

PRESENTED BY

**YELLOW
BRICK**

THE
ROUND



WINNER 2025

Best original premiere



**STUDY
GUIDE**

Written by
**Charlaina
Thompson**

DUST

Written by
Charlaina Thompson



Dust is not just a play, It is a visceral, evocative experience that pays homage to the working-class struggle!

MINDSHARE



DUST

Contents

A note for the teacher

Hello and welcome from Yellow Brick.

We are looking forward to welcoming you and your students to the production of Dust, written and directed by Charlaina Thompson and performed by Craig McArdle.

The following Teachers' Notes are designed to complement your work in the classroom with your students as you prepare them for their visit to the theatre and afterwards as they respond and reflect on the performance.

We hope you enjoy the show.

Charlaina Thompson M.Ed

CEO

Yellow Brick Theatre Pty Ltd

**YELLOW
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www.yellowbricktheatre.com

Instagram Yellowbricktheatre

Synopsis

Creatives

Back Story

Characters

Themes

Symbolism

The 10 Commandments

Style of Theatre

Set

Costume

Props

Music Lighting SFX

Curriculum

Lesson Plans

DUST

Synopsis

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England
2020
Pinderfields Hospital
Lock-Down
2:20AM

A man fights with each breath to make it home to Dot. In his isolated, morphine-fuelled delirium, we witness a frail man reliving his fragmented past: a boxer, a soldier, a boilermaker, and a miner, dancing around the ring with Lady Luck as he fights to win. But is it fate, or our will to survive, that decides when we return to dust?

Dust is one man's unforgettable journey, examining generational trauma, resilience, and survival against the backdrop of post-World War II England. Dust is dedicated to the servicemen who fought for their country, the seven men who tragically died in the Lofthouse Colliery disaster of 1973, and every miner who lived their lives in darkness so we could live in the light. Based on a true story and infused with Northern grit, humour and soul.





Charlaina Thompson is an award-winning playwright and producer, and the Creative Director of Yellow Brick Theatre. Born in Sydney, Yorkshire bred, and now proudly Adelaide-based, she burst onto the scene with *DUST*, the sold-out hit that won the 2025 Adelaide Fringe inSPACE Award for Best-Original Work by a South Australian Artist.

A former high-school performing-arts educator with more than a decade of youth-theatre credits as a writer, director and producer, Charlaina now channels her expertise into bold, new, and collaborative storytelling that champions untold voices. Building on that momentum, she is developing two new playscripts as part of a trilogy and will take *DUST* interstate and overseas in 2026 and beyond. Charlaina is most excited about her future collaborations with visionary presenters, co-producers, and creative partners who share her belief in theatre's intimate power to connect communities through socially resonant storytelling.

Craig McArdle is an award winning South Australia-based actor, director and drama teacher. After studying acting at Wakefield College and Leeds Metropolitan University (UK), he trained with *Horizon Theatre Arts* and in 2009 won the *Holden Street Theaters Edinburgh Fringe Award for Heroin(e) for Breakfast*. Craig has since worked across theatre, film, opera and television; his latest screen project, *The Royal Hotel*, is now streaming on Netflix. A respected drama educator, choreographer and performer, Craig mentors primary and middle-school students at Scotch College and collaborates widely with schools through Drama South Australia. His Adelaide Fringe credits include *My Filthy Hunt* (2011), *Loaded Heart* (2012) and *Elvis Hates Me* (2014). Craig was proud of his collaboration with Thompson and the success of *DUST* at Adelaide Fringe 2025, and looks forward to taking the production back home to the UK to honour his late grandfather, Hugie McArdle, a proud miner and his grandmother Dorothy McArdle.



TIM BOS

SOUND DESIGN



Saxophonist, Musician and DJ, Tim Bos has carved out a unique niche on local and international stages for over 20 years. A graduate of the Adelaide Conservatorium of Music, Tim Bos spent his early 20's playing in jazz and funk bands before breaking out as DJ in 2007, winning the People's Choice Award at the inaugural Adelaide Fringe SPIN DJ competition. He has collaborated on composing an original score for *Dust* after seeing its debut in 2025 at the Adelaide Fringe.

JESSIE MCKINLAY

MOVEMENT COACH



Jessie McKinlay has worked as a dancer, choreographer and dance educator, graduating from Adelaide College of the Arts (Bachelor of Dance, 2004) and University of South Australia (Master of Teaching, 2019). Her diverse experience working in Melbourne, Europe, Malaysia, and New York, have broaden her ideas on dance and her practice as a dance maker and educator. Jessie won the inSPACE Adelaide Fringe Award for *The Isabetta Project* in 2016.

MADÉLEINE FLETCHER

UK - VOCAL COACH



Madeleine is a professional actress and a member of actor's equity. Originally from the North of England she is now based in Brussels in Belgium. As an acting graduate from the Leeds Metropolitan University, she has performed in multiple productions on-stage and screen in the UK and Europe. Madeleine currently works for Nickelodeon as the voices of Timid and Painter Smurf in *The Smurfs* and her recent film credits include Patricia Deluso Lucas film, *For I am Dead* 2022, *Deadly Potential* 2022, and *Bucky* 2021. After reading the original script of *DUST* Madeleine was thrilled to join the ensemble.

DANIEL JABER

STYLIST



Daniel Jaber is a Lebanese-Māori Australian choreographer and educator from Nairne, South Australia. He has created work for Australian Dance Theatre, Australasian Dance Collective, Houston Ballet II, Qantas Tourism Awards, Architanz Tokyo, the Dubai Festival and more, and in 2010 won the inSPACE Adelaide Fringe Award for *Too Far Again*, and *not far enough*. His commissions span tertiary institutions across Australasia and the United States, including QUT, Adelaide College of the Arts, CSU Fullerton, Transit Dance and the New Zealand School of Dance. Daniel now teaches at the Barbara Jayne Dance Centre and continues to choreograph for companies, festivals and universities worldwide and worked on *DUST* as a Creative Stylist.

Soldier - Boxer -

In June 2023, playwright Charlaina Thompson received devastating news: her beloved aunt had passed away. This was no ordinary loss. Her aunt—affectionately known as “Major Maureen”—had been a cornerstone of Charlaina’s life. She had cared for Charlaina during her mother’s battle with cancer, taken her in after her mother’s passing, and always seemed to hold the answers to life’s hardest questions. To Charlaina, she was a towering, seemingly immortal figure.

Determined to honour her aunt, Charlaina returned to Yorkshire, embarking on a journey that would transform her grief into creative purpose. Securing a last-minute flight from Sydney, she found herself embraced by the warmth of friends and family, who supported her through the process of writing and delivering her aunt’s eulogy. This deeply personal moment of closure reignited a curiosity about her family’s roots, setting her on a path toward the creation of *Dust*.

