



Audio Description Pre-Show Notes: Pride and Prejudice (*sort of)

The Venue

Pride and Prejudice (*sort of) is staged in the Drama Theatre, one of the smaller theatres located in the Western Foyer on the ground floor of the Sydney Opera House.

The Western Foyer is shared between the Playhouse, Studio, and Drama Theatre. Stretching along one side of the narrow space is a long wall with many large glass windows and doors leading outside to the paved Forecourt and the water's edge.

Along the opposite wall of the Foyer are the entrance doors to these theatres, as well as a Bar and Café, a Box Office counter to collect tickets from, and a Cloak Room counter where you can leave any coats or bags for the duration of the performance. There are toilets at either end of the Foyer, including an accessible option at both locations.

The Drama Theatre is entered from the back and has 540 seats arranged in 19 straight, continuous rows that slope down toward the stage. The concrete walls are painted black, the floor is carpeted in a deep blue, and the chairs are made of a white birch wood with orange upholstery.

The Set

Pride and Prejudice (*sort of) is Jane Austen's well-loved story, this time retold by the people usually confined to its margins. The story is told inside the Library of an unnamed country estate, with a grand sweeping staircase and shelves bursting with books. The space transcends time, blending together old and new.

Spanning most of the stage is a large white staircase. 15 steps curve upwards from the front left to a landing at the back right, 3 metres above the stage. Each step has books stacked under their treads. Tall white balustrades connected by a curving wooden banister line either side of the staircase.

The space under the stairs is filled in. 3 different sized doors that blend in with the staircase lead to cupboards and a water closet, or as the common folk call it – the loo!

There is a large open nook below the landing, which is held up by 2 pillars. In the nook sits a white, upright piano, which can be moved around on wheels.

Jutting out to the right of the landing is a large white bookcase. It is 2 metres wide and 2 storeys tall, stretching from floor to ceiling. In the left side of the bookcase is a secret door, which will be used as an entrance and exit point by the characters during the story.

The middle of the space, bordered by the staircase and bookcase, is an open area of floor. The flooring is pink with a dark red diamond pattern. Furniture pieces are brought in and out of this floor space to create scenes within the well-known world of *Pride and Prejudice*. Some of these locations are described below.

[The Bennet Sitting Room at Longbourne House](#)

The Bennet sitting room is rather modest but cozy, typical of a household with five unmarried daughters to support. A plain beige sofa, and sitting to its left, a wooden side table with a square top and curved legs. Atop the table sits a lamp with a brass base and brown shade.

[The Netherfield Drawing Room](#)

The Netherfield Drawing Room is the peak of the Meryton Society, with ornate furniture and an air of elegance.

A classical style chaise longue sits in the centre of the room. It has silk upholstery with bold red and gold stripes, and curved wooden legs. Across the room to the left of the chaise is a dark wood chair with dark brown leather upholstery and a rounded back. In between the chair and the chaise is a matching knee-high wooden side table. A floor lamp sits tucked in behind the wooden chair. It has a white lampshade with a red fringed edge.

Between the chaise longue and the bookcase is a fancy blue and white vase displayed on a circular wooden plinth.

A two-tiered wooden drinks trolley is wheeled in. It has a paisley pattern cloth over the top which drapes down the sides of the trolley.

[The Cast and Characters](#)

[The Servants](#)

Pride and Prejudice (*sort of) features a small ensemble cast of just five actors. They become a chorus of five omnipresent Servants who take charge of Austen's classic tale. The

Servants are young women in their 20s and 30s, although they also seem eternal, transcending time. They could also be a group of friends on a night out at the karaoke bar.

The Servants narrate the story, breaking the fourth wall to speak directly to us. They also play the many different roles of the “Masters”, the main characters around whom Austen’s story revolves. They will change their voice and mannerisms for each Master they portray.

Servants are also a constant presence in the background of the story. As housekeepers, chambermaids, cooks, and other household staff, they quietly but expertly guide the course of their Masters’ lives.

The Servants all wear the same “uniform”: three layers of Regency-era undergarments in plain white fabric, and a pair of black Doc Martin boots. A frilly, sleeveless chemise with a low square neckline is worn under a rigid bodice known as a pair of “stays”. Unlike hourglass corsets, stays do not cinch in the wearer’s waist, but instead support the torso and lift the bust to create a straight silhouette with a full bosom. An ankle-length petticoat skirt is worn just under the bust, creating the raised “empire” waistline typical of Regency dresses.

Over their stays and petticoats, the Servants don a range of Regency-style dresses, coats, and hats to play the Masters in the story. This allows them to switch between characters in quick succession.

