

'Oh! What a Lovely War'

Joan Littlewood wrote 'Oh! What a Lovely War' in 1963. 'Oh! What a Lovely War' is a play about World War One. It includes main events that happened at that time and focused on the lives of soldiers. The play is shown through humour and songs sung by soldiers of the time. **'Oh What a Lovely War is based around the songs which were sung by ordinary British soldiers during the war – often bowdlerised versions of popular classics, filled with parody and self-mocking humour'**. I have chosen this quote as it shows Joan's view of the play explaining her ideas on the play, it also explains what the play is based around. I got the quote from <http://www.warhistorian.org/todman.php> this website seems like a reliable website as the owner of the website is a military historian and he has provided most information. Joan Littlewood was a playwright who was an influential British theatrical director. She was influenced by her rejection towards the standardized form and innocuous social content of the commercial theatre in favour of experimental productions of plays concerned with contemporary social issues for working-class audiences. A quote that supports this is, **"influential British theatrical director who rejected the standardized form and innocuous social content of the commercial theatre in favour of experimental productions of plays concerned with contemporary social issues for working-class audiences."** This is a good quote because it conveys how she had a hate for the realism in theatre, she believed in the epic theatre. The website I got this quote from was <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/344266/Joan-Littlewood>. This is a good website to use because it is an official website. I know this because of the Blogs on this website. This means that the website has been used and therefore can be reliable.

Joan Littlewood wrote the play to express her views on war; she did this in a humorous way. She wanted people to see how futile war was. The play reflected society of the time; it showed different views from both the lower and upper class. Critics thought that it was an amazing piece of writing which brought out the strong emotion in war. I know this because in the text it says, **"Adrian Gregory has written about the creation of the British Legion Festival of Remembrance in the 1920s: a commemorative event for veterans based around the rendition of popular songs. (21) The Festival established an inclusive form of public remembrance which sanctioned veterans' enjoyment of camaraderie without offending the bereaved. Not only did words and tunes call up a host of memories for those who had sung them originally, but the very act of mass communal singing was an emotionally stirring rehearsal of wartime behaviour."** This is a good quote to use because it shows who the critic is and what he thought of the play. On the contrary not all of the critiques were good, **"The critic David Pryce Jones noticed this when he reviewed the play for a second time, as it closed its run at the Aldwych: 'Showbiz has crept in to bespangle the poor relation from Stratford East, and make it more polite, and I fear that the latter audiences imagined themselves back in the days of the good old musical shows, wishing the girls were rather more gaiety."** This is a good quote to use because it shows the bad critic towards the show and the advice that the critic has given the entertainment industry to improve this. The website I quoted from is <http://www.warhistorian.org/todman.php>. This website was a good website to use because it is an official website. I know it's an official website because it has been blogged on and has reviews giving the impression that it's a well-used site to get information, further suggesting that the website is a reliable source. The play was also approved by Princess Margaret and many others however,

again some thought it portrayed a false view of war, especially the family of Field Marshal Douglas Haig, The family wanted to stop the show reaching the West End, as they thought the portrayal of Haig was an unfair judgement. **'The family of Field Marshal Douglas Haig wanted to stop the show reaching the West End, claiming the portrayal of him was a crude caricature.'** I chose this quote as it explains why certain people didn't like the play, this could be because she didn't portray war as well as she could have done. This quote is from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-15691707> this is a reliable website as it is from the BBC who don't allow public to change information or facts and only post trust worthy information.

Joan Littlewood was a very significant theatre director. Her main influence was Bertolt Brecht, Bertolt Brecht invented epic theatre. Joan Littlewood was part of the communist party. A communist is someone that believes everyone is equal, no matter what. Epic theatre originated from Bertolt Brecht.

Brecht wanted to create a type of theatre that the audience didn't get lost in and knew they were actually watching a play. Brecht's main influences were Karl Marx and Charlie Chaplin. Brecht, like Joan Littlewood and Karl Marx was also a communist. I got this information from [https://www.google.co.uk/?gws\\_rd=cr&ei=TABQUrquAYWTtQag3IGIBQ#q=charlie+chaplin](https://www.google.co.uk/?gws_rd=cr&ei=TABQUrquAYWTtQag3IGIBQ#q=charlie+chaplin). The website was a good website to use because it is a reliable website, it's reliable because it's got advertising on it which means it's a popular website.

Bertolt Brecht's ideas for theatre were that he would let the audience decide for themselves. Actors did not strive to make their characters realistic. Each character represented a different side to an argument. The website I got this from was a PowerPoint so I couldn't get any quotes. The website I got this from was <http://www.slideshare.net/garethhil/bertolt-brecht-workshop>

The techniques that are connected with epic theatre are; a scenic design, which is the design of the set, it can be to set the scene; the comedy, which keeps the audience interacted, montage, which is linking freeze-frames together to create a scene; gestus; which is very sharp, precise movement. The website I got this information from was [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic\\_theatre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_theatre) I chose this website as it was the only website where I could find this information from. However, Wikipedia is not a reliable website as it allows the public to change and publish new information.