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# McQUEEN

THE FASHION VISIONARY WHO BROKE THE RULES

JAMES PHILLIPS

B L O O M S B U R Y

**James Phillips**  
**McQueen:**  
**Or Lee and Beauty**

Bloomsbury Methuen Drama  
An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

B L O O M S B U R Y  
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The play received its world premiere at the St James Theatre, London, produced by McQ Productions Limited on 12 May 2015. The team was as follows:

Lee	Stephen Wight
Dahlia	Dianna Agron
Isabella	Tracy-Ann Oberman
Arabella	Laura Rees
Mr Hitchcock	David Shaw-Parker
Ensemble Dancer	Sophie Apollonia
Ensemble Dancer & Dance Captain	Amber Doyle
Ensemble Dancer	George Hill
Twin & Ensemble Dancer	Eloise Hymas
Ensemble Dancer	Jordan Kennedy
Ensemble Dancer	Rachel Louisa Maybank
Swing	James Revell
Twin & Swing Ensemble Dancer	Carrie Willis
Director	John Caird
Production Designer	David Farley
Choreographer	Christopher Marney
Video Designer	Tim Bird
Lighting Designer	David Howe
Sound Designer	John Leonard
Wig Designer	Linda McKnight
Fight Director	Kate Waters
Casting Directors	Jayne Collins CDG
	Kate Plantin CDG
	Adam Maskell
Assistant Director	Emma Baggott
Production Manager	Lee Batty & Spencer New
Company Stage Manager	Emma Basilico
Deputy Stage Manager	Charlotte Willis
Technical Assistant Stage Manager	Gary Wall
Assistant Stage Manager	Adam Cox
Wardrobe Mistress	Caroline Hannam
Wardrobe Deputy	Katy Kettleborough
Wig, Hair & Make Up Mistress	Hayley Reeves
Props Supervisor	Lizzie Frankl
Costume Supervisor	Caroline Hannam & James Maciver

Dialect Coach	Budgie Salam
Assistant Designer	Grace Smart
Props Assistant	Claire Turner
Assistant Wig Supervisor	Suzy Barrett
Marketing, Sales & Advertising Agency	AKA
International Press Representative	Amanda Malpass PR
Production Photographer	Chris Davis
Producer	Robert Mackintosh
Producer	AMIR Ltd
Producer	Hilary A. Williams
Producer	Deborah Negri
Executive Producer & General Manager	Julian Stoneman
Associate General Manager	Mark Green

**McQueen:  
or Lee and Beauty**

*For Frank and Vera Polley*

## **Characters**

**Lee**, a designer, thirty-nine

**Dahlia**, a lost girl, twenty

**Isabella**, a dead woman, forties

**Arabella**, a reporter sometimes called Victoria, thirties

**Mr Hitchcock**, a tailor, fifties

*This story takes place in London over a single night.*

*It is inspired by a love of the talent of the designer Alexander McQueen.*

*It is not a documentary, nor a biography. It is a fairy story, like a McQueen show.*

*The stage directions are deliberately lavish but are in no way prescriptive.*

**‘I’ve got a 600-year-old elm tree in my garden and I made up this story of a girl who lives in it and comes out of the darkness to meet a prince and become a queen.’**

*Alexander McQueen, 2008*

## **I. The girl who watched from a tree.**

*We're in the shambolic basement, huge, of Lee's unfinished house in Dunraven Street, Mayfair, London. The mannequins and the clothes and the chaos is actually a sort of store room, like an explosion in a gallery at the V&A. There are also stuffed animals from photo shoots and gifts. The clothes are samples and relicts from a career, his excesses and triumphs and the embryo of future designs. A magical location.*

**Lee** sits on a stool, in a pool of light. Lost in thought. A man who has lost weight fast, new strength in his arms. He hears something, stands, listens. He's not sure he heard anything. Another noise. He steps back away from us, hides.

*And now we see a girl creeping through the long messy lines of mannequins, all tiptoes and attempted silence in her motion. A girl in a short denim skirt, twenty years old, her dark hair tied back from her face. Sneakers, a t-shirt, a good large handbag held across her chest. Like an Indian in a movie stalking prey. Now she comes through to the front of the room, looks at the clothes on the mannequins. She examines the dresses one by one. Now she drops her bag on the ground, and pulls her t-shirt over her head. Expensive underwear. She walks to a mannequin and peels off a dress. A red dress, exquisite, feathered skirt flaring out blue, from Givenchy Spring/Summer 2001. She tries to put it on, gets inside, is swamped by it, the dress far too long for her little height. She is singing softly to herself.*

**Dahlia** softly sings first verse of Billy Joel's 'She's Always A Woman'.

*Now Dahlia, the girl, pulls off the red feathered dress and leaves it on the ground. Looking down she sees a pair of extraordinary and lethal shoes: prototypes of what will be the famous armadillo shoes from the McQueen 'Plato's Atlantis' show and made famous by Lady Gaga. She kicks off her sneakers, pulls on the shoes with great difficulty. Next to these a pair of more traditional, but still stunningly beautiful, high heels. She considers both and then picks up the armadillo shoes.*