

Transcript for **Mix the Play: set designer Sarah Beaton**

Sarah Beaton: I'm Sarah Beaton. I'm the set and costume designer for Mix the Play.

I think set design is primarily a visual language and a lot of people engage with images more than they do with words, initially, and so a lot of the subtext is filtered through the design, and so a lot of the, kind of, the backstories of characters, how the characters are feeling, is represented in the set and the costume, and the scenography of the scenes.

I went straight from secondary school, erm, and then I took a gap year, erm, and then I went to study set and costume design, and it was the three-year course at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London.

I was working with lighting designers, and sound designers, and production managers, and stage managers and actors, and that was kind of throughout my training, erm, so I was always aware that I was part of a big engine.

I was lucky in that I applied to the Linbury Prize for Stage Design which is quite a prestigious stage design prize, and I was just lucky enough to be one of the winners that year, erm, which meant that I was commissioned to design an opera with The Opera Group with John Fulljames who's the Associate Director of Opera at The Opera House. I'm now part of The Old Vic 12 which is a new scheme, erm, run by The Old Vic, and that's, kind of, come at a really nice time in my, kind of, early career because I've already worked on productions, and this is now going to be like my fifth year, kind of, in the industry. It's nice to feel, like I'm – 'cause I'm still emerging – it's nice to feel like I'm still supported, and it's not like I'm just being left now.

I like a really good story, I like a really good narrative and I feel like if there's a narrative which I feel is interesting, and either the way it's written, it suggests that it's going to be told in a, like, a way which is ... unusual, I'm more drawn to projects like that than I am a play which is very similar to another play I've read.