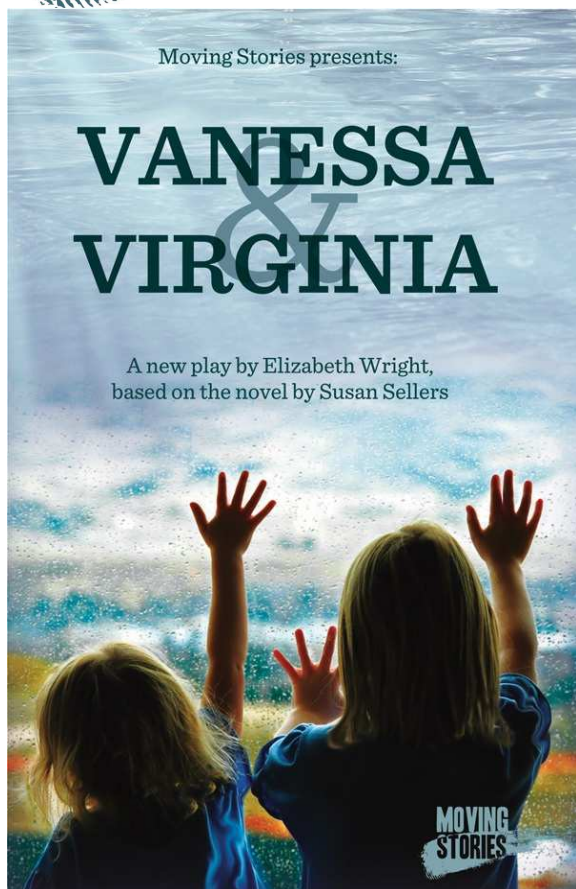


MOVING STORIES



'Vanessa and Virginia'

a new play

PUBLICITY PACK

Following its acclaimed debut at the International Virginia Woolf Conference in France (September 2010) *Vanessa and Virginia* is proud to be launching in the UK and is now available for booking and tour, until September 2011.

"I thoroughly enjoyed Vanessa and Virginia. I think its fluidity is remarkable and completely absorbing... I found the whole thing totally convincing and moving." (Professor David Bradshaw, Woolf Scholar, Oxford University)

The Production

Based on the acclaimed novel by Susan Sellers, Elizabeth Wright's innovative new play is a moving, poetic and powerful story about the remarkable sisters, novelist Virginia Woolf and artist Vanessa Bell.

"Our faces are imperfect replicas of each other, as if the painter were trying to capture the same person from different angles"

Fusing original music and poetic text, the play creates a dream-like, meditative quality, moving gracefully through time and seamlessly transporting the audience through places, events and memories. The play is enhanced by an interwoven projected backdrop of evolving images, inspired by paintings by Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant.

Vanessa and Virginia has already garnered tremendous support and interest from venues, conferences, and the Virginia Woolf/Vanessa Bell estate, securing a tour which, began in Aix-en-Provence in September 2010. The play has been invited to Poland, Germany, Greece and across the UK including a combination of theatre spaces, literary conferences and site-specific locations until October 2011.

The Company

Moving Stories was set up by Director Emma Gersch in 2010 to create theatre that allows stories to be shared and heard, and engages audiences in an immersive theatrical event. We aim to awaken the senses and stimulate the emotions by creating bold, ambitious and

beautiful work for both theatres and unusual locations and sites. For more information visit www.movingstories.org.uk

Synopsis

Vanessa and Virginia are sisters, best friends, bitter rivals, and artistic collaborators. As children, they fight for attention. As young women, they stake their claims on bohemian Bloomsbury, creating new lives and groundbreaking works of art. Through everything — marriage, lovers, loss, madness, children, success, and failure — they remain the closest of co-conspirators. But they also betray each other. A love letter and an elegy from Vanessa Bell to her sister, 'Vanessa and Virginia' is a stunning portrait of sibling rivalry and an imaginative triumph

The play weaves historical facts with imaginative interpretations, tracing the lives of these two remarkable sisters from the constraints of their Victorian upbringing to their creation of the free-thinking Bloomsbury group. Featuring a cast of two, the play follows the women's passionate devotion and fierce competition as they fight to realise their artistic visions amidst desire, scandal, illness and war.

