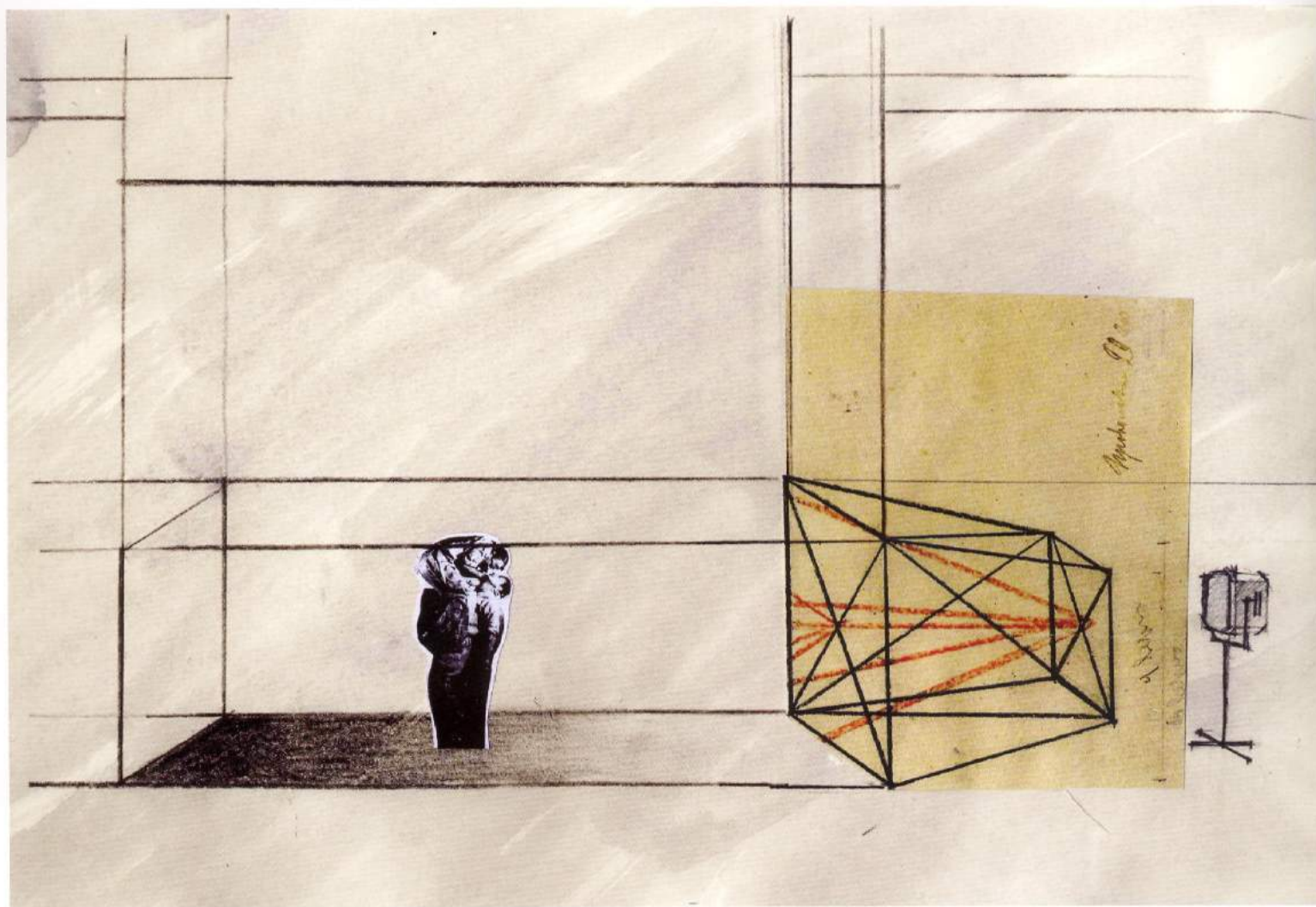
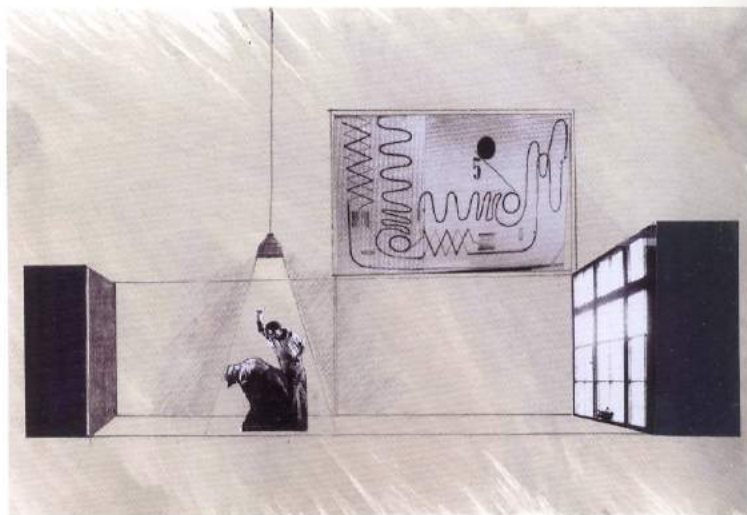
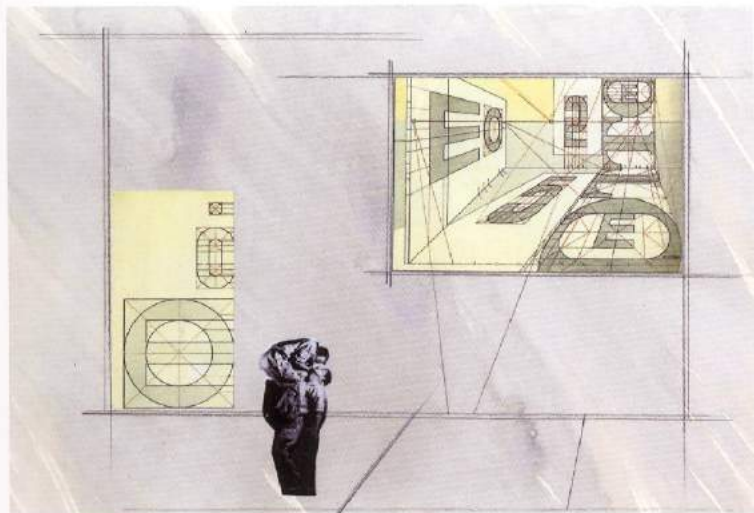


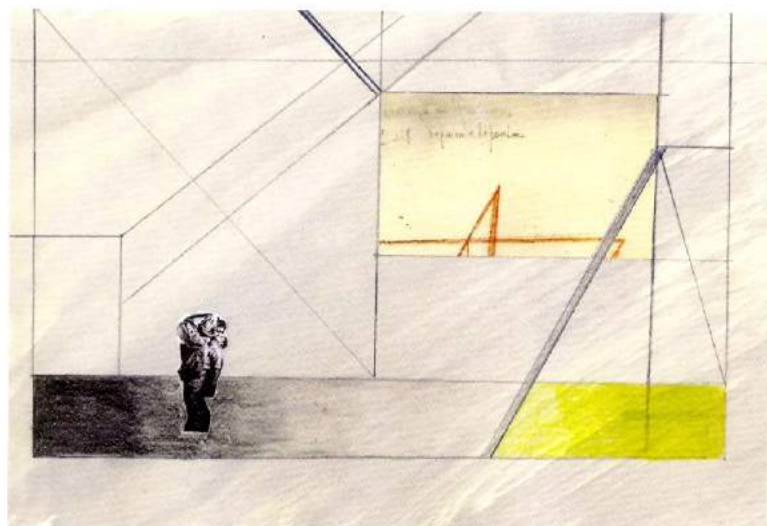
the Minotaur

John Tomlinson 'told' = MAN  
Frame head and shoulders and 'jockstrap'

Alison Cuthy Design Process 1970-2010







*Alison Chitty began work as a theatre designer in 1970. She has designed in many performance spaces, from small studios to international opera houses, and also for film. In 2007, she was given an award in memory of the great architect and designer Misha Black (1910-77), who was for nearly 20 years professor of industrial design at the Royal College of Art. The award celebrates distinguished services to design education.*

*The following is from the speech she made in accepting the award, on 20 March 2007:*

I am absolutely thrilled at being given this award. What a brilliant idea to have an award to recognise the work of design teachers. We are just a small part in the story of the creation of so many things which we use and experience and which surround us in our everyday lives. How wonderful and right to have such a prize in the memory of the great designer and visionary teacher, Sir Misha Black.

