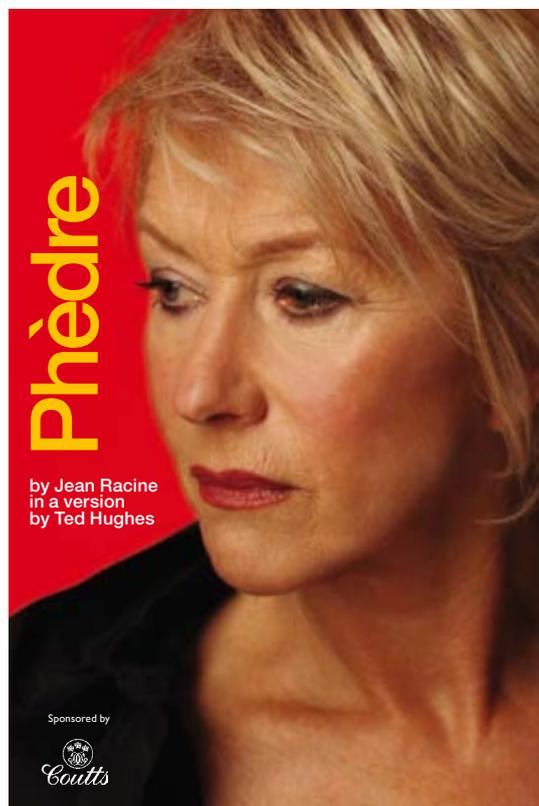


***Phèdre***  
**by Jean Racine**  
**in a version by Ted Hughes**

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**Further production details:**  
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Sources for some of the dates given in this background pack differ. In each case the most likely date has been chosen, given the available evidence

**Director**  
Nicholas Hytner

**Discover**  
National Theatre  
South Bank  
London SE1 9PX  
T 020 7452 3388  
F 020 7452 3380  
E [discover@nationaltheatre.org.uk](mailto:discover@nationaltheatre.org.uk)

**Workpack writer**  
Nadia Fall

**Editor**  
Emma Gosden

**Design**  
Clare Parker

**Photographs**  
Simon Annand

# The National's production

This production of *Phèdre* opened in the National's Lyttelton Theatre on 11 June 2009

*Characters, in order of speaking*

Hippolytus, son of Theseus and  
    *Antiope, an Amazon* . . . . . **DOMINIC COOPER**  
Théramène, Hippolytus' counsellor . . . . . **JOHN SHRAPNEL**  
Oenone, Phèdre's nurse . . . . . **MARGARET TYZACK**  
Phèdre, Queen of Athens . . . . . **HELEN MIRREN**  
Panope, Phèdre's attendant . . . . . **WENDY MORGAN**  
Aricia, granddaughter of Erechtheus,  
    *once the King of Athens* . . . . . **RUTH NEGGA**  
Ismène, Aricia's attendant . . . . . **CHIPO CHUNG**  
Theseus, King of Athens,  
    *Phèdre's husband* . . . . . **STANLEY TOWNSEND**  
Phèdre's Son . . . . . **CHRISTOPHER ASHLEY**  
    . . . . . or **ELLIOT HORNE**

*Understudies/Ensemble*

ALEXANDER D'ANDREA (Hippolytus),  
PORTIA BOOROFF (Panope/Oenone),  
ELIZABETH NESTOR (Aricia/Ismene),  
TRISTRAM WYMARK (Theseus/Théramène)

Director . . . . . **NICHOLAS HYTNER**  
Designer . . . . . **BOB CROWLEY**  
Lighting Designer . . . . . **PAULE CONSTABLE**  
Sound Score . . . . . **ADAM CORK**  
Company Voice Work . . . . . **JEANNETTE NELSON**  
    and **KATE GODFREY**

Production Manager **KATRINA GILROY**  
Staff Director **NADIA FALL**  
Stage Manager **DAVID MILLING**  
Deputy Stage Manager **ANNA HILL**  
Assistant Stage Manager **IAN FARMERY**  
Costume Supervisor **CHRISTINE ROWLAND**  
Prop Supervisor **CHRIS LAKE**  
Assistant to the Designer **JAIMIE TODD**  
Assistant to the Lighting Designer **SARAH BROWN**  
Design Associate **TIM BLAZDELL**  
Associate Sound Designer **YVONNE GILBERT**  
Production Assistant **AMIE SHILAN**  
Casting **WENDY SPON** and **JULIET HORSLEY**  
Production Photographer **CATHERINE ASHMORE**