During her time in Yorkshire, Charlaina uncovered a treasure trove of family history. She located her mother’s ashes, found her grave, and realized the urgency of preserving her ancestry. Her search led her to extraordinary discoveries, including the story of her great-grandfather, a miner who was awarded the Edward Medal—later converted to the George Cross—for heroically saving a life during a mining disaster. Childhood memories of holding the medal came rushing back, along with stories of the dangerous lives miners led. As Charlaina sifted through old documents—letters from the National Coal Board, newspaper clippings, and invitations from Buckingham Palace—she became captivated by the untold narratives buried in her family’s history and the fading world of coal-mining.



Boiler - Miner

The seeds for *Dust* were planted during a chance encounter with Craig McArdle at a Fringe show in March 2024. Their shared familial connections to mining sparked a conversation that unearthed remarkable stories. Craig recounted a harrowing tale about his grandfather, who narrowly avoided the tragic Lofthouse Colliery disaster in 1973. That night, seven miners perished when water flooded the mine, sealing them in a watery grave. By a twist of fate, Craig's grandfather had been excused from the shift due to bronchial issues caused by the mine's damp conditions. Although he survived, the disaster left deep scars on the survivors and the grieving community.



As their conversations deepened, Charlaina and Craig realized they had a story that needed to be told. With no immediate family left to consult, Charlaina turned to Craig's father for insights. Over two months, Craig recorded conversations with his father, unearthing details that enriched the narrative. Weekly visits to Charlaina allowed Craig to read her drafts aloud, fostering an emotional collaboration. These sessions were cathartic, filled with laughter, tears, and a shared sense of purpose. Charlaina describes this experience as "perhaps the most emotional and rewarding of all," as it strengthened bonds between father and son and brought their family's history to life.

Dust tells the story of one man—a soldier, boxer, boilermaker, and miner—whose life encapsulates the experiences of many. Set in post-World War II England, the play explores the challenges of men conscripted to fight in the Korean War, the decline of working-class trades, and the harrowing choices faced by miners during industrial disputes and economic hardship. At its core, *Dust* is a tribute to the miners who toiled in darkness so others could live in light.

The first installment in a trilogy, *Dust* delves into the fragmented memories of one man's life, reflecting on an industry that, like the men who sustained it, has become obsolete. As the dust settles on this bygone era, the play invites audiences to reflect on the lives lost and the sacrifices made in the depths of the earth. In a world where survival often required burying fears, laughing in the face of danger, and finding solace in camaraderie, *Dust* examines the grit and spirit of those who carried on despite the odds.

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DUST Characters



The Man

A soldier, a Boxer, a Boilermaker and a miner. The protagonist of the play 'The Man' represents the working class man who lived through an era of enforced conscription of national service after World War II, making a living in an industrial trade in a northern town, as industrial trades decline forced to fight for life he has build and love of his life.

Dorothy - Dot

The Wife is the heart of the Man's world — his anchor through chaos, love, and loss. Loyal, patient, and strong, she shares his struggles and dreams with quiet resilience. Her devotion gives his life purpose, embodying the enduring strength of love that survives hardship, time, and unspoken sacrifice.

Sargent Major

The Sergeant Major is a hyper-surreal embodiment of military authority — loud, commanding, and absurdly precise. A relic of 1950s National Service, he represents discipline taken to extremes, blurring fear and farce. His exaggerated presence exposes the dehumanising nature of control and the lasting psychological scars of enforced obedience. National Service Army in 1950's

Dave

Dave is the Man's loyal comrade and closest friend — a soldier driven by duty but ill-suited to the brutality of war. His vulnerability contrasts the masculine ideal of strength, exposing the human cost of patriotism. Haunted yet devoted, Dave represents sacrifice, and loss during war time.

Arthur Farmer

A hyper-surreal character, the antagonist and close friend of 'the man' whose values and outlook juxtaposes that on 'the man'. He is an avoider, lazy and the comic relief in the face of harsh realities in a working class town. Arthur Farmer works hard to avoid hard work.

DUST



Betty

She is the old flame who ignites the Man's longing for connection after war's emptiness. Torn between lust and love, she embodies his search for belonging and meaning. Their reunion, charged with desire rather than love.

The Brothers

Steve embodies the inherited weight of masculinity within a working-class family. His life, masked with alcohol, violence, and brotherly banter, reveals the struggle to express vulnerability in a culture that prizes toughness. Through him, the generational impact of male influence unfolds.

Mick

Mick represents the heart of working-class solidarity — a loyal mate whose instinct is to lend a hand without hesitation. His warmth, humour, and generosity reflect the deep camaraderie forged through shared struggle. In times of hardship, Mick's kindness reminds others that community is strength, and no man stands alone.

Old Bill

Old Bill embodies the enduring spirit of the working class — a miner hardened by decades underground yet softened by wisdom. From his steadfast perch in the club, he shares tales of survival, pride, and resilience. His presence anchors younger men in tradition, resilience, and the quiet dignity of labour.

Maplebeck

The foreman, embodies the stoic "keep calm and carry on" spirit of working men. Proud, disciplined, and rooted in duty, he values hard work and quiet resilience. A symbol of fading integrity, Maplebeck stands firm amid chaos, representing an older generation's strength, endurance, and understated moral steadiness.

The Reporter

A young reporter arrives in a shattered town, chasing headlines amid tragedy. Detached and ambitious, they embody a desensitized media exploiting pain for spectacle. Confronted by the town's enduring scars, and is awakened to the moral cost of turning human suffering into news.

DUST

Themes

Memory & Mortality

Set in Pinderfields Hospital during England's 2020 lockdown, *DUST* explores the fragile boundary between life and death. As the Man drifts between consciousness and delirium, his memories collapse into one another — the past bleeding into the present. The play becomes a meditation on mortality, asking whether it is fate, luck or sheer will that determines when we "return to dust."

Masculinity & Generational Trauma

Through the lens of post-war working-class life, *DUST* examines inherited ideas of masculinity — strength, silence, endurance — and the generational wounds they create. The Man's experiences as a soldier, boxer, boilermaker, and miner reveal a culture that valued toughness over tenderness. His struggle to express vulnerability mirrors the emotional repression passed down through generations of men shaped by labour, war, and loss.



Resilience & Survival

The Man's fight — physical, emotional, and spiritual — symbolises the resilience of the working class. Each breath becomes an act of defiance against hardship and decline. His journey celebrates the enduring human instinct to keep going, even when the world collapses around him, reflecting the perseverance of communities built on industry and camaraderie.

