# **MILDRED HUBBLE SPELLS TROUBLE**



**FLIES INTO THE WEST END FOR A STRICTLY LIMITED SEASON**

# **BRINGING MILDRED HUBBLE AND THE ACTION-PACKED ADVENTURES OF MISS CACKLE’S ACADEMY TO THE LONDON STAGE**

**FILLED WITH ORIGINAL SONGS, MUSIC AND MAGIC TO CHARM**

**FAMILY AUDIENCES OVER THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS**

**RUNNING FROM 24 JULY – 8 SEPTEMBER FOR 60 PERFORMANCES ONLY**

**AT THE VAUDEVILLE THEATRE**

***The Worst Witch*** will fly into the West End for 7 weeks only, over the summer holidays, from 24 July \* to 8 September (\*all tickets for the 24 July performance are just £20.00!) following its hugely successful premiere at Royal & Derngate and hit UK tour. This new story, adapted for the stage from **Jill Murphy**’s original books by **Emma Reeves** (who won a Royal Television Society Award for Best Children’s TV Programme and 2017 British Screenwriters Award for Best Children’s Programme for the televised version of *The Worst Witch*) was launched last November as Royal & Derngate’s Made in Northampton 2018 Christmas show.

*The Worst Witch is the story of an ordinary girl who finds herself in*

*an extraordinary place: a school for witches.*

*Accident-prone Mildred Hubble and her fellow pupils leave a trail of mayhem*

*behind them as they find themselves at the centre of a battle*

*that’s being fought for their future.*

Featuring Jill Murphy’s much-loved characters, the production includes original songs, music, magic and a dose of Mildred’s unique brand of utter pandemonium!

*The Worst Witch* is directed by **Theresa Heskins** (2017 UK Theatre Award for Best Show for Children and Young People) and designed by **Simon Daw**, with music by **Luke Potter**. **Kenny Wax Family Entertainment**, **Novel Theatre** and **Nica Burns** present a **Royal & Derngate**, Northampton Production.

**Jill Murphy** says: *"My first trip to the theatre aged four, opened up a magical world - so real to me, that I had to be restrained from climbing onstage to help the children in peril! My mum was quite cross with me, but I never wanted the show to end and sang the songs loudly all the way home on the bus. Imagine how proud I feel, all these years later, seeing my own Mildred Hubble on stage with all the characters from Miss Cackle's Academy. I still feel thrilled to bits when I go to the theatre and The Worst Witch is a magical production."*

**Emma Reeves** added: *“We’ve created a brand new story as well as revisiting moments from the books. Jealous Ethel Hallow is out to spoil Mildred's fun, and Miss Hardbroom is opposed to all fun in general. But, without giving too much away, Mildred faces a greater danger than she ever imagined as an old enemy returns, with a plan for revenge that could threaten not just the Academy, but the whole world…”*

**Theresa Heskins** says: *“We’ve seen the start of a rebalancing of power within our society and it feels like an important time to be creating a play about young women who are learning, collectively and individually, to use their power; and the danger if they decide to use it not for good but for ill.”*

**Jill Murphy**’s *The Worst Witch* stories have sold more than five million copies and been made into films and TV series by HBO, ITV and CBBC. There are now eight *Worst* *Witch* titles. *The Worst Witch* was made into a television series for ITV in the early 1990s and there is currently a major television series with CBBC. Jill is also well known for her picture books. She was commended for the 1980 Kate Greenaway Medal for *Peace At Last*. *Five Minute’s Peace,* the first in her series about the Large Family (of elephants), won the 1987 Parents Magazine Best Books for Babies Award, as well as being shortlisted for the 1986 Children’s Book Award. From the same series, *All In One Piece* was highly commended for the 1987 Kate Greenaway Award and shortlisted for the 1987 Children’s Book Award, and *A Quiet Night In* was short-listed for the Kate Greenaway Medal in 1994. *The Last Noo-Noo* won the 0-5 category of the 1995 Smarties Book Prize and in the same year was shortlisted for the English 4-11 Outstanding Children’s Book of the Year, going on to win the 1996 Sheffield Children’s Book Award. *The Last Noo-Noo* won the 1996 Gateshead Gold Award and in the same year was adapted as a play and performed at the Polka Theatre, London

Winner of the Royal Television Society Award for Best Children’s Television Programme, and of the 2017 British Screenwriters Award for Best Children’s Programme for the television adaptations of *The Worst Witch*, **Emma Reeves**’ screen writing credits include *Eve*, *The Dumping Ground*, *Young Dracula* and *The Story of Tracy Beaker*. Her stage work includes the Olivier Award-nominated and critically acclaimed adaptation of *Hetty Feather* (UK tour and West End).