I was very surprised to receive the letter saying that I had been chosen. I was really confused about how anybody could possibly know what we do at Motley, the post-graduate theatre design school that I run, along with the designers Ashley Martin Davis and Antony Lamble and our administrator Cat Martin.

The thing about Motley is that there are just 11 students and some tutors in a large fridge with some mice. Don't misunderstand me – it is a wonderful school, there's no question, and I am extremely proud of Motley but it is one of education's best kept secrets. Brilliantly positioned in Drury Lane, thanks to the generosity of Andrew Lloyd Webber and the Really Useful Group, we are fiercely independent but poverty-stricken. However, our independence gives us the freedom to teach in the way we believe is right. We are swimming in integrity – and constantly struggle to survive. But we will come back to Motley later.

First I want to tell you about how I got into the theatre and teaching, and a little about my philosophy of designing for the theatre.

Cover image:  
*The Minotaur* costume drawing,  
directed by Stephen Langridge,  
2008

Above and opposite page:  
Preliminary drawings for *Semper  
Dowland*, *Semper Dolens* and  
*The Corridor*, directed by Peter Gill,  
2009



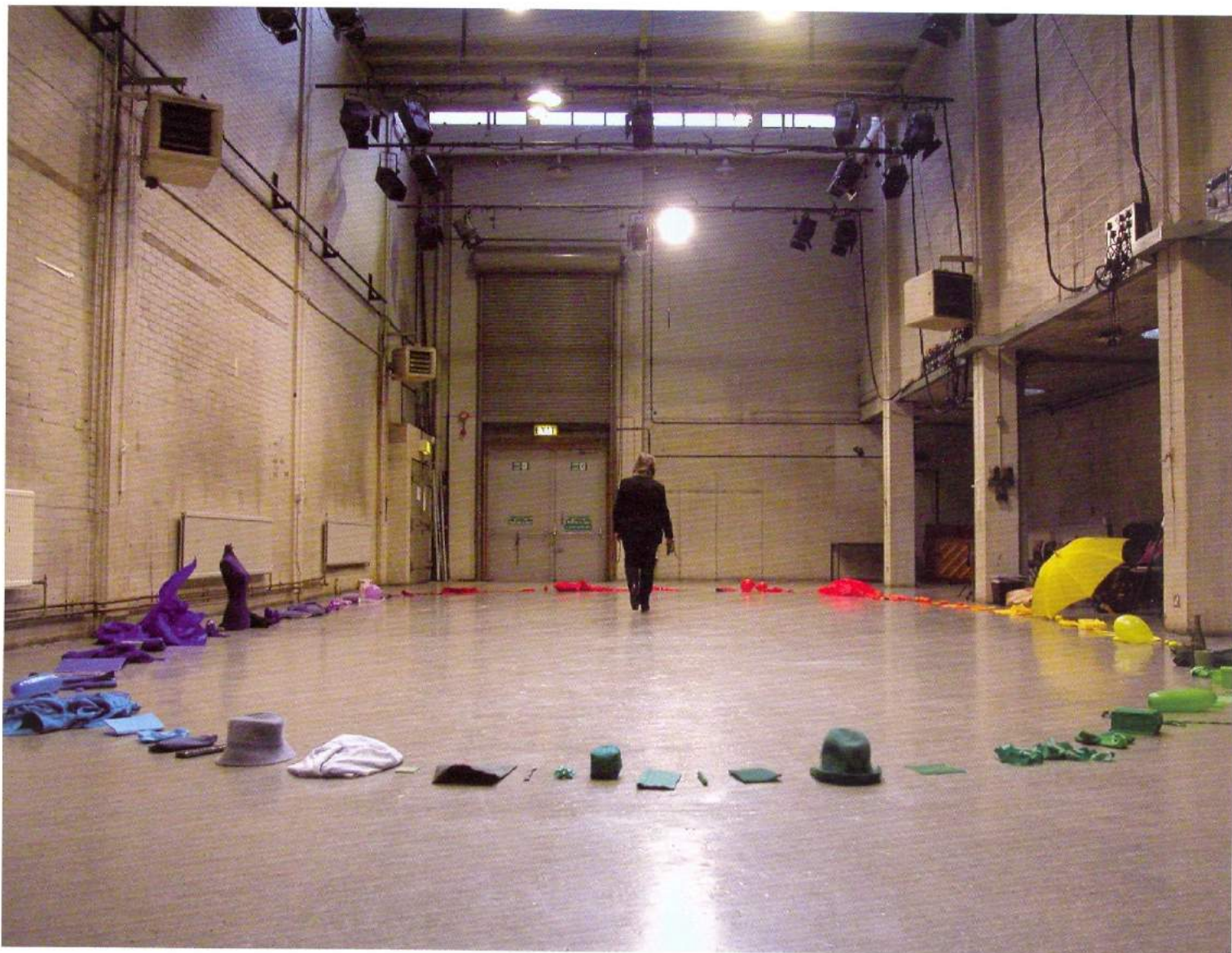


I have two major passions in my life – the theatre and teaching. I love the theatre. I love how the theatre helps us to understand and interpret our lives. The best theatre helps us makes sense of the world we live in. As theatre designers we are in the business of telling stories, helping performers to tell stories – to live – in the best possible way. We make spaces to hold the performers, we clothe them and we create a complete world that the performers inhabit. As we design, we make some order out of an endless random succession of variables. We sort it all out, we try to make sense of it all and give it some form. We sort out the text, if there is one – and we'll come back to Mike Leigh later. We sort out the performance spaces, their potential and their limitations. We try to make sense of the kind of fabulous chaos that is inevitably part of group creativity – a lot of people coming together to create one incredibly complex piece of work. As theatre designers, we don't often work alone.

We start with the text: my way to start is to draw. I couldn't work without drawing. It's essential to the way I clarify what I know, and investigate what I don't – you will have seen how, in the exhibition. I design from the inside out. The nature of the world is dictated by what happens in the play.

I am a designer not a decorator.  
I have learnt to trust my instincts.





Left: Alison Chitty in her studio  
 Photograph by Clare Parker

Above: Colour Workshop  
 Photograph by Patrick Bernier



I am a designer not a decorator.  
I have learnt to trust my instincts.

*Bad Blacks / patterns - textures - shapes - colours*



*NEEDLE SHOWNING - SPEAKING - 20-25 EXTRA  
All clove ladies Extra shorts - saddle chits  
Act 1.*

*BAD BLACKS.  
ACT I,*



*All clove Men Act 1. Stable  
- with rib of cloth - sack - suit? (47) +  
to flap about (25) EXTRA.  
EVERYONE*

*BAD BLACKS.  
ACT I*

Preliminary Act I Chorus  
costume drawings for *Otello*,  
directed by Francesca  
Zambello, 1999



My mother, father and stepfather were passionate theatre-goers. My mother was a teacher, my father a clergyman and my stepfather an engineer.

We went to the theatre once a week.

That is what we did. It was ordinary.

We mostly sat in cheap seats with poor sightlines. I saw lots of plays on what I thought were triangular stages.

Maybe that was a useful experience.

I saw everything at the National Theatre at the Old Vic – Laurence Olivier and Maggie Smith in *Othello*, Robert Stephens in *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* – everything at the RSC at the Aldwych – Ian Holm in Peter Hall's *Wars of the Roses* and all the early work of Peter Brook. I saw *The Marat Sade* and *U. S.* and Peter Daubeny's fantastic World Theatre Seasons. Peter Brook's work was strong, visually exciting, designed by Sally Jacobs. It was political and the acting was marvellous. I also saw lots of opera. I was becoming hooked.

I enjoyed school despite having a bit of a bumpy time. I failed my 11-plus twice and my Art O-level. Yes, Art O-level! I have been wondering – does this disqualify me from winning this award? Luckily I was supported and encouraged to hang on in there by my family and my teachers. I had wonderful art teachers throughout my schooling – Jo Bondy, Daphne Simpson and, at St. Martin's School of Art, John Dougill. It was John who saw in my work a connection with the theatre and he sent me off to look at an exhibition of theatre design at Central School of Art. For some reason I hadn't understood that I could design for the theatre as a job!