DUST

Themes

Love & Connection

At the heart of *DUST* is a love story — the Man's enduring devotion to Dot, his wife and anchor. Amid the chaos of memory and regret, she remains his reason to live. Their bond embodies the power of love to transcend mortality, grounding the play's raw realism with tenderness and hope.

Fate, Faith, and the Illusion of Control

Fate Versus Luck

The recurring motif of Lady Luck reflects life's unpredictability — the random turns of fate that shape human existence. Through boxing metaphors and mining imagery, *Dust* questions whether our paths are chosen or imposed, and whether faith, fortune, or sheer endurance determines survival.

The Legacy of Hero's

Dust questions whether our paths are chosen or imposed, and whether faith, fortune, or sheer endurance determines survival. eer endurance determines survival. apses around him, reflecting the perseverance of communities built on industry and camaraderie.



DUST

Symbolism



Dust

Dust itself symbolises the cycle of life and death — what remains when all else fades. It evokes the physical grime of mining life, the ashes of destruction, and the spiritual return to the earth. The title reminds us that identity, labour, and love are fleeting, but their impact endures beyond mortality.

The Boxing Ring

The boxing ring functions as both a literal and metaphorical battleground. It represents survival, masculinity, and the fight against fate. In the Man's delirium, it becomes the stage on which he battles his past, his regrets, and ultimately death itself — a fight he cannot win but must face with dignity.

Lady Luck

Lady Luck personifies fate, chance, and the unpredictable nature of life. She dances in and out of the Man's memories, teasing the fine line between triumph and tragedy. Her presence blurs the boundaries between hope and despair, suggesting that survival often depends as much on chance as courage.

The Miners Lamp

The torch symbolises hope and endurance amid despair, its beam cutting through the darkness, disaster and industrial decline. Guiding the man through fractured memories and buried guilt and is a comforting companion in the depths of hell - *"There is not where darker than a pit"*

The Hospital Room in Lock Down

The hospital room becomes a stage of reckoning — limbo or purgatory between life and death. It symbolises confinement, both physical and emotional, as the Man confronts the limits of his body and the ghosts of his past. The sterile hospital contrasts the grit of his lived experience, underscoring themes of isolation and loss.

Breath

Breath functions as the most primal symbol of life. Each laboured inhale mirrors the rhythmic struggle of existence — from the suffocating mines to the sterile ward. The Man's battle for breath becomes a metaphor for endurance, representing humanity's instinctive will to live despite overwhelming odds.



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THE NORTHERN 10 COMMANDMENTS

No1 Thou shalt not go around killin' folk, as thy knows better **No2** Thou shalt not use the Lord's Name in vain, or I'll have words with thee **No3** Thou shalt not nick owt from thy neighbour **No4** Thou shalt not walk the streets with thy hands in thy your pockets **No5** Thou shalt not look a gift horse in the mouth **No6** Thou shalt never call me mother or father a **** **No7** Thou shalt not mess with a man's lass or else **No8** Thou shalt have to wait and see **No9** Thou shalt never let anyone see you cry **No10** Thou shalt not leave anyone behind.

DUST

CHARLAINA THOMPSON & CRAIG MCARDLE

YELLOW
BRICK

THE MILL ADELAIDE FRINGE **25/26**

DUST

Style of Theatre

DUST juxtaposes the anti-naturalistic present with the hyper-surreal past, fusing two contrasting styles to explore one man's fractured memories and his struggle to survive against the odds. The present unfolds within a stark, clinical world—a hospital room lit by harsh white light—where the man's morphine-fuelled delirium blurs the boundaries between life and memory. Framed in darkness, his mind becomes both stage and battleground.

Much like *The Wizard of Oz*, film where Dorothy is swept from monochrome Kansas into vibrant technicolour, *Dust* propels the audience through the man's inner tornado. His past erupts in vivid, expressionistic flashes of colour, sound, and movement—each vignette revealing love, loss, war, and the relentless rhythm of working-class life. These hyper-surreal sequences distort time and space, immersing the audience in his disordered psyche.



Anti-Naturalistic Theatre

Anti-naturalistic theatre moves away from realism. Instead of trying to make the stage look and feel like real life, it focuses on showing ideas, emotions, or memories in creative, exaggerated, or symbolic ways. This might include breaking the fourth wall, using minimal sets, stylised movement, or abstract lighting to explore what's happening inside a character's mind rather than what's happening in the real world.