**Theresa Heskins**’ past productions include *The Snow Queen,* which won the 2017 UK Theatre Award for Best Show for Children and Young People. Her wonderfully inventive and hugely popular production of *Around the World in 80 Days* was nominated for the same award, in both 2015 and 2017, and will tour to America in 2019.

The show is designed by **Simon Daw**, whose credits include *Baskerville* (Liverpool Playhouse) and *Humble Boy* (Orange Tree Theatre). Lighting design is by **Aideen Malone**, whose credits include *A Monster Calls* (London Old Vic/Bristol Old Vic) and *Peter Pan* (National Theatre), and sound design is by **Leigh Davies** whose recent work includes *Spring Awakening* (Hope Mill Theatre, Manchester) and *King Lear* (Old Vic). Original music is composed by **Luke Potter** (*Hetty Feather*), aerial director by **Vicki Amedume**, choreography by **Beverley Norris-Edmunds**, and illusions by **John Bulleid**.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**REMAINING UK TOUR DATES**

Plymouth, Theatre Royal - Tue 9 - Sat 13 April

[theatreroyal.com](http://www.belgrade.co.uk/event/the-worst-witch)

Norwich, Theatre Royal - Tue 16 - Sat 20 April

[Theatreroyalnorwich.co.uk](https://secure.theatreroyalnorwich.co.uk/Online/)

Coventry, Belgrade Theatre - Wed 24 - Sat 27 April

[belgrade.co.uk](http://www.belgrade.co.uk/event/the-worst-witch)

Edinburgh, King's Theatre - Tue 7 - Sun 12 May

[capitaltheatres.com](https://www.capitaltheatres.com/whats-on/theworstwitch)

Birmingham Hippodrome - Wed 22 - Sun 26 May

[Birminghamhippodrome.com](https://www.birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/the-worst-witch/)

Liverpool Playhouse - Tue 28 May – Sat 1 June

[everymanplayhouse.com](https://tickets.everymanplayhouse.com/single/PSDetail.aspx?psn=92768)

**FULL CREATIVE TEAM**

Adapted by **Emma Reeves**

Director **Theresa Heskins**

Designer **Simon Daw**

Composer **Luke Potter**

Lighting Designer **Aideen Malone**

Sound Designer **Leigh Davies**

Aerial Consultant **Vicki Amedume**

Puppetry Designer/Director **Paschale Straiton**

Movement Director **Beverley Norris-Edmunds**

Magic Consultant **John Bulleid**

Casting Director **Anji Carroll CDG**

Associate Director **Ellie Taylor**

Associate Sound Designer **Rory Maguire**

Vocal Coach **Laura Bowler**

Assistant Director **Sarah Stacey**

**KENNY WAX FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT**

Kenny Wax Family Entertainment is renowned for producing some of the best family theatre in the West End, on tour in the UK and worldwide. Their productions include: the highly anticipated *Oi Frog & Friends! By*Kes Gray and Jim Field, Jill Murphy’s *The Worst Witch*, *What the Ladybird Heard*by Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks, the award-winning productions of Jules Verne’s *Around the World in 80 Days*and Jacqueline Wilson’s*Hetty Feather*. *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt by*Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury*, Mr Popper’s Penguins by*Richard and Florence Atwaterand*Tall Stories’ The Gruffalo, The Gruffalo’s Child*and *Room on the Broom*by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler.

Kenny also produces the multi-award-winning *The Play That Goes Wrong*, currently in the West End, on a US tour and at the New World Stages in New York. *Peter Pan Goes Wrong*now touring Australia. *The Comedy About A Bank Robbery*in itsthird year at the Criterion Theatre in the West End and on a UK tour. As well as *Mischief Movie Night,*The world première of *Top Hat*whichwon three Olivier Awards including ‘Best New Musical’ and 1995’s *Once on This* *Island*winning the same award. Last year, the new British musical *SIX*completed a sold-out UK tour and returned to the West End in January for an open-ended run at the ArtsTheatre.Kenny has been the President of the Society of London Theatre since June 2017.

