Belgrade Community & Education Company

Belgrade Theatre Coventry

The MYSTERIES IN OUR OWN WORDS

UNRAVELLING THE MYSTERY
Stories inspired by the Bible and the Qur’an

Education Pack
Scripts and Education material for use with young people aged 11+
THE MYSTERIES – IN OUR OWN WORDS
SCRIPTS & EDUCATION MATERIAL

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The Mysteries – In Our Own Words

In 2009, the Belgrade Community & Education Company put on a production entitled The Mysteries – In Our Own Words, contributing to a long history of Mystery performances in the city of Coventry that stretches back to the medieval period. The origins of the Mystery tradition are to be found in priests re-enacting Bible stories for their illiterate congregations, a task that was later taken on by lay groups called the Guilds. The Biblical stories were made accessible through the use of contemporary settings, language and political/social reference.

In this version of the Mysteries, the Belgrade’s Community & Education Company continued in the spirit of reflecting the experiences and issues of the local community by widening the traditional Christian focus of the event, and celebrating also the stories of the Qur’an. Whilst one section of the pack deals specifically with the connection between stories in the Bible and in the Qur’an, we hope that you will make your own links also, encouraging students to see shared values, narratives and experiences. We have indicated at the end of some sections where comparisons may be useful.

This education pack is made up of three exiting new plays, two films, one short story and one narrative poem, with six accompanying sections of education material. As well as the extracts required for the exercises, the full texts of all the creative products have been included in this pack.

These creative products have all been inspired by the ideas and preoccupations of young people, and were especially created by the young people in partnership with professional artists for performance by young people. They therefore provide an excellent resource for use in schools.

Please note that the film Chosen does contain strong language, and that Chosen, Smokeless Fire, and Underground are best suited for an older audience (aged 14+).

This education pack has been designed with a specific focus on Secondary Education. Throughout the pack we have offered suggestions of national curriculum focus. The activities themselves are all drama based, since this is our speciality at the Belgrade, and since drama provides an ideal medium for practical learning.

Each exercise objective is written with the expectation of it needing to be tailored to the specific abilities of your class. The exercises offered in this pack should be adaptable, in their form and style, to suit the specific needs of your class. This pack focuses on Key Stage 3 Religious Studies, but can be used and adapted for a variety of subjects. Whether you plan to use this material in Religious Studies, Drama, PSHE or Citizenship, it is our hope that it will be engaging and useful for your students learning.
The Origins of the Mystery plays

The origins of religious drama are believed to lie in the rites and ceremonies of the early Christian church. These early mini-plays or short liturgical dramas, recorded as far back as the sixth century, gradually developed into more complex pieces, which made it more difficult to stage them within the confines of the church building. At the same time, the participation of the clergy in such performances came to be viewed with increasing disquiet by church leaders; was it unseemly, for example, for a monk to enact the part of an evil character such as Herod? Eventually, in 1210, the problem was solved by Pope Innocent III, who issued an order that the plays should no longer take place inside churches. Once the plays began to be performed in public spaces, non-clerical people increasingly became involved in their presentation.

Only 50 years after this order, in 1264, Pope Urban created the feast of Corpus Christi to celebrate the redemptive power of Christ through the miracle of the Host. Although it did not become a major date in the religious calendar until the early fourteenth century, the timing of it – the Thursday after Trinity Sunday – made it an eminently suitable season for the expansion of the traditional religious processions. In addition to this the Corpus Christi festival also became the occasion for trade fairs, making the conditions ideal for the development of the liturgical dramas into all-day celebrations, with a more secular input.

The overall organisation of the plays was probably still handled by a religious guild, but the local craft guilds would take on responsibility for a particular play, providing the wagons used as portable stages and props and possibly actors for the minor roles, while the main roles would still be taken by members of the religious guild. The connection between an individual guild and the play they were responsible for is usually obvious. In the York cycle for example, the shipwrights were responsible for building the Ark and the bakers provided the Last Supper. Religious and secular interests would often coincide, as in the case of the goldsmiths, who would provide appropriately elaborate props for the Adoration of the Magi, giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their skill to potential buyers.

The guilds themselves were known as ‘mysteries’, accepting new members only after they had served long apprenticeships and proved they had acquired the ‘mystery’ or ‘mastery’ of the craft. By extension, therefore, the plays became known as the mystery plays.

At a time when all religious business within the Church was carried out in Latin, the mystery plays presented the stories from the Bible in everyday language that ordinary people could easily understand, allowing them to have their own views about them without the intervention of a priest.

The plays were organised into cycles and, although manuscripts only survive for four of these, other contemporary records indicate that some of the plays at least were performed at Aberdeen, Bath, Beverley, Bristol, Brome, Canterbury, Chester, Coventry, Dublin, Ipswich, Leicester, Norwich, Northampton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Wakefield and York, and probably also at Lincoln and in London. The four more or less complete cycles come from York, Chester, Wakefield and an unknown location in the East Midlands, named for Coventry. They have strong resemblances to each other, but the treatment of the religious material is quite different.

Elaine Peake © John Good.
THE FALL OF LUCIFER
By Jennifer Farmer
(Inspired by the story told in the Bible and the Qur’an)

Overview

When creating The Fall of Lucifer, the Belgrade’s Acting Out group explored various themes of the original story. They soon found themselves drawn to Biblical and personal stories of betrayal and rebellion. Through writing and performance workshops, the group examined how these themes impacted on their lives, and what element of Lucifer’s story they found... in their own - with unexpected consequences. One participant stated “The more we explored Lucifer’s story, the more empathy we felt for him.”

Key Words

Rebellion, Jealousy, Betrayal, Nepotism

Curriculum Link

Religious Education
Exploring the impact of religions and beliefs on how people live their lives.

Objectives

Exercise 1 - Exploring betrayal and what it means to be betrayed.

- Know what the term ‘betrayal’ means.
- Begin to understand why the story, The Fall of Lucifer, may offer guidance to people of all faiths through storytelling.

Exercise 2 - Exploring what jealousy is and how it can affect you.

- Know what the term ‘jealousy’ might mean to some people.
- Understand how we can begin to recognise jealousy in ourselves by studying what the signs of jealousy were in Lucifer.
- Learn how to use the dramatic technique ‘monologue’ to develop a character by responding to a situation that is happening in the script.

Exercise 3 - Understanding how to ‘mark the moment’ in a piece of theatre.

- Know what the term ‘mark the moment’ means by focusing on Lucifer’s rebellion against God.
- Understand how to ‘mark the moment’ using dramatic devises such as ‘freeze frame’,
‘slow motion’, ‘thought tracking’ and ‘narration’.

- Learn how to ‘mark the moment’ in the story The Fall of Lucifer.

Brief synopsis

God sits in his office. He is disturbed by the whispers of the Seven Deadly Sins. We hear fragments of sentences referencing Satan. God silences the whispers.

The scene shifts quickly to a laboratory where God’s angels are working hard. They are carrying out what looks like a scientific experiment. Ariel drops in a final ingredient. It has the desired effect and all the angels cheer.

Amid much tension on the shop floor, Lucifer organises a group photo to mark the moment. We find out that the team of angels are embarking on their most ambitious project yet, project Genesis, the creation of the world.

God arrives. We see that He and Lucifer are very close. God announces his new Executive Director for the project. Everyone expects Lucifer to get the job, but instead God introduces his Son Jesus Christ to take on the role. Lucifer reels with the shock. The Seven Deadly Sins from the start of the play echo in Lucifer’s head.

God comforts Lucifer, telling him he has always loved him like a son, and to show his love gives him the position of ‘Bearer of The Light’. Lucifer half-heartedly congratulates Jesus. God and Jesus walk towards God’s office. God and Jesus walk in and Lucifer is left outside.

Lucifer sits at his desk and the whispers of the Seven Deadly Sins return. Lucifer tries to shut out the whispering telling himself that Jesus is the right man for the job. Ariel rushes excitedly into Lucifer’s office and shows him a test tube in which he has created life. Jesus walks past and notices the commotion. He takes the test tube from Lucifer and drags Ariel to share the good news with his Father.

Lucifer decides that the appointment of Jesus to the position of Executive Director is an injustice and that the staff should go on strike until the decision is reversed. Lucifer is told that it is impossible to win against God, but he continues regardless. Lucifer summons the Seven Deadly Sins and as their whispering grows he is transformed into Satan.

God is informed of Lucifer’s plan to take down Jesus and of his transformation into Satan. At that moment, Satan walks into God’s office with his army of the Seven Deadly Sins. Satan threatens God, God only kisses Lucifer’s forehead.

A great battle breaks out between the angels and Satan’s army. Finally, Satan’s army is defeated, and Satan alone is left standing before the angel Michael. Michael regrets the loss of his good friend, Lucifer, but is left with no other choice but to cast him off into hell.

As Satan falls, he calls out to God “Why didn’t you love me best?!”. As God and the angels watch Lucifer, we hear talk of the importance of sacrificing for the greater good, then silence. Then from out of the silence come the words ‘Let there be light’. As the lights fade, we once more hear the whispering voices of the Seven Deadly Sins. At the same time that earth is created, evil and temptation are born into the world.

Exercise 1 - Exploring betrayal and what it means to be betrayed.

Starter

Ask the group to think about the term ‘betrayal’ and what it means to them.

Give the group the definition below:

Betrayal is the breaking or violation of a presumptive social contract, trust, or confidence that produces moral and psychological conflict within a relationship amongst individuals, between organisations or between individuals and organisations. Often betrayal is the act of supporting a rival group, or it is a complete break from previously decided upon or presumed norms by one party from the others. Someone who betrays others is commonly called a traitor or betrayer.

(Wikipedia 2010)

Make sure that the group all have a pen and a piece of paper. Ask them to think about a time when they have been betrayed. Then ask the group to think about how this made them feel and to express this feeling on the piece of paper in whatever way it manifests itself - written, drawn, scribbled etc. Ask some of the group to present their creations and explain the story behind them.

Main

Ask the class to split into smaller groups, and for each group to choose one of their tales of betrayal to focus on. This will provide the basis for a story. Give each group the grid below to help them create a strong structure for their piece.

The students must split their story into the different sections of the grid. This may cause some debate. Equally, the students may have to expand their story in order hit the five point story structure.

Once the groups have broken their stories into the five elements of story structure, they should begin to dramatise their stories. The teacher may wish to run this exercise over more than one lesson.
Extension Exercise

When the students share their work, ask the rest of the group to pin point the five elements of storytelling in each of the presentations. Use this as an assessment exercise.

Exercise 2 - Exploring what jealousy is and how it can affect you.

Starter

Split the class into smaller groups and give each group the scenarios beneath:

Scenario One

Your best friend tells you that they’ve been given £300 for getting all Cs at GCSE, whereas you got all As and received nothing.