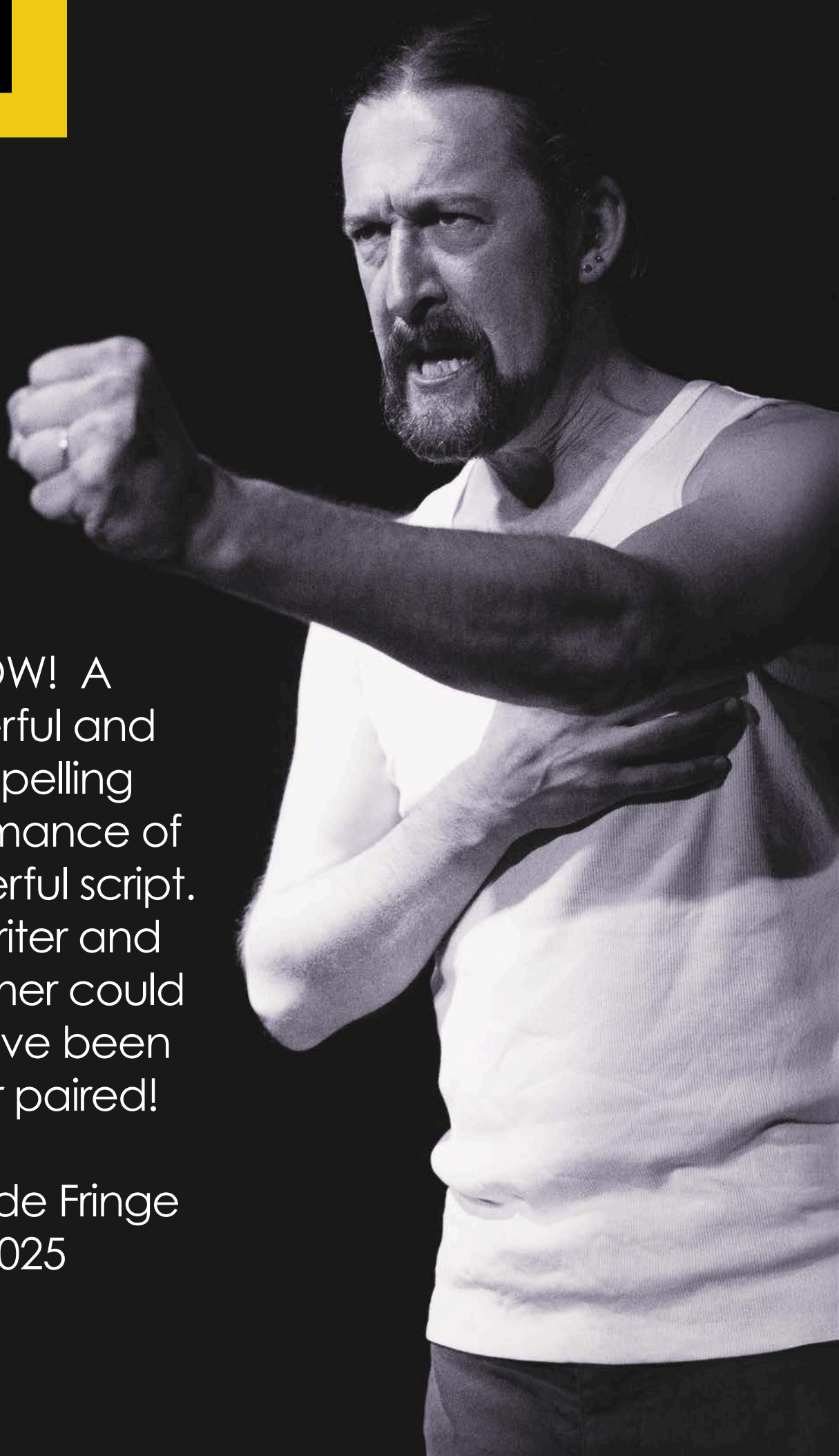
Hyper-Surreal Theatre

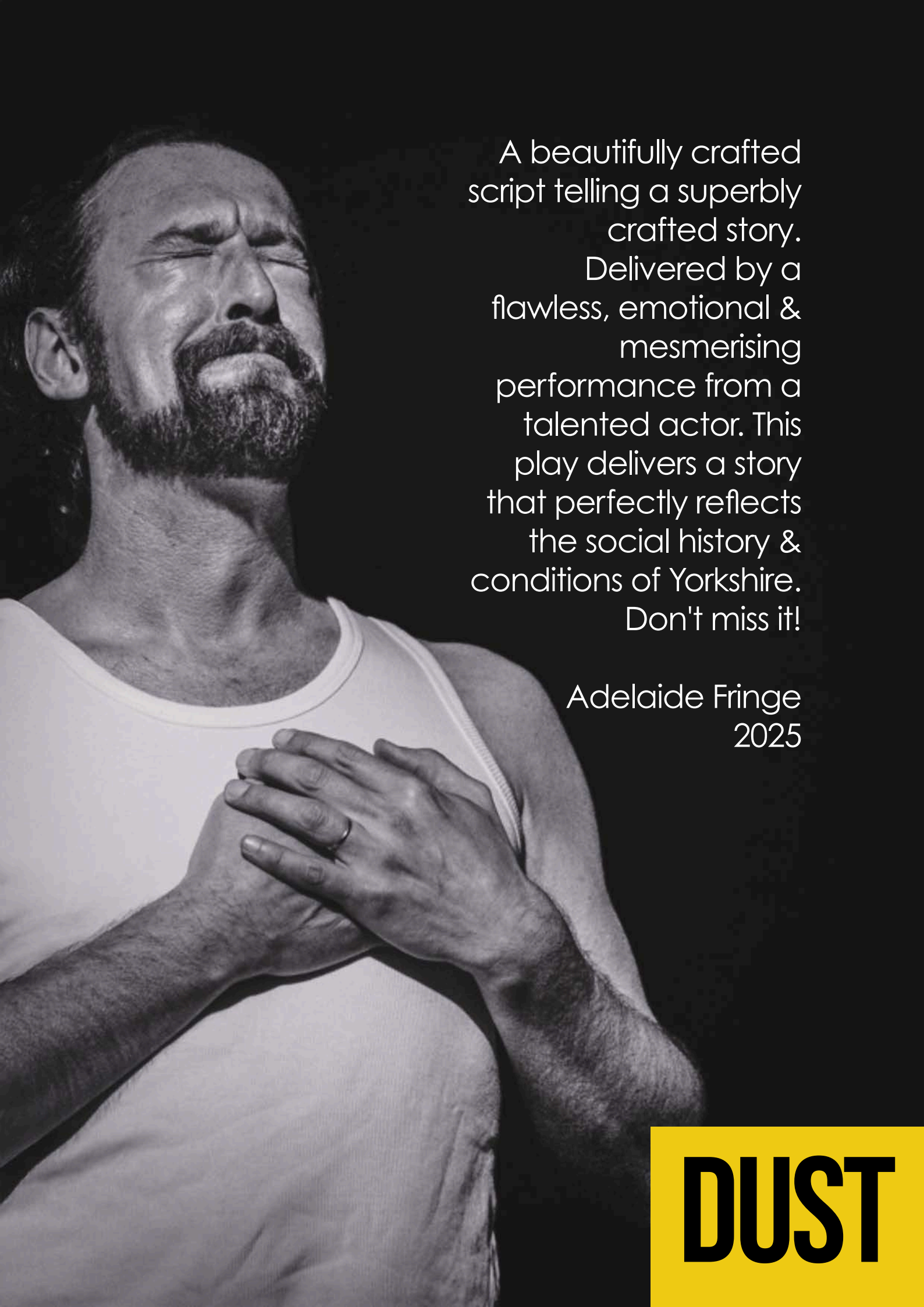
Hyper-surrealism takes this even further, blending dream and reality until the line between them disappears. In *Dust*, this means memories appear out of order, time shifts suddenly, and everyday objects take on symbolic meaning. The world feels distorted—like a vivid dream or hallucination—allowing the audience to experience the chaos and emotion of the man's fractured memory.

DUST

WOW! A
powerful and
compelling
performance of
a masterful script.
The writer and
performer could
not have been
better paired!

Adelaide Fringe
2025





A beautifully crafted
script telling a superbly
crafted story.

Delivered by a
flawless, emotional &
mesmerising
performance from a
talented actor. This
play delivers a story
that perfectly reflects
the social history &
conditions of Yorkshire.

Don't miss it!

Adelaide Fringe
2025

DUST

DUST

Set - Black Box Theatre

Embrace the Void ... Set and Semiotics

As the play navigates fragmented memories through flashback and the shifting interplay between past and present, the minimalist set functions as a semiotic landscape—one that privileges transformation over realism.

The deliberate reduction of physical elements allows lighting, sound, and symbolic props to operate as fluid signifiers, guiding the audience through changes in time, place, and emotional state.