**NOVEL THEATRE COMPANY**

Novel Theatre is thrilled to be co-producing *The Worst Witch*. Previous productions include: *Little Women*(Duchess Theatre, West End); *Anne of Green Gables*(Lilian Baylis Theatre, Sadler’s Wells); *Carrie’s War*(Apollo Theatre, West End and UK tour); *Cool Hand Luke*(Aldwych Theatre, West End); and *Hetty Feather*(Vaudeville Theatre, West End, Duke of York’s Theatre, West End and UK tour.

2015).

**NICA BURNS**

Nica Burns, Chief Executive Nimax Theatres and co-producer of the show says: “Since Nimax was founded in 2005, introducing children to quality theatre has been at the heart of our company. Our extensive programme of quality shows across our 6 theatres for children in the school holidays has seen over 1.2 million family members attend our theatres.  For the tinies, productions include  *The Gruffalo*, *Gruffalo’s Child*, *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*, *No Room on the Broom*. For 7 years and above, productions include:  *Peter Pan Goes Wrong*, *Hetty Feather*, *Horrible Histories*, *Operation Ouch!*, *Swallows and Amazons* and now this funny, fun and magical production of Jill Murphy’s much loved classic, *The Worst Witch*.  For many, this is their first introduction to theatre and it gives us much pride to introduce new generations to the joys of theatre-going.”

**ROYAL & DERNGATE, NORTHAMPTON**

Royal & Derngate is the main venue for arts and entertainment in Northamptonshire, with audience members for live shows and films numbering 378,000 last year, and an additional 115,000 seeing its work on tour at over 85 venues. Named Regional Theatre of the Year in The Stage Awards in 2011 (and nominated again in 2016), the theatre won the UK Theatre Awards for Best Presentation of Touring Theatre in 2015 and Best Touring Production in 2016 for *The Herbal Bed*, and The Stage Ensemble Award and a Fringe First for *Education, Education, Education* in 2017.

Alongside touring nationally and internationally Royal & Derngate’s *Made in Northampton* productions have transferred to the West End and Broadway as well as Shakespeare’s Globe, the National Theatre, Hackney Empire and the Lyric Hammersmith. The venue also presents a diverse range of visiting productions on both the Derngate and Royal stages, featuring musicals, dance, comedy and music, including a residency from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Royal & Derngate’s award-winning, nationally recognised *Get Involved* programme engages with over 21,000 participants each year, including schools, families and communities in Northamptonshire and beyond, and its two-screen cinema welcomed over 82,000 audience members to the best in world, independent, British and mainstream film. Meanwhile, the theatre’s *Generate* artistic development programme supports hundreds of local and emerging artists and practitioners each year.

Royal & Derngate also continues to work in partnership to manage The Core at Corby Cube.

**LISTINGS**

***THE WORST WITCH***

**FROM 24 JULY TO 08 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**VAUDEVILLE THEATRE**

**WRITTEN BY JILL MURPHY**

**ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY EMMA REEVES**

**Age Recommendation:** Most Suitable for Ages 7+

**Production Artwork:** Available to download [**HERE**](https://we.tl/t-bdnsEkwK6C)

**Press Performance:** Sunday 28 July at 5.30pm

**Performances:** 1.30pm, 2.00pm 5.30pm & 7.00pm

(Please check [www.nimaxtheatres.com/shows/the-worst-witch](http://www.nimaxtheatres.com/shows/the-worst-witch) for full schedule details)

**Running Time:** Approximately 2 hours 10 minutes including interval

**Ticket Prices:** From £20.00

**Address:** Vaudeville Theatre, 404 Strand, Covent Garden, London, WC2R 0NH

**Box Office:** 0330 333 4814

**Website:**

UK tour: [www.worstwitchlive.com](http://www.worstwitchlive.com)

West End: [www.nimaxtheatres.com](http://www.nimaxtheatres.com)

**Facebook/Twitter/Instagram:** @WorstWitchLive

#WorstWitchLive/#WorstWitchSelfie/#WorstWitchThePlay

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