

K THEATRE **L N**

KILN THEATRE IN ASSOCIATION WITH KINDRED PARTNERS
AND EILENE DAVIDSON PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

COVEN

A SCORCHING NEW MUSICAL
BASED ON ENGLAND'S
MOST NOTORIOUS WITCH TRIALS

VISUAL STORYBOARD

Book by **Rebecca Brewer**

Music & Lyrics by **Rebecca Brewer** and **Daisy Chute**

Directed by **Miranda Cromwell**



CAST AND CHARACTERS

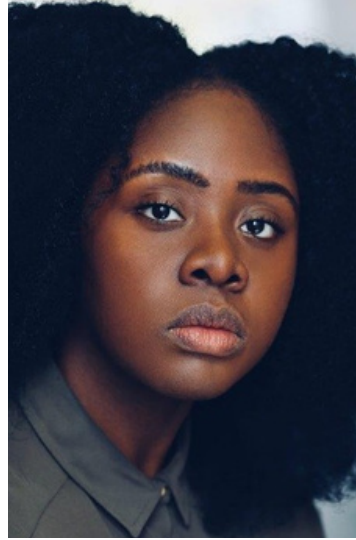
Cast members may play different roles, and they will change their costume to indicate when that is the case.



ALLYSON AVA-BROWN

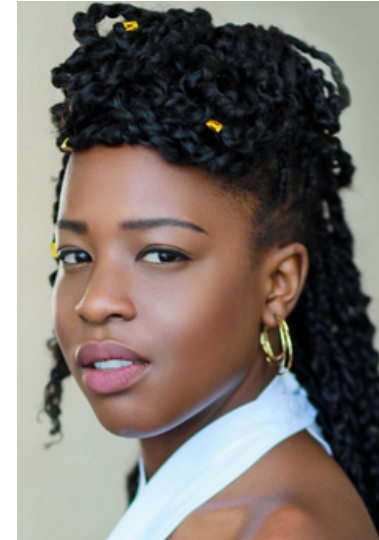
plays **Nell**, a midwife imprisoned for witchcraft.

She also plays Jenet's mother **Elizabeth** when we are in Jenet's memories.



SHILOH COKE

plays **Frances**, a woman accused of witchcraft by her husband following a miscarriage. She also plays Jenet's sister **Alizon** when we are in Jenet's memories, and clergyman **Henrich Kramer**.



GABRIELLE BROOKS

plays **Jenet**, a woman accused of witchcraft. She is also the voice of young Jenet who is portrayed by a puppet.

**PENNY LAYDEN**

plays **Martha**, Rose's mother, imprisoned and accused of witchcraft. She also plays the **Judge**.

**LAURYN REDDING**

plays **Rose**, a pregnant woman accused of witchcraft by Frances' husband. She also plays **Roger Nowell**.

**DIANA VICKERS**

plays **Covell**, the guard of the prison. She also plays **Edmund**, a young boy invited by the court to testify against Jenet.

**JACINTA WHYTE**

plays **Maggie**, accused of witchcraft. She knows a lot about plants and their use in medicine.

These members of the cast are part of the ensemble and play instruments at many points of the show. They are often in the scene but not always part of the action.



RACHEL BARNES

is part of the ensemble, and plays the cello.



ROSALIND FORD

is part of the ensemble, also plays the violin and is a puppeteer. She also plays **King James I**.



KATHRYN TINDALL

is part of the ensemble, also plays the guitar and the harmonium.

These members of the cast are part of the band.
They play instruments throughout the show.



ALICE GRUDEN

plays the electric bass and
the double bass.



HOLLY MALLETT

plays the drums.



JENNIFER WHYTE

plays the keyboard and the
harmonium.

OVERVIEW AND REFERENCES

The show takes place in Pendle, Lancashire and is inspired by real events.

Most of act one takes place in 1633 in a prison cell, but some scenes across the show jump across time, to earlier in the characters' lives or even to past history.

Maggie's character leads the others to what she calls the **Liminal**. This is a space inside their mind, similar to a trance.

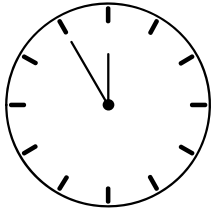
Malleus Maleficarum is a book written in 1486 by the German Catholic clergyman Heinrich Kramer, describing how to find and convict witches. It was used as a manual for witch hunts.