In the present-day sequences, the Man is consistently framed within a stark, hard white light—an aesthetic choice that reinforces the rigidity and isolation of his current existence. In contrast, the flashback moments adopt softer, warmer tones, blurring the boundaries between memory and re-enactment. This visual distinction enables the audience to engage with the fluidity of storytelling and the subjective nature of recollection, where truth, performance, and identity merge within the act of remembering.

Through this interplay of design and performance, the production explores how theatrical semiotics can evoke meaning beyond dialogue—positioning space, gesture, and light as narrative devices that construct the fragmented psyche of the protagonist.

▪



DUST

Costume Design

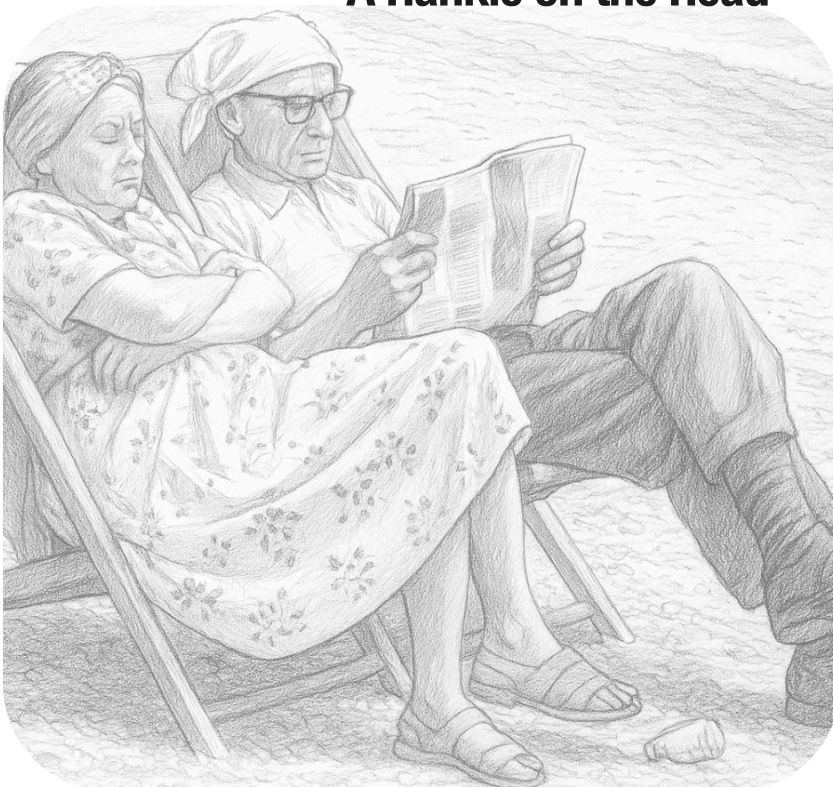
A Yorkshire Flat Cap



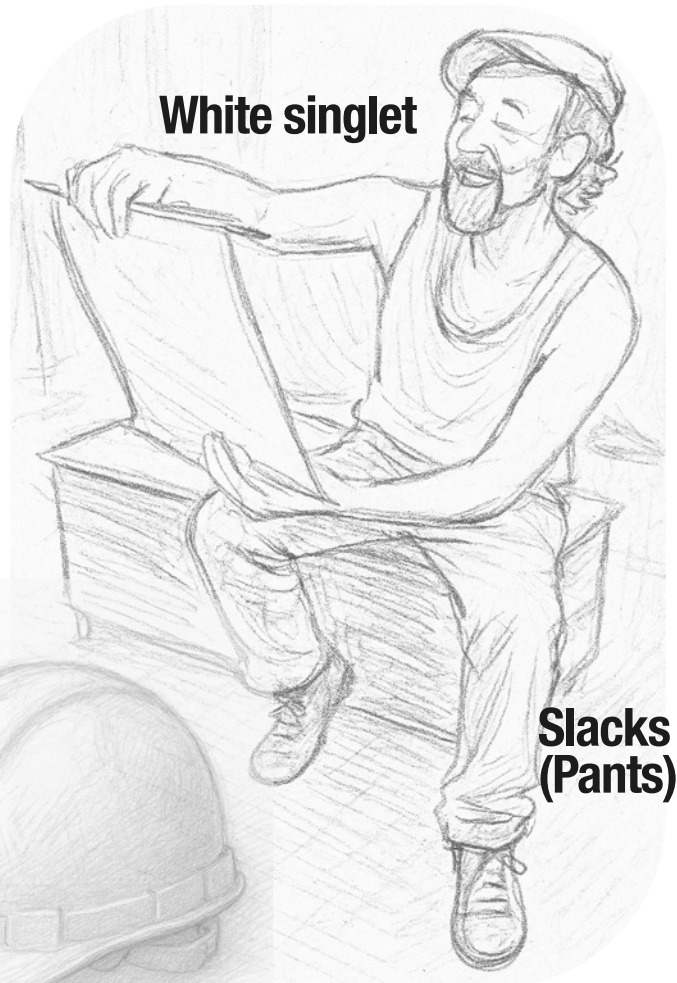
A Miners Helmet



A Hankie on the Head



White singlet



**Slacks
(Pants)**

Black Boots



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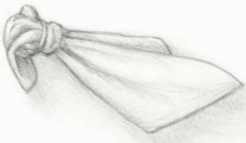
DUST

Props

Scroll

The scroll, inscribed with the “Ten Northern Commandments,” serves as the man’s moral compass—a personal bible shaped by grit, humour, and survival. It reflects his working-class code: loyalty, resilience, and pride. As his memories unravel, the scroll anchors him to identity and tradition, guiding his choices through hardship and redemption.

White Hankie



The white hankie symbolises surrender and vulnerability—a personal white flag amid life’s battles. Once a playful marker of working-class joy at the seaside, knotted proudly against the sun, it now becomes a tender relic of loss and memory, used to wipe away tears and mark moments of human fragility.

Torch

The torch in Dust symbolises light amid darkness, guiding the audience through the man’s fragmented memories. It illuminates moments of truth, loss, and resilience, framing his shifting realities. As his mind fades, the torch becomes both literal and metaphorical—shedding light on what remains of his identity and humanity.



Cane

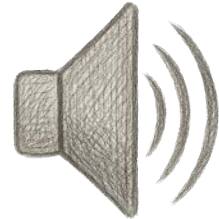
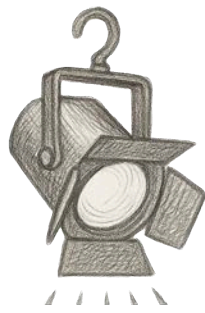
The folding cane symbolises adaptability and transformation—an extension of the man’s shifting identity. Morphing from walking aid to rifle, sergeant’s baton, bar stool, and resting seat, it embodies power, vulnerability, and endurance. The cane blurs past and present, grounding each memory while revealing his dependence, authority, and the fragility of survival.

