle, we have many water stations located around the building.



The Lifts

We have two lifts to take you to the upper floors or there are also stairs, which are located to the left.



On the first floor there is a restaurant, a bar, a gallery space with artwork on the walls and Door B into the auditorium.

On the second floor are Doors C and D into the auditorium. There will be helpers who work at the theatre to show you which door you need to get to your seat in the auditorium.

The Auditorium



This is the auditorium where the play is performed.

Once inside the auditorium, you'll find your seats where you will sit to watch the play. Remember, it will be busy and a little noisy. Feel free to bring noise-cancelling headphones, or we have a few ear defenders available to borrow from the Ushers if needed.

From your seats, you are looking at the stage, which is where the actors perform the play. The show begins with the stage very dark, and as the show progresses it becomes more vibrant and full of colour. There are moments in the show where bits of stage are flown in and out on wires, when this happens

all of the actors know to stay far away from the moving set so are completely safe.

How long is the play?

The show is in two parts, each about an hour long, with a 20-minute interval.

Need help?

Our friendly ushers are here to help! They'll check your tickets and answer any questions you may have. They usually wear black jumpers or tee-shirts.



Chill-Out Areas

If you want to have a break during the play you can go back out to the foyer space, where there is comfortable seating and will be much quieter when the show is happening - you can ask one of our ushers to show you the way. You can go back into the auditorium later on if you want to.

What is the play about? (please note there are spoilers ahead!)

Under Milk Wood tells the story of one day in Llaregyb, a small Welsh coastal town. The play begins in the middle of the night, when all of the town is fast asleep. All of the cast enter the stage and deliver the prologue, which gives a

brief overview of the dreamers. This is then repeated using movement. We then begin to be introduced to some of the townspeople by being shown their dreams.

The first dream we see belongs to Captain Cat, a retired sea captain, who dreams of his long-lost friends, and his lover Rosie Probert, who drowned long ago. We then meet Mog Edwards and Myfanwy Price, who dream of each other, Jack Black, who dreams of chasing the naughty couples from the hills of the town, Evans the Death whose dreams take him back to his childhood playing in the snow, and to Mr Waldo, who dreams of all of his ex-wives, his mother, and the gossiping neighbours who haunt him.

We meet the Ogmores-Pritchards. Mrs Ogmores runs a hotel in town, but she never allows guests in case they dirty her nice clean rooms. In her dreams, her two dead husbands lie ghostly on either side of her and she nags them in her sleep.

Willy Nilly delivers the morning post, telling the townspeople of the contents of their letters before they have had a chance to read them themselves.

As the town begins to wake up, the stage comes to life and becomes more colourful. The Reverend Eli Jenkins performs his morning poetry. We find Mr Pugh taking up the morning tea to Mrs Pugh and fantasising about all of the ways he can finish off his wife.

Mr and Mrs Cherry Owen are at the breakfast table, discussing the events of the previous night in a light tone that masks the dark events that actually occurred. Mr Butcher Beynon teases Mrs Beynon about secretly feeding her moles and shrews. Captain Cat sits at his bedroom window listening to the townspeople going about their day, slowly filling the stage, gossiping, shopping, heading off to work as the morning reaches its peak.

A spring dance begins the second half of the play. The neighbours gather in Mrs Organ Morgan's shop to trade gossip. Mr and Mrs Willy Nilly steam open their neighbours' mail and read a letter from Mr Mog Edwards to his love, Myfanwy Price. The fishermen gather at the harbour, ready to head out for the day, but

decide against work and head to the Sailor's Arms instead. The children sing a clapping rhyme in the school yard.

Mrs Dai Bread Two tells Mrs Dai Bread One's fortune. Polly Garter sings of her long-dead lover. Gwennie and the other children of the town play a game, the boys can kiss her where she says or give her a penny. Gossamer Beynon and Sinbad Sailors daydream about each other. In School House, Mr Pugh fantasises again about all of the ways he can murder his horrible wife. Mrs Organ Morgan laments to her husband about Poly Garter's many lovers. Lord Cutglass sits in his kitchen full of clocks, waiting for the worst to happen.