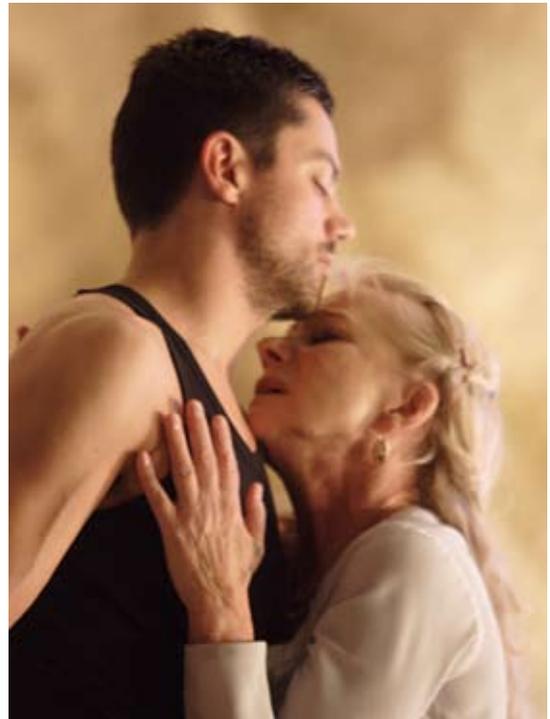


Photo (Dominic Cooper as Hippolytus and Helen Mirren as Phèdre) by Catherine Ashmore

# Synopsis of *Phèdre*

'Life here in Troezen is extremely pleasant  
But I can't hang around doing nothing.'

Hippolytus, the son of great king Theseus, is restless. He wants to leave his idyllic palace by the sea and search for his father, who has been missing for six months. His tutor and old companion, Théramène, is confused by Hippolytus' sudden eagerness to leave; after all, his men have already searched far and wide for the king, to no avail. Hippolytus explains away his agitation as being induced by the arrival of his stepmother, Queen Phèdre, whom Theseus had sent to Troezen before his departure. Although Théramène sympathises with Hippolytus (Phèdre has always been cruel to her stepson; having him banished to Troezen in the first place), he still does not understand why Hippolytus is quite so adamant to leave, particularly as Phèdre is no threat since she is dying. Hippolytus finally admits he wants to get away from Aricia – the sole survivor of the House of Pallas, former rulers of Athens, whom Theseus has imprisoned so that she may never marry or bear children. Hippolytus tells Théramène that he is in love with her. Théramène is taken aback by this confession, not least because Hippolytus has famously dedicated his life to the worship of Diana (Artemis), goddess of chastity and hunting, and fully committed to a life of daring and skilful athletic pursuits to the complete exclusion of love and sex. Despite Hippolytus' protestations, Théramène encourages him to submit to his feelings: it is futile to try and stop them.

Queen Phèdre meanwhile is consumed by an inexplicable and terrible illness, and wants to end her life. Having refused food and sleep for three days she decides to face the court and daylight. However, no sooner has she left her quarters than she is overcome once more, and is determined to die. Exhausted and at a loss, her nurse, and longstanding companion, Oenone, continues to urge Phèdre to reveal the root of her physical and mental affliction. Phèdre finally admits to an incestuous love for her stepson Hippolytus:

'Venus has fastened on me like a tiger...  
My own craving fills me with horror...  
I would have preferred to die.'

At that moment Panope, Phèdre's lady-in-waiting, announces that news has come of king Theseus' death. Though Phèdre's own young son is expected to be Theseus' successor, Panope brings news of a divided

city: some want to crown Hippolytus, rival factions support Aricia. Oenone encourages Phèdre to gather her strength and put aside her suicidal thoughts for the sake of her young son, to help him seize the throne; she tells her she need no longer be ashamed of her love for her stepson:

'Your love is guiltless as love can be.  
Theseus' death has liberated it.'