Scenario Two

You have secretly liked a particular individual for months, and you finally decide that you are going to tell them. Just as you are about to talk your best friend sweeps in and asks them out on a date.

Scenario Three

Your best friend does not do any work, but consistently gets higher grades than you. You have just received test results and they have again done better than you but on less work.

Scenario Four

Your friend’s parents buy them a brand new car on their seventeenth birthday in preparation for them learning to drive. You have just found out.

Scenario Five

You’re in a relationship with someone, and you notice them spending a lot of time with another individual who is known for breaking up relationships.

Ask each group to create a still image for each of these scenarios. After they have created their still images, ask them what feelings may be associated with these situations. Introduce the idea of jealousy.

Jealousy is an emotion and typically refers to the negative thoughts and feelings of insecurity, fear, and anxiety over an anticipated loss of something that the person values, such as a relationship, friendship, or love. Jealousy often consists of a combination of emotions such as anger, sadness, and disgust.

Ask the students if there has ever been a time when they have experienced jealousy. Ask them to explain what it felt like.

Main

Ask the group to read through this extract from The Fall of Lucifer:

GOD:

Listen, I just want you to know that your dedication hasn’t gone unnoticed. You’ll be rewarded, don’t you worry.

LUCIFER:

Thank you, sir.

GOD:

A pleasure, my boy. Gather ’round, everyone.

Everyone makes a semi-circle around God.

As you know the company is embarking on our most ambitious project to date; the creation of Earth and every living thing that will exist on it. I give you Project Genesis!

An over-sized digital clock is unveiled. It hasn’t started, but the countdown is set for T – 3 Days. All of the workers cheer and applaud.

Lucifer, over to you.

LUCIFER:

Thank you, sir.

Lucifer addresses the assembled angels.

As you know, there are three crack teams working diligently on the three elements that will enable Project Genesis to proceed. Time!

Lucifer points to Ariel and her team which consists of Baal, Uriel and Amy. The others cheer wildly.

Space!

Lucifer points to Gabriel and his team which consists of Celestiel and Lilith. Again, cheers and applause.

And Life!

Lucifer points to team leader Michael, Raphael and Belzebub. Again, cheers and applause. Michael looks uneasy, but Lucifer gives him a thumbs up.

3 days we’ve got to get everything in place, but if we all work together and stay focused, it will be a success.

GOD:

And because this is such a massive project, I only want the best working along side me, knowing my ideas and strategies, sharing in my honour and power.

Lucifer straightens his tie. Michael nudges him.

The moment you’ve all been waiting for. Let me introduce you to your new Executive Director,

Lucifer begins to take a step forward.
The Mysteries | Education Pack & Scripts

My Son, Jesus Christ.
God’s plush leather chair swivels around to reveal Jesus.

JESUS: Hey everyone.

Ask the class to think about this extract of text and consider who may be feeling jealous within the scene. In response to God’s lines, ask the class to create a monologue that runs parallel, which will be performed by Lucifer. The monologue should explore what Lucifer is feeling as God builds up to announcing his new Executive Director. The monologue should allow the audience an insight into Lucifer’s feelings about Jesus being given the post of Executive Director.

Ask the students to consider the following Self Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand what the word ‘jealousy’ means and am capable of writing with this emotion in mind.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am capable of creating a structure that runs parallel to another piece of text. In this case God’s speech.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am capable of using punctuation in order to give the performer guidance on how the lines ought to be spoken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am capable of writing in the style of a character by adopting a style that befits a certain character and by using appropriate words. In this case the character of Lucifer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the pupils have written their monologue responses ask the group to perform them. Ask the students to explain whether and why they have met their success criteria.

Exercise 3 – Understanding how to ‘mark the moment’ in a piece of theatre.

Starter
Split the class into four groups and give each of the groups one of the tasks linked to an explanation of a dramatic device as listed below:

Narration
This is usually when text is spoken over a physical performance.
Create a short scene, possibly of your trip to school, where some of the group physically act out a scene and the rest of the group narrate the journey by telling the story.

Still Image
This is where a still picture is created by a group of performers. The still image should tell a story or add to the narrative of a performance.
Create a still image of a time in history that you feel is particularly dramatic.

Thought Tracking
This is where a character speaks their thoughts out to the audience, while the rest of the performers remain still, giving the audience an insight into the characters inner feelings.
Create a short scene, possibly of an argument with a friend, and attempt to include ‘thought tracking’ from one or both of the characters.

Slow Motion
This is where you slow the action down.
Create a performance of an everyday task in slow motion, e.g. as brushing your teeth or playing football etc.

Ask the groups to complete their tasks and share their work with the rest of the group.

Mark the moment
This is where you highlight a key moment or scene using dramatic device such as ‘narration’, ‘thought tracking’, ‘still image’ and ‘slow motion’. This should make the audience focus on a pivotal moment in the narrative.

Main
Ask the students to consider the extract below in which Satan has rebelled against God and decided to take over Heaven.

Rebellion
Is a refusal to do something. A refusal to conform with the accepted norm of society.

Ask the group to read the scene below and think of a moment that would benefit from being marked by a dramatic device.

Satan enters with his army. He walks in and stands in front of God. With his foot, Satan draws a line so that every angel must choose his/her side. One by one, the angels either side with God or with Satan.

GOD: What’s this I hear about you starting a revolution? Explain yourself, Lucifer.
SATAN: My name is Satan and we’re unhappy with the way things are going around here. And what we want—
GOD: (scoffs) Satan...
SATAN: And what we want is for me to be made your rightful equal. Over Jesus.
GOD: That’s not going to happen. I’ve made my decision.
SATAN: Well your decision was wrong God and I’ll give you one last chance to—
GOD: Who are you to be giving out chances, my son?
SATAN: I am not your son.

Pause.

GOD: No, you’re not. Get out. All of you, get out now.

Satan points to the rebellious angels.

SATAN: They’re with me! You’d kick them out too and make this place empty? You’d do that?

GOD: Get Out.

Satan and God stare at each other in silence.

SATAN: (whispers) Please sir, don’t make me do this.

GOD: (whispers) It’s not you doing it to me, my boy.

Satan looks confused. God gives him a kiss.

I wish I didn’t have to do this. Believe me, if there was another way...

Beat, then Satan is about to push God away from him when Michael steps in, blocking the attack.

There is silence as Michael and Satan stare at each other. Then suddenly Michael lets out a battle cry.

With this, Satan breaks into individual warriors to battle against Michael and the army of angels.

A vocal/instrumental canon builds, creating the sense of war.

The battle has begun.

One by one, the angels who sided with Satan are defeated and expelled from heaven until only Michael and Satan remain.

Michael and Satan are in a fierce embrace; it could be a hold, it could be a hug. It is then clear that Michael has defeated Satan. As Satan is expelled from heaven, he calls out to God.

SATAN: Why didn’t you love me best?!
**CHOSEN**

A film written and devised by the company with Chris Bradley and Orla O’Connor.

*(Inspired by the stories of The Annunciation & The Nativity as told in the New Testament).*

**THE STORY OF MARYAM**

Written by Nesilhan Demir

*(Inspired by the story of the birth of Jesus as told in Qur’an).*

**Brief Overview**

**Chosen** *(film – 21 mins)*

Chosen and The Story of Maryam tell the story of Jesus’ conception from two very different angles. Chosen was inspired by the biblical stories of the journey of Mary and the birth of Jesus. The group that devised this film largely comprised of girls of varying ages, which lead the film to explore aspects of relationships and teenage pregnancy. By weaving a parallel narrative of the Nativity (told through a school play), with a more urban portrayal of our modern day Mary, the group were able to tell a story which had resonances with how they experienced their lives today.

**The Story of Mary** *(filmed performance – 9 mins)*

The idea for the story came from the writer Nesilhan Demir asking the question ‘what would be interesting and informative for people of a different faith?’ Nesilhan was aware that most people knew one story of the birth of Jesus, but wanted to share the story from the Islamic perspective. The Qur’an sees Jesus Christ as a Prophet rather than as the son of God.

**Curriculum Link**

Religious Studies

Exploring the variety, difference and relationships that exist within and between religions, values and belief.

**Key Words**

Trust, Belief, Comparisons, Relationships

**Objectives**

**Exercise 1 – Exploring theatrical ways to tell stories.**

- **Know** what the term ‘cross cut’ means.
- **Understand** how to focus an audience’s attention on one element of the action when more than one narrative is attempting to be told using dramatic devices.
- **Learn** how to use dramatic devices, such as ‘cross cut’, ‘silent action’ and ‘still image’.

**Exercise 2 – Exploring the similarities and differences between religions**

- **Know** how to identify narrative change between similar stories by reading, watching and using prior knowledge.
- **Understand** that there are similarities as well as differences between religions by looking at the varying accounts of Mary.
- **Learn** how to identify these differences and similarities using a grid to make them clear.

**Exercise 3 – Understanding that drama can be used to highlight similarities**

- **Know** that there is a relationship between religions through the account told in their holy books.
- **Understand** how to create a dramatic comparison between the three stories of Mary giving birth to Jesus using ‘Cross Cutting’.
- **Learn** how to edit a scene together by working together and using material that compliments each other.

**Brief Synopsis - Chosen**

Louise and Jay are lying in bed together. Jay suggests that they take their relationship to the next level and make love. Louise tells Jay she is not ready yet and Jay leaves.

We discover that Alex, Louise’s sister, has been given the part of Mary in the school Nativity.

We see Louise at school. She tells her friend that she may be pregnant.

Alex has her first Nativity rehearsal.

After the third pregnancy test, Louise is certain she is pregnant.

Jay’s friends ask him if he and Louise have had sex yet. Jay says he has not. They laugh at him. They think he’s going ‘soft’. Jay has made a wooden heart to give to Louise as a token of his love.

We see Louise sat on the stairs, alone; a voice speaks to her and tells her that her mother will understand her pregnancy. Louise becomes very upset but the voice tries to reassure her.

Louise says that she is a virgin and this pregnancy is completely impossible.

Alex goes to perform in her school Nativity, while Louise goes to a party where she knows she will find Jay. Louise tells Jay that she is pregnant. Jay is obviously hurt. Louise tells Jay that she is going to have God’s baby. Jay leaves, accusing her of sleeping around.

Louise is confined to the house by her ashamed mother. Jay decides, after talking to his friend, that miracles can happen. He goes to see Louise and tells her that he believes her. He leaves his wooden heart on her doorstep.
**Brief Synopsis - The Story of Maryam**

According to the Qur’an, Maryam (known in the Bible as Mary) dedicated her life to Allah and Allah always provided for Maryam.

One day Archangel Jibril (Gabriel) visited Maryam in the form of a beautiful man to see whether she would be tempted by him. She was not, and she said to Jibril “I seek refuge from you with Allah”. She was afraid of Jibril, but he informed her that she was to have a holy son. She was confused as she had not been touched by a man. Jibril reassured her that Allah can make anything possible.

