



# The Snail and the Whale

## 2021 NORTH AMERICA MARKETING PACK

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# 1. BROCHURE COPY

Tall Stories presents

## The Snail and the Whale

A play with music inspired by the book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler

Join an adventurous young girl and her seafaring father as they reimagine the story of a tiny snail's incredible trip around the world, inspired by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's much-loved picture book.

Longing to see the world, a tiny sea snail hitches a lift on the tail of a great big, grey-blue humpback whale. Together they go on an amazing journey, brought vividly to life through live music, storytelling and lots of laughs - but when the whale gets beached, how will the snail save him?

A heart-warming adventure for everyone aged four and up, from Tall Stories, the Olivier Award-nominated company that brought you 'The Gruffalo' and 'Room on the Broom' live on stage.

*Please also include at least one press quote where possible.*

*Please ensure the byline is worded exactly as above. Please do not use the following, or similar, in your publicity: "Based on the book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler" / "Adapted from the book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler".*

# 2. PRESS QUOTES

'Faultless family fare... One of the best examples of children's theatre' *WhatsOnStage* ★★★★★

'This production has real charm.' *The Scotsman* ★★★★★

'An exquisite piece of theatre' *The Stage*

'A small but ingenious pleasure' *The Guardian*

'Joyous in every way... a textbook example of how to do theatre for children right.' *Broadway Baby* ★★★★★

'Captivating, inventive storytelling along with beautiful live music and songs – it's highly recommended that you climb aboard and set sail!' *Edinburgh Festivals for Kids* ★★★★★

'A heart-warming adaptation... with songs, sensitivity and imagination' *Time Out Sydney* ★★★★★

'An imaginative and heartfelt adaptation' *The List* ★★★★★

'Expect to leave the theatre happy and smiling.' *Fest Magazine* ★★★★★

'Adventures abound in this touching adaptation' *TheArtsJournal.co.uk* ★★★★★

### 3. BOX OFFICE BRIEF

- From the creators of 'The Gruffalo' and 'Room on the Broom' live on stage.
- The show is for **age 4** and upwards and their families. It is not suitable for under 4s.
- Tall Stories use storytelling combined with humour and original music to create a lively theatrical experience that embraces its audience. In this show there are three performers and live music.
- 'The Snail and the Whale' is a tale of bravery and adventure.
- The show was created in 2012 and has previously toured to the USA and Canada in 2014 (including the New Victory Theater, New York, in October 2014), Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia (including Sydney Opera House). In December 2019 it will run in London's West End.
- This is Tall Stories' fourth and most recent collaboration with Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler.

**Age Group:** 4+

**Running Time:** 55 minutes, no interval.

**Devised by:** Toby Mitchell, Olivia Jacobs and the Company

### 4. ACCESS PERFORMANCES

Tall Stories is committed to providing opportunities for all families to be able to attend the theatre. We frequently hold relaxed performances aimed at children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder or learning disability, signed/audio described performances, pre-show touch tours, and more. If you are interested in or planning on organising a performance of this sort for 'The Snail and the Whale' we would be delighted to work with you on it. We can provide a visual guide to the story for relaxed performances and any other aids that would be useful. Please contact us at [info@tallstories.org.uk](mailto:info@tallstories.org.uk) to discuss any aspect of this.

### 5. SOCIAL MEDIA

Tall Stories have an active presence across a variety of social media:

**Facebook:** /tallstorieslive

**Twitter:** @tallstorieslive

**Instagram:** tallstories

We will follow you back and retweet/share/etc. your posts whenever we can. Please do tag/link to us wherever possible and we will do the same for you.

## 6. COMPANY AND CREATIVE TEAM INFORMATION

### Tall Stories Theatre Company

Tall Stories brings great stories to life for audiences of all ages. The company is a registered charity which tours the UK and the world with its exciting blend of storytelling theatre, original music and lots of laughs. Tall Stories was founded in 1997 by co-directors Olivia Jacobs and Toby Mitchell. Tall Stories shows have played in the West End, on Broadway and in the Sydney Opera House – as well as all sorts of venues and countries in between.