Captain Cat, sitting in his bedroom window which overlooks the town, dreams once more of Rosie Probert and sings to her in his memory. As Rosie fades away, a child walks below the window and notices him crying.

Utah Watkins screams at his cows on Salt Lake Farm, and they respond with love, a cow kisses him and Bessie Bighead, who lives in the barn, remembers Gomer Owen, who kissed her once, as she takes the cows in for milking. Mae Rose Cottage lists all the ways she plans to sin in her dreams tonight.

The Reverend Eli Jenkins reads aloud his evening poem as the day draws to a close. The townspeople gather in the Sailor's Arms to listen to Mr Waldo sing a dirty song. The town retreats to bed, ready to begin dreaming again.

Realttime or Dreamworld?

Many of the scenes in Under Milk Wood happen in the dreams and imaginations of the characters. If you listen carefully to the narration, it always describes when something is imagined or is happening in a dream. You can also identify

these moments by watching the behaviour of the cast. When we are in a dream world, their expressions are bigger, their physicality is more extreme and they behave in non-natural ways. The dreams are more vibrant than their everyday lives, their emotions are heightened and feel more fantastical.

The use of BSL and Captioning

This show uses integrated British Sign Language (BSL). So sometimes you might find that one actor is speaking the text whilst another signs next to them. But often the BSL branches into a more creative visual metaphor. We also use Visual Vernacular throughout the show. Visual Vernacular is a physical form of storytelling, rooted in BSL but not tied strictly to it. It creates images in the space that are distinctly different from sign language or dance, but occupy a world adjacent to both of those forms. It is used in Under Milk Wood to create paintings of the text.

The whole show is also creatively captioned. This is different to normal captioning because instead of the words of the play being a screen on one side of the stage, they are projected onto different surfaces throughout the show. Usually they appear on one of the dark portals which frame the stage. Some of the captions are animated and move across the stage. Sometimes they are enhanced with the images that the text is describing.

The Characters in the Play

Traditionally this play is performed with one actor playing First Voice (the narrator) however in our production, each of our eleven cast members take turns in this role. Usually they narrate the bits about the characters they are

playing, but not always. Below you'll find a picture of our lovely performers in their base costumes, but they have lots of different costumes because they all play lots of different characters. If it's useful to you to know more about the characters everybody plays and how to tell the difference between them, we've created a separate information packet that you can find on our website and in The Boathouse.



Stage and the set

At the beginning of the show, the stage is dark with one row of houses lit in the middle of the stage. As we move from nighttime into the morning, the back wall flies out and a tumble of houses are revealed. The stage gets brighter and more colourful as time passes, and in act two huge flowers decorate the edges of the stage. As we return to the evening, the stage gets darker again and we are left where we began with one row of houses illuminated in the centre of the stage.

If you want more information on how the play is staged please visit our access booth, available before each show, during the interval and after the show finishes, and you will find a video playing which talks you through some of the more visual moments in the show. This information is also available on the website.

What else might you need to know?

- Haze is used during Captain Cat's memories which take place under the sea. A lot of it floods the stage so if you are sat towards the front of the auditorium you may feel like it's coming on to you also, but it is completely safe and won't harm you.
- About fifteen minutes into the first half, Jack Black (played by Adam Basset) shouts loudly at the end of his first scene.
- Lots of the characters in the show are dreaming about their lovers, so there are scenes of a sexual nature. These are done through speaking and movement, and happen in dreams and nightmares.
- Mr Pugh frequently fantasises about the ways he might murder his wife. This is also shown visually through movement in both of the scenes with the Pughs.
- In the scene between the Cherry Owens when they are sat at the breakfast table. Domestic violence is heavily implied although not shown. Mrs Cherry Owen is sat with a black eye and visibly flinches when Mr Cherry Owen asks her for a kiss.
- During some of the movement sequences, actors are lifted up by other actors and sometimes they go high up in the air. Before each show we make sure to practise these moments to keep the actors safe. They know what they're doing and we also have plans in place so that if a lift were to go wrong, all the actors know how to safely stop the lift so that nobody gets hurt.