Maryam soon conceived. She decided to hide away near the desert. Maryam gave birth to the child and was told by a voice to go back to her people but not breathe a word about her experience. She was told to call the child isa (known in the Bible as Jesus).

When she got back to her people they were very angry and disappointed that she had shamed her parents, and had a child outside of wedlock. She could not defend herself, as Allah had told her to remain silent. Her people told her to leave their village, and still she had to remain silent.

Suddenly isa, the child, began to speak. The baby told Maryam’s people that he was indeed a prophet and that he had been created to be kind and obey his mother. The people were amazed and astonished.

**Exercise 1 – Exploring theatrical ways to tell stories**

**Starter**

Ask the class to pair off to have an opening conversation. In film, the director is able to direct the audience’s attention from one place to another using the camera to focus in on specific action. Ask them to think about how can you get an audience to look at specific action in theatre without the aid of a camera.

**Main**

Separate the class into groups. Give each group a copy of the exercise below and ask them to create a ‘cross-cut’ scene.

**Cross-cutting**

Cross-cutting allows two scenes to happen simultaneously. Think about two situations that might happen together (someone getting told off by a teacher whilst students in the same class attempt to steal lunch from another classmate).

The audience cannot focus on all the action at the same time so it is your job, as theatre creators, to highlight what the audience ought to be looking at.

Create a scenario where the audience needs to watch two situations simultaneously. Find a way to make the audience focus on the action you want them to look at.

This could be done by muting the volume of half of the action whilst the action you want the audience to focus on continues (silent action). You may also achieve this by making the out of focus action still, whilst the action you want the audience to focus on continues (still image).

**Exercise 2 – Exploring the similarities and differences between religions**

**Starter**

Ask the group to watch the film Chosen with these questions in mind:

- What are the similarities between the film Chosen and the Bible story of Mary giving birth to Jesus, that some of the class may be familiar with?
- How is Louise treated when she is found to be pregnant?
- Would you believe your friend or partner if they informed you they had mysteriously become pregnant?
- Do you think Jay has a fair and justified reaction to hearing his girlfriend has become pregnant?
- What do you think of Louise’s mother’s reaction to her pregnancy?
- Are there any examples of cross cutting in this film?

**Main**

Read through, or watch The Story of Maryam, and ask the students to bear these questions in mind:

- What similarities exist between The Story of Maryam and film Chosen?
- Does the treatment of Maryam differ from the treatment of Louise in Chosen?
- Do you think the villages treat her fairly when she returns?
- Which characters are omitted from this story that we may be familiar with from the Bible story?
Ask the students to fill out the grid below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chosen</th>
<th>The Story of Maryam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Similarities &amp; Differences to Nativity Story (Bible)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ask the groups to discuss:
- Did you realise that the Mary story appeared in more than one religion?
- Which story did you most connect to?
- If you were to create a piece of theatre around these three versions how might you incorporate 'cross-cutting'?
- How is the role of men addressed in each story?

**Exercise 3 – Understanding that drama can be used to highlight similarities.**

**Starter**
Split the class into four smaller groups to revise the similarities and differences between the three versions of the Mary story from Exercise 2. Ask the groups to identify the difference that most stood out for them. After they have identified their key difference ask the group to share their most striking variable with the rest of the class.

**Main**
Having looked at the three stories, and identified similarities and differences between them, it is now time for the group to consider how to dramatise the stories at the same time highlighting comparisons to the audience using 'cross-cutting'. Ask the groups to revise what 'cross-cutting' is and what dramatic techniques we can put in place to make the 'cross-cut' work.

Ask the four groups from the starter exercise to create two groups. Ask the two groups to each select one version of the Mary story. The groups should choose contrasting stories.

Ask the two groups to devise a piece of theatre around the structure of the story they have chosen. Ask the groups to only devise from where Mary is pregnant to the point that the baby is born. Ask them to consider the Success Criteria below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Tick if you’ve achieved it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone can hear me clearly when I’m speaking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that there are similarities between the Bible’s version of the Story of Mary and that of the Qu’ran.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My piece uses dramatic devices such as ‘still image’, ‘slow motion’ ‘thought tracking’ or possibly ‘inner monologue’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have created a piece that has a strict structure and is not improvised to the point where it becomes unfocused and the sense of the story is lost</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have created believable characters that I committed to and invested physically, vocally and emotionally in.</td>
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</table>

**Extension Exercise**
Re-introduce the concept of ‘cross-cutting’. Ask the groups that have been devising opposing scenes to attempt to bring their pieces together. This should be done through ‘cross-cutting’ [tackled in Exercise 1].

Ask the groups to attempt to tell their individual stories, but bring them together through ‘cross-cutting’ the scene. Ask the groups to bear in mind where they wish the audience’s focus to be by using ‘still images’ or non-speaking action, as discussed in Exercise 2.

If the groups are capable of this complicated scene editing, ask them to perform some of the action simultaneously, as long as it is appropriate for the piece.

**Ask the groups to complete this Self Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am capable of incorporating ‘cross-cutting’ into drama that I devise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Through using ‘cross-cutting’ I am able to show the similarities and differences between stories.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to play a believable character.</td>
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<tr>
<td>By devising theatre I am able to show that some characters from differing stories have similarities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am capable of working successfully as part of a team.</td>
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</table>

After the group has completed their Self Assessment ask the students to discuss with their group anything they felt they excelled at and anything they feel they could improve.
UNDERGROUND
Written and Devised by the company and Tracey Street
(Inspired by the New Testament story of the Betrayal of Christ)

Brief Overview
The group chose to work with the story of Judas' betrayal of Jesus because it posed a very simple but unanswered question: what caused the breakdown of friendship between Jesus and Judas?

As one of the 'chosen', Judas was one of Jesus' close and trusted friends. What went wrong?

Following research into the Gospel of Judas, the group discovered that Judas was actually the disciple that was closest to Jesus. This stimulated the group to ask, 'what would it have been like to have had Jesus as a best friend?'

Curriculum Link
Religious Education
Exploring the impact of religions and beliefs on how people live their lives.

Key Words
Trust, Friendship, Betrayal, Loyalty

Objectives

Exercise 1 – Exploring 'trust' and what it means to us as human beings.

- Know that trust is important in all relationships.
- Understand that people can use the New Testament's Betrayal of Christ story to help live their lives, irrespective of their own beliefs.
- Learn how to devise a scene that comes before an existing scene in Underground looking back at action that doesn't appear in the play.

Exercise 2 – Understanding what 'loyalty' means.

- Know what the term 'loyalty' means.
- Understand how the play Underground has modernised the text of the 'Betrayal of Christ' story but maintained the theme of 'loyalty'.
- Learn how to spot the themes in the play Underground and highlight these for a modern audience.

Exercise 3 - Recognising the importance of friendship in our lives.

- Know how important friendship is in relation to everything we do in our lives.

Synopsis

The action begins with a gathering in a deserted hideout under 'Kings Nightclub'. We quickly discover that the meeting is highly dangerous under the current political climate.

Disciples, the group holding the meeting, talk of how they are being targeted as terrorists and are even being arrested for crimes they have not committed. The disciples' leader, Chris (Jesus Christ), has gone missing, and the group are lost without him. They cannot agree as to what to do in the current situation- whether to continue the struggle to promote Chris's message of love, or whether to call it a day. They decide to hold a vote, but first to reflect back on more of their experiences with Chris to see if they contain the answer.

We see Chris going skydiving and singing Karaoke with his best friend Jay (Judas), and the friends all celebrating his election to student president. We see also that Chris is very close with his father (God) whom we never meet in person, but is always issuing guidance through calls on Chris's mobile phone. Jay is jealous of Chris's closeness to his father.

The disciples then remember how single-minded and moody Chris could be if he did not get his own way. They recall Chris's encounter with King, a local gangster (Herod). Chris had confronted King and as a result, been beaten-up. Some of the disciples see this as reckless behaviour.

Some of the disciples recall Chris's return after a six weeks absence. Chris talks of how he is going to take on King at every level and asks the rest of the disciples to trust him. Jay is quick to do so, but the rest remain apprehensive.

The play flashes back even further to show a conversation between Chris and Jay. Chris feels that King needs to be stopped, but this time Jay is telling Chris not to get too big for his boots.

We move forward in time again. Jay is nowhere to be found and Chris is asking why his best friend would simply disappear. Chris talks of how he is going to take on King at every level and asks the rest of the disciples to trust him. Jay is quick to do so, but the rest remain apprehensive.

The play flashes back even further to show a conversation between Chris and Jay. Chris feels that King needs to be stopped, but this time Jay is telling Chris not to get too big for his boots.

We move forward in time again. Jay is nowhere to be found and Chris is asking why his best friend would simply disappear. Chris decides that he and the disciples are going to the 'Temple Club', Kings' place.

We see Jay meeting with King. We find that King has been paying Jay to take packages into the Cathedral, a bomb. King threatens Jay and tells him he has one last job. King is told that Chris is upstairs in the club.

Chris is preaching to the revellers in the club. He implores them not to bow to King's ways. King steps into the club with his security. Chris continues to preach. The rest of the disciples attempt to get Chris to stop. A fight breaks out as King's security attacks Chris. The disciples drag Chris back to their hiding place.

Chris is proud of himself, having stood up to King. The disciples are angry and annoyed. Chris tells Jay that this is his fight alone. Jay suspects that Chris is acting under his dad's influence, and Jay feels upset and betrayed because he is being left out of the action.

Chris has ordered Pizza for himself and the other disciples (the last supper). Chris notices
his phone has gone missing. It has fallen from his pocket, and Harpreet has picked it up. Chris takes the phone and exits to answer a text from his dad. The other disciples are clearly upset by the respect he has for his dad and the lack of time he has for them.

It transpires that Harpreet has read the last text message from Chris's dad. It simply said "Jay". We see Jay approach Chris and explain that he has debts to King which he has to find a way out of. Chris says he can help out. It becomes clear that Jay has betrayed Chris - he kisses him on the cheek and with this Chris is shot by one of Kings men.

At this point in the re-enactment of past events, the lights go out. When the lights come back on, the disciple playing Chris in the re-enactment has gone, leaving the rest of the disciples confused as to who he was - it turns out no one knew him.

Chaos ensues. One of the group receives a text. It is from Chris, it reads 'Good luck, C'. They realise that the person playing Chris' role was indeed Chris come back from the dead as a sign they should continue. This motivates the disciples and they decide to leave their hiding place to continue to spread Chris' message.

Exercise 1 - Exploring trust and what it means to us as human beings.

