

EXETER NORTHCOTT THEATRE AND LE NAVET BETE PRESENT

Dick Whittington



VISUAL STORY

Introduction

This visual story will let you know exactly what happens in our and Le Navet Bete's show *Dick Whittington*.

We'll be going over:

- The cast (page 3)
- The characters (pages 4 – 7)
- The set (pages 8 – 9)
- Show times (page 10)
- The story (warning: this section contains spoilers!) (pages 11 – 17)
- Any moments in the show that may be a little bit brighter, louder or more unexpected than others. There aren't many, but we want you to know when they are (pages 18 – 22).
- Relaxed performances (page 23)

If you would like to visit the Northcott, see the set and meet the company before you come to the show, please call us on 01392 72 63 63 or email us at access@exeternorthcott.co.uk and we'll do our best to make this happen.

If there is anything else that you would like to know about the show that we don't cover in this visual story, please get in touch at boxoffice@exeternorthcott.co.uk and we'll try to help as best we can.

The Cast

There are 10 actors in *Dick Whittington*.

Al, Matt and Nick from Exeter-based theatre company Le Navet Bete are joined by Molly, Elliot, Andrew, Poppy, Sophia, Stephanie and Jodie.

Le Navet Bete have been making shows together for over 10 years. *Dick Whittington* is the second time that they have collaborated with actors outside of their company, the first being last year's pantomime, *Robin Hood*.

The actors are supported by the Northcott's technical team. Our technicians make sure that the show runs safely and smoothly, but you probably won't see them on stage. Some of our technicians sit in the technical box, behind your seats, where they operate the lights and the sound. Other technicians will be above and at the sides of the stage, helping to raise or lower curtains, move scenery, and help actors change costumes during the show.



Nick Bunt
Actor



Molly Cheesley
Actor



Elliot Coombe
Actor



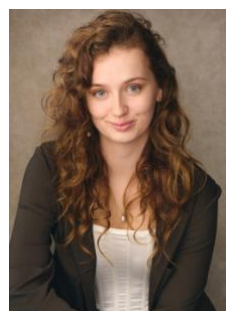
Andrew Dillon
Actor



Al Dunn
Actor



Matt Freeman
Actor



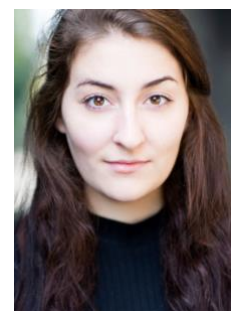
Poppy Joy
Actor



Sophia Lewis
Actor



Stephanie Lysé
Actor



Jodie Micciché
Actor

The Characters

The 10 actors play 14 different characters in *Dick Whittington*.

They will be wearing lots of different costumes and speaking in lots of different accents.

You can learn more about the main characters that each of the actors play in *Dick Whittington* below.

You can also learn about the minor characters in the play. They may only appear once or twice on our stage for a short amount of time.

Dick Whittington Characters (in order of appearance)

Stephanie Lysé plays one main character, the evil and tenacious **Queenie Rat**.

Queenie Rat is the villain of the story. She was once a rat herself, but after being given artificial intelligence, she escaped from her creator, **Elon Muskrat**.

She is now determined to use her army of AI robot rats to create chaos in London and help her to become Lord Mayor.



Jodie Micciché plays two characters, the good and kind **Fairy Bow Bells** and the rambunctious **Captain Barnacle**.

Fairy Bow Bells is the protector of London town and prophesises that 'an orphan youth with a heart that is good and true' will become the Mayor of London. When that youth is revealed to be **Dick Whittington**, she does what she can to aid him on his journey.



Captain Barnacle is an eccentric man who captains *The Saucy Sally*, a ship that the other characters travel on to the Mediterranean.



Elliot Coombe plays one main character, the titular hero **Dick Whittington**.

Dick is young, optimistic and a little naïve, but has a heart of gold. He comes to London to find his fortune and dreams of becoming Lord Mayor. Soon after arriving in the city, he befriends **Sox the Cat**, who joins him on his adventures.



