

tutti frutti



**STUDY GUIDE**

## About Tutti Frutti Productions

Tutti Frutti was founded in 1991 and we have been delivering our mission **to delight children with imaginative and meaningful theatre** for over 30 years. Our focus is on creating and touring newly commissioned productions locally in Leeds, across the UK and internationally the USA. We are funded by Arts Council England and Leeds City Council.

**Our vision is that all children, no matter who they are or where they live, should have access to creative experiences that will stimulate their imaginations and allow them to engage with the wonder of theatre in order to help them make sense of the world.**

We are a value-led organisation, we care about the people we work with and our audience. Our values fall under 4 distinct headings: *children and family, working together, to be the best we can, and change is possible*. These values lead to a thriving organisation proactive with environmental responsibility, committed to antiracism and to addressing underrepresentation across our workforce.

We bring together diverse highly skilled, children's theatre practitioners who have a capacity to be playful to create fantastic, distinctive, and carefully crafted theatre for children.

The shows we make are commissioned plays of original works or adaptations of well-known stories but that renders them meaningful and relevant to contemporary children. Our productions incorporate dance, live music, puppetry and imaginative design sets.

Our journey to working in the USA started in in 2018 when we were selected for to perform at IPAY (International Performing Arts Youth) at Madison WI with our production *WILD!* by Evan Placey. We met our USA agents and a tour of *Underneath a Magical Moon* by Mike Kenny followed in Spring 2019 and a further 15-week tour in 2020, which sadly was cancelled due to the pandemic. *The Ugly Duckling* is our second tour of the USA.

We love sharing our highly physical theatre and live music with the welcoming and enthusiastic audiences of children and we are delighted to be touring this show across the country once again. We look forward to meeting you all.

[Emma Killick, Executive Director](#)



## Emma Reeves – Playwright

Emma is an Olivier and WGGB award-winning writer working across screen and stage.

Her stage work includes the acclaimed adaptation of Jacqueline Wilson's book *Hetty Feather* which toured nationally and ran in the West End from 2014-2016. She was nominated for an Olivier award with this play and won the CAMEO Award. She has also written *Wave Me Goodbye*, *Carrie's War*, *Little Women* and *Cool Hand Luke*. Her adaptation for the stage of Jill Murphy's book *The Worst Witch* toured nationally and ran in the West End from 2018-2019 and won an Olivier Award for Best Family Show. For tutti frutti she has also written *The Snow Child* which toured nationally in 2015.



Her TV credits include *My Mum Tracy Beaker* (BBC's most successful programme launch ever), *The Worst Witch* (Lead Writer), *Eve* (Lead Writer and co-creator), *The Demon Headmaster*, *The Dumping Ground*, *Belonging*, and *The Murder of Princess Diana* (Lifetime Channel). Emma has won Best Children's TV Episode at The Writers Guild Awards twice – in 2016 for *Eve* and in 2017 for an episode of *The Dumping Ground*.

## Adapting “The Ugly Duckling” by Emma Reeves

When Wendy first suggested “The Ugly Duckling” to me, my first thought was, that sounds like fun! Familiar with the song version made famous by Danny Kaye, I remembered *The Ugly Duckling* as a comic, bubbly and ultimately uplifting piece about identity and finding your own place in life. I thought it would be a marked contrast to my previous work for tutti frutti, *The Snow Child*, which was based on a Russian folk tale with a distinctly melancholy edge.

But when I came to read Hans Christian Andersen's original story, I was struck by the potential darkness lurking in the material. Could anything be sadder, especially for a child, than to be rejected by your mother, brothers and sisters? And will the Ugly Duckling really be better off living as a swan? After all, at the end of the story, he's only just met them! When it comes to building relationships with people you love and who love you, is biological heritage really the only important thing?

The longing to find someone like-minded was reflected in Andersen's own desire to be accepted by the literary establishment – but in the end, although he did achieve the respect he craved, it didn't really make him happy. Discovering that you're really a swan isn't really the end of a story, but the beginning of a new one.

We talked about these ideas, and the themes of fitting in, bullying and self-discovery in a research and development session with Wendy and the team. We also had a great deal of fun trying out elements of design, movement and puppetry and attempting to channel our own inner ducklings and / or swans.