Starter

To begin, ask the class to split into partners. Label 'A' and 'B'. Ask 'A's to stand behind 'B's with their hands on 'B's backs. When 'B' is ready, they should gently lean back and 'A's will support them. This begins to introduce the idea of trust and the fear that goes with trusting someone. Slowly the 'B's can build up the distance that they lean back with 'A's support. Ask the partners to swap around so that they can both have the sensation.

If you feel your group is ready...

Ask the group to walk around the space (if you are occupying a large space you will need to set out a smaller area to perform this starter successfully). As the group are walking around the space, anyone may call out the word 'Falling' and start to fall backwards. It is then the responsibility of the group to catch them as they fall backwards. This can then be developed by removing the vocal prompt of 'Falling' forcing the group to be visually aware of when somebody is falling rather than listening to the word 'Falling'.

Ask the group what feeling they had whilst doing the exercise. Was anyone unable to fall? Did anyone have the desire to drop another member of the group, why? Did anyone not get caught, and if so how did that feel?

Introduce the idea of trust:

Trust is a firm belief or confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability, justice, etc. of another person or thing; faith; reliance.

Ask the class whether they felt trust was required in the 'falling' exercise?

Main

Ask the group to consider the idea of trust and what it means to them. Ask them in groups to look at the extract below. Tell the students that a series of events involving mistrust has lead to this scene:

A text from Chris's dad simply reads "Jay". Bally, Simon and Harpreet surround Jay and question him, in an intimidating way, as to why this text message might have been sent.

DAN: Jay?
BALLY: Explain yourself man...
SIMON: What did that mean Jay?
BALLY: Come on tell me...
HARPREET: (They round on him) What's going on?
BALLY: We're all friends here mate...
JAY: (He pushes past them) (Quietly) Get lost...
SIMON: What you hiding?
JAY: What you walking away for?
BALLY: What you touching me for?
JAY: What were you doin' with his phone anyway? You know he never let anyone touch his phone! What were you doin' reading his text messages? Just back off...

Ask the group to consider what may have happened previous to this scene to create such a sense of unrest in the narrative. Ask the group to devise the scene previous to this. Their aim is to create a reason for this disagreement, this lack of trust. Ask them to consider:
Exercise 2 - Understanding what ‘loyalty’ means.

Starter

Loyalty is the quality or state of remaining faithful to a country, person, ruler, government, or ideal.

In the original text ‘The Betrayal of Christ’, Judas betrays Jesus, a dear friend, for a small amount of silver. Ask the students to consider a time when they have made a decision that they are not proud of, a moment when they wish they had taken a different path. The moment should be a time they have gained something selfishly at the expense of a friend, a time when they betrayed their friend’s loyalty. Ask the group to physicalise this moment in their lives. The main focus of the physicalisation should be how the student felt after the act. This physicalisation can be as symbolic or as literal as they feel comfortable with. Ask each student to share their work. After all the physicalisations have been shared, ask the group to feed back on whether or not the betrayal had been worthwhile.

Main

Ask the group to consider loyalty and what it means to be a loyal friend. Ask the group to consider the text below.

CHRISt: Get your stuff everyone- we’re going to the Temple.
DAN: YOU wanna go to KING’S place?
NAT: You are kiddin’?

EMMA: I’m not going there.
JAMES: They won’t let you in.
KIRSTY: You don’t even like the Temple.
CHRISt: Yeah well, I wanna go tonight.
DAN: Why do you wanna go there all of a sudden?
CHRISt: Are you questioning me? Are you saying that I don’t know what I’m doing?
DAN: You’re twisting what I’m saying.
CHRISt: Ever since you’ve got back, you’ve been questioning me, I thought you trusted me.
EMMA: It’s nothing to do with not trusting you.
DAVId: Emma’s right, I don’t want to go there.
CHRISt: O.K. guys, it your choice, stay here and eat pizza. (no response) I don’t need you to come. I’ll go on my own.
JAMES: You can’t go on your own.
CHRISt: I’m going.
KIRSTY: Chris you’re being really out of order.
NAT: We can’t let you go on your own. You know we can’t.
CHRISt: (To David) Keys... (David won’t give them to him) KEYS! (David gives in and gives them to Chris)
EMMA: O.K. look we’ll come, of course we will, but you’ve got to promise you’re not going to start anything.
CHRISt: (Exasperated) What?!
DAN: And you’re gonna keep away from King... remember... he’s not giving you any more warning.

Ask the group to split into smaller groups and decide whether they feel Chris is acting as a loyal friend himself or is abusing the loyalty of his friends. Ask the groups to play the scene out with different thoughts behind it. Ask them to play it with Chris in the right and then with Chris in the wrong.
**Exercise 3 - Recognising the importance of friendship in our lives.**

**Starter**

Ask the students to think about their friendships and what makes those relationships work. Ask the students to get into partners. These should not be friendship pairings.

Ask the pairs to create two still images which represent a good friendship (i.e. a friendship that works and is long lasting).

Ask them to think about how balanced the roles are in that relationship, how the power is distributed between the pairing, and whether there is equality in the relationship.

Then ask the group to create two still images which represent a friendship that does not work. Ask them to think again how this affects equality, balance and power distribution in the relationship. Ask the students to then consider ‘transitions’ between the two sets of still images.

**Transitions**

Transitions are the joins between two scenes, or how you move from one scene to the next.

Ask the students to consider their ‘still images’ as scenes – how do they move from one image to the next? Ask them to consider exact movement that joins the images together. Do they want these movements to be smooth or erratic? What movements best compliment the images? The movement should then be choreographed as an integral part of the performance.

**Main**

Ask the group to consider how they treat their friends. From the text Underground, there are a selection of friendship issues that are highlighted in the script. These have been outlined in the scenarios below. Ask the students to read through these scenarios:

**Scenario 1 - Scene 5, Disciples night out**

Chris asks his friends to go to a dangerous place because he truly believes he has a mission to fulfill. He believes it is absolutely the right thing to do in order to fight evil. Is this a justifiable request to make of your friends?

**Scenario 2 - Scene 2, Karaoke and fun times**

Chris joins in with Karaoke and goes sky diving with his friends. He really gets involved in all the activities that his friends are involved in and is always the first to try something new. Is this a good trait of a friend?

**Scenario 3 - Scene 9, The last supper**

Chris’ friend, Jay, comes to see him and tells him he has no money. Chris tells Jay not to worry as he can lend him money until he sorts himself out. Is this a good act by Chris? Is it right for Jay to ask?

**Scenario 4 - Scene 6b, The Temple**

Whilst in a club, Chris starts a fight with the owner and refuses to stop arguing even when his friends ask him. He believes he is right. It starts a fight and all of Chris’ friends are forced to join in. Was Chris right to do this?

**Scenario 5 - Scene 10, The betrayal and execution**

Chris knows that his friend Jay is going to betray him, but he allows him to do it anyway because he knows it will teach him and his friends around him a valuable lesson. Is this a good decision from a friend?

Split the class into five groups and give each group a scenario. Either ask the groups to devise a scene based around their scenarios, or find the scenario in the script Underground (scene numbers are referenced above) and request the group perform the text.

When all the groups have performed, ask the groups to decide whether Chris was a good friend or not. Was he right to behave in the manner he did?

Ask each member of the class to fill in this Self Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can use stories to aid decision making in my life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can be a good friend and I understand that sometimes means sacrificing things I want to do for the good of my friendship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I perform, all the audience can hear me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to work successfully in a group situation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can empathise with other people and learn from their mistakes so when I am in a similar situation I will not make the same ones.</td>
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Get the class to explain their self assessment. Ask the class if they can explain how other peoples experiences can help us when we hit similar situations.
SMOKELESS FIRE
Written by Ahmed Khan
(inspired by the story of Mohammed’s (pbuh) flight from Mecca)

Brief Overview (film 11 mins)

Smokeless Fire is a contemporary film inspired by the events that unfolded on the eve of Hijrah when Mohammed (pbuh) fled from Mecca. It was decided that the film should strive for realism as a way in which to relate the historical story to both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences alike. The main theme of sacrifice and moral certitude are woven within the fabric of a contemporary anti terrorist police raid.

Curriculum Link

Religious Studies
Interpreting teaching, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to understand religions and beliefs

Key Words
Fear, Beliefs, Authority, Understanding, Tolerance

Objectives

Exercise 1 - Exploring what beliefs are and what they mean to human beings.

Know what the term ‘belief’ means.
Understand that beliefs are different in everyone but do influence our lives, by considering the character of Khan in the short film Smokeless Fire.
Learn how to identify your own beliefs and how far you would go in order to stay true to them.

Exercises 2 - Beginning to understand what authority means.

Know what the term ‘authority’ means.
Understand that authority can materialise in different guises in different people (concepts or beliefs) by considering the two characters David and Khan.
Learn how to accept that people have different influences when it comes to authority; begin to define the authority figures in your life.

Exercise 3 - Considering how a person’s personal opinions are influenced by the media.

Know that religions are often misunderstood.
Understand that people’s opinions of a particular religion are often influenced by popular media by considering the opinions of David in Smokeless Fire.
Learn how to develop an understanding of a religion, based upon all the information available.

Brief Synopsis

The film begins with a police radio call. We see a police squad in riot gear burst out of a civilian van, run up the front path off a suburban house and surround the doorway. One of the police officers is Asian and the sergeant checks that he, in particular, is ready for the job in hand. The Asian officer assures the sergeant that he is. They break the door down and enter.

The raid is intercut with shots of a Muslim man preparing for prayer, and a Muslim woman preparing milk for her baby. As the police enter the house, they find the woman and her baby, but it is apparent that their target is elsewhere. They search the house and find a man asleep. The sergeant realises that this is not the person they are looking for, and sends the rest of the officers downstairs. After a brief session of interrogation, the man, who is called Khan, tells the sergeant where their target is. The target’s name is revealed to be Saleem.

The sergeant stays to talk to Khan. Khan tells the sergeant that Saleem has been the victim of racist attacks. Khan has offered Saleem refuge in his own home in order to give Saleem some respite. In the meantime, Khan has moved into Saleem’s house. The sergeant cannot understand this kindness, and questions Khan’s motives for hiding Saleem. Khan explains that Saleem is his brother in spirit.

A photo of the Ka’aba at Mecca hangs on the wall and the sergeant questions Khan about it. Khan describes the place as ‘the House of God’, and quotes “To God we belong and to Him we return”. The sergeant’s response to this is scornful, but Khan remains calm.

The sergeant progressively gets more intimidating towards Khan and asks when he last did ‘Jihad’, using this to mean involvement in violent acts in support of Islam. It is apparent that he has little understanding of Islam. Khan informs him that Jihad is the search for peak perfection. It is clear that Khan is beginning to get annoyed.

The sergeant continues to push Khan, questioning why Muslim women wear head scarves. This angers Khan and he warns the sergeant that Judgement Day will come. Under pressure, the sergeant threatens Khan, telling him that he could shoot him and nobody would know. Khan retorts with ‘a few bullets would be getting off lightly’, there are people before him who have had much harder tests.