Sophia Lewis plays one main character, the thoughtful and intelligent **Alice Fitzwarren**.

Alice is kind and clever, with a genuine love of numbers and maths. She meets Dick when he first arrives in London, and it's love at first sight. She helps Dick get a job at her father's shop and supports his dream of becoming Lord Mayor of London.



Nick Bunt plays the slightly pompous old man, **Alderman Fitzwarren**.

Alderman Fitzwarren is a merchant, shop owner and Alice Fitzwarren's father. He gives Dick the job of guarding his shop (and safe full of gold coins) while he travels abroad to the Mediterranean.

He is sometimes bad tempered but ultimately cares about his friends and family very much, and helps to thwart Queenie Rat's attempt at becoming Lord Mayor of London.



Al Dunn plays two characters, **Jack Suet** and **Elon Muskrat**.

Jack Suet is a young man who is a little bit lazy. He asks the audience to help him trick the other characters into thinking he is always busy, so that he doesn't have to do any real work. He is Sarah Suet's son and helps to run Alderman Fitzwarren's shop.

Elon Muskrat is the creator of Queenie Rat and the first artificial intelligence, RatGPT. He lives on a remote paradise Island, which the other characters find after they are shipwrecked. His island has been overrun by robot rats, and he asks for the help of the other characters to rid him of the rats.



Poppy Joy plays **Sox**, a very sassy cat and rat catcher extraordinaire (photographed here with Dick Whittington).

Sox meets Dick soon after he arrives in London and the two immediately become the best of friends. Sox stays with Dick throughout his adventures and helps him to defeat the army of robot rats that's on the loose, both in London and on Elon Muskrat's Island paradise.

Sox occasionally talks to the audience, but the characters in the play cannot hear them speak.



Matt Freeman plays the loveable pantomime dame, **Sarah Suet**.

Sarah Suet is Jack Suet's mother. She works for Alderman Fitzwarren and is convinced he is secretly in love with her (which he is!).

Sarah Suet wears lots of different colourful costumes and large, over-the-top wigs throughout the show.



Molly Cheesley and **Andrew Dillon** play four minor characters throughout the show: **townspeople of London, rats** (photographed here with Queenie Rat), **sailors** and **Returning Officers**.

This means they change costumes a lot throughout the show as they become the different characters.



The Set



The *Dick Whittington* set was designed by Imagine Theatre.

The set has several backdrops (showcloths). These help to give the idea that the stage is larger than it really is.

The first showcloth shows houses of the city of London in the background, with the title of the show written on the front of a large, red knapsack and the bells of London in the foreground. The second showcloth shows the view from Highgate Hill, with trees on the edges of the foreground and the city of London in the background. The third showcloth shows a tropical beach scene.

The sides of the stage look like ornate columns, with large, gold bells hanging from above.

The floor of the set is predominantly blue and has yellow and purple speckles across it.

There are also several pieces of scenery (set pieces) that are brought onto and taken off the stage during the show to help give the idea of different spaces in the story. These set pieces are built on wheels and will be moved around by the performers and / or technicians.

The first set piece in the show is outside Alderman Fitzwarren's shop. There are several life-sized, old-fashioned buildings (17th century style), with shop signs hung on the outside. Smoke appears to be rising out of their chimneys. On the right of the stage, one of the shops has a large, red sign on the front that reads 'Fitzwarren's Store'. Fitzwarren's Store opens to reveal the interior of the shop, complete with shop counter.

The second set piece in the show is the London Docks, which includes lots of barrels and pieces of cargo scattered around the stage, as well as the exterior of a large ship (*The Saucy Sally*). The ship has huge, cream-coloured sails and a gangplank that the characters can walk up and down to board or exit the ship.

The third set piece in the show is the deck of the ship, *The Saucy Sally*. In the centre of the stage is a tall mast and in front of that is the ship's steering wheel, which is called the 'helm'. To the left and right, on each side of the stage, are short staircases that lead onto a raised platform behind the mast/helm. Around the edges of the set are several tall deck lamps, from which fly gold and red flags.

