

FINAL DRAFT

‘Down the Ole Rub A Dub’

Lunar Youth Theatre @ Half Moon Theatre

Simon Batchelor & Amy Costello

The idea is a group of elderly friends have met where their pub used to be (2018) and then we zoom back to 1960 and their memories are brought to life. Reminiscing and sharing memories of their past when they worked and played in the east end.

Always have elderly puppets at side of stage watching.

Outline

Opening / Boys trips / Girls on bus / Poem

Opening

(‘Down the East End’ into ‘Pub Soundscape’)

3 pub stools and a table DSL and elders already sat at table. Ensemble behind and around them standing and chatting (mime) like a busy trendy pub.

Elder 1: Bit loud in here ain’t it?

Elder 2: *(indicates she can’t hear)*

Elder 1: *(louder)* I said, a bit loud in here isn’t it?

Elder 3: What’s she say?

Elder 2: She said...*(giving up)* Oh forget it!

Elder 3: Sorry Maureen, sorry June – I thought coming back here would be a lovely trip down memory lane

Elder 2: *(looking round)* Well the ‘Ol Rub a Dub has certainly changed from back in our day.

Elder 3: Tell me about it, they’re serving pints in jam jars now!

Elder 1: The piano used to be in that corner, do you remember?

Elder 3: You used to tinkle the ivories didn’t you?

(Sound cue – Kiera mimes playing the piano and we hear a few notes of a long forgotten tune ‘play piano motif’)

Ensemble change into slow motion/freeze frames

Elder 1: Oh yeah. Seems like yesterday.

Elder 2: Those were the days ay?

Elder 3: Yeah we had some memories down the ‘Ol Rub a Dub (pub) ay.

Elder 1: Yeah, everyone having a sing song, going down The Rialto and staying out till late.

Elder 2: We did have a laugh...remember when Mary would always fall over down Forest Gate rollerskating club!

(all laugh and agree)

Elder 3: Yeah I remember going to Brussel and Sprouts (scouts) with the boys. I was showing everyone how to make fire but kept setting fire to everything.

Elder 1: And look at us now, still friends ay, we’ve lived here all our lives haven’t we?!

Elder 2: Yeah never left Maureen. I was born in the same street I live in now.

Elder 1: Those were the days ay

Elder 2: Those were the days ay

Elder 3: Those were the days!

Elders just do a ‘cheers’ – freeze in their ‘cheers’ pose

(Play Nostalgia music piece)

Puppeteers enter and remove hat and jacket slowly, make puppet, come forward with puppets, look left and then right, then walk up to stage – take time with music. During this 3 enter and move stools slowly to stage. Set up like pub but on stage right.

(Music fade but still in background)

Elder puppet 1: I remember when we used to go scouts and my sister went guides, looking at the stars let us forget all the bad stuff going on. I made so many friends there, I’m still friends with some of them now.

Group 1 (Guides/Scouts) move centre and use stools and table in their sketch, including the 3 young people. The group get bigger with every sketch. We see them reading a map, looking at the stars and lighting a fire.

Finish sketch with ‘We need to take her to first aid!’

Elder puppet 2: I remember when we would go to the Brady club and learn first aid. Once we did we got a badge we would then sew on our jumper. Health and safety back then wasn’t like it is today!

Group 2 (Learning first aid at club) take over and do their sketch using group 1 as well. We see them learning first aid and getting certificates.

Finish sketch with ‘Let’s celebrate down the pictures’

Elder puppet 3: I remember when we would go to the pictures. It was something like 20 pence to go see a film. Me and my friends must have watched one film a week!

Group 3 (Cinema) take over and do their sketch using group 1 and 2 as well. We watch as a family enter and sit down. Everyone watches the stage.

(Play clip of a western on the screen:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHdI5X3HtQU>

Everybody cheers and makes cowboy noises, fun playful, shoot in the sky. 2 boys run up and pretend to be cowboys.

(Play nostalgia track)

One boy gets into puppet outfit while other 2 puppets stay watching (needs to be girls holding so boys can act their scene

‘Roy and the boys playing out’ sketch

“I have so many memories of back then, I remember in the evenings actually we used to walk about a lot, there was always stuff going on down the street. Just meet some friends and hang out.

There were clubs that you could go to, I was with the scouts. We used to learn to chop with an axe (pause) and build fires (pause) but the fire brigade always had to be called because they got out of hand ([explosion](#)) The next week he taught us how to make a fire again (pause) but that got out of control and again the fire brigade came! ([explosion](#)) They were some scary times, but we learnt.

On a Saturday, we would go round a friend’s house down Whitechapel and just listen to records. We listened to Rock and Roll, I loved rock and roll. (pause)

(Play track as boys listen ‘Shout’)

One boy pretend to sing – everyone stare

(next part – play cycling clip on screen to give sense of travelling – NO SOUND)

<https://youtu.be/GHhuBZEZESU>

(keep track playing quietly)

One of the things we did a lot on the weekend was get on our bikes, we put the tent on the back and then we used to go off to the country, through London, through Rotherhithe tunnel and down to Kent. (pause) When we got there we would look for a field and most of the fields were owned by farmers, we would knock on the door and ask them if we could

stay (pause) the farmer would say for 2 shillings my wife would do you a breakfast in the morning (pause)

So we would set up our tent and chat all night (pause) (make TENT)

We would sleep (pause) and in the morning get our breakfast from the farmer’s wife (pause)
Then we cycled back to the east end.

