

Have you read any of the Brontës' work, and if so, can you describe your first or best experience of it?

FINN ATKINS – Charlotte Brontë

I first read the Brontës' work when I was at school, actually, but it was so long ago and obviously when it's something that you're like made to do it kind of takes the enjoyment away from it a little bit. And so I read Jane Eyre. That was the first thing that I read when I found out that I was, or when I was auditioning for the project, actually, that's kind of when I started like prepping for the part and reading their literature.

So I read Jane Eyre, I've read Jane Eyre. And then I read Wuthering Heights. And I've read The Professor and a bit of Villette, but it's quite a difficult read and then that was kind of the point where I'd found out that I'd got the part and I just, I kind of, because I didn't have time to read absolutely everything, I kind of had to make a choice to either read more of the literature or read some of the juvenilia and some of Charlotte's letters, were like really important for me to read as well because obviously it gives me like a little bit more of an insight into what was going on in her mind at like any particular time.

But it was really interesting to read Jane Eyre actually and kind of draw parallels from some of the things that Charlotte had wrote about in it with views that she had and things that were going on then, you know, like there's talks about what the woman in the attic, what she represents and whether that's like the repressed woman that's like passionate and wants to kind of like escape and get out or. So it's quite interesting to kind of to explore that a little bit more really. And once I'd kind of done a bit more research about the character, you almost like see certain parts of the book that kind of stand out more.

But yes, I would quite like, I actually, even though I'm playing Charlotte I love Wuthering Heights and I've just started reading Agnes Grey now actually but and I wanted to wait to read Shirley until, I am going to read it but I want to read it after we've finished because that hadn't actually been written during the time period that we're filming so it kind of didn't really make sense for me to start getting my head in that book because that came after this period. But I love all of their work. I mean it was kind of like a little bit difficult for me to get into at first, but then I feel like I'm kind of a bit more used to their like, you know, their way of writing now and their style of writing so. But yes I think my favourite one was Wuthering Heights.

ADAM NAGAITIS – Branwell Brontë

My first experience with the Brontës' work was like a lot of people's, was at school. Doing GCSE, I did Wuthering Heights, which is the one they chose and I remember, it's funny because I remember it being, I remember it feeling very accessible when I read it at school. I never had a problem understanding it and then I came back to reading it just before doing this. And I remember having to read, almost read every page twice. I was like wow, this is a book I have to really wake up and I have to concentrate. This is so densely written. You know what I mean, it's so advanced and, you know, it was difficult, it was hard. It's not an easy quick page turning thing, obviously. But I felt a bit foolish but coming back and reading after so long. But the stories are there, that's what's amazing about it is the stories are so real and human and the language is so heightened and so advanced.

How did what you knew of their work affect your approach to the drama?

CHLOE PIRRIE – Emily Brontë

Reading Wuthering Heights you have such a strong sense of it's got a very strong current through it. It's quite an energetic book, forceful book. And there are, I think if you're playing a writer the best thing you can do is read as much of their work as possible because that's where they live. That's where their kind of soul is. They're in the pages. So for me it's very important to read thoroughly like all of her poems and read Wuthering Heights and try and get, read Wuthering Heights again actually, because I did read it when I was a kid but I don't think I understood it properly when I was a kid. I think I was too young to apprehend it. So yes it was very important to read everything because yes there's so many clues in the writing.

How did this project change your view of the Brontës and their writing?

CHARLIE MURPHY – ANNE Brontë

Getting to read Anne's work was a real treat because I didn't know a lot personally about Anne at all really. She wasn't in my mind at all growing up we would have just really known Charlotte and Emily's work. So getting to read her work and realising that it was, she was so prolific and she was a real feminist before her, you know, I think she seemed to have been born in the wrong era especially for The Tenant of Wildfell Hall. It's incredible and it's something that is, you know, that is relevant now.

How would you describe 'Wuthering Heights' in three words?

FINN ATKINS – Charlotte Brontë

Intelligent, thrilling and exciting.

CHARLIE MURPHY – ANNE Brontë

I can't really riddle her down to three but I suppose what comes to mind is tumultuous, harrowing I suppose along the same lines and just pure love.

CHLOE PIRRIE – Emily Brontë

Tempestuous, forceful and it's quite a bizarre book actually, like it's bizarre. It's sort of in a different genre from anything else like I don't really know what genre it is but it's not realism but it's also not fantasy. It's got this weird thing where you like are there ghosts, are there not ghosts. You don't really know. It could be read in so many different ways. Yes so it's quite a bizarre book but I love it.

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