

10 “Did You Know” facts about Ben Hur (the theatre tour)

- 1) The actors took 5 months of rehearsals 1-2 times per week, to learn the roles, characters, and specific skills like gladiatorial scenes, rowing scenes etc.
- 2) Each actor has an average of three to four costumes.
- 3) The galley overseer's drum is made from a plastic bin covered in wood-effect vinyl, the leather from a friend's old sofa, and edged in faux sheepskin.
- 4) The swords and other weapons in the show were bought from a closed historical re-enactment group near York and were funded by a grant from Tesco
- 5) It took 18 months to write and edit the script for the show during the Covid lockdowns
- 6) The Cross for the Crucifixion scene was made of two old salvaged railway sleepers.
- 7) The wine for the stage scenes is made of blackcurrant juice
- 8) The recipe for the stage blood is completely edible: coffee, food colouring and syrup.
- 9) Casworan is a character created for our version of the play. In rural south west England it would be difficult to find an older Arabian man to play the Bedouin; Sheikh Ilderim, so we took the personality of the character and created Casworan, a Celtic warrior from the Dumnonii tribe in Cornwall who was captured in battle and trained as a gladiator in a Roman city in northern Africa. The meaning of the name Casworan, in the old Celtic language is “Battle Hero”.
- 10) Ben Hur is the biggest ever theatre tour to date for the South Devon Players