Phèdre is revived by these words.

Aricia is told of the King's death. Ismène, her companion, suggests that Hippolytus has feelings for Aricia. On hearing this Aricia admits that she too hides a passion for Hippolytus, relishing the opportunity to seduce a man famed for his pride and virginity.

'To render that unfeeling arrogant soul  
Sick with desire...  
This thrills me. This is what I want.'

Hippolytus then arrives to confirm the King's death, and, as new King of Troezen, to relinquish any claim he might have had, in the race for leadership of Athens, to Aricia. Overcome in her presence, he is unable to keep his deep love for her a secret any longer, and she returns his love with equal passion. Hippolytus tells Théramène to prepare for his immediate departure.

Phèdre then comes to Hippolytus to ask that he should mourn with her, despite her previous treatment of him, and take pity on her young son. She is overcome in his presence and declares the full extent of her love for him. Hippolytus is horrified. Phèdre grabs his sword and threatens to kill herself when Oenone stops her and takes her away. Théramène returns with news of the arrival of a delegation from Athens, ready to crown Phèdre's young son and reveals that there are also rumours that Theseus is, in fact, alive. Hippolytus is determined to investigate these and to crown Aricia.

Phèdre is utterly humiliated by her outburst and her declaration of love to Hippolytus, yet is unable to abandon her pursuit. Despite Oenone's warnings, she demands that she plead with Hippolytus and seduce him with the prospect of assuming the crown of Athens by joining forces with Phèdre. She evokes Venus, goddess of love, to witness the depths of her obsession and challenges her to make Hippolytus feel the emotion that he has never felt before: love.

## Synopsis of *Phèdre* contd...

Oenone returns with news that King Theseus is, in fact, alive and will soon return to the palace. At this news Phèdre admits defeat and plans to take her own life. Oenone halts her with a plan to accuse Hippolytus of rape before he is able to reveal Phèdre's actions. Phèdre's hesitation to accuse an innocent man is quashed when Theseus arrives and she sees the look of disdain in Hippolytus' eyes.

Theseus returns from his ordeal of being captured and imprisoned in Epirus, to find his son Hippolytus distant and Phèdre unable to approach him, running away with the ominous words:

'Your honour, my lord, has been violated.'

Hippolytus asks to leave Troezen immediately. Taken aback, Theseus demands that his son should explain what Phèdre means by her ominous words. Hippolytus, wanting to protect his father from dishonour, refuses to reveal Phèdre's true actions. Angered, Theseus goes to question Phèdre.

Oenone tells Theseus that Hippolytus raped his stepmother, using Hippolytus' sword as evidence of the crime. Theseus is enraged. Hippolytus returns and is sickened to the core to find out about Phèdre's accusation. However, he is determined not to reveal the horror of the truth and dishonour his father; and instead, is compelled by Theseus' accusations and anger, to reveal his love for Aricia. Theseus dismisses this as a poor attempt at a lie in order to conceal his crime. Theseus then evokes Neptune (Poseidon), god of the Ocean, to destroy Hippolytus.

On hearing Theseus' angry howls, Phèdre begs him to spare Hippolytus' life. Theseus confirms that he has cursed him and that Hippolytus claims to be in love with Aricia.

Phèdre is consumed with jealousy and despair. Oenone attempts to appease her, telling her that her love for Hippolytus is only human weakness. Repulsed by Oenone's continued encouragement, Phèdre blames her for her destruction, and Oenone subsequently commits suicide.

Arcia, petrified by Theseus' wrath and curse, begs Hippolytus to reveal his innocence to Theseus but Hippolytus asks Aricia to swear not to repeat the

truth. He is sure that justice will prevail and that, since he is innocent, the gods will protect him. He asks Aricia to run away and marry him in a sacred temple. Theseus witnesses their tender and joyous parting and the seeds of doubt about Hippolytus' guilt begin to grow. Aricia confronts Theseus, pleading with him to reverse his curse and believe what his son is telling him, though she keeps her promise to Hippolytus and does not reveal Phèdre's lie. Panope informs Theseus that Phèdre is close to death and behaving irrationally and that Oenone has taken her life. This information forces Theseus to give heed to his earlier doubts; he urgently asks for Hippolytus to be called back and begs the Gods to put a stop to his earlier curse. Théràmène returns, telling Theseus that his regret and prayers are in vain: Hippolytus has died a violent death at the hands of Poseidon. He also delivers Hippolytus' dying wish that Aricia should be protected.