The fourth set piece is the galley of *The Saucy Sally*. A galley is the inside area of a ship where food is prepared, like a kitchen. The ceiling, walls and floor are all made of wooden planks. There are two round porthole windows in the walls. At the back of the set piece is a double wooden door, above which is a shelf covered in cooking and baking equipment and ingredients. A large worktop sits in the centre of the galley, with cakes painted on the front of it.

The fifth set piece is Elon Muskrat's Island palace. In the centre of the stage are a set of blue steps. On either side of the steps are two sizable, golden plant pots, containing leafy green plants. The steps lead up to a raised platform. Behind the raised platform is a short wall that is tiled with purple and turquoise tiles, and three highly decorative window arches. Beyond the window arches is the ocean. Several ornate, gold lamps hang from the ceiling.

The final set piece shows the Mayoral Chamber. In the centre of the stage is a set of blue stairs. On either side of the stairs are decorative golden walls, with vaulted windows at the top. The stairs lead up to a grand, arched doorway. Above the doorway hangs a large, gold bell.

About the show

How long is *Dick Whittington*?

Dick Whittington is performed in two parts with a short break (interval) in the middle so that you can grab a drink from our theatre café, pop to the loo or stretch your legs. The first half of the show is approximately 40-50 minutes long. The interval lasts around 20 minutes. The second half of the show is approximately 50-60 minutes long. The total length of *Dick Whittington*, including the interval, is approximately 120 minutes, or 2 hours.

How do we tell the story of *Dick Whittington*?

Dick Whittington is a pantomime show. This means that, at times, the actors will talk directly to the audience and help explain what is happening on stage. There will also be moments when the actors ask the audience to be part of the show. They might throw objects into the audience for you to catch, ask you to make sounds or respond to their questions.

Dick Whittington – Scene by scene

We warned you! The following section contains spoilers for *Dick Whittington*. If you would like to keep the show a surprise, do not read any further.

ACT 1

Scene 1

Location: Highgate Hill, London

Meet Queenie Rat, a rebellious AI rodent who has escaped the control of her creator, Elon Muskrat. She's on a mission to become the new Lord Mayor of London.

However, Fairy Bow Bells appears and reveals a prophecy that an orphan boy with a good heart will take the role. On cue, Dick Whittington walks by Queenie and Fairy on his way to London, holding a bundle with all his belongings.

Queenie doesn't believe Fairy, and challenges her to a wild bet: if Queenie loses the election, she'll kiss a flamingo, dance a flamenco and eat a Sea Captain's hat.

Scene 2

Location: London Town

Dick arrives in a bustling London marketplace while Fairy and ensemble members sing *Welcome to London Town*. He dreams of being Lord Mayor and quickly befriends Sox the Cat. They sing *Count On Me(ow)*.

Dick meets Alice Fitzwarren. It's love at first sight.

Alice is buying food ingredients with Jack Suet for Sarah Suet, Jack's mum, so that she can bake a surprise cake for Alderman Fitzwarren, Alice's dad. Fitzwarren is about to travel by ship to the Mediterranean.

Dick needs a job. Alice suggests that Fitzwarren can hire Dick to work at his store.

Dick, Sox and Alice leave, and Jack and Fitzwarren enter. Jack wants to break free from being bossed around by Fitzwarren and Sarah. When Fitzwarren leaves, Jack decides to rebel and become his own boss. He asks the audience to shout, 'He's busy being bossed!' if anyone asks 'Jack, where are you?', so that the other characters will think that Jack is too busy for them to boss around.

Jack leaves, and Sarah enters. She reveals that Fitzwarren is in love with her, but he won't admit it.

Sarah leaves, and Queenie enters. Queenie reveals that she can control robotic rats with a tablet device while singing *Revolting Vermin* with ensemble cast members. Dick and Sox re-appear and scare away the rodents.



Scene 3

Location: Fitzwarren's Store

Alice and Jack return to Fitzwarren's store with Sarah's ingredients. Fitzwarren also comes back to the store unexpectedly, forcing Alice, Jack and Sarah to hide the ingredients. Fitzwarren asks what they were doing together, and Alice distracts him by alleging that there are rats in the store. Fitzwarren panics; he fears rats.