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[info@tallstories.org.uk](mailto:info@tallstories.org.uk)

### Cast

*To be announced.*

### Creative Team

#### **Toby Mitchell (Director)**

Toby studied at Cambridge University and Central School of Speech and Drama. He has been a French and drama teacher, an editor at Macmillan Children's Books and designer of Total Theatre Magazine. Recent directing credits include 'Wilde Creatures' (co-director, West End), 'The Snail and the Whale' (UK, international), 'Alfie White: Space Explorer' (UK tour), 'My Brother the Robot' (UK tour), 'Twinkle Twonkle' (UK, US), 'The Snow Dragon' (UK, international), 'Does a Monster live Next Door?' (UK tour), 'Cat and No Mouse' (Edinburgh/London), 'The Owl and the Pussycat' (UK tour), 'The Egg' (Edinburgh/London) and 'Alice and Mr Dodgson' (Edinburgh/London). Recent performing/devising work includes: 'Future Perfect', 'Monsters Got Talent', 'A British Guide to French Pop', 'The Island of First Loves' (Edinburgh) and 'Pandemonium' (Edinburgh/London). He has worked with Soho Theatre and the Royal Court and is co-founder and joint artistic director of Tall Stories.

#### **Olivia Jacobs (Creative Producer)**

Olivia trained at Central School of Speech and Drama and obtained a degree from the University of London before studying Japanese Children's Theatre in Tokyo. She worked with Besht Tellers, Black Theatre Co-operative and Soho Theatre before becoming Artistic Director of Camden People's Theatre. Her directing credits include: 'Wilde Creatures' (co-director, West End), 'Emily Brown and the Thing' (UK tour), 'The Gruffalo' (UK, US including Broadway, Australia including Sydney Opera House, international), 'The Gruffalo's Child' (UK, US, Asia and international), 'Snow White' (UK/US tours including Broadway), 'Room on the Broom' (UK, US, Australia including Sydney Opera House, international), 'The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr Benn' (UK, international), 'How the Giraffe got its Neck' (UK tour), 'William's Monsters' (UK, international), 'Mum and the Monster' (UK tour), 'Something Else' (UK tour), 'The Happy Prince' (UK tour), 'Rumpelstiltskin' (UK tour) and 'Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming' (UK tour). Olivia is co-founder and joint artistic director of Tall Stories.

#### **Isla Shaw (Designer)**

Theatre includes, for Tall Stories: 'Emily Brown and the Thing', 'My Brother the Robot', 'Does a Monster live Next Door?', 'The Gruffalo's Child', 'The Gruffalo', 'Mum and the Monster', 'Snow White' and

'Something Else'. Other theatre credits: 'Checklist For An Armed Robber' (Australia), 'Requiem for the C2oth' (Australia), 'One Way Street' (Australia), 'The Wall Project' (Australia), 'Copenhagen' (The Watermill), 'Fen' & 'Five Kinds Of Silence' (Live Theatre), 'Neville's Island' (The Watermill), 'The Memory Of Water' (UK Tour), 'The Argument' & 'Three Dark Tales' (Theatre O), 'Skin Deep' (Warehouse Theatre), 'Desire Under The Elms' (RSC), 'Alban 2000' (St. Alban's Cathedral), 'Phaedra' (Royal Lyceum Edinburgh). Dance & Opera: 'The Barber of Seville' (Denmark), 'Maria De Buenos Aires' (Norwich Theatre Royal), 'The Strauss Gala' (UK Tour), 'From Berlin to Broadway' (Denmark), 'Grabmusik' & 'Bastien and Bastienne' (Germany).

### **James Whiteside (Lighting Designer)**

Tall Stories credits include: 'The Gruffalo', 'The Gruffalo's Child', 'Room on the Broom', 'Snow White' and 'Mr Benn'. West End credits include: 'Never Forget' at the Savoy; 'Footloose' at the Novello and Playhouse; 'Holding the Man' at Trafalgar Studios; 'The Female of the Species' at the Vaudeville and 'Calamity Jane' at the Shaftesbury. Other recent credits include: 'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists', 'Wallenstein', 'Funny Girl', 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'The Snow Queen' for the Chichester Festival Theatre; 'A Christmas Carol', 'Arcadia', 'Grimm Tales' and 'Gates of Gold' for the Library, Manchester; 'Twelfth Night' for Perth Theatre; 'The Absence of Women' for the Lyric, Belfast; 'Love's Labour's Lost' for Rose Theatre, Kingston; 'Salonika' for the West Yorkshire Playhouse; 'Animal Farm' for Bath Theatre Royal; 'Jump!' for Live Theatre, Newcastle and tours of 'Midnight Tango', 'Shaun's Big Show' and 'Guess How Much I Love You'.