Phèdre then returns having drunk a lethal poison. She confirms Hippolytus' innocence and admits to her obsession with him in her final dying words. Theseus vows, henceforth, to treat Aricia as his own daughter.



Photo (Ruth Negga as Aricia and Dominic Cooper as Hippolytus) by Catherine Ashmore

# Phèdre: guises of a myth

**Euripides** wrote *Hippolytus* in 429 BC primarily as a story of the revenge of the goddess of love, Aphrodite, against Hippolytus, who renounced her and instead devoted his life to Artemis, the goddess of chastity. Hippolytus is the son of King Theseus and stepson of Phaedra, and in Theseus' absence Phaedra falls in love with Hippolytus. Phaedra's nurse relays the Queen's feelings to Hippolytus, who spurns her advances. As a result Phaedra hangs herself, leaving a letter accusing Hippolytus of violating her. Upon learning this, Theseus banishes his son and asks Poseidon to punish him. A colossal bull rises from the sea and frightens Hippolytus' horses, which drag him to his death. Artemis tells Theseus of his tragic mistake; but he is forgiven in Hippolytus' final words.

**Seneca** wrote *Phaedra* in 50 AD. In this version, Phaedra confronts Hippolytus with her passion, and he drops his sword, which Phaedra later uses to accuse him of assault. Hippolytus is killed by Neptune, evoked by a curse made by Theseus. Phaedra in turn admits her lie and takes her own life. Besides the arrival of Neptune, this story removes its focus from the gods and instead is far more about the tragedy of human passion.

**Racine** takes his *Phèdre* (1677), deeper into a human drama about love as an affliction. The proud and celibate character of Hippolytus falls in love with Racine's invented character, Aricia, who is the descendant of the House of Pallas and a prisoner of Theseus. Hippolytus' love for Aricia puts him in a state of inner turmoil: after all, he is in love with a sworn enemy of his father, and betrays the life of chastity to which he has so rigorously dedicated himself. Racine fuels Phèdre's unbearable and forbidden passion for her stepson Hippolytus with an intense, consuming jealousy upon hearing about his love for Aricia. Though Phèdre does not accuse Hippolytus explicitly of assaulting her, she certainly allows Oenone to accuse him on her behalf. Theseus curses his son, and the wrath of Neptune brings Hippolytus to a violent death. However, soon after invoking his curse, Theseus feels a strong and overwhelming foreboding as his love for his son eats away at his conscience. Subsequently, Phèdre commits suicide, plagued by a deep sense of guilt and remorse. Hippolytus' name is cleared posthumously.



17th century engraving, by Lebrun, commissioned by Racine, representing tragedy (courtesy of Michael Hawcroft)

# A glimpse at the rehearsal process

by **Nadia Fall**, Staff Director on *Phèdre*

The role of a staff director can vary considerably, depending on the particular needs of the production and director. At the National Theatre, duties typically include: research around the text and world of the play; rehearsing the understudy company; overseeing bring-back calls (after the acting Company have had a few days' or weeks' break from performing); and, in the director's absence, regularly watching and noting (picking up on any elements that need tightening or reviewing) the show throughout its run. For me, a staff director is fundamentally there to support and assist the director with his or her artistic endeavour. It is a role that is really anchored in the rehearsal room and rehearsal process, where it is crucial to watch closely and form a clear understanding of the artistic choices being made, in order to be able to uphold these ideas for the understudies, as well as when maintaining the show beyond first night. The position forms part of a large team of artists, stage management and technical support, all working together to serve the production, led by the director and his/her artistic vision.

## A beginning

The first day of rehearsals began with the National Theatre's customary 'meet and greet', where the staff from the organisation's numerous departments come together in the rehearsal room to welcome the *Phèdre* company: everyone from casting to Discover (the NT's education department), and costume to marketing. First days can always feel a little nerve-wracking for the company, especially when met by such a sea of faces, but there is a real sense of camaraderie here, and a palpable excitement for the project ahead.