Target Audience

At the heart of this piece is a moving tale of two sisters, and it is not necessary for our audience to have any prior knowledge of their historical legacy. Our hope is that the play will appeal to a wide audience, since it is concerned with the human condition. It will of course be of particular interest to english, drama and art students, literary groups, theatre and non- theatre going audiences, and young audiences for its innovative use of multimedia and original music. Spanning 60 years from the turn of the 19th century, the play would also appeal to audiences interested in reflecting back over this dramatic period of history.

Educational Workshops

The company is committed to offering a comprehensive education package to enhance the student experience of the play. Dynamic, practical Workshops can be tailored to specific school/college groups, and are offered by director and cast. Teacher resource packs will also be available. More information available on request.

Post Show Events

The director and cast are available for post show discussions or Q&A sessions at the request of the venue.

Technical Information

The piece has been designed to be able to adapt to a range of spaces and sites. Technical requirements are minimal:

- Cast size: 2
- Production Technician accompanies show
- Projector and Projection screen/blacks (can be provided)
- Minimal set
- Minimal offstage action/space required

Catch the show....!

Our next performance will be at The Byre in St Andrews, Scotland on February 11th.

The Company:

Cast:

Vanessa: Kitty Randle

Virginia: Sarah Fullagar

Creative Team:

Director: Emma Gersch

Designer: Kate Unwin

Playwright: Elizabeth Wright

Composer: Jeremy Thurlow

Lighting Design: George Seal

Projection Design: Samantha Simmonds

Projection Design: Keeley Major

Stage Management: George Seal

Assistant Director: Hannah Quigley

Playwright: Dr Elizabeth Wright Elizabeth Wright is Senior Lecturer in English and European Literature at Bath Spa University. She penned her first play, an adaptation of the novel *Vanessa and Virginia* by Susan Sellers, in 2009. The play is now touring to a number of exciting and unusual venues across the UK and Europe. Elizabeth is currently teaching literature courses on early 20th century European drama and female modernist writers; working on a book about amateur dramatics at the turn of the nineteenth century and thinking up ideas for her next play.

Novelist: Professor Susan Sellers

Susan Sellers is author of the novel *Vanessa and Virginia*, published in the UK by Two Ravens and in the US by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and Mariner Books. The novel is currently being translated into several languages (including Swedish, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Korean and Chinese) and is available as an audiobook. Susan is a professor of English at the University of St Andrews and an internationally acclaimed scholar on the work of Virginia Woolf. She is the editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Virginia Woolf*, general editor of Virginia Woolf's writings for Cambridge University Press, and volume editor of Woolf's novel *The Waves* (also for Cambridge University Press). Susan has also written a number of books on literary theory and criticism, and has translated the work of the French writer H el ene Cixous.

Director: Emma Gersch Emma is Artistic Director of Moving Stories Theatre Company, whose debut production is *Vanessa and Virginia*. Most recently Emma directed *West Side Story* for the Minack Theatre in Cornwall. Emma trained at the University of Hull and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has worked as an actress, director and teacher in the UK, Europe and the USA. Acting includes work with Howard Barker and the Wrestling School. Directing work includes *The Tempest* in New York, *Judith* in London. For Full Tilt Theatre Company, Emma has directed major site-specific and reinvention productions including *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* for the Bath Shakespeare Festival and Minack Theatre, and *The Comedy of Errors*, which toured across USA and Canada. Emma is Senior Lecturer in Drama at Bath Spa University, and Deputy Artistic Director of Full Tilt Theatre Company. Emma heads up the third year reinvention project at Bath Spa, where outputs include *Agamemnon* (BAC) and most recently, *Orestes Re-Examined* (Bath Spa, prison tour and Southwark Playhouse). Emma also works as a freelance director and teacher at Mountview Theatre Academy and ALRA in London.