### **Richard Heacock (Composer)**

Richard's first theatre music was for an adaptation of 'Winnie the Pooh' by writer/director Nick Ward in 1984. He has composed scores for 'Apart from George' (National Theatre), 'The Relapse' (Birmingham Rep), 'Hardie and Baird' (Traverse, Edinburgh), 'Tess' (West Yorkshire Playhouse) and 'Kindertransport' (Soho Theatre). Richard also composes and performs for TV, including 'Poldark', 'The 1900 House', 'Gamesmaster', 'Warlords' and 'The Worst Jobs in History'.

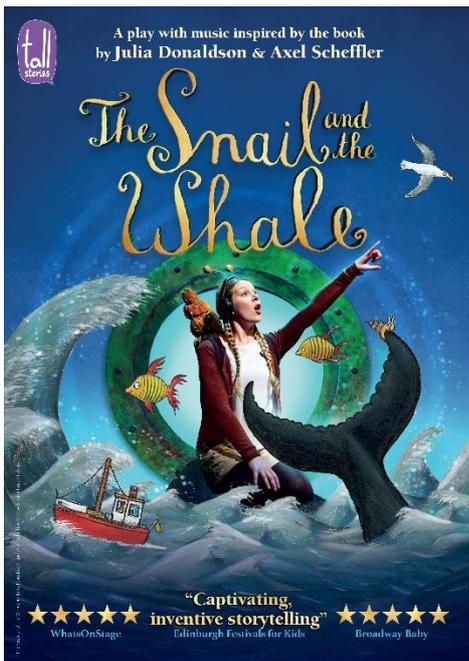
# 7. MARKETING IMAGES AND LOGO

Please email [info@tallstories.org.uk](mailto:info@tallstories.org.uk) for the correct image files for brochure and website use. Please ensure that no other versions are used in your marketing and please use the Tall Stories logo wherever possible. High resolution production photographs can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.tallstories.org.uk/the-snail-and-the-whale/venue-resources>

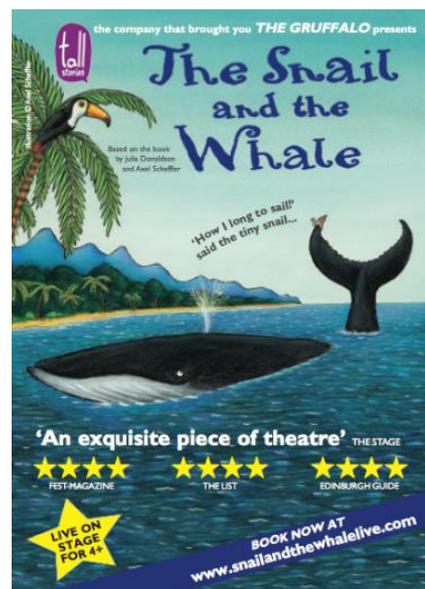
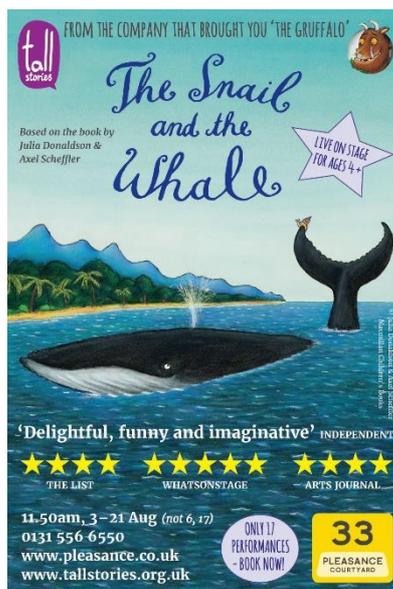
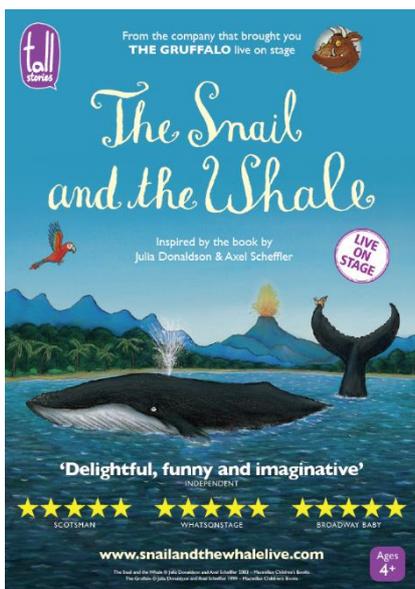
The following copyright line must be used wherever the illustration and/or title treatment is used:  
*The Snail and the Whale* © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 2003 – Macmillan Children's Books

Correct design to be used:

Tall Stories logo:



Previous designs – not to be used:



## 8. MARKETING IDEAS

### Speedy around the world

To tie in with the theme of an adventurous snail that wants to see the world, the New Victory Theater in New York ran a competition in the week leading up to the show. Each day they released a picture of Speedy the Snail in a different location, published on their Facebook and Twitter pages, and people guessed the location to win tickets to the show and a copy of the book.