Nicholas Hytner, the director of *Phèdre* and Director of the National Theatre, warns everyone he is about to embark on a lengthy talk on the background and themes of the play – but it proves to be, in fact, an illuminating insight. He speaks about the centuries of storytelling behind *Phèdre*: weaving in the life and work of Racine and his days at the court of Louis XIV with those of the ancient Greek legends behind the characters in *Phèdre*. Then he brings us up to date with the Ted Hughes translation we will be using, presenting the scenography for the production and talking through the ideas behind Bob Crowley's set design, using the model box (a scaled-down mock-up of the set). This achieves an instant baptism into the context of the work without having to wade knee-deep into dusty reference books, but, more significantly, it sows the seeds for some of the key thoughts and images which reappear in the rehearsal room and, in turn, inspire the rehearsal process.

After the first reading of the play, the actors are invigorated by the directness of Hughes' language, together with the epic narrative. Over the first few days of rehearsals the company sit around a table, reading out various supporting texts that Nick has brought in, such as Racine's play *Andromache* and Ted Hughes' *Tales from Ovid*. The actors relish playing the different characters, and this exercise ignites vibrant discussions about Racine's take on love as an affliction, and the distinctive power of Hughes' imagery. We are all invited on a cast outing to see Declan Donnellan's production of Racine's *Andromaque* at the Barbican, with a French company, performed in French.

Our work over the first few days has bought the company closer together, and gently leads us to our *Phèdre*, through the back door!

## Excavating and layering

In week two, we move to a much larger rehearsal room, complete with a wonderful, purpose-built rehearsal set, in brilliant white. The space is bare, apart from a few chairs. Nick talks about the imagined geography of the world beyond the set: the sea and the forests surrounding the palace and the exits leading to various characters' imagined apartments. The actors slowly begin to feel the words in their mouths, excavating to find the jugular of the story and layering the playing of it with a detail to make it their own. It is very quickly apparent that this piece has no hiding places and that each character wears their every emotion completely on their sleeve.

The actors are now on their feet, sketching out the story with both their bodies and the words. Helen Mirren (*Phèdre*) and Nick, for example, talk about *Phèdre*'s relationship to the Sun and the extreme emotions leading her to either bathe in its light (in hope) or indeed hide herself (in shame) from it; this begins to inform her movement around the set. This is juxtaposed with the first entrance of Aricia, (played by Ruth Negga), who runs to the light and the open space, desperate to break free from her life as Theseus' prisoner.

On another afternoon, working on act four and the confrontation between Theseus (Stanley Townsend) and Hippolytus (Dominic Cooper), the scene begins to 'cook', and ends up as a violent altercation between the father and son characters, with Theseus brandishing his sword dangerously close to Hippolytus' neck. The scene had suddenly achieved a pitch of violence and anger that was both exhilarating and terrifying to witness. (Stanley and Dominic gave each other a good hug afterwards as if to break the tension of the work!). Nick later requested Terry King (the fight co-ordinator) to come in to work on retaining the movement and friction of the scene, without

# A glimpse at the rehearsal process contd...

compromising the actors' safety.

## The technical rehearsal

By week six, we do a run-through of the play. After the run Nick declares positively that we can go no further in the rehearsal room, and now need the stage and the audience. The actors take to the stage in wigs, costume and make-up, and after weeks of watching them work the scenes in their own 'civilian' clothing, it is a glorious jolt to see the story further enhanced by the costume as well as the sound and light. The actors are immediately at ease on the set, and the lighting on stage in the opening scene drenches the space in a bright light with a blue Mediterranean sky: many of the actors comment on how much it feels as if they have arrived in Troezen! Paule Constable's lighting design provides a clear architectural shaft of light and shadow to begin with, and the actors play with the limits of each of these during the technical rehearsals. The company are told not to be alarmed by the addition of sound; and Adam Cork's ingenious sound design only seems to propel the words and tensions of the piece further as the actors instantly embrace the abstract score.