Fitzwarren tells Alice, Jack and Sarah that he needs someone trustworthy to look after his store and guard his gold coins in his safe. Dick enters and convinces Fitzwarren to hire him, claiming that Sox is an expert rat catcher.

Everyone but Dick leaves. Dick is smitten with his good fortune. He sings *Anyone For You*. During the song, Alice re-enters and asks him who he is singing about. Dick pretends he is singing about another woman and Alice leaves, disappointed. They finish the song separately.

Dick and Sox guard the store overnight. They fall asleep and Queenie enters. She takes the gold coins out of the safe and plants them in Dick's bundle so that he will be framed for theft.

Queenie leaves. In the morning, Alice, Fitzwarren, Jack and Sarah enter and discover the gold coins are gone. Sarah finds the gold coins in Dick's bundle. Fitzwarren accuses Dick of stealing his gold and banishes Dick from London.

Scene 4

Location: Highgate Hill, London

Dick, downtrodden, walks away from London. Fairy casts a spell on him to boost his spirits so that he doesn't give up on his dream of becoming Lord Mayor. They sing *(Bells) Total Eclipse of the Heart*.

Scene 5

Location: London Docks

At London docks, Jack and Sarah sneak aboard Fitzwarren's ship, *The Saucy Sally*, disguised as sailors. Alice and Fitzwarren also board the ship.

They meet Captain Barnacle, the ship's leader. Barnacle tests his new crewmates with some comical military drills: he gives them mops, asks them to pretend that the mops are rifles, and instructs them to shoot a buoy floating out at sea for target practice. Fitzwarren hits the buoy, Sarah misses and hits two ushers in the audience, and Jack hits a seagull flying above them, which falls from the ceiling.

Dick and Sox, and later Queenie, also stow away on the ship.

The cast sing a medley of *My Heart Will Go On* (Celine Dion), *Go West* (Pet Shop Boys), *Captain of Your Ship* (Renata & The Delrons), *Orinoco Flow* (Enya) and *Sailing* (Rod Stewart) as the ship departs from the harbour and the adventure sets sail.



ACT 2

SCENE 1

Location: London

Events:

Fairy Bow Bells reminds us that *The Saucy Sally* was setting sail.

SCENE 2

Location: On board *The Saucy Sally*

Events:

Sarah, Jack, Alice, Captain Barnacle and the Crew are on board *The Saucy Sally*.

Sarah leads them in a song - *Cake by the Ocean* – about baking while they're at sea.

Alderman Fitzwarren and Alice talk about Sarah, Jack and Dick. Alderman Fitzwarren promises to lock her in her cabin if she ever mentions his name again. Alice tricks Alderman Fitzwarren into saying Dick's name himself, so he goes to lock himself in his cabin.

Sarah, Jack, Dick and Sox reveal themselves to each other and Alice. During this sequence, various characters jump out of barrels and startle each other. When they are surprised, some of them scream.

Alderman Fitzwarren discovers Dick is aboard, and is not happy to see him. Dick is seized by Captain Barnacle, and prepared to walk the plank. Captain Barnacle wields his metal sword, but no one is hurt. The crew forgot to bring the plank along for the voyage, so they lock Dick in the hold instead, which is accessed through a trapdoor in the stage.

Captain Barnacle identifies that a storm is brewing – there are thunder and wind sound effects from this point onwards.

Alice unlocks the hold so Dick can escape, and the two of them kiss.

SCENE 3

Location: On board *The Saucy Sally*

Events:

Fairy Bow Bells appears, as if in a vision. She confronts Queenie Rat, who is planning to sink the ship using an axe during the storm.

Queenie Rat reveals that she has captured Sox, who is bound and gagged. Queenie Rat asks the audience whether she should throw Sox into the sea.

SCENE 4

Location: The Ship's Galley, on board *The Saucy Sally*

Events:

Sarah is preparing to bake Alderman Fitzwarren's cake in the Ship's Galley, which rocks and makes Sarah and Jack stumble around.