The sergeant receives a radio call informing him that Saleem is not to be found in Khan’s house. The sergeant tells Khan that he is free to go.

Exercise 1 - Exploring what beliefs are and what they mean to human beings.

Starter
Ask the class to physically create a ‘still image’ which shows their strongest belief, something they believe in above anything. This may be a feeling or an abstract concept; it may be an object, a person or a group of people.

After they have decided on their strongest belief, ask them to share their ‘still image’ with the rest of the group.
Ask the class about their beliefs, and why they have such a strong commitment to them.

Belief is acceptance by the mind that something is true or real, often underpinned by an emotional or spiritual sense of certainty.

Main

Ask the group to watch *Smokeless Fire* (11 minutes in length) and consider the character of Khan. Whilst watching the film, the class should consider his beliefs, what they mean to him and the decisions he makes.

After the class has watched the film, ask them to consider these questions:

- Do you think Khan is foolish to question the Sergeant?
- Why do you think he has such confidence to confront the sergeant who has such authority?
- What would you do in this situation?
- Do you think Khan allows his beliefs to put him in a dangerous situation?

Ask the class to think back to the original idea of ‘belief’ and what it means. With the character of Khan in mind, ask the class to work in pairs to improvise a short exchange between a police officer and a Muslim person accused of terrorism. In this exchange, ask the partnerships to incorporate a ‘thought tracking’ moment (see below).

**Thought Tracking**

‘Thought tracking’ allows the performers to express to the audience their inner feelings. The action is stopped and each performer is given the opportunity to say exactly what they are feeling at that moment. Either this is pre-planned in rehearsal, or the audience is given the opportunity to say ‘stop’, when they feel a moment needs more clarity, or when they see it as a pivotal point in the rehearsed scene.

The amount of rehearsal time required is dependent on whether the ‘stops’ are rehearsed or left to the audience when presenting back.

If you decide to ask the students to rehearse the responses, writing time may need to be built into the complete lesson within one session.

After the students have created their ‘belief’ scenes ask them to perform them to the rest of the group.

After they have performed their scenes ask the students to fill in the following Self Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand what the term ‘belief’ means, am able to define it verbally and can also incorporate a theme of belief into the drama I create.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to incorporate ‘thought tracking’ in my drama.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand that people have different ‘beliefs’ and am able to show contrasting ‘beliefs’ in theatre.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am beginning to understand some of my own ‘beliefs’ and can use these to influence my drama.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am capable of creating a piece of theatre that focuses on the theme of ‘belief’ and what that means to different people.</td>
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Ask the students to explain, and give examples, to their partners to why they have assessed themselves as they have.

Ask the students to think about these questions when viewing the rest of the group work:

- Were Khan’s beliefs put into question by the sergeant out of fear?
- Did the police sergeant feel guilty inside for applying pressure on Khan?
- Did Khan deal with the police sergeant in a manner that was positive and helpful?
- What did you think of the police sergeant’s conduct?

**Exercise 2 - Beginning to understand what authority means.**

**Starter**

Ask the group to break into partners and label themselves ‘A’ and ‘B’. Tell the ‘A’s that they are in charge of the ‘B’s and so can do whatever they want to them (within reason). Explain to the ‘B’s that they have to submit to the ‘A’s requests. As the exercise develops and the ‘A’s become more confident, tell ‘B’s that they can attempt to gain authority, not through violence or shouting, but through persuasion or becoming lazy with ‘A’s requests.

After you have called a halt to the exercise, ask the ‘A’s to group together, and the ‘B’s to group together. Ask the two groups to talk about what it felt like to be in either the authoritative role, (in the case of the ‘A’s), or the subservient role, (in the case of the ‘B’s).

Talk to the class and ask them to think about the idea of authority and about figures in their own lives that have control over them. How do they feel towards these people?

**Main**

Ask the class to split into pairs and to look at the extract below. The text may need to be edited for use by a mixed gender group of performers.

**DAVID:** You’re a generous bastard aren’t ya?

**KHAN:** They tried to kill him! I couldn’t just sit there and do nothing. I had to do something.
DAVID: What does he owe you? Money, drugs -?
KHAN: He doesn't owe me anything!
DAVID: So, why you doing this for him?
KHAN: He's my brother.
DAVID: What you talking about, Saleem hasn't got a brother.
KHAN: No, not like that. I'm his cousin, but we're as good as brothers.
DAVID: Let me get this straight. You're willing to get beaten up by a bunch of skinheads, have your house burnt to the ground, all for a cousin?
KHAN: Haven't you ever loved someone or something that you are willing to die for?
DAVID: I like lots of things - friends, beer, a couple of birds on a Friday night, but willing to die for em? (Shaking his head) Nah.

Ask the pairs to consider who has the authority in this scene - David, (the police sergeant), or Khan, (the suspected terrorist).

You will need a pack of cards in order for the following exercise to work.

Ask each pair to decide on how much authority each character possesses. If this was to be represented by a suit of cards, what number would their character be (with Two representing the lowest level of authority and Ace the highest). Ask the students to pick a card that they consider to be at the right level for their character. If you have enough cards, you can give one suit to each actor and ask them to track through the scene changing the card number when they feel that the authority levels change.

Ask the pairs to rehearse in this way, eventually readying themselves to share what they have created with the audience. Once the audience have watched through one, allow them the option to swap the cards over, changing the authority level of the performers. This will demand that the actors adapt their performance when the cards are changed. Ask the students to consider how our behaviour changes when we are permitted more authority. Ask the students to consider whether they are more fearful of God or of the Police.

Ask them to write down an answer to this question:

In the light of studying the excerpt from Smokeless Fire, consider what authority means to you. Whose authority do you respect most? Does the person who is meant to have authority, always have it?

Exercise 3 - Considering how a person's personal opinions are influenced by the media.

Starter

Ask the groups to think about stereotypes of Islam in this country. Ask the class to discuss with another member of the group what they have read, heard about or seen in the newspapers, on the news or from peers about Islam in this country. Ask each person to feed back. Information may be positive or negative, but it is important (in this forum) that all the information is aired. Ask the group if they believe everything that has been said around the circle. Ask them to discuss what has been said and if they believe it is a fair representation.

Main

Ask the class to consider this scene from the film Smokeless Fire:

DAVID: Tell me something - when's the last time you did Jihad?
KHAN: (Lets out a little laugh)
DAVID: What you laughin' at?
KHAN: (Remains Silent)
DAVID: You laughin' at my question is that it? Go on tell me I bet you're dying to tell me aren't you ya? Got that bomb off your chest and tell me - when's the last time you did Jihad?
KHAN: I'm doing it right now.
DAVID: You what? You got a tomahawk in you back pocket?
KHAN: Jihad - you have absolutely no idea. It's the peak of perfection. True Jihad is inner struggle; it's to control all your desires, your lust, your aggression, your rage.

Ask the class, in the small conversation groups they were in previously, to discuss what they think of David and his lack of knowledge or understanding of Islam. Is this his fault? Is he being necessarily precautious? Is he being racist?

After the groups have discussed the scenes, ask them to find partners. Ask them to think about the extract from 'Smokeless Fire'. What does it mean to them? Ask each of the pairs to take on one of the characters from the script. Ask them to think about their character and why they behave in that manner. Each of the students will take it in turns to answer question in the 'hot seat' exercise, in order to understand why these beliefs about religions exist:

Hot Seating

'Hot seating' is where a performer takes on the role of a character, and answers questions from other members of the group or audience as the character they have taken on.
Extension Exercise

After the groups have completed the 'hot seating' exercise, ask them to go back and rehearse the short scenes with this new inner knowledge of the characters. This should offer a new depth to their performances.

Ask the students to fill out this Self Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can understand that religions are sometimes misunderstood and I can demonstrate this knowledge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am capable of connecting to character through the 'hot seating' exercise and I was able to demonstrate this with the character of Khan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to make my own opinion about an issue without relying solely on the press and wider media.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to form my own opinion on whether some people are unfairly treated because of other people’s prejudices and talk about my own opinion.</td>
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</table>

Ask the students to discuss their Self Assessment with their original partners from the main part of Exercise 3, justifying their responses.

MY CONFLICTED SELF
Written by Badra Khatoon
(Inspired by the story of Mohammad’s [pbuh] migration to Medina to escape persecution in Mecca)

Brief Overview

The piece revisits a time when the Prophet Mohammad and his companion, Abu Bakr, were being chased by the Quraiish for their declaration of allegiance to the faith of Islam, and had to seek refuge in the cave of Thawr. Through the will of Allah or God, a Dove and a Spider set up home outside the cave, which meant the Quraiish did not investigate beyond its entrance, keeping the prophet and his companion safe within.

Badra Khatoon tells this story from the perspective of one of the pursuers and the frustration they felt as they unsuccessfully tried to chase down the Prophet and his companion.

Curriculum Link

Religious Education
Evaluating their own and others’ values in order to make informed, rational and imaginative choices.

Key Words

Values, Evaluate, Choice, Belief, Conflict

Objectives

Exercise 1 - Understanding that everybody has different values in their lives.
- Know what the term ‘personal value’ means.
- Understand that the values of the characters telling the story in My Conflicted Self differ from those of Mohammed.
- Learn how to create an argument through theatre.

Exercise 2 - Exploring the differences between verse and prose.
- Know that My Conflicted Self is written in verse.
- Understand why verse may have been used in My Conflicted Self specifically to emphasise points by breaking up sentences.
- Learn how to differentiate verse from prose by comparing My Conflicted Self to the original text of the same story ‘Mohammed’s migration to Medina’.

Exercise 3 - Understanding that people have both internal and external conflicts.
- Know what the term ‘conflict’ means, with specific emphasis on personal conflict within religion.
Understand that people sometimes question themselves regarding religion and this can cause internal and external conflict.

Learn how to attempt to make rational and informed decisions in order to resolve conflict.

**Brief Synopsis**

The piece begins in a desert with a group of men chasing another man. Although his name and whereabouts are unknown to the men, we know this man to be Mohammed.

The story is told from the point of view of the men chasing. They feel threatened by Mohammed, since he does not believe in their Gods, but believes instead in one God only. What is worse is that their children are beginning to follow Mohammed’s God too. Furthermore the worshipping of one God is bringing with it new standards of behaviour. The old ways of debauchery, alcohol and idleness are frowned upon, whilst the pursuers see this as their birthright. The man they are chasing also respects the trees and animals.

The pursuers have offered Mohammed riches and power and yet he has declined, favouring instead his love for Allah. They have persistently plotted to eliminate him, but have consistently failed. They question who is protecting him and why people are willing to die for his cause. Even under torture, people will not reveal his whereabouts. The pursuers also question why their own Gods are not powerful enough to help them.

