



- *Into The Woods* is a musical written by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. Originally directed on Broadway by James Lapine with orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick. This production has been licensed exclusively by Music Theatre International (Australasia). This production, directed by Eamon Flack with Belvoir Orchestrations by Guy Simpson, opened on Wednesday 22 March 2023.
- *Into The Woods* runs for approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes including a 20-minute interval.
- *Into the Woods* is a fantastical musical. It is both sung and spoken. It contains heightened and magical realistic elements as well as moments of naturalism.
- *Into The Woods* is set in a mythical fairy tale kingdom. This production is intentionally set in a non-specific time and place. The setting represents both traditional and contemporary time periods.
- There are thirteen performers in this production including two pianists. Each actor plays at least one fairy tale character; some actors play two or three characters. Each actor is also a 'storyteller'. The storytellers, including the Narrator are used as a theatrical device to move the story forward.
- The central characters of the story are The Baker and The Baker's Wife. This couple's story weaves together elements from the traditional fairy tales. All other characters in *Into The Woods* are based on fairy tale characters from Brothers Grimm. They are Jack and Jack's Mother from Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood and The Wolf, Cinderella, her Stepmother and stepsisters, two fairy tale Princes, and Rapunzel and the Witch. The Witch represents an amalgamation of all witch archetypes.
- The play contains two acts. Act One follows the characters seeking to fulfil their wish to reach their 'happily ever after'. Act Two follows the aftermath of their 'happily ever after' and what happens to these characters once get what they thought they wanted in Act One, as life continues and obstacles arise.
- **Spoiler Warning** *Into The Woods* contains some mature themes. In Act One The Wolf sings about Little Red Riding Hood as his next meal in a lascivious tone. Some relationships are shown as physically or emotionally abusive. For example, Rapunzel and The Witch who locked her in a tower violently drags her by the hair and Cinderella's stepsister slap Cinderella across the face.
- **Spoiler Warning** Act Two includes the sudden death of several characters relating to a giant in the kingdom. Two characters are heard being "squished" offstage by the giant. Several maternal characters die throughout Act Two, including Little Red's mother and Granny. These deaths are not shown on stage. Jack's Mother is hit on the head by the Prince's Steward. She is knocked out and falls unconscious. Two characters drag her offstage. Meanwhile, another character mourns their child who has just been squished. Later another character is 'squished' leaving behind an infant. Characters who have died in the show reappear at the end of the production.
- The production includes an implied sexual reference. In Act Two, The Baker's Wife encounters a prince in the woods and it is suggested they have a sexual encounter. They share a kiss onstage and then leave the stage together. When the characters are next seen together on stage they are smoking a cigarette.
- The musical includes themes of infertility and refers to this as a 'curse'. At several moments of the play the Witch 'zaps' the husband and wife and they recoil in pain as if their reproductive organs are zapped.
- The musical contains very mild gore, from the traditional fairy tales. Including body disfigurement in Cinderella, where the stepmother cuts off her daughters' toe and heel to fit into the slipper and several characters who are blinded by birds or briar. These moments are presented with humour and are theatrically exaggerated.
- The production contains the use of strobe lighting (mainly used at the end of Act One: Witch's Transformation and midway through Act Two: Last Midnight) haze, loud noises (including heavy bass which can be felt in the floor), fake blood (both exaggerated rubber representing bloodied eyes, and red liquid spilling from a shoe).
- There is some onstage smoking in this production, electronic stage cigarettes are used and not inhaled or exhaled. One character drinks from a flask and appears to be slightly intoxicated.
- Some students may need to be briefed about theatre etiquette. Please turn mobile phones off completely and refrain from eating in the theatre. Students need to know that the performance is live and that the actors see and hear them in the audience.
- Schools Performances are followed by a Question and Answer session with the cast. Let students know they can ask questions about aspects of the play that they don't fully understand afterwards.

Schools performance tickets are not sent out beforehand, please collect your tickets from the Box Office in the foyer of the theatre upon arrival on the day. Phone our box office on 02 9699 3444 if you need to check your booking.