Vanessa Bell: Kitty Randle

Kitty trained at Bretton Hall. Her theatre credits include: ensemble in *West Side Story* at the Minack Theatre, Prince Edward & Mistress Shore in *Richard III*, Electra / Chorus in *Orestes: Re-Examined* at the Southwark Playhouse, Duckling in *Fleet*, Bernarda Alba in *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Rondo Theatre Bath), Violet in *Heresies* (Bristol Old Vic Studio), Ophelia in *Hamlet* (Bath Shakespeare Festival and the Minack Theatre), Liz in *Becoming Giants* (PQTC regional tour), Susanna Walcott in *The Crucible* (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield) Praying Girl in *Iphigenia* (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield), Sheryl in *The Russian Soldier Who* (Babbling Vagabonds Regional Tour) as well as extensively touring with CragRats Theatre. TV and Film credits include: Crime Watch (BBC) and Rain (Suited and Booted).

Virginia Woolf: Sarah Fullagar

Sarah graduated from Bath Spa University in 2009 with a first class degree in Performing Arts, and makes her professional debut with *Vanessa and Virginia*. Previous work includes Rebel *Orestes Re-Examined* (Southwark Playhouse), Ensemble *Beast* (The Rondo Theatre), Storyteller *Old Man and the Sea* (The Egg, Theatre Royal Bath) and Guide *Moving Stories* (Southwark Playhouse). Sarah is an Associate Artist for Moving Stories Theatre Company.

Composer: Jeremy Thurlow (Cambridge University)

Jeremy Thurlow is a composer, writer and pianist. His music has been described as 'seductive, innovative, full of freshness' by Henri Dutilleux. It has been performed by the BBC Philharmonic, Rolf Hind, the BBC Singers, the Endymion Ensemble, Yundi Li and the Fitzwilliam String Quartet, among others. Recent projects include a video-opera for voices, video and electronics created in collaboration with writer Alastair Appleton; a new quartet for the Fitzwilliam String Quartet, a dance-piece *That Second Realm*, written in collaboration with choreographer Susie Crow, and a Keats setting *Unbidden Visions*. In 2007 he won the George Butterworth Award. His book on composer Henri Dutilleux is published in French by Millénaire III, and he has also written on Messiaen. He broadcasts frequently on BBC Radio 3. He enjoys playing chamber music, most recently in performances of *Winterreise* with tenor Phillip Conway-Brown. Jeremy Thurlow is a Fellow of Robinson College, University of Cambridge.

Lighting Design and Technical Stage Management: George Seal

George Seal is a recent graduate from Bath Spa University having studied Theatre Production, specialising in Lighting Design and Stage Management. Credits include *How to Disappear Completely and Never be Found* (Lighting Design, Ustinov Studio) *The Pillowman* (Lighting Design, NSDF 2010), *Romeo and Juliet* Unzipped (Technical ASM, Salisbury Playhouse) *Breakfast with Mugabe* (ASM Theatre Royal Bath) *Orestes Re-Examined* (DSM, Southwark Playhouse) and *Around the World in 80 Days* (Takeover DSM, Theatre Royal Bath). George is also the newly appointed Deputy Studios Technician for the Theatre Royal Bath's Ustinov and Egg theatres, and is an Associate Technician for Moving Stories Theatre Company.

Production Images





Production Support:

AHRC, Bath Spa University, Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, Charleston House, The Bloomsbury Workshop, Robinson College Cambridge.

For further information/Links

On the rehearsal process: www.vanessaandvirginiaresearch.blogspot.com

On the theatre company: www.movingstories.org.uk

On research at Bath Spa University: <http://www.bathspampa.com/research.php?page=page3>

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