

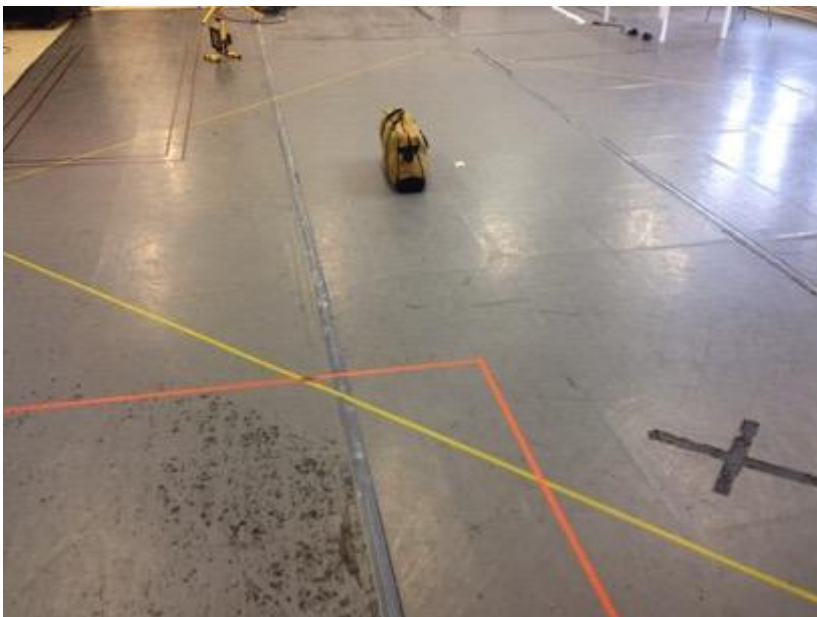
Welcome to *Villette*

This is your guide to inside the rehearsal room. We are **Tess Seddon** the Assistant Director and **Omari Swanston-Jeffers** the Assistant Trainee Director and are here to observe and support Director, **Mark Rosenblatt** as he directs *Villette*.

This is our rehearsal room where we will be for the next 4 weeks while we construct the play. Here's a peak inside our not so glamorous world.



Stage Management has marked out the size of the stage on the floor and has set props in the room for us to work with.





This is where the stage manager sits alongside the director, Mark. The guy in the headphones is the Sound Designer **John Harris**, he has a keyboard and a sound system. To the far right is the Lighting Designer **Chris Davey**, he has to imagine the lights that will be on the stage but won't get to try anything out until we are in our technical rehearsal in 4 weeks time.

The action in *Villette* happens in lots of different locations, the lab, bedrooms, a boat and even in a trench. Also time speeds up and slows down. Chris is creating a lighting design that helps to indicate these things as well as creating an oppressive atmosphere. We've been talking about maybe using hand held lights to flash at the audience allowing us to seemingly jump from one place to another.

Villette is a reimagining of **Charlotte Brontë's** novel of the same name, in this version however the characters are working on an archaeological dig searching for the body of the Lady of Villette. This means the rehearsal room is full of bones. It was important for us to understand how this might be done, what it feels like to dig up a body and what the science behind it. The actors got pretty excited...



Laura Elsworthy @LauraElsworthy · Aug 30

When I was little all I wanted was to be an actor or an archaeologist. Tomorrow we get to work with an archaeologist in rehearsal. Dream made.

← ↻ 1 ❤️ 22 ⋮

We invited **Martin Lightfoot**, Head of Commercial Operations (England) at CFA Archaeological Consultants to join us in rehearsal. He is an experienced archaeologist and manages and advises on archaeological digs across the country. Martin brought in photos of bodies he had unearthed in a dig in Manchester city centre. He talked about the legal issues behind digging up a body, the process that

happens when a body is found, how it has aged, dated and even about how archaeologists become best friends with their trowels, personalising them and giving them names.

It was really exciting to have an expert in the room and what we learnt has informed how the actors will handle the bones and their tools onstage. It helped us to understand the code of conduct of dig sites and realise that in one scene when Lucy is lowered into a trench late at night not only is it a scary moment for Lucy but the characters are seriously breaking the rules.