What I remember of the exhibition was large, dark metallic rocks burnished with Zebrite grate polish, and armour made of black bin liners, foam rubber and nuts and bolts. You have to remember that this was the 60s. I thought it looked marvellous and I thought, 'I could do that!'

I was given a place at the Central School of Art to study with the brilliant designer Ralph Koltai. On day one he told us that we should remember that any group of actors could put on a play without a designer – nicely provocative! But I know he would agree that it is a whole lot better when we are around. I graduated and won a nine-month Arts Council bursary to Stoke-on-Trent, the theatre-in-the-round run by Peter Cheeseman. I stayed for eight years.

Peter's policy was to put on one Shakespeare a year, a certain amount of other classics, children's work, his famous documentaries and new work. Sixty per cent of the programme at that time was new writing. Peter taught me to respect the writer and the text. He was – and still is – a real socialist. The work was directly designed for Stoke and North Staffordshire. There was always a political edge. It all made sense to me.

In retrospect I can see how my work in Stoke was the foundation of my design and teaching philosophy. Working in the round, I began to understand the power of the performer in the space, the power of the object and also the effect of one on the other.

Here's an exercise for a moment. Imagine an empty stage. Imagine an 18th-century cup and saucer. What do we know? We are probably in the 18th century – in any case, in any time since the cup and saucer was made.

Add an 18th-century chair. What has happened? In many ways nothing but, in fact, we are what I call 'more so'. We are more definitely in the 18th-century; or, of course, another possibility – in an antique shop. How do we know which? The condition of the chair and the cup and saucer.

Take away the cup and saucer and replace it with a Campari and soda. We now have an 18th-century chair and a Campari and soda. What has happened? The chair has become an antique. We are now in any time since Campari was invented and the glass was made.

Now, take away the chair and replace it with a yellow towel. We now have a Campari and soda and a yellow towel. What has happened? We are suddenly in a more contemporary world. The temperature seems to have changed and we are possibly even outside. Or we could be, of course, in the sort of bathroom where people drink Campari and throw their towels on the floor. But the nature of these objects in combination does seem to take us outside. I made the towel yellow. It may make us think of sand. The period is dictated by the date when the glass and the towel were made, or any time since, or in the future.

You can see how, with only four objects, we've leapt across a couple of centuries, gone from inside to outside and the temperature has changed. It's enough to give you a headache.

Every decision has enormous repercussions.  
Every decision must be fine-tuned.

It is easy to see how often in the theatre much of what is on stage, most of the scenery – and I hate that word – most of the props, the objects on the stage, are saying exactly the same thing. They are all doing the same job as each other. Everything is saying this is an 18th-century drawing room or whatever it is. Everything is making it all 'more so'.

I am fascinated by exactly how much I need to precisely evoke a world. In Stoke-on-Trent I began to see how a little goes a very long way. I began to develop some restraint. I worked to



## Every decision has enormous repercussions. Every decision must be fine-tuned.

select the essential elements that were needed and at the same time I came to realise that a distilled version of the world of the play was leaving space for the audience to take part – space for them to use their imaginations and contribute. I believe it heightened their experiences and they had a better time.

*I began to develop a way of working.*

In Stoke, many of our simple visual statements were born out of limited budgets and, of course, the very nature of theatre-in-the-round. The focus of the space was the floor and we were working sculpturally. I was learning that with distillation, restraint and often a little bit of wit, I could simply and powerfully express any place, any time, anywhere. I was becoming what I am now, as I said – a designer, not a decorator.

The work in Stoke with Peter Cheeseman's strong, simple, no nonsense storytelling had often been rough and tough, an exciting, honest and direct poor theatre. I can see now how it was influenced by the theatre of Brecht and the Berliner Ensemble – our own North Staffordshire version. We told the story of people's lives, all kinds of people.

After eight years I returned to London, fearful of what had been happening while I was away. I was worried I was going to be out of step. I had missed the whole of the 70s in London. Will everyone have green hair? And, of course, they did. We had been hippies; young people were now punks.

*I wrote six letters. I got two interviews.*

I met Peter Gill and Mike Leigh. They both offered me work on the strength of my portfolio of work from Stoke and I've been working with them ever since. Doesn't it sound easy?

Peter Gill comes from the Royal Court tradition. George Devine and the designer Jocelyn Herbert established a simple and elegant style of production there in the 1960s and the 70s. The Royal Court had similar ideas of programming to Stoke; they were putting on predominantly new plays. Peter Gill had been working there for many years and had developed his own way – his own aesthetic – again distilled and restrained but in addition refined, exquisite, poetic and expressive. He has a way of looking at ordinary, everyday life, and somehow making the simplest things poetic – brushing your hair, washing your husband's back

when he comes home from the mine.

We remember his famous DH Lawrence season at the Court, his production of *The Daughter-in-Law*. This work chimed with what we had been doing in Stoke and the way I was beginning to think about design. Peter Gill and I worked together at Riverside Studios for a year and then Peter Hall invited us to join him at the National, and we stayed for eight years.

*I also worked on my first Mike Leigh play immediately after leaving Stoke.*

It became *Ecstasy* at Hampstead Theatre.

Mike was keen to show a Hampstead audience a glimpse of the lives of the people a mile away in Kilburn. As you will know, Mike starts with nothing, absolutely nothing, and I describe my process with him as 'solidarity around a black hole'. It is a very slow and meticulous process creating a play the Mike Leigh way. Much too long to go into here, but all the work, the story, organically evolves out of the character Mike creates with each actor. I work alongside the rehearsals, gathering as much information as I can and trying to be patient until a direction seems inevitable. It's exciting and nerve-wracking and, as we know, his process produces the most incredible work, intense, passionate and in the broadest sense it is always political. Mike deals with real life, people's lives, the human condition – all another natural extension for me to the work I'd been doing and what I am interested in and care about.

To return to my work with Peter Gill at the National, my time there gave me the opportunity to design in all three theatres and work on many, many plays. I was regularly designing for the proscenium and the black box of the Cottesloe. I also worked on the development of many new plays at the National Theatre Studio which Peter Gill founded in 1984.

Half way through my time at the National, I started working with Peter Hall, the third Peter-director in my life. At this time, this Peter was working with the great designer, John Bury. John had originally come from designing with Joan Littlewood at the Theatre Workshop at Stratford East, another poor theatre with a strong political edge. Peter and John had been working together for years at the RSC and their productions were always extremely exciting and visually very strong. I could see in their work at the National how they loved the bold statement. Great sculptural shapes took control



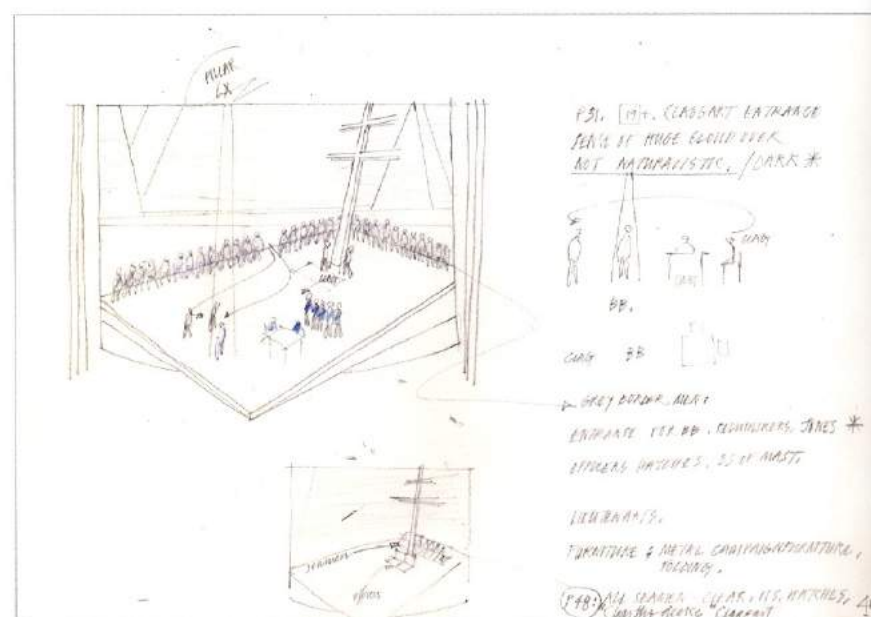


Preliminary and final costume drawings for *Turandot*, directed by Francesca Zambello, 1997