The ingredients are stored in another room, which is linked to the Galley by a speaking tube. When Jack uses the speaking tube to request flour, he gets a face-full of it. This happens a few times, and, as if Jack didn't have it bad enough, water keeps sloshing through the porthole into his face too.

Sarah continues baking the cake. Jack is making her life difficult by sticking his finger into the mixture and licking it. This descends into a food fight. Alderman Fitzwarren walks in and joins in. At moments, the audience is invited to egg the characters on.

The storm has become very loud. The captain shouts for everyone to abandon the ship, as it is sinking.

SCENE 4.2

Location: At sea

Events:

Queenie Rat escapes from the shipwreck in a lifeboat, heading back to London.

SCENE 5

Location: Desert Island

Events:

Dick, Alice and Sox stagger on – they are all OK. They find a sign advertising for a 'Rat Catcher Extraordinaire' and head to the Beach House so Sox can volunteer.

Alderman Fitzwarren, Jack and Sarah enter. Jack is carrying a prop shark under his arm, which he throws back into the sea (offstage).

They sing a song – *The Twelve Days of Christmas* – with objects they find on the beach. When they get to the 7th day, 7 mini beach balls are thrown into the audience, contained within a net.

At the end of the song, they decide to go and check out the beach house.

SCENE 6

Location: Island Palace

Events:

The island palace is overrun with robotic rats, who sing *Revolting Vermin* again. Elon Muskrat enters and demands they stop causing chaos in his tropical paradise.

Dick, Sox and Alice arrive. Elon Muskrat tells them about the rat infestation, and they prepare to take it on. Dick and Sox fight the rats, simultaneously participating in a rousing rendition of *Eye of the Tiger*.

Dick and Sox are subdued by the rats. Elon Muskrat says it would take a maths genius to change their programming so they are afraid of cats again. Alice to the rescue! She codes her heart out and the rats shut down.

Sarah and Alderman Fitzwarren arrive.

Alice has made the rats obey Sox's command. Sox makes them do some silly moves before telling them to run away. Everyone cheers and congratulates each other.

With some help from the audience, Sox tells the others that Queenie Rat was behind the sinking of The Saucy Sally. They agree to head back to London to stop her from becoming Mayor.

SCENE 7

Location: Desert Island

Events:

Alderman Fitzwarren gets stuck behind a cloth during the scene change, and has to squeeze underneath it to escape. In the process of helping him, Sarah loses her wig.

The characters sing a song – *The Wellerman* – to speed up their journey back to London. They invite the audience to sing along, encouraging them with water pistols. At the end of the song, they spray the audience with water.

SCENE 8

Location: The Mayoral Chamber

Events:

The result of the mayoral election is about to be announced. Just as the Officer is about to announce that Queenie Rat won, Alderman Fitzwarren interrupts with Sarah, Alice and Dick in tow.

Fairy Bow Bells proves that Queenie Rat has been cheating, so she cannot win the election. Sox appears in a superhero costume to take Queenie Rat into custody.

Jack arrives, carrying every single item from *The 12 Days of Christmas* song.

Alderman Fitzwarren asks Sarah to marry him. What's more, he gives Jack the management of his shop.

The audience is led in a vote by Fairy Bow Bells, and Dick is made Mayor of London.

Coming true to her promise, Queenie Rat eats a hat while dancing a flamenco and attempting to kiss a flamingo. Or rather, while being hit over the head by Jack with an inflatable flamingo. He chases her off the stage.

Alice congratulates Dick. Fairy Bow Bells casts a love spell and the two embrace.

Everyone sings *The Power of Love*.

The End

At the end of the show our actors join hands and bow. Audience members usually clap and whoop or whistle. There is no obligation to join in.

Moments in *Dick Whittington* you might want to know about

Audience Interaction

There are a few moments of direct audience interaction *Dick Whittington*. In certain moments of audience interaction, the actors may move off the stage and come out into the auditorium rows and seats (where you're sat).

ACT 1

Scene 2

When Queenie Rat swipes and types on her tablet device the fourth time, two ensemble cast members dressed as rats (see: **Other** section below for photos of the rat costumes) run between rows and seats in the auditorium.