## The adventure continues...

One of the great things about the run of *Phèdre* has been the constant rush and energizing quality of each step and next challenge. Following the all-round success of opening night, the company is faced with a further test: *Phèdre* is the first production at the National Theatre to kick-start the NT Live initiative: the play was to be filmed digitally and broadcast live to cinemas around the world. After a busy week of performances and camera rehearsals, everyone held their breath, not knowing if the concept would work at all. It was an unprecedented success: the camera close-ups, married with the wide shots, were beamed onto the big screen in a way that served to magnify and intensify Racine's tragedy. The actors and audience members that I spoke with after the broadcast all echoed a feeling of being deeply moved at the thought of experiencing the play simultaneously with thousands of people around the world.

There is to be no lull in the proceedings as the team look forward to taking the production to the ancient amphitheatre in Epidaurus, Greece and then on to Washington DC.



Photo (John Shrapnel who plays Thérémène in rehearsals for *Phèdre*) by Catherine Ashmore



Photo (Chipso Chung who plays Ismène in rehearsals for *Phèdre*) by Catherine Ashmore



Photo (Helen Mirren as Phèdre and Margaret Tyzack as Oenone) by Catherine Ashmore

# Interview with Bob Crowley, designer

## Can you tell us about your starting point for designing *Phèdre*?

When I started conversations with Nick [Hytner, director], we played around with ideas about where it would be set, and the 'period'. This is a Greek play that has been re-written by a Frenchman [Racine], in the 17th century, then translated by an English poet [Ted Hughes], in 2000. In that sense, it is a contemporary text based on an ancient play.

Nick was keen to incorporate the extremes of those worlds; the contemporary language with those primeval roots. And I love mixing ancient and modern at the same time, ending up with a sense of what people like to call 'timeless' – though I really don't like that word!

## Why don't you like the word 'timeless'?

There is no such thing, really: everything has a time. For instance, I have used contemporary dress for this production: Helen [Mirren, *Phèdre*] is wearing a dress that she could wear to an opening night, at the Oscars almost, but it still has a very Grecian silhouette based on Grecian drawings that I've looked at. I'm constantly balancing things.

Actually, the amazing thing is that this play only has nine props in it, when there are normally hundreds. The most difficult thing for me was actually finding the *right* chair! Chairs immediately indicate time and place, so we ended up having them made and adapting something I found in South America.

Obviously, you have to design a space that bears in mind the entrance and exit conventions of Greek tragedies without, of course, looking like you're intentionally doing so. This set is all to do with light; all to do with someone [*Phèdre*] who does not really want to be in the light, who wants to hide away from the sun. I knew I was going to do some kind of shaded set, and I came up with the idea of a ceiling, as *Phèdre* talks in the play about the ceilings and walls... We wanted light to come in on one side; normally that would be through windows or a roof and so on but we wanted to make it a lot more elemental, so the audience can imagine the sea beyond the space and that deep blue sky where the characters talk to the gods.

## How do light and sound fit into the world of the play and the set?

Well I think they are very much woven into the fabric

of this production: you can't separate the sound, light and visuals. Nick said very early on that he wanted it to feel like you can sense the sea against the rocks, the volcanic eruptions of the earth, the ships coming to dock at the harbour and the gods in the air, giving the audience an opportunity for their imaginations to fill in the gaps. I love working like that – where you don't spoon-feed the audience – and I think audiences appreciate it, too. We live in such a visually-saturated world, with TV and so on, imposing their imagination on us, so I love to give the audience the opportunity to work their imagination, and I think theatre in general does that so well.

## What do you think will be the challenges and benefits of mounting *Phèdre* in Epidaurus?

Well the challenges are that we can't use the same set there! I did see a show there once and they put a great big set into the space, which I thought was an abomination. You can't put our kind of 'scenery' into that sacred space – you need to put in something that looks as if it has been there forever. The background is Greece, mountains and sky. I think it is the most amazing place I have ever been to; it's a spiritual place. So I have designed a series of curved metal structures that sink into the earth. I just couldn't put a wooden floor into that space. I have done very little, and that's the idea.



Photo (Helen Mirren as *Phèdre* on Bob Crowley's set) by Catherine Ashmore

# Interview with Ruth Negga, who plays Aricia

## Have you worked at the National Theatre before?

No, this is in fact my National Theatre debut! I have only worked in London once before and that was at the Royal Court, with director Max Stafford-Clark, on a production called *Duck* by Stella Feehily.