Flask

The flask functions to express life underground in the mine but also as a practical addition for the actor to hydrate as they are on-stage from start to finish.



DUST



Lighting, Music and Sounds Effects

In *Dust*, lighting, sound, and music intertwine to evoke memory, emotion, and the haunting legacy of industrial life. The use of stark white spotlights defines the present—the hospital room during the COVID-19 lockdown—where the man lies isolated in clinical light. This sterile glow mirrors his fear, confinement, and fading grip on reality, evoking the loneliness of those trapped both physically and emotionally.

In contrast, LED lighting floods the stage with colour to signify the hyper-surreal world of memory. These vibrant hues illuminate moments of warmth, love, and loss, creating visual rhythm between past and present. The interplay between white light and shifting colour becomes a recurring motif, symbolising the fragile line between life and death, consciousness and memory.

Music deepens this emotional layering. Miki and Griff's *A Little Bitty Tear* underscores the tenderness and regret in the man's relationship with Dot, while *Don't Go Down the Mine, Daddy* foreshadows tragedy and the daily dread faced by mining families. The soundscape—of closing mine gates, clanging lifts, and the chants of picketing miners—immerses the audience in the heartbeat of a community bound by endurance and loss.

In one of the play's most powerful moments, the handheld miner's torch becomes a central visual symbol. Its flickering beam recreates the terror and chaos of the 1973 Lofthouse Colliery disaster, cutting through smoke and darkness as the man relives the inrush. The torch's light, fragile yet determined, embodies both human resilience and the glimmer of hope that survives even in the depths of despair.

DUST

MUSICAL MOTIF

Miki & Griff recorded their version of A Little Bitty Tear in 1962.

In the man's story, the song becomes a quiet anthem of his bond with Dot—their love layered under his tough exterior. The "little bitty tear" mirrors Dot's one soft falter in his bracing façade, the moment he realises his clown-act of strength can't hide his longing. Their relationship holds that tear like a secret: small, delicate, but enough to crack through the armour and anchor him in tenderness, proof that love remained when memories fragmented.

*A little bitty tear let me down, spoiled my act as a clown
I had it made up not make a frown, but a little bitty tear let me down*

*You said you were leaving tomorrow
That today was our last day
I said there'd be no sorrow, that I'd laugh when you walked away*

*A little bitty tear let me down, spoiled my act as a clown
I had it made up not make a frown, but a little bitty tear let me down*

*I said I'd laugh when you left me
Pull a funny as you went out the door
That I'd have another waiting
And I'd wave goodbye as you go*

*A little bitty tear let me down, spoiled my act as a clown
I had it made up not make a frown,
but a little bitty tear let me down*

*Everything went like a planned it
And really put on quite a show
In my heart I felt I could stand it
Till you walked with your *grip* through the door
A little bitty tear let me down, spoiled my act as a clown
I had it made up not make a frown, but a little bitty tear let me down*

A little bitty tear let me down

Song Title: A Little Bitty Tear

Performed by: Miki & Griff (Barbara "Miki" Griffith & Emyr Griffith)

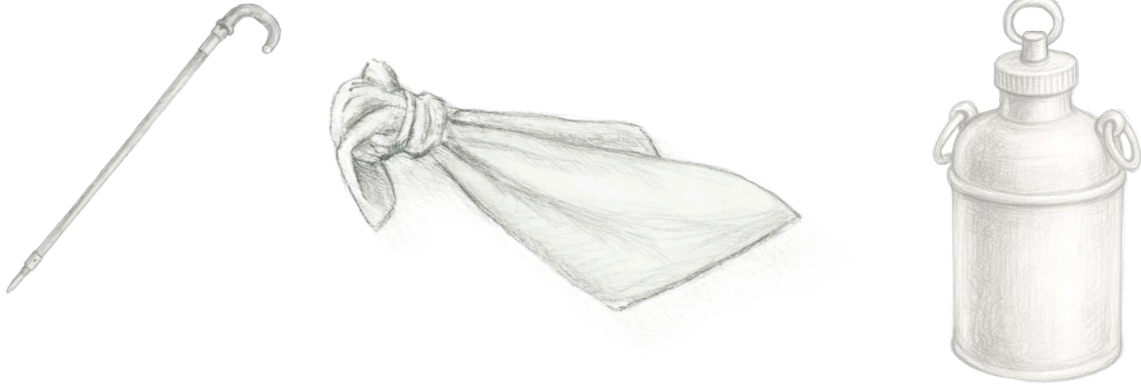
Written by: Hank Cochran

Release Year: 1962 Label: Pye Records (UK) Arranged and Directed by: Tony Hatch



DUST

Make the Ordinary Extraordinary



This 90-minute practical drama lesson is designed for senior Drama students (SACE Stage 1 & 2 / VCA Years 11–12).

It encourages creative exploration of props, sound, light, and emotion to express memory through anti-naturalistic performance techniques, inspired by Charlaina Thompson's *Dust*. The activity links to themes of memory, loss, resilience, and transformation.

Learning Focus

Students explore how an object or sound can transform meaning through theatrical context. They will use props and sensory layers (light, sound, emotion) to create a symbolic vignette inspired by memory or emotion, developing skills in composition, improvisation, and analysis.

SACE / VCA Curriculum Links

SACE Stage 1 AT1 / Stage 2 AT2 – Performance: Apply expressive and stagecraft skills to realise dramatic ideas.

SACE Stage 1 AT2 / Stage 2 AT1 – Folio: Reflect on and justify creative choices.

VCA VCADRE046 / VCADRE048 – Manipulate dramatic elements and conventions to convey meaning.

VCA VCADRR047 / VCADRR049 – Analyse how contexts and production elements shape audience response.

DUST

Lesson Plan 90 Minutes

0–10 minutes – Introduction and Warm-up



Begin with a short ensemble warm-up to connect breath and body.

“The Machine”

Focus:

Ensemble timing, sound and movement connection

How:

One student begins with a repetitive movement and sound (e.g. “Clank!” and a shoulder jerk).

One by one, others add a new movement and sound, forming a living “machine.”

Gradually build to full ensemble rhythm, then reverse and “shut it down.”

Goal: Builds group rhythm, spatial awareness, and creativity.

Discuss: 'How can an ordinary object become extraordinary on stage?'

Demonstrate with an example such as a torch – exploring how it can represent light, hope, fear, or revelation through gesture and angle.