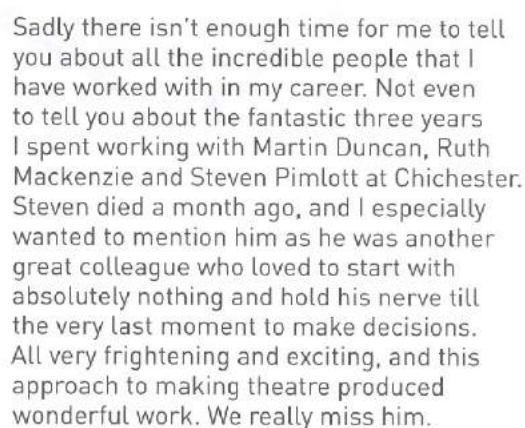
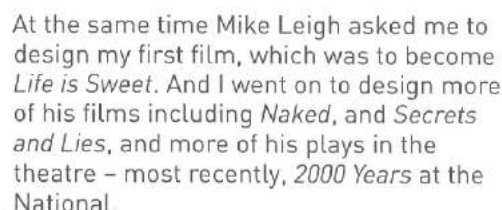
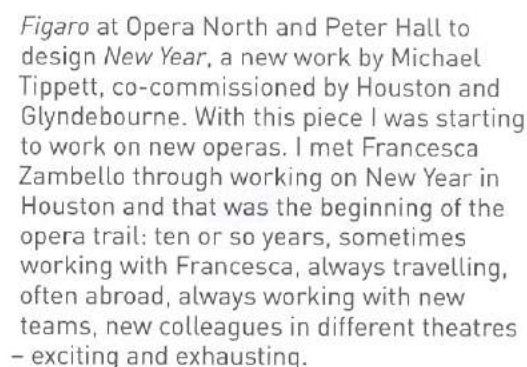




So my next move was into opera and film. Peter Gill asked me to design





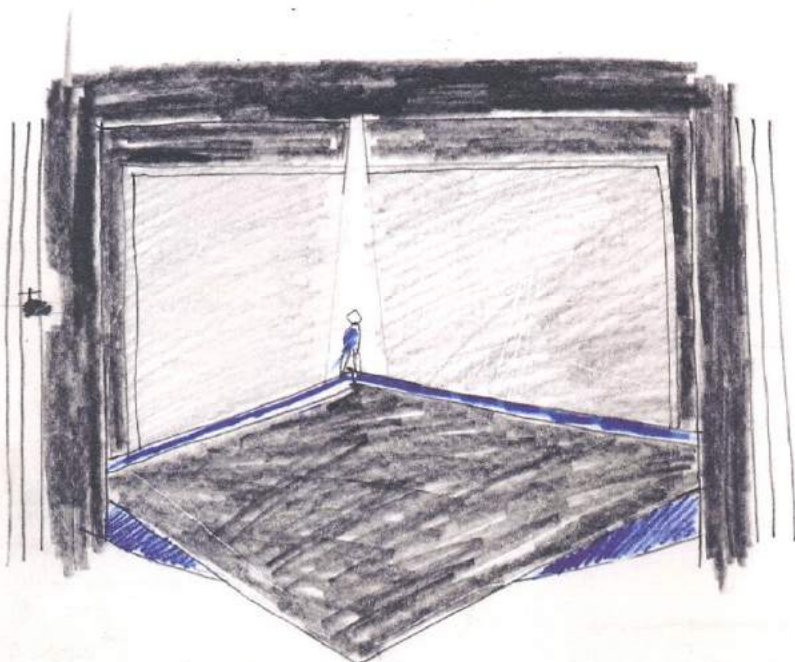


Now I continue to be a freelance designer and, since I have never planned a career in any way, I continue to do whatever comes next that I would love to do.

One other thing – alongside designing for the theatre I have always been interested in theatre buildings themselves, and have been involved in the design of theatres in Stoke, of course, Delhi, the Market Theatre Lab in Johannesburg, and, most recently, Peter Hall's project, the new Rose Theatre in Kingston.

Here and overleaf:  
Selected storyboard drawings for *Billy Budd*,  
directed by Francesca Zambello, 1994





143 I WAS LOST ON THE INFINITE SEA.

CLIFF EDGE

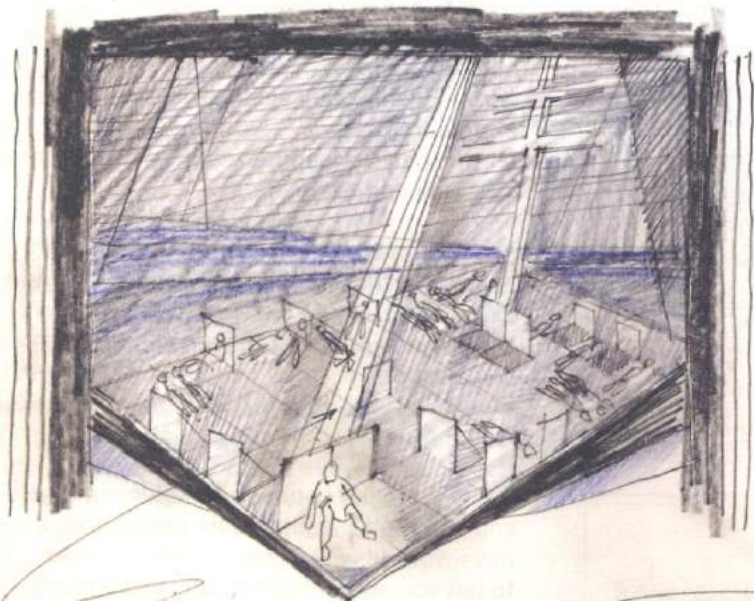
EDGE OF FLOOR LIGHTS UP...

FLOATING in

SLOW FADE ....

15





MOONLIGHT  
WIRES



ACT TWO... TRANSITION.  
SCENE III INTERLUDE // CHORDS.

BAY OF GAN DECK / P297.

SHORTLY BEFORE DAWN, NEXT MORNING.