King James I / VI of Scotland was king of Scotland from 1567 and king of England from 1603 to his death in 1625. He became heavily involved in witch hunts, writing a book which argued for the existence of witches and tightening the witchcraft laws in England.

Roger Nowell was the Justice of the peace for Pendle. He led the investigation of Jenet's family who were accused of witchcraft.

The show mentions an association between **witches and pins**. This is because Seventeenth-century metal pins were handmade and relatively expensive, but they were frequently needed for magical purposes, such as in healing or divination.

SHOW NOTES

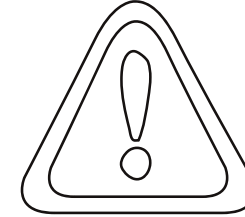


Running Time

The show is approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, with an interval

Please note this production includes loud noises, high volume, amplification, haze, low fog, flashing lights and pyrotechnics.

Age Guidance: 14+



Content Advice

- Language: Swearing, violent language
- Nudity: No
- Violence: Acts of violence
- Themes: Misogyny, witch prosecution, imprisonment, state violence and murder, execution by hanging, classism, rape, childbirth, child abuse, PTSD and child loss.

For further content advice visit
KilnTheatre.com/content-advice

THE STORY IN BRIEF

ACT ONE

Adult Jenet is sent to prison among other women accused of witchcraft.

She fights back that she is innocent.

Rose, heavily pregnant, and her mother Martha accuse Frances of stealing common land.

Rose reveals that Jenet accused her family of witchcraft as a child and that they were executed.

Martha confesses to try and get Rose freed.

Rose doesn't want Nell's help with her pregnancy as she couldn't save Frances' baby.

Maggie tries to soothe Rose, sending her into a memory of her and her mum.

Back in the present, Rose reveals she was raped by Frances' husband.

Frances doesn't believe her. She blames herself for the death of her baby.

Nell tries to comfort her.

Jenet and Rose are called to court, where a young boy testifies against Jenet.

Rose needs to pay a fee to leave the prison, but she has no money.

Covell secretly asks Jenet and Rose to make each other confess.

Jenet refuses but Rose succeeds and gets her signed confession.

INTERVAL

ACT TWO

Maggie and Jenet are in Jenet's mind, witnessing a historical event that led to witch hunts.

Jenet remembers the events of her childhood that led to her family's executions.

Jenet's sister tried to make some money but was accused of witchcraft by Roger Nowell.

Roger finds little Jenet and uses her to testify against her family.

Back in the present, Jenet realises she was fed lies and tries to pay for Rose's fees with a locket Roger gave her.

She confesses her initial testimony was a lie and is sentenced to death by the judge.

Rose starts going into labour. The women protect her and lock themselves into the court, celebrating taking back power even for a moment.

The women support Rose through labour and she gives birth to a boy.

She is worried his father will try to take him away but is determined to keep him.

The women bid her goodbye. They realise no one will know when they die.

As Rose leaves, free, the women sing about the power of nature and each other.

THE STORY

SCENE BY SCENE

ACT ONE

Come Gather

1633. A chorus of women sing a haunting song as a judge sentences Jenet to go to prison. We see Jenet and her younger puppet self briefly, before adult Jenet is thrown into jail.

She shouts to the guard, Covell, asking to be let out. The other women in the prison mock Jenet and guess she is accused of witchcraft, as that is what all of them are accused of. She starts to pray, and Frances realizes she knows Jenet from church.

Covell comes in with their dinner. Maggie has known him since he was a child, she is preparing a herbal remedy for him.

Covell confirms the judge will see Jenet. She is excited to see the judge and prove that she is innocent. The other women insist they are also innocent.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Heavy low fog sweeps the stage

Dim lighting

1633 is projected on the backcloth

Choral singing, Jenet shouts to the guard

Light brightens, turns to a gloomy white across the prison cell.



Production Photography by Marc Brenner

Clear My Name

Jenet sings a song about her faith in God.

Covell brings in Rose who is heavily pregnant, but her mother Martha is kept back. He confirms the judge will see Jenet soon and asks her for money in return, but she refuses.

Rose is concerned about her mother and accuses Frances of being responsible for her imprisonment. Frances and her husband privatized the land that used to be common, making enemies out of Rose and her mother who made their living on the common land.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Low light across the stage with a spotlight on Jenet

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental.



Witch

The women sing about each other, pointing out the different reasons they could be called witches.

