



Matthew Bourne's
**SLEEPING
BEAUTY**
A GOTHIC ROMANCE

Visual Guide

Introduction

This visual guide is designed for any audience members who would benefit from familiarising themselves with what to expect from Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty before they get to the theatre. It contains images and information about the characters, story and the production in general. We hope this resource makes your visit more enjoyable.

If you have any comments, or would like this resource in larger print, please get in touch at office@new-adventures.net

Show Notes

Themes within the show:

Love, Magic, Gothic, Passion, Obsession, Revenge

Please be aware:

- The dancers playing the characters in this guide may not be the same dancers on the day you see the show, but the character costumes will be the same.
- The scenes with Carabosse and Caradoc can be intense or uncomfortable and might be distressing to some audience members.
- There are masks used in the show which may make you feel uneasy. One of these is a plain skin-toned mask with no features, making the wearer look like a mannequin, and the other is black with devil-ish features.
- At the end of the show, a dagger is used with the intention of harming one of the characters. This is a plastic prop and is not sharp.
- At the end of the show, one of the characters is killed by another.
- **Sleeping Beauty is approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes long, including a 20-minute interval.**

Meet the Characters

The story centres around:

- Aurora
- Leo
- Caradoc
- Carabosse
- Count Lilac

There are lots of other characters in the story too. Here are some of them:

- King Benedict
- Queen Eleanor
- The Fairies

Aurora (Sleeping Beauty)

Aurora is the adopted daughter of King Benedict and Queen Eleanor.

She is presented to the royal family by the fairy Carabosse as a baby, which appears as a puppet at the start of the show.

Aurora has long, dark blonde hair and wears different white dresses throughout the show.



Carabosse

Carabosse is a dark fairy who gifts the royal family with the baby Aurora.

She has black hair gathered on her head and dark eye makeup. She wears a red dress with a feathered skirt and black wings.



Leo

Leo is a gardener at the Palace who falls in love with Aurora.

He has short dark blonde hair. At the start, he wears brown trousers and a white shirt and after the interval he has small wings and wears jeans and a hoodie.



Count Lilac

The King of the Fairies is Count Lilac. He has long black hair and black makeup across his face over his eyes.

He wears a light blue waistcoat with a blue jacket trimmed with multicoloured feathers.



Caradoc

Caradoc is the son of Carabosse. He has long black hair pulled into a ponytail.

He wears a black suit with a long white jacket in his first scene, and later wears a long red jacket with black shirt and trousers.



We also meet:



King Benedict & Queen Eleanor



The Fairies

The Story

If you don't want to know what happens in the show, stop reading now!

“Once upon a time, there lived a king and queen who were very unhappy as they had never been blessed with a child”

The show starts with Carabosse, the dark fairy, conjuring the baby Aurora as a gift for King Benedict and Queen Eleanor. The baby is left at the palace door and is taken inside by palace staff.

As a baby, Aurora is wilful and playful, leaving her nurse Miss Maddox and the other palace staff scurrying after her as they try to get her to bed. But as soon as the King and Queen enter, she instantly becomes well behaved!

When Aurora is finally put to bed, the window is left open for the fairies to visit.



Count Lilac, King of the Fairies, and the other fairies appear and give entertain Aurora with their individual dances that show off their personalities. Each fairy presents Aurora with a gift and protection.



But then Carabosse and her dark fairies enter Aurora's room. Carabosse is angry because she doesn't think the King and Queen have properly thanked her for giving them a baby.



Carabosse places a curse upon Aurora that when she is older, she will prick her finger on a rose, and this will send her into an endless sleep. The audience and the King and Queen see this prophecy enacted with two dancers in faceless masks.



But Count Lilac returns to save Aurora! He can't break the curse, so instead he changes it. Now Aurora will sleep for 100 years after pricking her finger and will be awoken by the kiss of her true love. Aurora is returned safely to her cot.

Twenty years later...

Carabosse has died in exile but her son, Caradoc, seeks revenge for his mother...

Aurora is now a young adult, still playful as Miss Maddox tries to help her get ready for her coming-of-age party. While Miss Maddox's back is turned, Leo, the Palace gardener, and her one true love sneaks in through the window and leaves a rose on Aurora's bed. Aurora sees him and playfully shoos him away, as he would be in big trouble if he was caught in



In the Palace garden, the party is in full swing with guests talking, eating and playing tennis. Aurora dances with the suitors that are in attendance while Leo watches from the background wishing he could dance with her.

A new suitor enters – it's Caradoc, the son of Carabosse! He hypnotises Aurora and dances with her whilst trying to get her to touch the black rose, he has brought with him.



Suddenly, it starts to rain, which sends everyone running inside. In the disturbance, Aurora manages to break free from Caradoc's spell and finds Leo in the rose garden. They finally get to have their dance together.



But then Aurora pricks her finger on the dark rose that Caradoc sneakily planted in the garden. She starts to fall into a deep sleep as Leo frantically seeks help.



Caradoc appears and blames Leo for killing Aurora, meaning Leo has to escape. Leo is chased out of the palace by the other guests and the King.

Count Lilac, who knows the truth of what happened, finds Leo and, seeing his despair at losing Aurora, Count Lilac is revealed as a vampire fairy and bites Leo on the neck, giving him the gift of eternal life so he can be reunited when Aurora wakes up in 100 years.



Interval

The interval will be **20 minutes**.

You can stay in your seat or leave the auditorium. You might want to buy a drink or snack or use the toilet in the interval.

100 years later...

At the Palace gates, a group of tourists pose for photos. The palace has fallen into disrepair and is deserted, and what happened there all those years ago has become the stuff of legend.



When the tourists leave, Leo emerges from a tent, in modern clothes and with a small pair of wings on his back – he is now a fairy thanks to Count Lilac’s spell. Count Lilac appears and offers Leo the key to the Palace gates.

When they enter, they are transported to the sleepwalkers' forest, which is where Aurora has been trapped for 100 years. Leo finds Aurora but she remains just out of reach, carried along by the other sleepwalkers.



The scene switches to Aurora's bedroom in the palace where she is asleep and guarded by Caradoc and his henchmen. Now that the 100-year sleep is over, Caradoc kisses Aurora to wake her up so that he can kill her to finally avenge his mother... but Aurora doesn't wake up. He realises it is because he is not Aurora's true love and plans to let Leo enter the room to wake her up.



Count Lilac guides Leo to Aurora's bedroom. Leo kisses her...
But out of the shadows, Caradoc's henchmen grab him and
take him away.

Leo's kiss worked, but when Aurora wakes up, she sees
Caradoc and thinks that he is the one who has broken the
spell, making him her true love.

Now the Palace is turned into a gothic wedding venue. Guests wear masks and red clothes.

Aurora enters in a white dress, under Caradoc's spell. Count Lilac and Leo, who have snuck into the wedding in disguise, watch as Caradoc lies Aurora down... and removes a dagger from his jacket! He stands over Aurora, holding the dagger above her.



But Count Lilac comes to the rescue, grabbing the dagger from Caradoc and killing Caradoc instead. Whilst this happens Leo snatches Aurora away to safety.

Leo takes Aurora and kisses her again, breaking Caradoc's spell. At first, Aurora is confused but soon realises she is safe with Leo, her true love.

In the final scene, Leo and Aurora dance with their own baby, who has tiny wings.



And they all lived happily ever after!