BILLY IN IRONS: BOUND WRISTS

[WITH CEILING/WATERY?  
ALTERNATIVE

BERTH DECK / MEN LIFT HATCH TOPS,

MOONSHINE // WIRES ON RINGS,

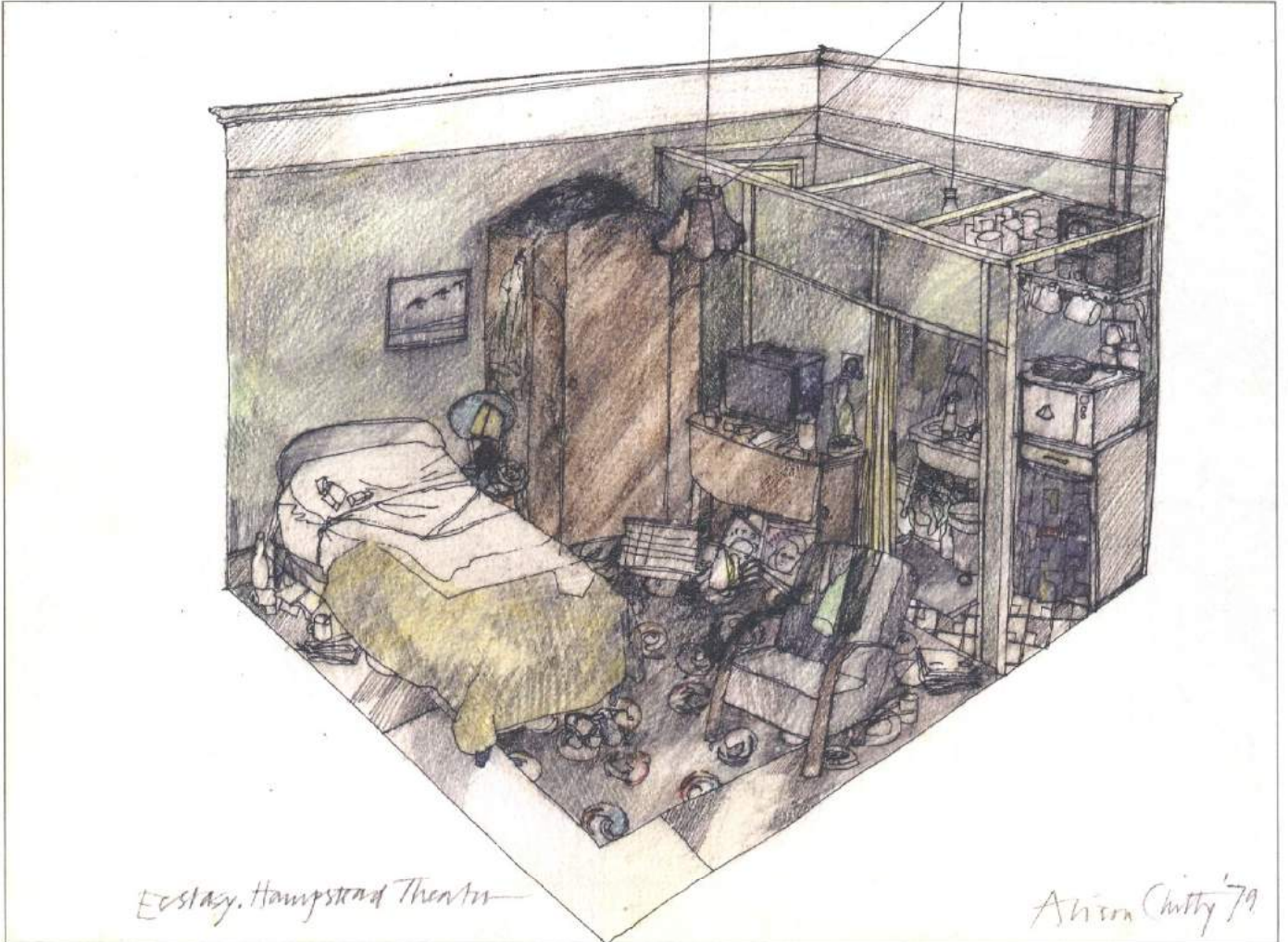
MEN IN BOATHS //

PULLED THROUGH FROM UNDER  
HATCH?

FOES INDIVIDUAL LX, / LANTERNS,  
MOONLIGHT WIRES //

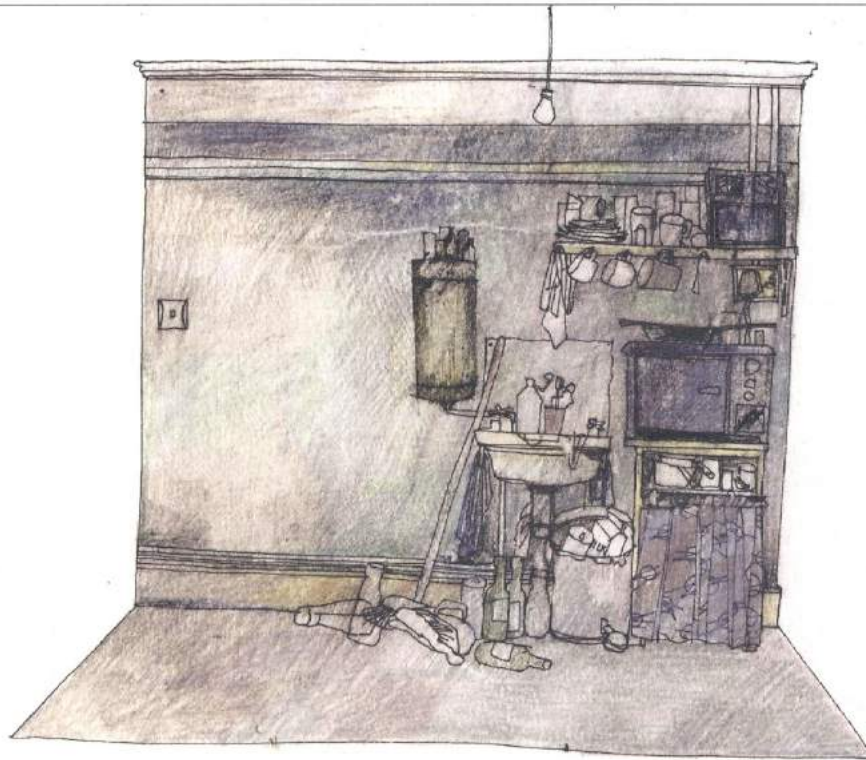
ALTERNATIVE ??





Set drawing for *Ecstasy*,  
written and directed by Mike Leigh, 1979





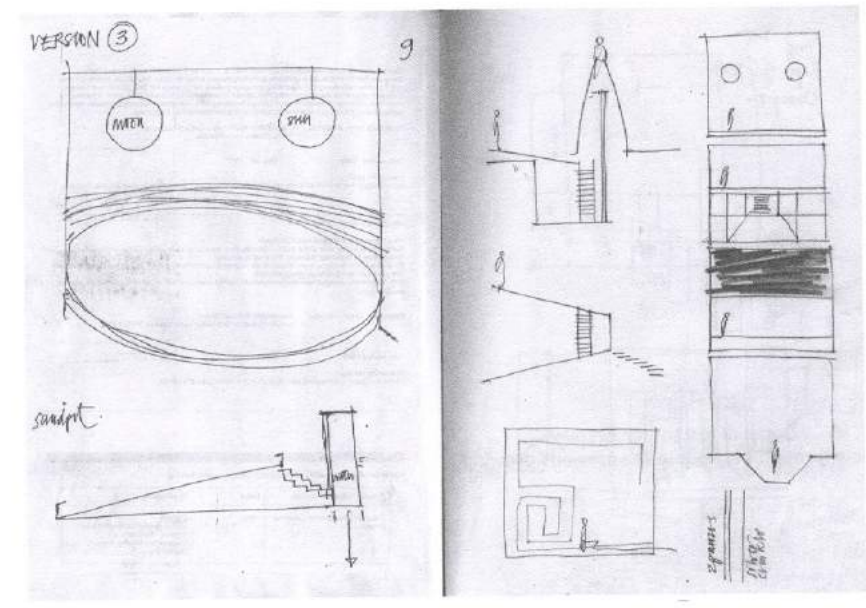
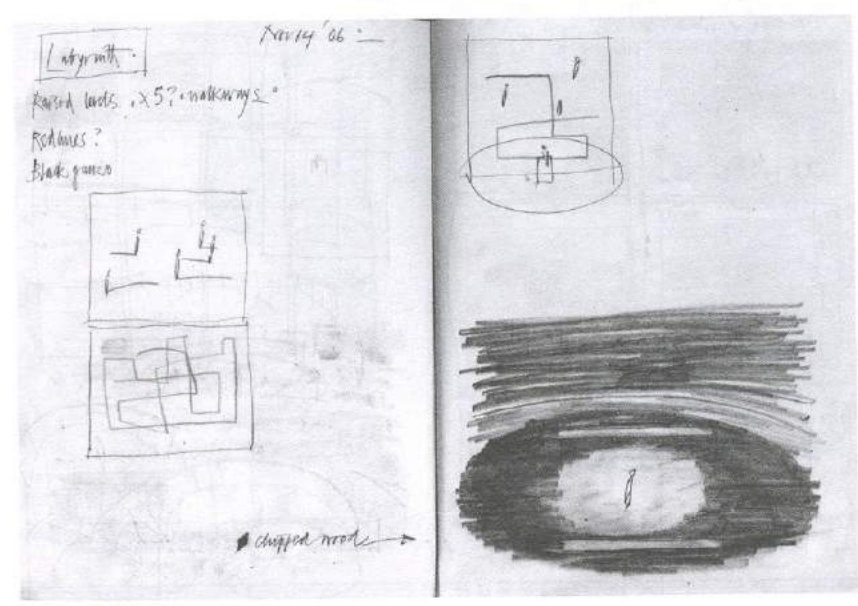
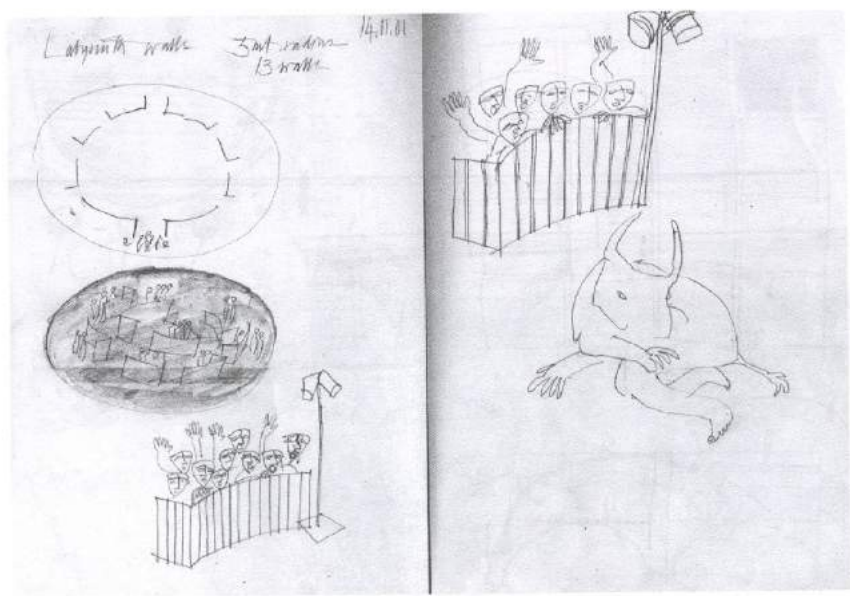
*Jeann's kitchen*