Each of the five Servants are described below, along with a list of the Masters they play during the story. Some of these Masters will be described in more detail in the next section.

[Amy Lehpamer \(she/her\) plays Tillie the Servant.](#)

Tillie is tall and slim. Her exposed arms are fit and toned from cleaning all day. She has fair skin, and blonde hair neatly styled in a low bun. Two curled locks of hair frame her face.

Tillie plays the roles of Charles Bingley, Caroline Bingley, and Charlotte Lucas.

[Teo Vergara \(they/them\) plays Effie the Servant.](#)

Effie is average height with a slim and strong build. She has white skin with a bright complexion. Her long brown hair is full of springy curls, worn in a simple half up, half down style with a curly fringe covering her forehead.

Effie plays the role of the story’s heroine, Elizabeth Bennet.

[Zoe Ioannou \(she/her\) plays Flo the Servant.](#)

Flo is short and petite. Her curly brown hair is piled on top of her head in a tall bun that makes her about 10cm taller. Some curls escape the bun, including two that drop down either side of her forehead. She has fair skin and a warm smile.

Flo plays the roles of Mrs Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy.

[Kaori Maeda-Judge \(she/her\) plays Clara the Servant.](#)

Clara is average height with a slim build. She has an olive complexion. Her long brown hair is worn loose in soft curls, with a curtain fringe sweeping over her forehead.

Clara plays the roles of Jane Bennet, George Wickham, and Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

[Ruby Shannon \(she/her\) plays Anne the Servant.](#)

Anne is tall with an average build. She has white skin with a warm, clear complexion and rosy cheeks. She wears her curly red hair in a loose, low bun, some curls escaping and falling around her face. She is composed and professional, although a cheeky smile often appears when the Masters aren't looking.

Anne plays the roles of Mary and Lydia Bennet, Mr Collins, and Mrs Gardiner.

[The Masters](#)

The Masters are the main characters from Pride and Prejudice, as portrayed by the five Servants. Some of them are described below.

[Elizabeth Bennet](#)

Often called Lizzie for short. The second eldest Bennet sister and heroine of the story. A witty and spirited young woman, she often has a playful smile and sparkle in her eye.

She wears a light green satin dress with short sleeves of white lace. The skirt parts down the front to reveal a triangular panel of Effie's petticoat.

[Jane Bennet](#)

The oldest Bennet sister. She is pleasant and polite, and bit shy.

She wears a pretty light blue wrap dress, with a V neckline and trim of white lace ribbon around the waistline and sleeves.

[Mary Bennet](#)

The middle Bennet child. She is an earnest, gawky teen with an awkward posture.

She tries too hard for approval, wearing an oversized pink dress with way too many frills, and a big pink bow in her hair. This outfit is not flattering and clashes with her red hair. She also has a pair of huge round-framed glasses.

Lydia Bennet

The youngest and wildest of the Bennet sisters. She has a flirty confidence beyond her years, and flaunts her womanly curves.

She wears a light yellow dress, adorned with a cluster of red frills like flowers below her right shoulder. The neckline plunges low to display her bosom. Anne's petticoat peeks through a split down the front, which also allows for easier display of Lydia's ankles.

Mrs Bennet

The vexed and fretful mother of the Bennet sisters. She moves with a waddling gait, her back and hips a bit stiff.

The style of her dress is a little old-fashioned. Made of a jacquard silk, peach with a cream-coloured floral pattern, the waistline widens out around the hips. The skirt is open at the front, revealing Flo's petticoat. The sleeves and neckline are decorated with lace frills.

Fitzwilliam Darcy

Often called Mr Darcy or simply Darcy for short. A proud and haughty gentleman, he often looks down his nose with a severe, frowning face. He moves in a rigid, almost mechanical way.

He wears a well-tailored navy blue dress coat over a patterned silk waistcoat. The waistcoat's collar is stiff and upright, and he has a crisp white cravat fastened at his throat. Instead of trousers, Flo's white petticoat skirt makes up the bottom half of his outfit.

Charles Bingley

Often called Bingley for short. Darcy's posh friend. A ridiculously amiable young gentleman, his movements and expressions are bursting with exuberance.

He wears a flamboyant double-breasted dress coat made of blue and gold tartan silk. Similar to Darcy, the bottom half of his outfit is Tillie's petticoat skirt instead of trousers.

Caroline Bingley

Bingley's snobbish, supercilious sister. She is played by the same Servant as her brother, so the family resemblance is very clear.

She is peacock-like in an elaborate gown made of the same blue and gold silk as her brother's coat. It is adorned with trim and tassels. The skirt is open at the front, and gathered into a prominent bustle at the back. She also wears a matching silk cap with a tall plume of blue and green feathers.