### Activities in the theatre

- Colouring in snails to stick onto a giant whale
- A book-reading corner in the foyer where copies of the book of 'The Snail and the Whale' as well as other books are available for families to read.

### Underwater collage competition

For our Christmas run at the St James Theatre in 2013, schools attending performances were asked to create underwater collage scenes and send them in. The winning school had a meet and greet with the cast after the show.

### Storybook Soldiers

Storybook Soldiers are the charity that influenced our retelling of the story, with their scheme where British military personnel serving abroad can record themselves reading a bedtime story to be sent home to their children. This idea gave us the framework of a production, in which a father in the Navy records 'The Snail and the Whale' for his young daughter. Their website is <http://www.drumbeat.org.uk/7591.html> and if there is any TV, radio or editorial interest in the link between Storybook Soldiers and the show, the Tall Stories office can put you in touch with them.

If there are any army bases or barracks near to your venue this link is an excellent way to reach out to them, as we have done in the past.

*The Tall Stories office is more than happy to help out with competitions and marketing projects and can provide photos, arrange prizes of merchandise or signed books, meet the cast, etc.*

## 9. INTERVIEW WITH TOBY MITCHELL, DIRECTOR

**Without giving away too much of what makes the show so special, can you describe what the challenges were of telling a story within a story?**

At Tall Stories we've loved Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's fantastic story about the snail and the whale for years. The original challenge was thinking about how to put that story on stage – with those two very different characters. Reading an article about Storybook Soldiers gave us the idea of telling the story with a young daughter (representing the snail) who desperately wants to go around the world with her Royal Navy father (the whale). Then, it was a question of fitting the two stories together seamlessly and clearly, so the audience knows where they are within each one.

**How were you challenged or invigorated by the idea of adapting such a beloved story? How were the authors of the book involved in your process, if at all?**

This is the fourth Donaldson/Scheffler book we have adapted and we're always invigorated by their brilliant stories. When we first had the idea for how to adapt the book, we spoke to Julia about it, and while she wasn't sure how the two stories would fit together, she trusted us to work it out. She also came up with the idea of using live music. Meanwhile Axel's fantastic pictures inspired many scenes in the show – like the ninja crabs and the penguins. Both Julia and Axel have seen the show – and enjoyed it. Phew!

**I know *The Snail and the Whale* has played in a lot of different places. What's the process like of moving a show around like that? How does it change in each city? Or, is there a point where the whole thing is really set in stone?**

The show has played all around the UK, as well as in Paris, Warsaw, Dubai, Singapore, Hong Kong, Bermuda, Canada, the US and Australia! It's broadly the same in each place, but it's never "set in stone." As with any truly live show – and especially live shows for family audiences – it changes each time, depending on how the audience reacts.

**Can you tell us which character is a favourite, or what you love about all of them?**

My favourite is the chief penguin (one of many characters played by the very imaginative dad), because he's so grumpy, but he loves it when the audience gets his song right. And then the snail herself is so brave, so resourceful, so excited by life, that you just have to love her. Meanwhile, the narrator (the daughter as a grown-up) is our friendly guide through both stories, with her fantastic electric viola, creating all the music and sound effects herself.

**If a kid or young person told you they want to be a theatre director when they grow up, what advice would you have for them?**

Watch a lot of theatre! Read books and scripts. Think about how you would make characters and scenes come alive visually on stage. And – above all – remember that theatre is different from film and television. You can tell stories brilliantly in both those media, but theatre is different. Theatre is live. Think about what that means. All of us – actors and audience – are in a room together experiencing a story. How does that affect the way you would tell it?

**What, would you say, is the core message to take away from the show? How do you hope kids and families leave feeling?**

The core message of Julia's story is that small things can achieve big things. The message of the show is to love stories and use your imagination. As the dad says, a good story can take you all around the world, without even leaving your room. We hope kids and families will leave feeling energized – and ready to go home to make dens, tell stories and sing songs!

*(Thank you to the New Victory Theater for conducting the interview)*