DUST

10–25 minutes – Prop Exploration

Students select one prop (or are assigned one). Encourage use of props from *Dust* such as the torch, cane, scroll, miner's flask, or white hankie. Experiment with 3–4 different uses for the same prop – from realistic to abstract, literal to symbolic.

Examples:

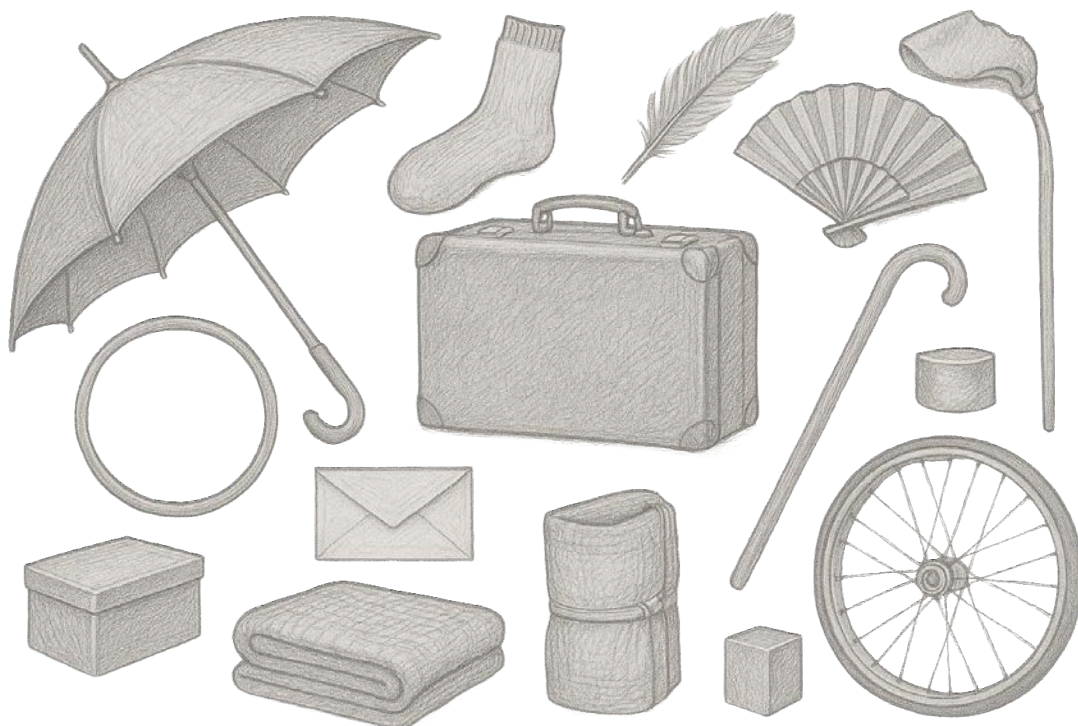
- A cane becomes a gun, a chair, or a memory of authority.
- A torch becomes a searchlight, a lifeline, or a symbol of memory.
- A white hankie becomes a flag of surrender, a keepsake, or a tear-stained memory.

25–40 minutes – Emotion Connection

Students write down the emotions they would like to convey using the prop. Focus on physical expression rather than dialogue.

Suggested emotions:

Joy, grief, fear, anxiety, nostalgia, confusion, love, loss, guilt, hope, determination, despair, pride, surrender.



DUST

40–55 minutes – Stream of Consciousness: Memory Exercise

Using their chosen emotion, students write a short stream-of-consciousness paragraph based on a personal or imagined memory.

Encourage honesty and sensory detail. Use prompts to inspire the writing.

Suggested scenarios:

- A day at the beach
- Getting lost
- Experiencing fear or anxiety
- A surprise or unexpected encounter
- A moment of pride or loss
- A time of waiting or endurance
- A moment of realisation or forgiveness



DUST

55-75 minutes – Layering Sound and Lighting

Students now layer their performance with

- a sound effect
- piece of music,
- lighting change to heighten the emotion or atmosphere.

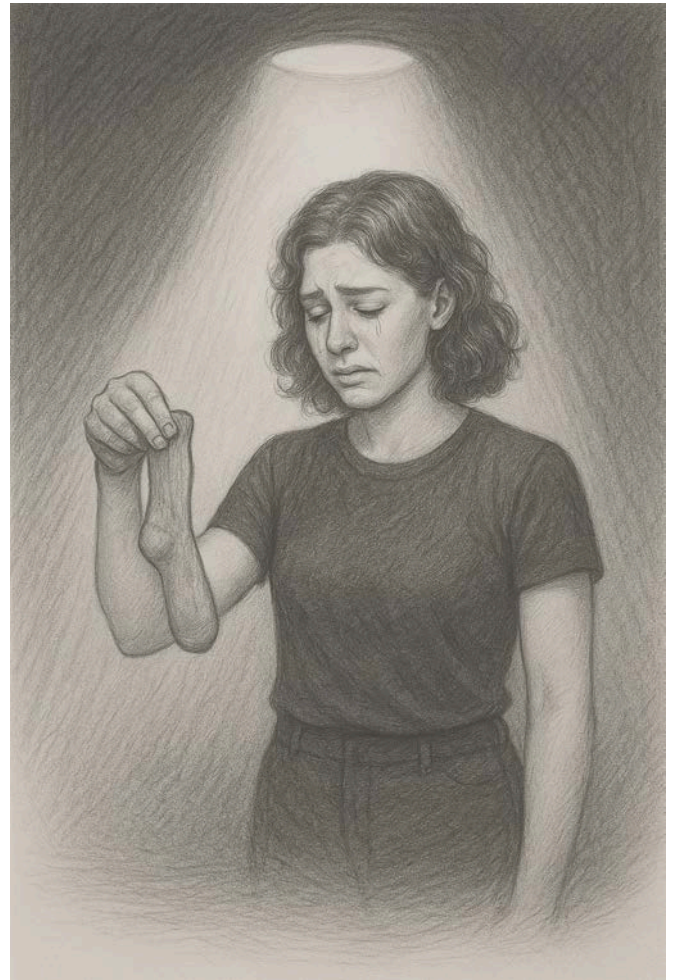
Encourage experimentation with contrasts or repetition.

Sound effect examples:

- Ocean waves / seagulls (nostalgia)
- Heartbeat or ticking clock (anxiety)
- Industrial hum or machinery (memory / trauma)
- Laughter or distant voices (loss or disconnection)
- Wind or rain (fear or longing)

Lighting examples:

- Spotlight for isolation or truth
- LED colour wash for memory or dream
- Side-lighting for tension or fear
- Handheld torch for searching or hope



DUST

75–90 minutes – Presentation and Reflection

Students present short vignettes (30–60 seconds) to the class. Each performance should use at least one prop, a light source, and a sound or music element. After viewing, reflect as a group on the emotional and symbolic impact.