Rose accuses Frances of stealing land, Frances accuses Rose of being a thief. Nell accuses Maggie of helping people who don't deserve to be cured. Frances accuses Nell of providing abortions. Maggie reminds them all they should try to stick together instead of being divided. Jenet tries to understand who is telling the truth and who is lying.

As the song ends, Martha comes back into the prison. She looks shaken but seems to recognize Jenet. Rose reveals she stole Jenet's locket, which is engraved with her real last name, Device.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Warm orange light across the stage

Spotlights one after the other appear on various characters

Turns back into the gloomy prison light when Martha comes in

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental.



The Liar and the Thief

Rose reveals that as a child, Jenet accused her family of witchcraft and they were executed. Jenet tells them what she saw as a child and insists that she told the truth.

Maggie realizes that Jenet's words aren't her own, she is just copying what someone else has told her to say.

Covell comes in and reveals that Martha signed a confession. The judge accepted it, and Covell is coming to take Martha away to be executed.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Cold blue light across the stage

Projection of the moon on the backcloth during Jenet's testimony, then flickers

Rose and Jenet argue loudly

Dog and horse sounds

Music intensifies during Jenet's testimony

Sounds of breathing and rasping breath



Martha's Goodbye

Martha signed the confession to try and get Rose free. Rose tries to get her to stay, asks her to tell the truth-- that she did nothing.

Sad and angry, Rose has a contraction which indicates she may give birth soon. Nell tries to help her but Rose refuses. She's scared that Nell will hurt her baby because she wasn't able to save Frances' baby.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Gloomy prison light

Rose shouts after her mum leaves



Liminal

Maggie sings and gives Rose lavender to help her calm down. Jenet tries to get the guard's attention, but Nell tells her that the real risk is the guards torturing her.

Maggie's counts lead to a flashback for Rose, and she is cast back to a scene in her past where she was discussing the land being seized by Frances and her husband. Martha is reminding her of the importance of the link between people and their land.

They wonder whether Frances is pregnant—her conversation with Nell reveals that she is pregnant but that she needs medical assistance.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Soft purple light, low fog fills the stage

Maggie chants, strong reverb effect

Jenet shouts for the guard

Smell of lavender fills the theatre. This effect will not happen during the relaxed performance for the comfort of the audience.

Warm light and sky on the backcloth as we enter a flashback



Common Women

Martha sings proudly of her connection with the earth. Her and other 'common women' and their hard work are what makes the world turn.

Rose reveals she is pregnant but won't say who the father of the baby is. She slowly returns to the present, longing for her mother to return.

Rose's Song

Still looking at her mother although she only exists in her imagination, Rose sings. She reveals that she was raped by Frances' husband, and that he is the father of the baby.

Frances doesn't believe Rose, neither does Jenet—all the other women do. Frances accuses Rose of having planned this, to have an heir with her husband and get her land back through the baby.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Warm light and sky backcloth

Cast stomp and slap their skirts

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental.



Low fog fills the stage. Purple light returns, dim at first then turning into the gloomy prison light.

Spotlight on Martha

Warm pink light as Rose sings

Redemption

Seething, Frances accuses Rose of lying. She has tried all her life to be a perfect wife and to have a child, and her husband blamed her for her miscarriage.

Nell tries to comfort Frances and reminds her that she may not have saved her baby but her own life was still worth saving. Frances is still upset, and blames herself for the death of her baby.

Jenet argues that women shouldn't interfere with pregnancies, but Nell argues that women should have control over their lives.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Loud bell rings out twice before Frances starts singing

Bright red light fills the stage

Turning into soft white light as Frances starts to pray



Care

Nell sings of the different women that she helped through childbirth or pregnancy, or who she wasn't able to save.

Covell comes in—the judge wants to see Rose and Jenet. He brings Jenet a prison uniform for her to wear to court. It's the uniform Martha was wearing before she was executed that very morning.

Monk Music

The judge and the courtroom of magistrates take their seats. They ask Jenet to plead guilty, but she refuses. They invite a young boy, Edmund, to testify against her.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Very dim light around a spotlight on Nell, before a white light silhouettes the cast on the platforms

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental

Recorded voices whisper around the theatre at the end of Care

At the end of Care, the gloomy prison light returns as Covell enters

Lights dim then soft blue lights come on the magistrates with a spotlight on the judge



The Testimony of Edmund Robinson Jr, Son of Edmund Robinson

Edmund accuses Jenet of being a witch as the magistrates excitedly sing along, clearly familiar with him and his testimonies. As Edmund accuses Jenet of turning into a dog, then turning him into a horse, she denies everything and continues to defend her innocence.