The men have finally tracked their target down to a mountain, and discovered that his name is Mohammed. They reach the mouth of a cave in which he is hiding. But at the entrance to the cave, there is a bird’s nest and across it a spider’s web. These lead the pursuers to believe that there can be no one inside, and they leave without checking.

A voice in their heads tells them they will never find Mohammed and never defeat him. “The battle was lost the day He was born.”

**Exercise 1 - Understanding that everybody has different values in their lives.**

**Starter**

Ask the group to consider how far they might be pushed to do something. Pose the question ‘what would you do for a million pounds?’ This should provoke a multitude of responses. Bring the idea of ‘values’ to the foreground and ask the students about their personal values. What did they say they would do for the one million pound prize?

**Values** are a person’s or community’s common ethics, morals and principals.

**Main**

Here are two extracts from My Conflicted Self. Ask the class to consider:

- What world they would prefer to live in?
- What their values would lean toward?
- Why people might invest in either one of the ways of living?
- How these societies might work and which one is closer to our own?

**Extract 1**

Why should we not have supremacy
Why not bury the inferior female, good for breeding and our satisfaction
Why not the debauchery
Alcohol and idleness a right - our birthright!
An inheritance owed to our sons

**Extract 2**

He wants to give rights to the slaves, equality to our women
He wants us to degrade our superior heads in the dirt, in prayer
Shoulder to shoulder with our brothers be it king or pauper
He even wants justice for the animals and trees
His words something ridiculous
Do not overburden the carrying mule
And do not cut down the growing tree without reason.

**Contrast this sentiment with what they say about Mohammed:**

Split the group so that some of them take on the challenge of Extract 1 and some of the group take on the challenge of Extract 2.

The drama should form an argument. How do groups make their point through drama? It is important that whichever extract the groups are assigned they commit to that being the right argument to make. Ask the group to bear in mind the following when considering staging:

**Staging**

- How do you create an atmosphere and a world through theatre?
- Use ‘still images’ to ‘mark a moment’ (see definition above)
- Consider ‘thought tracking’ (see definition above)
- Consider ‘soundscapes’ (see definition below)

**Soundscapes**

A layering of sounds made by a group of people to create an atmosphere and a sense of place for their audience.
Ask the groups to consider these criteria:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am able to consider two sides of an argument, specifically in relation to My Conflicted Self.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am capable of using 'still image', 'thought tracking' and 'soundscape' in appropriate places in my drama.</td>
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<tr>
<td>From looking at stories (including My Conflicted Self) I am able to form my own opinion of how I would prefer to live my life.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Ask the group to vote, after the pieces have been shared, on which extract they feel would be the best sentiment to live by.

**Exercise 2 - Exploring the difference between verse and prose.**

**Starter**

Ask the students to consider the two extracts below. Request they consider the following questions when looking at the extracts:

- What are the main differences between the two texts?
- Why do you think they have been written like this?
- Do you know the names for the varying styles of writing in these texts?

**Extract 1**

Who is this Man?
They say He is a light in the darkness, a walking miracle
Time and time again we have tested him
Time and time our plots have failed
Time and time again we have returned shame faced
Who protects Him, from who and where does derive his strength
He will not turn to us
He will not give in

**Extract 2**

A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of One God, and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of divine revelation; praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon through His mercy, and striving to follow after good works, almsgiving, purity and justice.

Ask the group to think about the differences between the extracts.

**Main**

Ask the students to consider Extract 1 and the idea of verse writing. Ask the students to approach the text with these questions in mind:

- Consider what effect repetition has within a piece.
- Are there any consistencies in the number of syllables per line?
- If you were to perform these pieces as a group, do you think the verse or the prose would be easier to perform?
- Can you think of a way to perform this as a chorus?

**Chorus**

A group of performers that speak or sing in unison as an ensemble.

Ask the class to consider Extract 2. Ask the class to think about what makes verse verse, ask them again to consider why ‘Extract 1’ is different to ‘Extract 2’. Ask the class to consider why Badra Khatoon split the lines in the way she did in ‘Extract 1’. Ask them to consider again the impact of repetition.

Give each student a copy of Extract 2 and then to think about how they might make this prose text into a piece of verse. Ask them to consider where they want to split the line in order to create the emphasis. Allow the students to change some of the text in order to add repetition to the text.

**Extension**

Ask the class to split into groups and share their verse versions of ‘Extract 2’. After the groups have shared their work, ask them to choose one person’s verse that appeals to the whole group. Their task is then to dramatise that piece of verse in a chorus.

Ask the groups to consider the idea of chorus, working together, speaking some of the text together. Ask the group to think about appropriate physicality for the piece.

**Exercise 3 - Understanding that people have both internal and external conflicts.**

**Starter**

Ask the group to consider a time when they have been emotionally split between two choices. Have they ever been at a point in life when they have made a decision selfishly and a decision which jars with their personal values?

**Dilemma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you did</th>
<th>What you wish you’d done</th>
</tr>
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How did it make you feel?

How would it have made you feel?
Introduce the idea of personal conflict and what this means. Ask a selection of the group to discuss their dilemma and ask them to identify their personal conflict.

**Main**

Ask the group to consider this extract from *My Conflicted Self*:

**Extract 5**

Who is this new Mohammed
Who has ensnared even the great Umar
Umar so quick to grab the sword to do our bidding, to do murder
What secret did he depart to Umar to have to have turned him so completely
Who is this man
What magic does He possess which we the Quraish cannot undo
That our Gods cannot undo
Our gods who are repeatedly failing us

Ask the class to consider what personal conflict this character has. What are his two options?

**What if?**
The “What If” scenario allows us to explore two different outcomes to one single situation.

Ask the class to split into partners and consider the extract above. Ask the partnerships to create a “What if?” scenario.

Ask the partnerships to perform the scene together, possibly in chorus; at the end of the scene both the performers should create a short monologue. One of the performers should create a monologue that is written with the presumption that the character has taken the path of Mohammed (described in Extract 2 of Exercise 1). The other performer should create a monologue that presumes the character follows the path they talk of in Extract 1.

Ask the students to complete this Self Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rarely</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand that conflict can only occur when there are two opposing opinions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to perform with commitment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am capable of assessing both sides of an argument and forming my own opinion based upon a gathering of information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to see that people question themselves in life and also in religion. I am able to show this through drama.</td>
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</table>

Ask the students to justify their answers.

**Extension Question**

Having looked at the experiences of the Prophet Mohammed, can you see any similarities to the experiences of Jesus Christ? You might want to explore the work on *Underground* (see above) to help answer this question.

---

**SAMSON AND DELILAH**

Written by Nick Walker
(based on the story from the Old Testament)

**Brief Overview**

The story of Samson and Delilah immediately interested writer Nick Walker, partly because of its visual possibilities - the story has unsurprisingly inspired a run of overblown Hollywood movies - but also because its theme offered him that crucible of high emotion, the hairdressing salon, as a setting. The group that performed the script were able to be extreme, exaggerated, spiky and funny playing on many melodramatic traditions - vanity, betrayal and revenge.

**Curriculum Link**

Religious Studies
Understanding that religious practices are diverse, change over time and are influenced by cultures.

**Key Words**

Contemporise, Control, Persuasion

**Objectives**

**Exercise 1 - Understanding that Biblical texts have evolved over time.**

- **Know** what the term contemporise means.
- **Understand** why texts are contemporised by looking at a contemporary version of *Samson and Delilah*.
- **Learn** how to contemporise a theatrical text by creating a new setting for a Biblical story.

**Exercise 2 - Exploring what it means to be persuasive.**

- **Know** what the term persuasion means.
- **Understand** how we might persuade another human-being to do something or tell us something.
- **Learn** how to use persuasion in a positive way by looking at the contemporised version of *Samson and Delilah*.

**Exercise 3 - Understanding the role of the director.**

- **Know** how to stage a scene by utilising the role of the director.
- **Understand** what a directors job is by considering the question posed in Exercise 3.
- **Learn** how to take direction and also give directions for the better of the performance by undertaking the moulding exercise.
Exercise 1 - Understanding that Biblical texts have evolved over time.

Starter

Split the class into smaller groups and ask them to think of a fairytale set long ago, such as Hansel and Gretel, Cinderella etc. Request the group consider how they might change the story, contemporise it, to make it accessible to a modern day audience. They should think how they could change the setting, the character names, the date it was set, etc. They should think about how they can tell the story back to the group in an interesting way. Suggest they use these storytelling success criteria in order to guide the group work:

Target | Tick if you have achieved it
--- | ---
I am able to tell the story with energy and can change the tone, pitch and volume of my voice to reflect the story. | 
I am confident with the structure of the story. | 
I have worked as part of a team and have completed my equal share of the planning. | 
I am capable of using sounds to enhance the story. | 
I am able to use repetition within my storytelling to emphasise certain moments and to ensure the audience understand key elements of the plot. | 

Ask the groups to share back their brief, contemporised fairytales. Ask the other groups to say whether they liked the contemporised versions of the stories more than the originals.

Main

Nick Walker contemporised the Old Testament story of 'Samson and Delilah' in order to make it accessible to a modern audience, and young group of actors. Ask the class to read the version of the bible story below:

Samson and Delilah - summary of the original story as told in the Old Testament.

Samson is renowned for his great strength, but when he falls for Delilah it marks the beginning of his downfall and eventual demise. It doesn't take long for the rich and powerful Philistine rulers to learn of the affair and immediately pay a visit to Delilah. Hoping to capture him, the Philistine leaders each offer Delilah a sum of money to collaborate with them in a scheme to uncover the secret of Samson's great strength.

Using her powers of seduction and deception, Delilah wears down Samson with her repeated request to know the secret of his strength until he finally divulges the crucial information. Samson tells Delilah that his strength will leave him if a razor were to be used on his head. She cunningly crafts her plan with the Philistine rulers.

Delilah eagerly volunteers to go back to Samson's to once more try to discover his secret. When she returns she has even bigger hair. This time she puts his talent down to his hair diffuser which she has also stolen. This is also destroyed. Still people walk out of Samson's with huge hair and Delilah is even more eager to go back and find out his secret. She appears to be enjoying her mission... a little too much.

This time when Delilah returns to Phil, Samson comes with her. Samson declares that he has fallen in love with Delilah and has made her his wife. Delilah explains to Phil that she has drugged him, and finally discovered that his unbelievable talent for hairdressing is kept in his untamed locks. Phil cuts off Samson's hair, pokes out his eyes and cuts off his hands so he will never be capable of cutting hair again. Samson is forced to work for Phil.