ACT 2

Scene 5

During the song *Twelve Days of Christmas*, the cast will throw seven small beach balls contained in a net into the audience.

Scene 7

At the end of the song *The Alderman (The Wellerman)*, cast members will spray the audience with water from a water gun.

Lighting

There are a few moments where the lighting changes suddenly during the show. They are only very brief and don't last more than 10-20 seconds at most.

We'll also turn off our house lights (which illuminate the area where you're sitting) during Act 1 and 2.

ACT 1

Scene 1

Lights flash when Queenie Rat enters.

Scene 2

Lights flash when Queenie Rat enters. Additionally, when Queenie types or swipes on her tablet device for the third time in this scene, lots of little red LED lights appear around the set, giving the impression of lots of rats.

Scene 3

Lights turn off when Dick Whittington says 'Alexa, lights out.' and claps his hands together.

Scene 4

One light turns off when Sarah Suet pretends to shoot her mop-rifle at the audience.

ACT 2

Scene 2

Lights flash when *The Saucy Sally* sails into a storm.

Scene 8

Lights flash when the cast sing *The Power of Love*.

Noises

There are some moments in the first and second half of *Dick Whittington* which are a little bit louder than others. We've listed these moments below. Don't worry, it's ok to cover your ears at these points.

ACT 1

Scene 1

There is a loud clap of thunder when Queenie Rat enters.

Scene 2

There is a loud electronic noise when Queenie Rat swipes and types on her tablet device.

There are lots of rat squeaking noises when Queenie swipes and types on her tablet device the fourth time, after lots of little red LED lights appear around the set.

There are rat squeaking noises when Dick and Sox fight the rats.

Scene 3

There is a loud shop bell sound when characters enter Fitzwarren's store.

There is a loud church clock sound after Jack Suet says, 'You wouldn't catch me dead on a ship - I can't swim! And there are sharks. Waiting to nibble you where the sun don't shine.'

There is a loud cockerel call after Queenie Rat has planted the gold coins in Dick's bundle and leaves the stage.

Scene 4

There is a loud whip crack noise when Sarah hits Jack on the head with her mop.

ACT 2

Scene 2

There are some loud wave noises while *The Saucy Sally* sails on the sea.

There are loud wind and thunderclap noises when *The Saucy Sally* sails into a storm.

Scene 3

Loud bells ring when *The Saucy Sally* sinks into the sea.

Other

Ensemble cast members appear dressed as humanoid rats throughout the show. They wear rat masks with glowing red eyes (see below).



Captain Barnacle uses a metal sword, but no one will be hurt.



Queenie Rat uses a fake axe, but no one will be hurt.

In Act 1 and 2, cast members enter and exit scenes using a large trap door in the floor of the stage.

Chill-out spaces

If you need to take a break from the show for any reason, we've made two chill-out spaces: one outside Door 2 (The Pink Room, a spacious and bright room with large windows) and one outside Door 4 (a smaller room with less light, and access to an accessible toilet and lift).

***Dick Whittington* relaxed performance**

There will be a relaxed performance of Dick Whittington on Saturday 6 January at 2:30pm.

Relaxed performances are a lot more casual than a regular theatre performance:

- You are welcome to leave the auditorium and re-enter as needed.
- Our house lights (which illuminate our auditorium seating area) will be dimmed, but not completely darkened, to allow you to see and move around more easily.
- The performance will be tailored to accommodate those who may be sensitive to sound or lighting. The volume of the performance will be lower than usual, and there will be no lighting blackouts, sudden explosions, sudden crashes or loud bangs.
- Performers will have a more relaxed attitude to audience behaviour. There is no expectation for audience members to remain silent or still during the performance.

You can familiarise yourself with the Northcott Theatre building before you arrive at <https://exeternorthcott.co.uk/your-visit/getting-around-our-theatre/>

You can read more about access performances at the Northcott at <https://exeternorthcott.co.uk/your-visit/access-performances/>

If you have any access requirements, please contact us via email at access@exeternorthcott.co.uk, or by phone on 01392 72 63 63, and we'll gladly assist.