Perhaps as a result of my early exposure to the Danny Kaye song, I was keen to have a strong musical element in the show, including both funny and moving songs and dances.

What emerged from our R&D was a desire to balance the plaintive side of Ugly's search for identity with as much humour and playfulness as possible. As Ugly struggles to find his place in the world, a swan mis-categorised as a duckling, he looks for answers everywhere – he even attempts to follow the well-meaning advice of dogs and cats.

Ultimately, however hard we search for an identity outside ourselves, true happiness can only be achieved by coming to peace with our inner selves.

The emotional power of Andersen's story is undeniable and timeless. Our aim is to explore in as playful, entertaining and imaginative a way as possible.

## Hans Christian Andersen



Hans Christian Andersen was a Danish author and poet. He was born in 1805 in Odense, Denmark. His father died when he was 11 and, whilst not a wealthy family, he was educated at a boarding school for the privileged. He began writing in 1819 but was discouraged by his teachers. He persevered and first gained recognition in 1829 with a short story. A bursary from the king followed allowing him to travel across Europe developing his writing and body of work.

Although a prolific writer of plays, travelogues, novels, and poems, he achieved worldwide fame for writing innovative and influential fairy tales and it is these for which he is best

remembered.

His fairy tales, which have been translated into more than 125 languages, have become culturally embedded in the West's collective consciousness, readily accessible to children, but presenting lessons of virtue and resilience in the face of adversity for mature readers as well. Some of his most famous fairy tales include "The Little Mermaid", "The Ugly Duckling", "The Nightingale", "The Emperor's New Clothes" and many more. His stories have inspired plays, ballets, and both live-action and animated films and many remain classics of the genre.

One reason for Andersen's great appeal to both children and adults is that he was not afraid of introducing feelings and ideas that were beyond a child's immediate comprehension, yet he remained in touch with the child's perspective. He combined his natural storytelling abilities and great imaginative power with universal elements of folk legend to produce a body of fairy tales that relates to many cultures.

The Danish government declared Andersen a "national treasure" when he was in his late sixties. The government subsequently paid him a stipend and started constructing a statue of the author in the King's Garden in Copenhagen to commemorate his 70th birthday. Andersen lived to see his birthday, but died four months later. Over a century later, you can still see tributes to the writer's legacy in Copenhagen, including a second statue of Andersen along the street named after him (H.C. Andersens Boulevard) and a sculpture of the Little Mermaid at Langelinje Pier. Visitors can also visit his childhood home in Odense, Denmark, and a museum dedicated to his work in the same city.

According to scholars, the tale of *The Ugly Duckling* reflects Andersen's own feelings of alienation. As a boy, he was teased for his appearance and high-pitched voice, which often made him feel isolated, and he later wrote a story about a boy named Hans who gets made fun of as a child. Much like the ugly duckling, Andersen only later in life became the "swan"—a cultured, world-renowned writer with friends in high places. Andersen even admitted of *The Ugly Duckling*, "This story is, of course, a reflection of my own life."



# Ugly Duckling Teacher's Information

## Synopsis

In the park, a group of ducklings and their mother wait for an enormous egg to hatch. The baby duckling who emerges is the strangest-looking duckling they've ever seen. His feathers are the wrong colour, his neck is too long and even his beak is the wrong shape. The other ducklings - Fluffy, Pecky, Chirpy and Waddles - christen their new sibling "Ugly".

Ugly struggles with most aspects of being a duckling - he can't chirp, peck or even waddle as the others do. In a song, big brother Fluffy tries to teach Ugly how to be a good duckling, but Ugly just can't get it right.

However, Ugly impresses everyone in the pond with his swimming skills. His Mummy Duck praises Ugly, but his siblings become jealous - especially Fluffy. The jealous ducklings trick Ugly into a "game" of Hide-and-Seek, but don't come to look for him.

Realising that he's been rejected by his siblings, Ugly looks for advice from the other creatures in the park, looking for a tribe to belong to. A Wild Goose tells Ugly to be tough and self-reliant. A Dog tells Ugly to do tricks and to beg for attention. A Cat tells Ugly to be cool and aloof. But none of these ways of coping with the world feel right to Ugly.