After five years of making tea and sweeping hair, Samson has collected enough clippings to make himself a wig. With his unrivalled talents back in his control, he summons a mighty storm to once more liberate hair for all humankind. With his new found strength he suffocates Phil with his mongrel wig. Delilah commits suicide with some hair straighteners. Suddenly there is a thunder clap and in the doorway appears Samson. Samson has huge hair, which is nothing like Phil Stein's signature look. Samson announces that he has opened a new Salon which promotes wild and untamed hair. Samson's two assistants sing on it to destroy Samson's magic.

Phil Stein, the salon owner, enters and barks orders at his employees. We learn from Phil that there have been many years of hairdressing wars, during which Delilah, his assistant, has particularly suffered. Now, however, Delilah is happy with a well 'coiffed' hair style, and Phil's plans for world domination are on course. Only a few remaining humans are without the signature Phil Stein style (highly coiffed and uniform hair) and these are queuing up outside the salon.

Phil suggests that Delilah go and get her hair cut at Samson's to attempt to find the secret to his impossible hairstyles. She returns with massive hair, and proclaims that it is Samson's comb that enables him to defy the conventions of hairdressing. She has stolen the comb, and Phil's employees stamp on it to destroy Samson's magic.

However, customers of Samson's Salon continue to walk past with impossible hairstyles. Delilah eagerly volunteers to go back to Samson's to once more try to discover his secret. When she returns she has even bigger hair. This time she puts his talent down to his hair diffuser which she has also stolen. This is also destroyed. Still people walk out of Samson's with huge hair and Delilah is even more eager to go back and find out his secret. She appears to be enjoying her mission... a little too much.

Suffocates Phil with his mongrel wig. Delilah commits suicide with some hair straighteners. His energy exhausted, Samson collapses and dies.

Brief Synopsis

The scene is a hairdressing salon, the only salon left in the world after the rest of the salons have 'mysteriously burnt down'.

Phil Stein, the salon owner, enters and barks orders at his employees. We learn from Phil that there have been many years of hairdressing wars, during which Delilah, his assistant, has particularly suffered. Now, however, Delilah is happy with a well 'coiffed' hair style, and Phil's plans for world domination are on course. Only a few remaining humans are without the signature Phil Stein style (highly coiffed and uniform hair) and these are queuing up outside the salon.

Suddenly there is a thunder clap and in the doorway appears Samson. Samson has huge hair, which is nothing like Phil Stein's signature look. Samson announces that he has opened a new salon which promotes wild and untamed hair. Samson's two assistants sing of the benefits of free hair, which attracts people from Phil Stein's Salon to Samson's. Phil is left with no customers.

Phil suggests that Delilah go and get her hair cut at Samson's to attempt to find the secret to his impossible hairstyles. She returns with massive hair, and proclaims that it is Samson's comb that enables him to defy the conventions of hairdressing. She has stolen the comb, and Phil's employees stamp on it to destroy Samson's magic.

However, customers of Samson's Salon continue to walk past with impossible hairstyles. Delilah eagerly volunteers to go back to Samson's to once more try to discover his secret.

When she returns she has even bigger hair. This time she puts his talent down to his hair diffuser which she has also stolen. This is also destroyed.

Still people walk out of Samson's with huge hair and Delilah is even more eager to go back and find out his secret. She appears to be enjoying her mission... a little too much.

This time when Delilah returns to Phil, Samson comes with her. Samson declares that he has fallen in love with Delilah and has made her his wife. Delilah explains to Phil that she has drugged him, and finally discovered that his unbelievable talent for hairdressing is kept in his untamed locks. Phil cuts off Samson's hair, pokes out his eyes and cuts off his hands so he will never be capable of cutting hair again. Samson is forced to work for Phil.

After five years of making tea and sweeping hair, Samson has collected enough clippings to make himself a wig. With his unrivalled talents back in his control, he summons a mighty storm to once more liberate hair for all humankind. With his new found strength he suffocates Phil with his mongrel wig. Delilah commits suicide with some hair straighteners. His energy exhausted, Samson collapses and dies.

Ask the groups to share back their brief, contemporised fairytales. Ask the other groups to say whether they liked the contemporised versions of the stories more than the originals.

Nick Walker contemporised the Old Testament story of 'Samson and Delilah' in order to make it accessible to a modern audience, and young group of actors. Ask the class to read the version of the bible story below:

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Hoping to capture him, the Philistine leaders each offer Delilah a sum of money to collaborate with them in a scheme to uncover the secret of Samson's great strength.

Using her powers of seduction and deception, Delilah wears down Samson with her repeated request to know the secret of his strength until he finally divulges the crucial information. Samson tells Delilah that his strength will leave him if a razor were to be used on his head. She cunningly crafts her plan with the Philistine rulers.

While Samson sleeps on her lap, Delilah calls in a co-conspirator to shave off the seven braids of his hair. Subdued and weak, Samson is captured.

Rather than killing him, the Philistines prefer to humiliate him by gouging out his eyes and braids of his hair. Samson tells Delilah that his strength will leave him if a razor were to be used on his head. She cunningly crafts her plan with the Philistine rulers.

Delilah eagerly volunteers to go back to Samson's to once more try to discover his secret. She appears to be enjoying her mission... a little too much.

This time when Delilah returns to Phil, Samson comes with her. Samson declares that he has fallen in love with Delilah and has made her his wife. Delilah explains to Phil that she has drugged him, and finally discovered that his unbelievable talent for hairdressing is kept in his untamed locks. Phil cuts off Samson's hair, pokes out his eyes and cuts off his hands so he will never be capable of cutting hair again. Samson is forced to work for Phil.

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and subjecting him to hard labour in a Gaza prison. As he slaves at grinding grain, his hair begins to grow, but the careless Philistines pay no attention. And in spite of his horrible failures and sins of great consequence, Samson’s heart now turns to the Lord. He is humbled.

He prays to God—a first—and God answers.

During a pagan sacrificial ritual, the Philistines gather in Gaza to celebrate. As is their custom, they parade their prized enemy prisoner, Samson, into the temple to entertain the jeering crowds. Samson braces himself between the two central support pillars of the temple and pushes with all his might. Down comes the temple, killing Samson and all of the people in it. Through his death, Samson destroys more of his enemies in this one sacrificial act, than he had previously killed in all the battles of his life.

Ask the groups to select a small extract from the story ‘Samson and Delilah’ above and consider how this might be updated. Ask them to consider contemporising:

- The setting of the story, maybe set it in an urban atmosphere, a country village etc.
- The occupation of Samson and Delilah.
- The way in which the characters speak, how can you contemporise their language.
- The reasons for Delilah betraying Samson.

Ask the groups to create a small section of script, considering the usual script conventions - setting the characters name away from the main body of text and giving the performer stage directions in brackets or italics.

Ask the groups to read or perform their contemporised versions of the text.

Exercise 2 – Exploring what it means to be persuasive.

Starter

In the story of Samson and Delilah, the art of persuasion is used by Delilah in order to discover the secret behind Samson’s superhuman abilities. In the contemporised version Phil is able to persuade Delilah to go and have her hair cut at Samson’s Salon.

Find an object, this could be anything. Ask the group to sit in a circle and request two volunteers for a short improvisation exercise. Give one of the volunteers the object. Tell the other volunteer that it is their aim to persuade their fellow performer to hand over the object. Maybe use this simple definition to guide the students.

Persuasion is a form of social influence. It is the process of guiding oneself or another toward the adoption of an idea, attitude, or action by rational and symbolic (though not always logical) means.

After a few partnerships have improvised ask the group what persuasion tactics they felt were used and also what they felt were most effective at achieving their aim of gaining the object.

Main

Ask the group to look at the below extract:

All of Phil’s customers have decided to go to Samson’s Salon leaving Phil without anybody to style. He needs to think of a way of discovering the secret of Samson’s success.

PHIL: Delilah.
DELILAH: Yes.
PHIL: You’ll have to go and get your hair cut.
DELILAH: (Sitting in a sort) You’re right. Sometimes when you’ve had a shock it’s the only thing to make you feel better...
PHIL: Not here, at his place.
DELILAH: What?! No!
PHIL: You must.
DELILAH: I’ve suffered.
PHIL: You’ve suffered, I’ve suffered.
DELILAH: But I can’t be caught between two hairstyles again. You saw what it did to me last time. I’m still traumatised.
PHIL: This isn’t just for us, it’s for our children.
DELILAH: We don’t have any children.
PHIL: Not actual children, no, I’m thinking of our franchised subsidiaries.

She starts weeping.

DELILAH: Oh well if you put it like that.
PHIL: Go.

Delilah stands, takes a deep breath.

DELILAH: If something happens to me...
PHIL: You won’t be forgotten.

Ask the class to split into partners. Give each partnership a copy of the above scene. Ask the partners to read the above scene for meaning and to spot any persuasive techniques that are used. Ask them to think how they might use some of the successful persuasive techniques they discovered in the starter exercise in the staging of this scene.
Ask them to consider the Success Criteria below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Tick if you have achieved it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am able to use a tone of voice that is persuasive and has the ability to influence people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to use body language in a persuasive way.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to think about how my physical spacing may affect someone in a persuasive way. (Does distance to a person make a difference to how they react to you?)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Ask the group to perform their scenes. Again request the audience pay attention to the tactics employed in persuasion.

**Exercise 3 - Understanding the role of the director**

**Starter**

Ask the class to get into groups of three. Tell the groups that two of them are to be the actors and the third group member will act as director or sculptor. Give the character descriptions below to the director and do not allow the actors to see them.

**Samson**

One of the world’s strongest men. Samson has beautiful long hair and is proud of the fact. He is handsome and very charming. He never shies away from a challenge and is happy to stand up for injustice in the world.

**Phil Stein**

Obsessed with being the world’s best hairdresser and will stop at nothing to secure that title. Phil is a control freak and enjoys bossing people around. When Phil walks into the room he likes people to know who is in charge.

Ask that the director mould the two actors into a still image which represents the character descriptions. The actors are not permitted to talk and must simply follow direction.

Ask the smaller groups to share their still images with the class, the class should guess which character is which.

**Main**

In the same groups as the starter exercise, ask the groups to look at the short extract below.

Samson and Phil used to know each other but have not been in contact for years. In this time Phil has amassed a huge hairdressing empire by literally destroying the competition. Samson has returned to challenge Phil’s salon by creating his own.

**SAMSON:** My people.

**PHIL:** Don’t listen to him, he’s a wizard!

Samson takes a step in. There’s a hush.

**SAMSON:** Your hair has been crushed and oppressed.

**PHIL:** Turn on the radio! Drown him out with Wogan!

**SAMSON:** It lies on your head like a squashed animal.

**PHIL:** That’s slander, Delilah, sue him for slander!

**SAMSON:** Your hair cannot be a squashed animal. It is wild, it is an untamed beast that needs to be freed. And I am the man to free it. Samson.