## Tell us about your character, Aricia.

Aricia is a prisoner of King Theseus, and the last remaining survivor of the House of Pallas, a dynasty that ruled Athens, in this story. I discovered that Racine totally made up the character of Aricia, which wasn't there in the Euripides version. I think it's an amazing invention: Hippolytus and Aricia love each other and that, for me, makes Phèdre's unrequited love all the more painful. There is one line where the character, Oenone, tries to appease Phèdre about Hippolytus' love for Aricia, reassuring her that their relationship will come to nothing, to which Phèdre responds, completely broken: 'Yes but their love exists, it exists...'. I find that incredibly sad, and powerful. I think Aricia has truly never been interested in love before Hippolytus – she does not have that luxury – but, incredibly, she falls for the son of her enemy, a man who has butchered all her brothers. She is quite fierce but at the same time very delicate and vulnerable inside – much like Hippolytus. I think they are both very lonely. She also has a great sense of self and survival: when Hippolytus declares his love she immediately wants to make it official, as she is aware of her vulnerable position in the world.

## Can you give us some insight into the rehearsal process for *Phèdre*?

Rehearsal processes always vary so much depending on the director, and company and so on, but I think what is key for me is that I absolutely trust Nick [Hytner]. What was great was that it felt so organic. You get the feeling that ideas occur to him as we are working, when he's watching. There is no preprepared notion of where we should stand and what we should do – it is a spontaneous process. At the beginning we read other works by Racine and Hughes, and went on a cast outing to watch a production of Racine's *Andromaque*, which helped bring our small company together quickly.

It was also very apparent, early on, that these characters were real people, talking to each other and finding things out about each other, and the early rehearsals were full of conversations about their complete 'aliveness'.

## What would you say are the recurring themes of the play?

Love. It has to be love, and love in all its guises: heartbreaking, sickening, beautiful, honest, jealous and destructive love – all those things. These people are in such extreme crisis situations that there are no banal conversations.

It also seems to be about regret, deep regret for things which, once said or done, cannot be taken back, and I think that is the tragedy of life. I think we can all relate to the despair that Phèdre feels.

## *Phèdre* is also going to be performed in the ancient theatre of Epidaurus in Greece. What do you think will be the challenges and benefits of that space?

I have heard it is an amazing place and that the acoustics are unbelievable, too. I think the key will be to trust it and not to feel we have to completely change our performances for that space. The thought of playing to thousands of people is awesome!



