

Interview with Naomi Dawson: Designer for *Brave New World* 4 September - 5 December 2015 UK Tour



1. How did you become a designer? Where did you train?

When I was about 16 I was inspired by my aunt who was then a costume designer and maker (now a costume historian and tutor). I trained at Wimbledon School of Art and did a BA Hons degree course in Theatre Design. It was 3 years long.

2. How did you get your first job designing?

It was 1 or 2 years after graduation, I was assisting at the Gate Theatre which led onto a few design jobs.

3. What advice would you give to someone considering a career as a theatre designer?

Try to get as much experience as possible in designing your own show, however small a budget, as possible. Assisting is very useful but you'll only learn and develop your own design process by doing it yourself.

4. What was your first experience of theatre? Who were your role models in theatre design and why?

I was very lucky and had many early experiences of watching theatre but I think the show that most sticks in the mind was seeing 'Street of Crocodiles' by Complicite when I was a teenager. My role models were a couple of tutors I met when studying in Maastricht on an Erasmus exchange when at Wimbledon. They really made me look and understand design in a very different way.

5. How do you first approach a play from a design point of view?

I tend to build up an aesthetic gradually with different images, most often together with the director. I'll try to find the right 'feel' before worrying too much about practicalities. I'll also spend some time in the Theatre or whatever space it's going to be performed in to start to understand how the space might best work.