*Ecstasy, Hampstead Theatre - Dear Nicki - love Ally X*

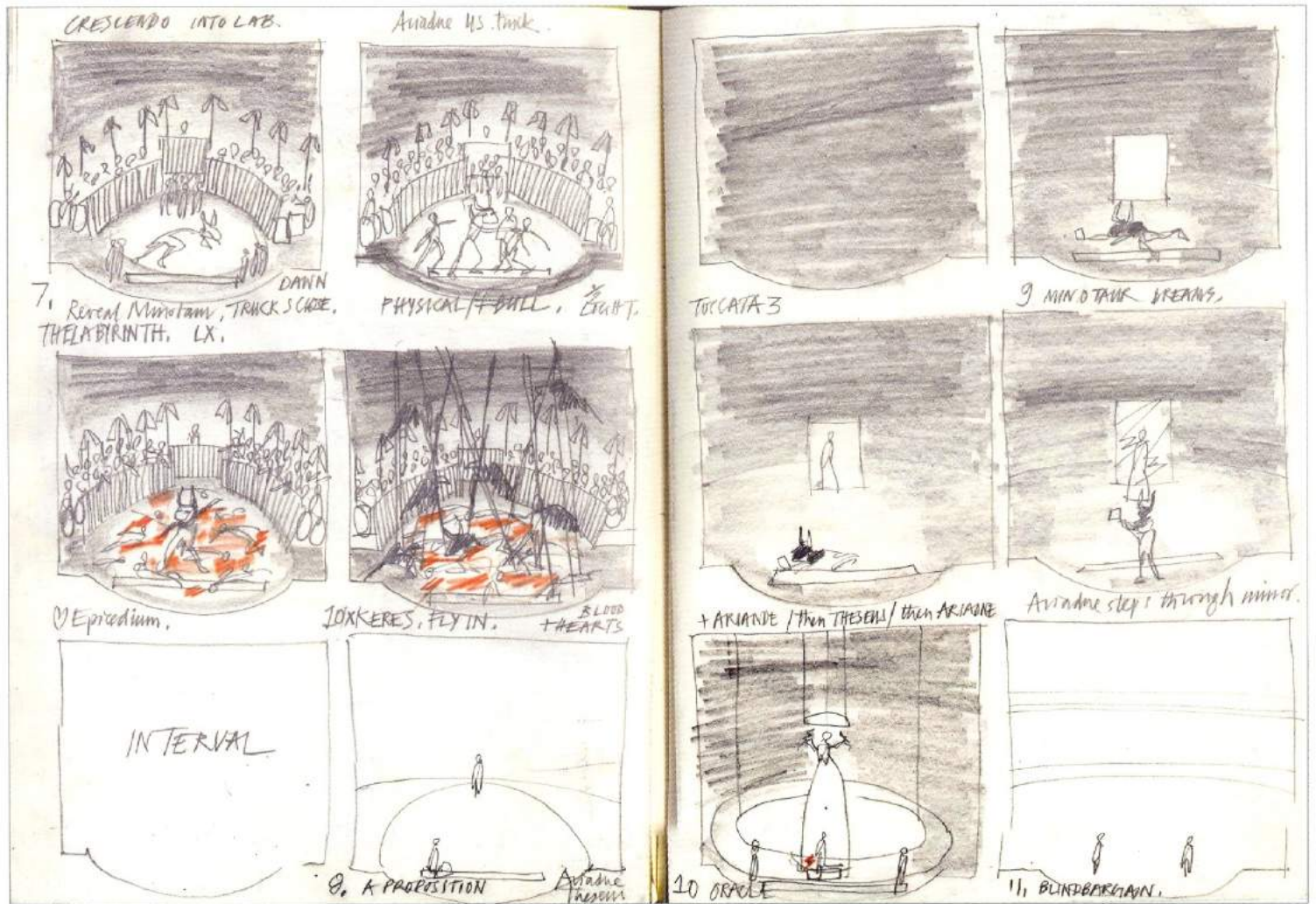
*Alison Chitty '79*

Detail of the set for *Ecstasy* :  
view through the door in the previous drawing















Final costume drawings for *The Minotaur*, 2008



Final costume drawing for  
*Venice Preserv'd*, directed  
 by Peter Gill, 1984  
 Photographs (Michael Pennington  
 and Ian McKellen; Jane Lapotaire  
 and Michael Pennington) by  
 Stephen Macmillan





Now to Motley and teaching. I have always loved teaching, first in London, at Central and Wimbledon, later all over the world – in South Africa, Lithuania, Spain and the States. I am the fourth in a line of women teachers in my family. My great-grandmother founded a girls' school, my grandmother and my mother were teachers.

Sixteen years ago, I was making my will and trying to decide who to give my books to. As I had taught a little for Percy Harris at Motley, and I loved the school and the way the library was always available to the students, I decided to leave them to Motley. I didn't tell anybody. A few months later, Percy asked me to take over from Hayden Griffin and help her run the school. Hayden had been on the first year of the course and had taught with Percy for many, many years. Hayden needed a break. Percy was 86 and thought she needed some help! It was a huge decision. I agreed.

Margaret – known as Percy – Harris founded the Motley Theatre Design Course 41 years ago. She was a theatre designer, part of the trio of lady designers who called themselves Motley. We are a one-year post-graduate course and Percy started the school with a few basic principles:

- The school should always be attached to a theatre;
- The students should always be taught by theatre practitioners;
- There are no entry requirements, except that applicants must be over 21.

We interview every applicant, we love the wild card. The fees are £4,000 a year, and with 11 students – we can all do the maths – we run on £44,000 a year, plus any donations or scholarships that we can beg. No one can be paid properly, so we survive through the support and commitment of the rest of the profession who – most importantly – believe in us and also come to teach for silly money. We are very aware that Motley cannot be a role model for mainstream educational establishments. But we know it works.

We have our own front door key and we are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for 11 months of the year. The students are responsible for running their studio and we only have a couple of rules:

- Every student must work in the studio. They cannot work at home;
- They must discuss with us any offers of outside projects or work.

The intense studio atmosphere helps them learn to respect each other. They are colleagues, they learn to work together. This is great training for working in the theatre. They work incredibly hard, sharing skills and supporting each other.

We have a bullshit bell which any of us can ring if we find ourselves or anyone else talking nonsense. I didn't bring it with me today.

There are no degrees, diplomas or certificates. If they want a certificate, it seems an excellent opportunity for a bit of prop-making. They leave Motley with the kudos of having studied with us and we hope, after an 11-month vertical learning curve, we have helped them to begin to work out who they are and what they want to do. We hope that they have begun to develop a process and find their own aesthetic. We hope they are ready to join the profession.

The teaching is based on a philosophy of respect for the text and the performer, and a belief in the integrity of the performance and the design. Students are encouraged to develop skills which combine practicality and imagination. They are encouraged not to accept the easy and predictable solution but, through rigorous research and hard work, develop their own interpretation in collaboration with a professional director, who leads each design project.

