**Pre-show notes for Ramona Tells Jim**

Welcome to these pre-show notes for Ramona Tells Jim, by Sophie Wu, directed for the Bush Theatre by Mel Hillyard.

The audio described performance takes place on Saturday October 7th.

There’s a touch tour at 1.15, these notes will be delivered live through your headsets at 2.40 with any changes, to give you a chance to refresh your memory and also check that your headset us working, and the performance itself will begin at 2.45.

The play lasts for one hour and ten minutes without an interval. It takes place in the intimate setting of the small studio theatre, with the acting area surrounded on three sides by two rows of tiered seating.

Ramona Tells Jim is set in the Scottish highlands, in a small town on the west coast. The performance area has a floor and back wall with wavy edges, like the pattern made by waves along the shore. They are layered at the edges and painted with streaks of soft sea green and sand. A metre-high matching bench with a wavy top stands against the back wall on the left. Above it, seven glass jars are fixed to the back wall at head height. They contain a variety of small sea creatures – there’s a hermit crab, a scallop, and a little starfish.

On the right the floor slopes upwards at the back to form a small hill the same height as the bench.

This setting remains unaltered throughout the play. The locations change but we are invited to imagine these as the story develops.

We meet three characters, Ramona, Jim, and a young girl named Pocohontas.

**Ramona** is 17, a young English schoolgirl out of her depth on a geography field trip. She is slender and awkward and holds herself very straight, arms clamped by her sides, or with her fists twisting the sleeves of her purple fleece. Her short brown wavy hair is held back with a black band, revealing a pale anxious face with big brown eyes and delicate chiselled features. As she stares out intensely, she brings to mind a fieldmouse or small rabbit, permanently poised to flee.

As well as her purple fleece, Ramona wears a dark brown knee length skirt with a floral pattern and a pointed handkerchief hem. Her legs are bare and her feet well hidden in a pair of sturdy short wellies edged with pink, and she wears a pink daypack on her back.

She encounters **Jim**, a young local boy the same age as she is, and similarly dressed for beachcombing. He’s tall and muscular with a healthy glow and an open expression – an outdoors boy as surely as Ramona is an urban girl. Jim wears a yellow waterproof over his khaki fleece and the pockets of his brown cargo shorts bulge with unseen objects. He has a bright blue daypack on his back and strides about in sturdy walking boots. Looking at Ramona, he sometimes twists the cords of his yellow anaorak while his face lights up with an eager smile.

As the story develops, we meet **Pocohontas,**  a trim blonde teenager. She is pale, and often vibrates with suppressed rage as she stamps about in lime green shirt and black gilt over narrow black trousers. Her pale hair is scraped back off her face with a scrunchie and her brown eyes flash. Later she appears in a see-through peach top spotted with white, worn over a matching camisole and a black bra, with tight white leggings and black pumps on her narrow feet. The outfit could be provocative, but on Pocohontas it looks more routine.

Finally, here are the cast and production credits:

Ramona is played by Ruby Bentall, and jim by Joe Bannister.

Pocohontas is Amy Lennox.

The sound is designed bby Dominic Kennedy, and the lighting by Rajiv Pattani.

The set designer is Lucy Sierra.

Ramona Tells Jim is written by Sophie Wu, and directed by Mel Hillyard.