The judge realizes Jenet lied about her last name and doesn't listen to her, rewarding Edmund with a lollipop.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Spotlight on Edmund, green wash across the stage.

Judge bangs his gavel on the stage repeatedly

Jenet shouts out, trying to interrupt

Lights dim then turn blue as Edmund finishes testifying.

Sudden spotlight on Jenet at the end of the song



Monk Music 2

The judge agrees to let Rose go, but adds that she needs to pay for the time she stayed in prison. She doesn't have money to pay the fees.

Make Her Sign

Covell tells Jenet she could get out of prison if she gets Rose to sign a confession. He wants Rose to stay in prison long enough to give birth, so he can get money for giving the baby to his father. Separately, he tells Rose she can pay off her fees by getting Jenet to sign a confession.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Dim blue light across the stage, spotlight on Rose and the Judge

Lights dim as the judge and magistrate exit

Two rectangles of bright light symbolise two cells

The moon reappears



Jenet rips up the confession, but Rose reluctantly agrees to help Covell, wanting to try to give her baby a chance to live free.

Covell and Rose team up to question and confuse Jenet about her testimony against her family. Exhausted and distressed, she finally signs the confession Rose hands her.

Maggie sees this. Jenet, disoriented, repeats her childhood confession, stuttering and stumbling on her words. Maggie encourages her to dig deeper into her memories. She sees herself as a child (portrayed by the puppet), accusing her mother of witchcraft.

INTERVAL

Lighting and Sound Notes

Dog and wings sounds

Song intensifies, Jenet shouts

Rasping breath, Maggie shouts

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental

Spotlight on Jenet puppet, then sudden blackout



ACT TWO

Liminal

Maggie sings what sounds like a spell. Her and Jenet are in Jenet's mind. We are in 1486, in a past Jenet hasn't lived. Maggie thinks this means she has a job to do.

Welcome to the Clergy

Heinrich Kramer writes in a large book, proclaiming his thoughts about women fueled by breaking up with his ex-girlfriend. He is writing what will become the Malleus Maleficarum.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Starts in blackout with faint whispering sounds

Heavy low fog and dimly lit lime green stage

Singing with a very noticeable reverb effect

Pale blue light comes in as Maggie's voice echoes

1486 is projected on backcloth



Shit Witches Do

Heinrich Kramer sings of the powers that witches have, scaring the clergy.

The clergymen become courtiers, and King James I enters, singing about more powers witches supposedly have and how dangerous they are.

Roger Nowell enters the scene, asking the king how to accuse witches. The king has changed the law to accept child testimonies. As he presents himself, Jenet seems to recognize him, and is visibly distressed.

We are in 1612. Young Jenet is with her mother Elizabeth and her sister Alizon as adult Jenet watches on, voicing the puppet from her memories.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Light purple light fades in, turning harsher when the king comes on stage

Wide purple lights move around the stage

Fade to black, then a green wash as Roger Nowell comes onstage

A loud bell rings as the song finishes and the date 1612 is projected



Common Woman Reprise

The women sing a reprise of Common Women. Alizon realizes her mother hasn't been paid and decides to help by getting pins to sell.

The Ballad of Alizon Device

Alizon approaches a man in the forest, asking him for pins to sell. He refuses. As she curses at him, he falls to the floor. She runs to a nearby church to get him help, but is accused of witchcraft by Roger Nowell.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Cold blue light across the stage
Spotlight where the man falls

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental



Redemption (Reprise)

Alizon is devastated and ashamed, she thinks she is responsible for what happened to the man.

Witch (Reprise)

Roger Nowell accuses Alizon and starts a witch hunt against the whole Device family. He spots little Jenet hiding.



Lighting and Sound Notes

Spotlights follow Alison as she moves around and Nowell across the stage

White wash across front of stage

A stained glass window is projected on the backcloth

Sudden blackout and small spotlight on puppet Jenet as the song finishes

Songs increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental

Family Man

Roger introduces himself to Jenet, tries to get her to come out of hiding and to convince her he wants to help. He offers her bread, and as she comes out older Jenet tells Maggie that Roger saved her, fed her, and taught her to sign her name.