There are six or seven projects each year; four or five are plays and one is always an opera. At the end of each project, experienced professionals are invited to review the work. Over two days, each student presents their model and costume designs to the group, the project director and the regular staff, which gives plenty of opportunity for discussion and assessment.

There is an end-of-year exhibition. For the last eight years it has been at the National Theatre, and I remind the students that the next central London retrospective of their work will be when they are dead!

We are very proud of our students, and at the last bi-annual Linbury Prize for theatre design in 2005, three of them were short-listed and two were winners, one of whom was the overall winner for the year.

Over the 41 years, Motley has trained designers who are now working in all branches of the industry – theatre, opera, dance, film and television – all over the world. I am really proud of our school.

I am also extremely thrilled to be given this award. This evening gives me the opportunity to publicly thank my fantastic colleagues, Ashley Martin Davis, Anthony Lambie and Cat Martin, and all our other tutors. I especially want to thank our incredible Chairman, John Simpson, who has supported the school since the very beginning and somehow makes the books balance. I couldn't do what I do without you all.

Most importantly, this award also gives me the opportunity to recognise the extraordinary vision, passion and determination of Percy Harris. She made the foundations that we build on. In 25 years she never paid rent. It is a hard act to follow. We now pay £1 a year rent and I think quite a lot of insurance. So I am sorry, Percy.

My last 'thank you' and the most important is to our students. We wouldn't exist without you and thank you for being so brilliant to teach. We are in the middle of a really exciting year.

Re-reading this, I thought I must be mad, and maybe I am. But here's to all of us who work in the arts and teach design, are lucky enough to know what we want to do, and are mad enough and passionate enough to do it.

Alison Chitty, 2007





Costume chart and colour palette  
for *Measure for Measure*,  
directed by Peter Gill, 1979





"I couldn't work without drawing, it's central to the way I clarify what I know and investigate what I don't. It's my way of ordering ideas and the way I experiment and work my way through confusion and blocks."

"Designing for the theatre, you must be obsessive, organised, open and free: a balancing act. There are many collaborators and unlimited ingredients, and through drawing I communicate what I am thinking. In a new work we start with nothing, we all need to have solidarity around a black hole and a sense of adventure. Drawing is my way out of the black hole. It is immediate and fast; for me it is the foundation of the design process."

This exhibition is dedicated to the memory of Steven Pimlott

## THEATRE

- 1970-79 Designed over 30 productions at Victoria Theatre Stoke on Trent (directors Ken Campbell, Peter Cheeseman, Ron Daniels, Bob Eaton, Clare Venables)
- 1973 *The York Mysteries* (director Edward Taylor) York
- 1979 *Ecstasy* (writer/director Mike Leigh) Hampstead Theatre  
*Uncle Vanya* (Anton Chekhov, director Nancy Meckler) Hampstead  
*Measure for Measure* (Shakespeare, director Peter Gill) Riverside Studios
- 1980 *Plays Umbrella* (5 new plays) Riverside Studios  
*Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare, director Peter Gill) Riverside Studios
- 1981 *A Month in the Country* (Turgenev/Isaiah Berlin, director Peter Gill) National Theatre and UK tour  
*Much Ado About Nothing* (Shakespeare, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Don Juan* (Molière/John Fowles, director Peter Gill) National Theatre
- 1982 *The Prince of Homburg* (Kleist/John James, director John Burgess) NT  
*Danton's Death* (Buchner/Howard Brenton, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Major Barbara* (Bernard Shaw, director Peter Gill) NT
- 1983 *Tartuffe* (Molière, director Bill Alexander) Royal Shakespeare Company  
*Tales from Hollywood* (Christopher Hampton, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Volpone* (Ben Jonson, director Bill Alexander) RSC  
*Kick for Touch* (Peter Gill, director Peter Gill) NT
- 1984 *Up for None* (Mick Mahoney, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Antigone* (Euripides, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Anton Chekhov* (devised Michael Pennington) NT  
*She Stoops to Conquer* (Oliver Goldsmith, director Giles Block) NT  
*Venice Preserv'd* (Thomas Otway, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Breaking the Silence* (Stephen Poliakoff, director Ron Daniels) RSC  
*Barbican & Mermaid*  
*Martine* (Jean-Jacques Bernard/John Fowles, director Peter Hall) NT  
*Fool For Love* (Sam Shepard, director Peter Gill) NT
- 1985 *Cottesloe Festival of New Plays* NT, directors Peter Gill, John Burgess  
*As I Lay Dying* (William Faulkner)  
*Murderers* (Daniel Mornin)  
*True Dare Kiss, Command or Promise* (Debbie Horsfield)  
*In the Blue* (Peter Gill)  
*Lennon* (Bob Eaton, director Clare Venables) Crucible Sheffield and Astoria
- 1986 *Long Time Gone* (writer/director Peter Gill) NT  
*Tartuffe* (revival – Molière, director Bill Alexander) RSC  
*Neoptide* (Sarah Daniels, director John Burgess) NT  
*Carmen Jones* (Oscar Hammerstein II, directors Steven Pimlott/Clare Venables) Crucible Sheffield  
*Not About Heroes* (Stephen Macdonald, director Michael Simpson) NT
- 1987 *Coming In To Land* (Stephen Poliakoff, director Peter Hall) NT  
*Antony and Cleopatra* (Shakespeare, director Peter Hall), NT  
*Mean Tears* (writer/director Peter Gill) NT  
*Bow Down / Down By The Greenwood Side* (Harrison Birtwistle) NT Studio & GEH
- 1988 *The Winter's Tale, Cymbeline, The Tempest* (Shakespeare, director Peter Hall) NT & international tour
- 1989 *When We Were Women* (Sharman Macdonald, director John Burgess) Edinburgh Festival, NT on tour  
*Schism in England* (Calderon/John Clifford, director John Burgess) Edinburgh Festival, NT on tour  
*The Way South* (Jacqueline Holborough, director John Burgess) Bush Theatre  
*Orpheus Descending* (Tennessee Williams, director Peter Hall) London & New York
- 1991 *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare, director David Leveaux) RSC  
*The Rose Tattoo* (Tennessee Williams, director Peter Hall) Playhouse Theatre
- 1993 *It's a Great Big Shame* (writer/director Mike Leigh) Theatre Royal, Stratford East  
*The Honey Spike* (Bryan Macmahon, director Francesca Zambello) Abbey, Dublin
- 1997 *Cardiff East* (writer/director Peter Gill) NT
- 2000 *Remembrance of Things Past* (Marcel Proust/Harold Pinter, director Di Trevis) NT

- 2001 *Luther* (John Osborne, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Hamlet* (Shakespeare, director Steven Pimlott) RSC
- 2002 *The Bacchae* (Euripides, director Peter Hall) NT  
*Original Sin* (writer/director Peter Gill) Crucible Sheffield
- 2003 *The Seagull* (Chekhov/Phyllis Nagy, director Steven Pimlott) Chichester Festival Theatre  
*The Merchant of Venice* (Shakespeare, director Gale Edwards) Chichester Festival Theatre  
*Scenes from the Big Picture* (Owen McCafferty, director Peter Gill) NT  
*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare, director Gale Edwards) Chichester Festival Theatre
- 2004 *The Master and Margarita* (Mikhail Bulgakov/Edward Kemp, director Steven Pimlott) Chichester Festival Theatre
- 2005 *King Lear* (Shakespeare, director Steven Pimlott) Minerva Chichester  
*Days of Wine and Roses* (Owen McCafferty, director Peter Gill), Donmar Warehouse  
*The Voyage Inheritance* (Harley Granville Barker, director Peter Gill) NT  
*Two Thousand Years* (writer/director Mike Leigh) NT
- 2007 *The Vortex* (Noel Coward, director Peter Hall) Apollo and tour
- 2008 *Uncle Vanya* (Chekhov/Stephen Mulrine, director Peter Hall) The Rose Theatre, Kingston and on tour