Photo (Ruth Negga and Dominic Cooper in rehearsal) by Catherine Ashmore

# Glossary

1. **Epirus:** A region in northwest Greece, west of the Peloponnese.
2. **Troezen:** A town located in the north eastern Peloponnese, on the coast. In Greek mythology, Troezen was where Aethra, a princess of Troezen, slept with both Aegeus and Poseidon the same night, and fell pregnant with Theseus.
3. **Acheron:** is a river in the Epirus district, which goes into the Ionian Sea. In ancient Greek mythology it was also named the river of pain and was said to lead into the underworld.
4. **Both seas:** The Ionian and the Aegean seas.
5. **Elis:** An ancient district in southern Greece on the Peloponnesos peninsula, now Morea.
6. **Tenaros:** The southernmost tip of mainland Greece and of Europe, now called Cape Matapan.
7. **The ocean that drowned Icarus:** The sea that encircles the island Icaria where the legendary character of Icarus drowned. In Greek mythology Daedalus, Icarus' father, was a great inventor (who also constructed the labyrinth that Phèdre mentions in Act 2 of the play). Father and son were imprisoned in Crete, and, in order to escape, Daedalus engineered wings partly made of wax. His son flew too close to the sun and so fell into the sea and drowned.
8. **Minos:** In Greek mythology, he was the king of Crete, son of Zeus, father of Phèdre and husband of Pasiphaë. After his death he was said to be the judge of the dead in Hades.
9. **Pasiphaë:** The daughter of the sun (Helios), and mother to Phèdre, Ariadne and the Minotaur. In revenge against Minos for breaking an oath by not sacrificing a beautiful white bull he had sent, Poseidon (or Venus in other versions of the myth) is said to have made Pasiphaë lust after a bull.
10. **Pallas:** Aricia's father, said to have overthrown Aegues and ceased the throne of Athens, which was later recaptured by the young Theseus who slaughtered the 50-strong sons of Pallas.
11. **Venus:** Also known as Aphrodite goddess of love in all its guises.
12. **Hercules:** A renowned hero in Greek mythology celebrated for his strength and bravery. Son of Zeus and Alcmene, famous for the twelve labours he completed through his phenomenal strength and cunning. Also known for his seduction of many women.
13. **Procrustes:** An evil tyrant who, according to the myth, invited weary travellers to his lodgings and then chopped off their legs if they were too tall for his bed or stretched them to fit if they were too short!
14. **Cercyon:** Another mythological tyrant, Cercyon, ruler of Eleusis. He would challenge travellers to a wrestling match and promise them his kingdom if they won. No traveller would survive the fight, until Theseus.
15. **Sciron:** A robber, who would force travellers to wash his feet and then kick them off a cliff, where they would be eaten by a giant turtle in the sea. Theseus would beat him at his own game.
16. **Sinis:** A giant bandit, who would tie travellers to two separate pine trees, then bend the trees to the ground and release them, tearing his victims' bodies to shreds. Theseus punished Sinis with his own method of torture and went on to ravish his daughter who later bore his child.
17. **Minotaur:** Son of Pasiphaë and fathered by the bull sent by Poseidon. He was enclosed within the depths of a complex labyrinth and fed on the seven youths and seven maidens sent as sacrifice each year from Athens. Theseus executed the Minotaur and escaped from the maze with the help of Ariadne, Phèdre's elder sister, whom Theseus later seduced and then abandoned.
18. **Periboea:** One of the numerous abandoned conquests of Theseus.
19. **Helen:** Famously beautiful daughter of Zeus, of whom there are numerous legends including Theseus having kidnapped her while she was still a child and keeping her at his mother's until she was old enough to bed. She was later rescued by her brothers and returned to Sparta.

# Glossary contd...

20. **Antiope:** An Amazonian warrior and sister of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons (a female warrior race), who, against the law of her people, falls in love with Theseus and gives birth to Hippolytus. According to some versions of the legend, Theseus executed her before marrying Phèdre.

21. **Scythian:** The Amazons were said to come from Scythia, the land of the barbarians (ancient Iran).

22. **Ariadne:** Phèdre's elder sister, who helped the young Theseus find his way out of the labyrinth using a spool of thread to lead him back. She fell in love with Theseus and eloped with him but was later abandoned by him on the island of Naxos.

23. **Erectheus:** In Greek mythology, the son of Earth and King of Athens, ancestor of both Pallas and Theseus.

24. **Pittheus:** The mythical King of Troezen, maternal grandfather of Theseus, who brought up both Theseus and Hippolytus.

25. **Pirithous:** Friend of Theseus, who aided him in his abduction of the young Helen and whom Theseus later accompanied to the underworld. Prince of the Lapithae, known for their warring with the Centaurs ignited by a drunken feud at a wedding.

26. **Aegeus:** Brother of Pallas and father of Theseus, he was conquered by Minos and therefore had to send seven maidens and youths each year to be sacrificed to the Minotaur. Theseus promised to free his father's kingdom from this covenant, and declared that if triumphant he would return under a white sail. Theseus forgot to hoist the white sail on his successful return, and Aegeus threw himself off a cliff. According to this legend, the sea where he drowned is therefore named the Aegean Sea.

27. **Neptune [Poseidon]:** God of the sea, associated with horses.

28. **Argos and Sparta:** Renowned cities of ancient Greece.

29. **Diana:** Goddess of hunting, the moon and woodlands; and emblem of chastity.

30. **Medea:** Legendary Greek mythological figure known for witchcraft and poisoning, including taking revenge on her husband Jason following his betrayal.



Photo (Dominic Cooper as Hippolytus and Stanley Townsend as Theseus) by Catherine Ashmore



Photo (Wendy Morgan who plays Panope in rehearsals) by Catherine Ashmore