



The actor and the shoe

How to
create character
from the ground up

*“It’s about putting on a persona,
stepping into a pair of shoes”*

Sally Hawkins

Pair of shoes unknown 1720-1730

All shoes taken from the V&A archive online at <https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections?type=featured>



Welcome!

In this session you will explore the ways that character can be inspired by costume

And gain insight into part of the working practice of a costume designer

We will be chatting to each other, sharing some thoughts with the group and looking at shoes!



Please say **hello** and share
your name,
pronouns if you wish
and your favorite food

or just give us a wave
if that makes you feel more
comfortable!



Pick a shoe!

Brown suede shoes by John White 1960s



Shoes said to belong to Dan Leno , late 19th century

Actors often build their characters from the ground up, so shoes are very important. They affect your physicality and how you connect to the earth. Like all clothes, they can tell you a lot about a person – and we have got very good at reading these stories.



Look at your shoe taking in all its qualities:
Answer the following questions about
the person who wears this shoe :

- What is their name?
- How old are they ?
- What is their job, if they have one ?
- What is their favorite music?
- Tell me a secret about them !

Moccasin, 1900-1916, Indigenous American, Iroquois



Extend and reflect

- What other questions would you like to ask your characters?
- Which question for your character did you like the best?
- Did you imagine the rest of your characters body?



Thank you so much
everyone
for sharing your
shoe stories!