Ugly sees a flight of wild swans and is both delighted and saddened by their elegant beauty - he'd love to be like them! But he's just an ugly duckling. Ugly reflects on the curse of being born "ugly", and decides that he's not going to accept the rejection of the other animals and birds. In a defiant song, he rejects the "ugly" label - the people who call him ugly are the ones with a problem. They're ugly on the inside, not him.

As winter comes, Ugly doesn't return to the nest. Fluffy begins to feel guilty about what he did. The other ducklings grow up and fly away, but Mummy Duck still misses her little Ugly Duckling.

Then, one day, the swans come back.



Mummy Duck remembers that she saw them fly past on the day Ugly disappeared, and goes to speak to them – asking if they've seen her lost duckling.

Ugly, watching the swans, realises that his mother has never stopped looking for him. He rushes out to greet her – but she doesn't recognise him. Ugly has transformed into a beautiful swan.

The swans tell Ugly he's one of them, and he can join their flight. But he hesitates, not wanting to leave Mummy Duck. She persuades him to go and take advantage of the opportunities of being a swan.

The Swans fly away, Ugly with them. But he promises to come back...

Next Spring, Ugly returns to the nest to see Mummy Duck, who is waiting for a new clutch of eggs to hatch. One of them looks very different to the others. Mummy and Ugly wonder who's about to burst out of their shell this time...

## Themes

*'It's not what you look like, it's what you do that counts!'*

Mummy Duck

- Self-confidence
- Heritage
- Remembering where you come from
- Believing in yourself
- The insignificance of labels
- Determination
- Uniqueness of families
- Acceptance

## Characters

Ugly Duckling

Mummy Duck

Fluffy

Goose

Swan

Cat

Dog



# Who Lives With Me Tree

- 1 Take a pencil and draw a tree trunk with branches on A3 paper. Draw lightly as you will be painting over your stencil. Alternatively you could also use a canvas.
- 2 After you have drawn the trunk of the tree, paint the tree brown. Use short strokes to create a wood effect. Continue all the way up the tree.
- 3 Let your trunk dry. When it is completely dry it will be ready for some hand prints. While you wait you could talk to the children about who lives with them and who will be on their tree.
- 4 Pour different colour paints on to plates for the children to place their hands into. Alternatively they could use a paint brush to paint their hands. Remember to get the children to wipe or wash their hands when changing colour.
- 5 When their hands are covered in paint, get the children to place them onto the paper above and near the branches. The hands will form the leaves.
- 6 After the leaves have dried and the tree is complete label each leaf with the name of someone who lives in their house.





# 5 THINGS I LIKE ABOUT MYSELF

In our story the Ugly Duckling finds it hard to fit in but after he gets to know himself better, he realises how special he really is! Why don't you have a go?

Below write 5 things that you like about yourself.



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# How to Make an Anti-Bullying Pledge

Let's talk about bullying!

1. Start the conversation with asking the class what bullying is and how it makes people feel. You could use the Ugly Duckling as an example.
2. Then ask the class what promises they can make to stop bullying.



3. Write a list of statements of what the class promises to do to make the classroom a happy place.
4. Ask the class to draw every member of their class on a large piece of paper.
5. Around the drawing of everyone in the class write in speech bubbles the statements of what the class promises to do to stop bullying.
6. Display the anti-bullying pledge somewhere in the classroom and remind the group about the promises they made.

# How to Make a Decorated Duckling



Draw an outline of a duck on a piece of card or paper. Marking out where the eye, beak and wing will be. Alternatively you can use the big or small template we have provided.



Colour in the duckling using paint or crayons, using the same colour as the materials you are going to use to decorate the duckling. This will fill in any gaps.



Cover your stencil with decorations. You could use buttons, paper, card, beads, glitter, fabric etc. Then stick down with glue. For example you could glue yellow buttons for the body, a black button for the eyes and darker colour buttons for the beak and wings. Use a range of sizes and shades of buttons.



Lastly add a background. For example you could use blue buttons or crayons to make a pond. You could also make a grey decorated duckling to represent the Ugly Duckling.

Share what you make with us on social media  
@tuttiFruttiProd