Extension:

Rework one variable (change lighting, sound, or emotion) and present again. Discuss how altering one layer shifts the tone and meaning of the memory.

Suggested Assessment

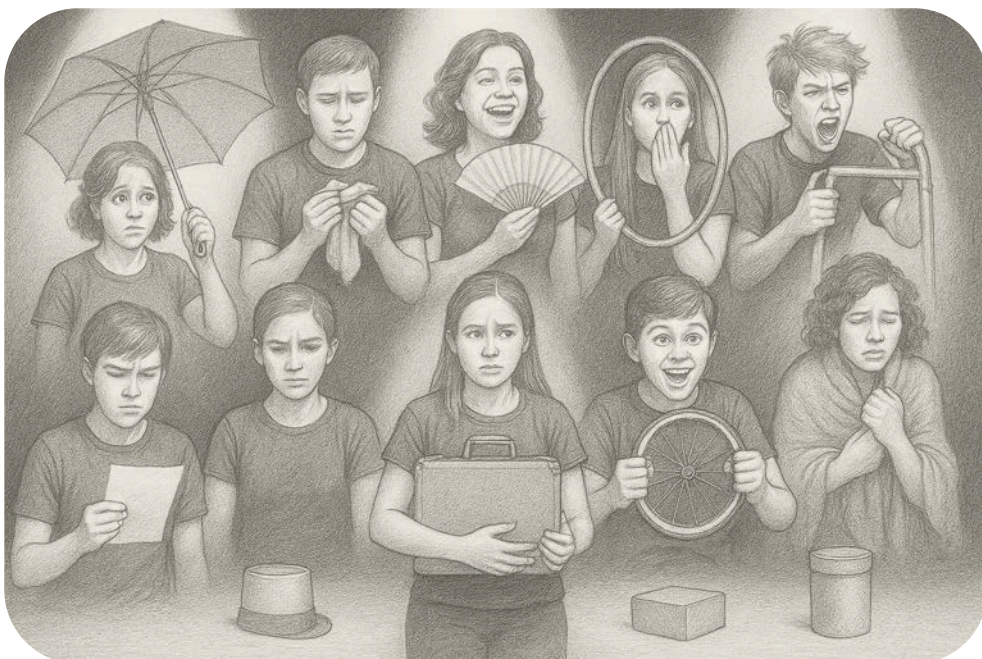
Performance Task (AT1/AT2)

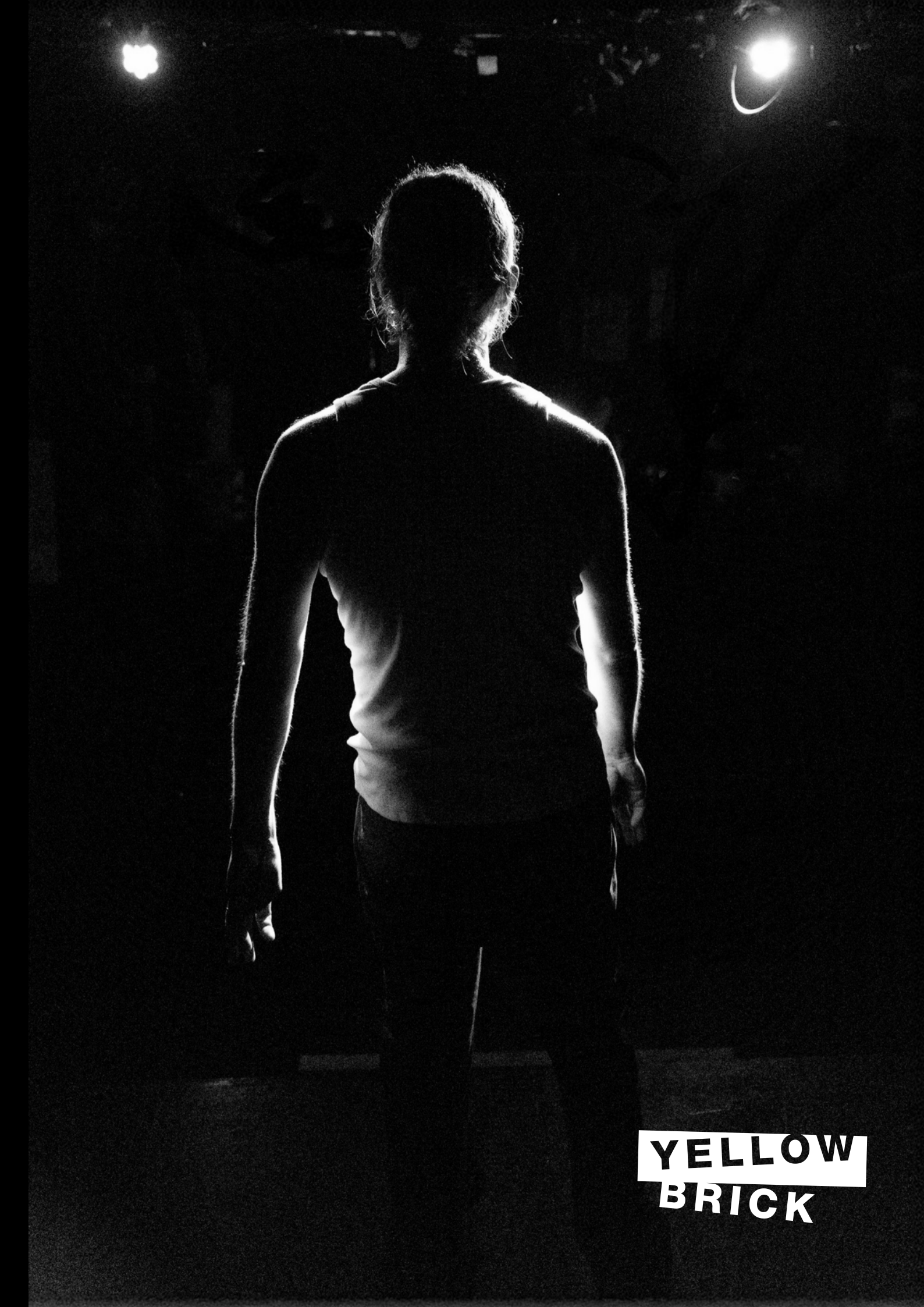
Create a short symbolic performance (30–60 seconds) exploring memory using prop, light, and sound. Focus on transformation, emotion, and atmosphere.

Written Reflection (AT2/AT3)

300–500 words analysing how choices of prop, light, and sound communicated meaning and emotion to an audience.

Play - Experiment - Shine a light on your imagination





YELLOW
BRICK