We had a great old time!”

(Fade lights – lights on puppets)

(Nostalgia track while transition)

Girl puppeteers replaced by boys. One girl wears female puppet outfit, sits on stool and watches (so it matches boys scene)

‘Ladies on bus chatting about work and play’ Maureen - sketch.

GIRL AS PUPPET SAYS: ‘I loved seeing the girls. We’d always get the number 15 bus and go up the west end, walk around together; you were safe to do so...’

(Play bus soundscape quiet in background)

(Play below link on screen – NO SOUND)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwXQA03MJgE&t=17s>

(Play bus bell)

Well you left school at 15, you had no choice in them days you had to get a job – didn’t sit indoors, right?

We all had different jobs, we were never out of work!

My father made sure I had a job *before* I left school – Woolworths – he took me for the interview

I did machining, I worked there with my sister

I worked at St Luke’s Printing works sorting the £10 notes and the £1 notes, separating the notes from the blotting paper

(all over lapping each other?...)

I worked doing glass decorating for a time

I got a job in a food factory on Wilcose Sq packing sugar and cake mixes

I had a job making ties and belts at Whitechapel

I was in the office at Woolworths doing reports everyday, items going up and down in price – just folders back then no computers

I was charge of 22 tills, all the cash – I’m still good at Maths!

I used to clean the phones in the factories, do you remember that?

(Stop overlap?...)

I tell you something, right – when I started my 1st job we used to have music on, you had a cup of tea and they’d play records.

Possible track – sing a long – lipstick on your collar

We had a great boss, a Jewish man, Victor Marks, very famous, and his brother. It was relaxing, not like now.

We had fun too...we’d get the 15 bus, go up the West End and walk around together – you were safe to do so – there were coppers on the street.

There was always something to do, we went Forest Gate once a week roller skating I loved that.

(laughing) I had a job at a shirt factory once, till I was married, I didn’t do very good at it though –

And me!

- I sowed the collars on upside down!

I got the sack and then I moved to another job and I got the sack from that one!

But that’s was it was like back then. You walked out of a job on Friday and into another by Monday – very easily.

And you’d do anything that came along – I had a daughter to look after, you’d take any job

(Play Nostalgia track)

(Into Celtic Beauty track when ready)

Ending

Chris Ross Poem – SHOULD WE HAVE A MICROPHONE?

Elderly puppets in three groups gathered. KIERA AMBER AND DENIS ON A BOX. Begin poem. Spotlight on each group as they speak and act the poem.

Group 1 - K

Rows of terraced houses, 3 rooms up and 3 rooms down
Unlocked doors and hiding when the rent man came around
Cobbled streets and outside toilets, housing for the poor
The east end still bore many scares of 6 long years of war

Group 2 - D

Disused factories and bombed out buildings, debris round our way
To kids with runny noses this is where we went to play
In and out of each other's houses and staying out till dark, round the local cemetery, we
treated as a park

Group 3 - A

Our swords were made of bits of wood, our shields dustbin lids
We played our battles on the streets, proper warrior kids
Hopscotch run out hide and seek and a goal painted on the wall
Sunday best of pie and mash and swimming in York hall

4 politicians on stage left adjust ties and destroy houses.

3 puppets stage left floor

Other side become houses, fall to the floor, arms in front, fallen.

During the 1960's demolition was all the rage
The politicians thought we should come into the space age
So they pulled down all our houses and built looming tower blocks
For the first time in our lives all our doors had double locks

Elder puppets start to lift arms.

People rise up.

3 elderly come centre stage. Puppeters redress them – take your time, others stand around them.

But typical of cockneys we came through all that and then

They knocked down all those monolifts and started all again

All stand strong together and everyone read the final two lines with power and passion!

So... Nazi bombs and city planners all gave us of their worst,

But EastEnders are NEVER going to have their bubble burst.

(Play Nostalgia track)

Stools back to stage left floor and table on. Puppeteers help elderly back to their seat.

Others behind back in pub setting.

(Play Pub Soundscape)

Young person: Sorry, do you mind me asking, we haven't seen you in here before?

Elder: We actually used to come here all the time, this is our local.

Young person: Oh cool. I bet it's changed hasn't it?

Elder: Yep but the people are the same, still very friendly.

Young person: That's good, can I ask what you did as a young person around here?

Elder: Well where do we start...

Other young people come over and start asking the elders questions, we hear all questions being asked, a lively chat happening, all smiling and sharing.

(lights fade)

End.

Play 'down in the east end' to finish.

PROP LIST – Everything.

3 x Flat caps

3 x Old jackets (one female and 2 male)

3 stools and circle table (pub)

A Record player or a box transformed into a record player?

Folded map (to be used as scout’s orientation)

Scouts woggle uniform x2

Bits of card to use as first aid certificates

Bicycle handlebars x8 or something similar to represent.

3 x ties (for the politicians)

3 x hard hats (for the politicians)

A tent – Use a wooden pole and a big cloth

Add:

Book and pencil for boys scene – stick words into it.