## OPERA

- 1987 *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart, director Peter Gill) Opera North
- 1989 *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart, director Peter Gill) Opera North (tour)  
*New Year* (Tippett, director Peter Hall) Houston Grand Opera
- 1990 *New Year* (revival, Tippett, director Peter Hall) Glyndebourne Festival
- 1991 *Out of the East* (Dominic Muldowney, director Di Trevis) Queen Elizabeth Hall  
*Gawain* (Harrison Birtwistle, director Di Trevis) Royal Opera House Covent Garden  
*L'assedio di Calais* (Donizetti, director Francesca Zambello) Wexford Festival Opera
- 1992 *The Vanishing Bridegroom* (Judith Weir, director Francesca Zambello) St Louis Opera  
*Gawain* (revival – Harrison Birtwistle, director Di Trevis) ROH
- 1993 *Jenufa* (Janacek, director Francesca Zambello) Dallas Opera  
*Falstaff* (Verdi, director Francesca Zambello) Gothenburg Opera
- 1994 *Khovanshchina* (Mussorgsky, director Francesca Zambello) English National Opera  
*Blond Eckbert* (Judith Weir, director Francesca Zambello) Santa Fe Opera  
*Gawain* (revival – Harrison Birtwistle, director Di Trevis) ROH  
*Billy Budd* (Britten, director Francesca Zambello) Geneva Grand Opera
- 1995 *Billy Budd* (revival – Britten, director Francesca Zambello) Bastille Paris  
*Modern Painters* (David Lang, director Francesca Zambello) Santa Fe Opera  
*Billy Budd* (revival – Britten, director Francesca Zambello) ROH  
*Jenufa* (revival – Janacek, director Francesca Zambello) Portland Opera
- 1996 *Billy Budd* (revival – Britten, director Francesca Zambello) Bastille Paris  
*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Copenhagen Opera  
*The Mask of Orpheus* (Birtwistle, director Stephen Langridge) Royal Festival Hall
- 1997 *Jenufa* (revival – Janacek, director Francesca Zambello) Dallas Opera  
*Billy Budd* (revival – Britten, director Francesca Zambello) Dallas Opera  
*Turandot* (Puccini, director Francesca Zambello) Bastille Paris
- 1998 *Misper* (John Lunn, director Stephen Langridge) Glyndebourne on Tour  
*Arianna* (Alexander Goehr, director Francesca Zambello) ROH  
*Misper* (revival – John Lunn, director Stephen Langridge) Glyndebourne on Tour  
*Turandot* (revival – Puccini, director Francesca Zambello) Bastille Paris



	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> (Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Opera de Bordeaux
	<i>The Bartered Bride</i> (Smetana, director Francesca Zambello) ROH
	<i>Billy Budd</i> (revival – Britten, director Francesca Zambello) Houston Grand Opera
	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> (Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Seattle Opera
1999	<i>Turandot</i> (revival – Puccini, director Francesca Zambello) Bastille Paris
	<i>Otello</i> (Verdi, director Francesca Zambello) Bayerische Staatsoper Munich
	<i>Giulio Cesare</i> (Handel, director Stephen Langridge) Opera de Bordeaux
	<i>Dialogues des Carmelites</i> (Poulenc, director Francesca Zambello) Santa Fe Opera
2000	<i>Ion</i> (Param Vir, director Steven Pimlott) Aldeburgh Festival & Almeida Festival
	<i>The Last Supper</i> (Harrison Birtwistle, director Martin Duncan) Glyndebourne on Tour
	<i>Gawain</i> (revival – Harrison Birtwistle, director Di Trevis) ROH
	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> (revival – Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Chicago Lyric Opera
	<i>Billy Budd</i> (revival – Britten, director Francesca Zambello) Los Angeles Opera
	<i>Billy Budd</i> (revival) ROH
2001	<i>Billy Budd</i> (revival) Bastille Paris
	<i>Jenůfa</i> (revival – Janáček, director Francesca Zambello) San Francisco Opera
	<i>The Last Supper</i> (revival – Harrison Birtwistle, director Martin Duncan) Glyndebourne Festival Opera
2002	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> (revival – Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Opera de Bordeaux
	<i>La Vestale</i> (Spontini, director Francesca Zambello) ENO
	<i>The Bartered Bride</i> (revival – Smetana, director Francesca Zambello) ROH
	<i>Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci</i> (Mascagni & Leoncavallo, director Martin Duncan) Royal Albert Hall
2003	<i>L'Heure espagnole / L'enfant et les sortilèges</i> (Ravel, directors Peter Mumford/Ian Spink) Opera Zuid
	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> (revival – Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Opera de Nancy
	<i>Khovanshchina</i> (revival – Mussorgsky, director Francesca Zambello) English National Opera
	<i>Così fan tutte</i> (Mozart, director Samuel West) ENO
2004	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> (revival – Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Opera de Marseille
	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> (revival – Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Lithuanian Opera
	<i>The 10 Passion</i> (Birtwistle, director Stephen Langridge) Aldeburgh Festival, Almeida Festival and Bregenz Festival
2005	<i>Tangier Tattoo</i> (John Lunn, director Stephen Langridge) Glyndebourne on Tour
	<i>Midsummer Marriage</i> (Tippett, director Peter Hall) Chicago
2006	<i>The Bartered Bride</i> (revival – Smetana, director Francesca Zambello) ROH
2007	<i>Carmen</i> (Bizet, directors Steven Pimlott & Aletta Collins) Greek National Opera Bizet
2008	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> (revival – Wagner, director Francesca Zambello) Den Nye Opera, Bergen
	<i>The Minotaur</i> (Birtwistle, director Stephen Langridge) ROH
2009	<i>Semper Dowland, Semper Dolens / The Corridor</i> (Birtwistle, director Peter Gill) Aldeburgh Festival, QEH and Bregenz Festival
	<i>Hippolyte et Aricie</i> (Rameau, director Stephen Langridge) Nationale Reisopera

## FILM

1984	<i>Blue Jean</i> (David Bowie, director Julian Temple)
1987	<i>Aria</i> (Don Boyd, director Bill Bryden)
1991	<i>Life is Sweet</i> (writer/director Mike Leigh)
1992	<i>Black Poppies</i> (devised Peter Markham and John Burgess)
1993	<i>Naked</i> (writer/director Mike Leigh)
1997	<i>Secrets and Lies</i> (Palme d'Or winner – writer/director Mike Leigh)
2003	<i>Turn of the Screw</i> (Britten, director Katie Mitchell)

## AWARDS

1985	British Drama Association Award for <i>Venice Preserv'd</i> , NT, director Peter Gill
1995	Laurence Olivier Award for <i>Khovanshchina</i> (Best Opera Production) ENO, director Francesca Zambello
1996	Laurence Olivier Award for <i>Billy Budd</i> (Best Opera Production) ROH, director Francesca Zambello
2001	Laurence Olivier Award for <i>Remembrance of Things Past</i> (Best Costume Design) NT, director Di Trevis
2004	OBE in New Year's Honours
2006	Honorary Doctorate from Staffordshire University
2007	Misha Black Award
2007	Laurence Olivier Award for <i>The Voyage inheritance</i> , NT, director Peter Gill
2008	The Young Vic Award
2009	Royal Designer for Industry

## POSITIONS HELD

1970-79	Resident Designer, Victoria Theatre, Stoke on Trent
1980-89	Resident Designer, National Theatre
1992	Consultant, British Council Theatre, Delhi
1993-now	Director, Motley Theatre Design School
1996-97	Consultant and Project Leader, The Market Theatre Lab, Johannesburg
2003-now	Associate, National Theatre
2003-06	Associate Designer, Chichester Festival Theatre
2008	Concept Designer, The Rose Theatre, Kingston

## FUTURE PLANS

2010	<i>La Forza del Destino</i> (Verdi, director Martin Duncan) Opera Holland Park
	<i>Madam Butterfly</i> (Puccini, director Stephen Langridge) Royal Danish Opera
	<i>Rigoletto</i> (Verdi, director Daniele Abbado) La Fenice, Venice
2011	<i>Betrothal in a Monastery</i> (Prokofiev, director Martin Duncan) Theatre du Capitole, Toulouse
	New Devised Play (writer/director Mike Leigh) NT
2013	<i>Parsifal</i> (Wagner, director Stephen Langridge) ROH
	<i>The Minotaur</i> (revival – Birtwistle, director Stephen Langridge) ROH
	<i>Nabucco</i> (Verdi, director Daniele Abbado) La Scala, Milan

## EXHIBITION

2010	<i>Alison Chitty: Design Process 1970-2010</i> National Theatre (1 February – 28 March)
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Catalogue designed by Clare Parker

Alison Cuthy Design Process 1970-2012



The Minotaur  
John Tomlinson  
Frame head & show ideas and 'jock straps'.