He changes her dress and starts teaching little Jenet the story she will have to tell the court about her family. As Roger and Jenet rehearse the story, adult Jenet realizes she was fed these lines, and that the story isn't true. Roger gives little Jenet the locket she still wears.

Elizabeth and Alizon enter the courtroom and the judge asks her to tell her story.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Low white wash over centre stage over Jenet, young Jenet and Nowell, set and band are in the darkness

Heavy breathing sound effect

Dog barking and horse galloping sound effects

Song increases in volume at the end, both vocals and instrumental



The Testimony of 9-year-old Jenet Device

Jenet starts telling the story but stutters, struggling to breathe. She finally accuses her mother, and the judge finds her family guilty of witchcraft, sentencing them all to death.

Liminal

Back in the present, the women surround Jenet as she regains consciousness. She awakens, distraught as she realizes she wrongly accused her family.

The other women try to comfort her.



Lighting and Sound Notes

Blackout

Blue light fades over Jenets mother and sister, spotlight onto young Jenet

Moon image projected

Heavy breathing sound effects as Jenet struggles to speak

Blackout with tiny spotlight on little Jenet

Blue lights fades back in

Spotlight on Maggie and turquoise backlight

Spotlight on middle of stage over Jenet

Loud boom sound effect and blackout

Testimony Reprise

Rose reveals she got Jenet to sign a confession—Jenet tells her Covell tried to do the same to her.

Covell enters the prison, and Jenet demands to be brought to the judge. Maggie pretends to have a remedy for Covell, but gives him something that puts him to sleep instead.

Jenet runs into the courtroom and tries to pay for Rose's fees with the locket Nowell gave her. The judge demands more and asks her to confess to witchcraft—if she does, Rose will walk free.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Low light wash across the prison

Brighter light on Jenet and the judge in the courtroom



I Want to Confess

Jenet starts to confess. She sings an anthem to her family, her village and the women who surrounded her as a child.

She admits to lying in her initial testimony as Nowell used her to lie on his behalf.

The judge frees Rose and condemns Jenet to be hanged.

Rose starts going into labour as Covell comes into the courtroom. He tries to get to Rose but the other women protect her, threatening to curse Covell.

Lighting and Sound Notes

White light over Jenet and the Judge

The other women are faintly lit

Exhaling sound effect



Jenet's Common Woman

The women steal the jail keys and run Covell out of the jail cell.

Burn Our Bodies

The women sing about standing together and standing up for themselves even if they are being blamed for things by a society that looks down on poor people and women.

Rose goes into labour. The other women prepare for the birth by making Rose comfortable.

Nell comforts Frances and reassures her that she was not responsible for her baby not surviving.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Low light wash over stage

White light fades into orange and red
Lights dim

A pyrotechnic effect starts at the end of the song: a line of fire appears across the stage and stays on until the end of the song. This effect will not happen during the relaxed performance for the comfort of the audience.



Care Reprise

Frances gives her late daughter the name Hannah. Maggie praises Jenet's bravery and sacrifice for Rose.

All the women support Rose through her labour.

Birth Spell

As Rose gives birth, Maggie sings of her connection to the earth and all life.

Rose's baby is born. Seeing it is a boy, she is scared his father will take him away.

Nell helps Rose to feed the baby.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Dim yellow and white light across the prison cell

Warm red backlight during Rose's labour

Rose screams as she's in labour



Rose's Song Reprise

Rose sings to her baby, full of love. She doesn't want to give him away and decide to keep him. The women prepare to face Covell.

As Rose prepares to leave a free woman, the other women bid her goodbye and give her messages to their families outside of prison. Jenet has no one for Rose to give a message to. Rose leaves.

Know Thyself

The women realise no one will know when they die, joking they would only call them witches anyway.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Textured green light over the prison cell

Soft white light over the prison cell



She/Care (Reprise)/Rematriation

The women sing of their absence in records or history, but their presence in nature as Rose leaves with her baby.

They sing the power of nature and of each other as trees descend into the theatre. They are still powerful, as nature is always growing and constantly in a state of rebirth.

Lighting and Sound Notes

Purple backlight with a spotlight on Rose
Backcloth fades to yellow, pale green lights across the stage.

Trees are slowly lowered in over the stage

Fog pours over the stage

Bright colourful lights shine onto the audience and back on to stage