**PHIL:** No!

**SAMSON:** Salvation awaits. This is your Hair Right Salon now open for business! Come. Come and be saved.

Ask the group to think about how they wish to stage the scene. Suggest the director in the group consider these questions:

- How do you show that Samson is taking the power from Phil?
- How do you make it clear to the audience that the characters are like the descriptions above?
- How do you make Samson’s Salon seem exciting in comparison to Phil’s?
- What will Phil feel as Samson appears to take over?

The director can also level the actors using the Assessment Criteria below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My actors listened and responded to my instructions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My actors were capable of creating their own unique characters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My actors performed the characters with confidence and commitment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My actors understood why sometimes contemporise texts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My actors contributed to the rehearsal process.</td>
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</table>

Ask the directors to go through with the actors their assessment of the work. Ask them to justify their responses, and also gain feedback from the actors on their assessment.
Now ask the actors to give feedback to the directors with focus on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My director offered useful advice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The director listened to my ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The director was able to create a good structure for the piece.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like the director to be in charge again.</td>
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MAKE YOUR OWN MYSTERIES

The city of Coventry is constantly re-inventing ways for the Mysteries to be told and re-told by its communities. This section provides an opportunity for your class of young people to think about how they might start to create their own Mysteries performances.

Curriculum Link

Religious Education
Understanding how moral values and a sense of obligation can come from beliefs and experiences.

English
Develop speaking and listening skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects.

Key Words

Theme, Teach, Structure

Exercise 1 - Understanding how theatre can be a powerful teaching tool.

Know that theatre is created to entertain but also has the ability to teach.
Understand how to use non spoken techniques to tell a story.
Learn how to create your own Mystery Play from the starting place of a key word.

Exercise 2 - Exploring the idea of a ‘theme’.

Know that the ‘theme’ is a central idea of a book, film, story, play etc.
Understand that a ‘theme’ is not overtly spoken about but prevalent in all parts of a piece of theatre.
Learn how to create a ‘theme’ in a piece of theatre by connecting to something you feel strongly about.

Exercise 3 - Understanding that structure is vital to any piece of theatre.

Know that a structure is vital to any piece of theatre, by using the five stage structure.
Understand that the Medieval Mystery plays were created not just to entertain but also to teach.
Learn how to use drama and storytelling as a tool to inform.

Exercise 1 - Understanding how theatre can be a powerful teaching tool.
Starter

Split the class into four smaller groups. Give each of the groups one of the words below on a folded piece of paper so only that group can see what that word is.

**Hate, Jealousy, Love, Forgiveness**

Ask the groups to create a series of four ‘still images’ (see definition in *The Fall of Lucifer*, Exercise 2) that tell a story based around their understanding one each of the above words. The still images should show a narrative progression and make it clear to an audience what the story and secret word behind the images is.

Ask the groups to share their work with the rest of the class. The audience can then attempt to guess what word has inspired each group's set of still images.

**Main**

Keep the students in the same groups. Using the still images as a basis for creating a larger piece of work, ask them to consider further the short narrative that they encapsulated in four still images. Ask the students to share, within their smaller groups, a personal experience that is linked to their key word.

After the groups have shared their experiences of hate, jealousy, love or forgiveness, they should pick one story from the shared personal experiences – one that they feel will best teach an audience a lesson or offer an insight into that state / emotion. Within this story, ask the students to choose five moments that are pivotal to the narrative. Again, go back to the concept of ‘still image’ and ask the groups to create an image for all five of their pivotal moments. Ask the students to also include transitions (see definition in *Underground*, Exercise 3) between the still images.

Ask them to consider the exact movement that joins the images together. Do they want these movements to be smooth or erratic? What movements best compliment the images? The movement should then be choreographed as an integral part of the performance.

Ask the groups to share their work with the rest of the class. The audience can then attempt to guess what word has inspired each group's set of still images.

**Ask the students to use this Success Criteria to help them with the creation of their pieces.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Tick if you have achieved it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All members of your group have a chance to tell some of the story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your still images are of pivotal moments in the story</td>
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<tr>
<td>You have created choreographed transitions between your five still images</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You have included two lines of text between each of your transitions which help progress your story</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You have managed to incorporate your original word within your story</td>
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</table>

Ask the groups to share their pieces with the rest of the class. Discuss the Success Criteria and whether the groups feel they have been successful in achieving all the required targets.

**Exercise 2 - Exploring the idea of a ‘theme’**

**Starter**

Ask the class to consider the idea of a theme.

**Theme**

A ‘theme’ is a broad idea or message conveyed by a work, such as a performance, a painting, or a film. This message is usually a comment on life, society or human nature.

Ask the class to consider what human traits or attitudes frustrate them. This could be anything that humans have a hand in – global warming, racism, bullying, love, etc.

Ask the students to pick one of these frustrations and think of a piece of art, a film or piece of theatre that addresses that particular theme.

Ask the students to answer these questions:

- Why does that particular piece of art, or film or theatre address that frustration for you?
- Does it mention, overtly, that specific frustration?
- Do you feel in some way connected with that film, theatre or art work because it addresses that issue?
- Did you learn something from seeing or hearing another person’s perspective of that frustration?

**Main**

Split the class into smaller groups and ask them to consider the idea of ‘theme’. In these smaller groups, ask the students to talk about the frustrations they have considered in the Starter exercise. Ask the groups to consider whether these are ‘themes’ (an underlying message of the piece).

Ask the groups to pick one of their frustrations to work on for the rest of the session. Before they begin group work, have a whole class discussion, giving each group an opportunity to contribute a ‘theme’ they are planning to work on. The rest of the class, and yourself, can then determine whether this is definitely a theme.

In their groups, ask the students then to use this chosen theme as a catalyst for drama. Ask the students to create a short scene around this theme. Ask them to think about how they create a piece that has a clear theme but never mentions outright what that ‘theme’ is. What do they want to say about their particular theme? Get them to answer this in one sentence. This is their ‘premise’. Ask them to start their piece with a ‘still image’ (see definition in *Underground, Exercise 3*) and end their piece with another ‘still image’. These images should help the audience understand what theme the students are attempting to address.

Ask each group to share their work. Ask the audience to write down what they feel the theme(s) of their fellow students’ pieces are. Then also discuss the group’s perspective on the theme.
**Exercise 3 - Understanding that structure is vital to any piece of theatre.**

**Starter**

Ask the class to consider a story they were told as a child that was designed to teach a lesson. This might be a Bible story, a fairytale, a fable etc. Ask them to share this story with another member of the class. After the class have had sufficient time to share their stories, ask some of the class to tell their stories to the whole group.

Once the class have shared their stories, facilitate a discussion around the idea of why stories are used to teach. Ask the groups to re-consider the idea of theme and the overall premise of the story.

**Main**

Ask the class to consider further the story chosen in the starter exercise. What theme was the story exploring, what was the overall premise of the story?

Ask the class to think about how this story might be updated for a modern audience. Ask the students to stay true to the theme and premise of the story but consider changing:

- The settings
- The characters
- The time the story is set
- The vocabulary the characters use.

Split the class into smaller groups and ask them to create a piece of theatre that entertains but also leaves the audience understanding something new. Ask them to consider the stories used in the starter exercise as a guide to challenge the audience to explore something new.

Ask the groups to consider these points.

Ask the class to use this Success Criteria to help them in the production of their pieces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Tick if you have achieved it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have thought of and included a theme in your drama.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have considered what the overall ‘premise’ of your piece will be</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(explained in Main of Exercise 2 above), and thought about what your audience will leave thinking about.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You have thought about why you want the audience to think about that particular perspective.</td>
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Ask the class to also consider structure for their pieces. Use this five stage structure to guide them in the creation of their drama.
The Mysteries

| Education Pack & Scripts |

THE MYSTERIES SCRIPTS

FALL OF LUCIFER
Written by Jennifer Farmer

First performed by the Belgrade Community & Education Company on
Monday 27th July 2009

The Company

Tom Wells   God
Daniel Collinge   Lucifer
Jamie Sergeant   Jesus
Leanne Kirk   Michael
Rob D’Hagan   Ariel
Hawar Fetah   Beelzebub
Shanice Cooper   Gabriel
Nick Powell   Baal
Neal Layton   Raphael
Lynne Williams   Lilith
Stanley Saungweme   Photographer
Amy Siddall   Uriel

Director    Leon Phillips
Choreographer   Dave McKenna

Prologue

God stands before an unlocked cupboard. Around him the Seven Deadly Sins - Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath and Sloth swirl about. They utter indecipherable whispers.

Black is just black; has no real meaning.
Black is the cause of death, black as death.
The sky went black when Satan was born.
Eyes as black as night.
Black knight takes the queen.
My heart is now black.

The Sins try to escape, but God reins them in and forces them into a cupboard that he then locks. God pockets the key and leaves.

Scene One

Factory floor of Trinity Inc.

There is a hustle and bustle about the place: a mixture of industriousness and fun. The feeling of when people know they are good at what they do.

Ariel, Baal, Uriel and Amy are working as a team. While all of their lab coats are dirty with hard work, Baal’s and Amy’s are dirty with sloppiness.

ARIEL: Ready?
They all hold their breath as Ariel adds an ingredient. The test tube snaps, crackles and pops—exactly what they want it to do. They all cheer.

ARIEL: Come on! That’s what I’m talking about!

Ariel congratulates her team with hugs and high-fives. Lucifer, in a suit and tie, enters. He is carrying a clipboard. Ariel and her team rush up to him.

LUCIFER: This looks promising.

ARIEL: Lucifer, we are this close to cracking ‘Time.’

LUCIFER: That’s brilliant news, Ariel.

ARIEL: Thank you, Lucifer.

Gabriel, Celestiel and Lilith huddle over their test tube. Gabriel adds a pinch of an ingredient. The test tube begins to bubble and smoke. Lucifer walks over to them.

LUCIFER: And how’s it going here?

GABRIEL: We’re getting there.

CELESTIEL: Ready?

Gabriel pulls down his goggles and mixes a liquid into the test tube. Nothing happens at first, and then sparks start to fly. Celestiel has her fingers crossed.

Come on, come on.

The sparks die out and then the test tube shatters. They all let out a groan of disappointment.

LILITH: Not again.

Lilith makes a note in her book.

GABRIEL: We’ll just have to start over again.

RAPHAEL: Michael, I give up.

MICHAEL: Come on, Raph, just one more time.

RAPHAEL: You said that the last time.

MICHAEL: Please?

Raphael sighs. Lucifer walks over to their station.

LUCIFER: And how’s it going with you lot?

MICHAEL: We have a problem, Lucifer. We’ve tried everything. And being one angel down doesn’t exactly help.

RAPHAEL: Where is Beelzebub?

MICHAEL: Who knows and who cares?

LUCIFER: Remember guys, you work as a team, you win as a team.

Lucifer takes off his jacket, rolls up his sleeves and gets stuck in. Michael passes him a dropper and a new test tube. The test tube shatters just as it did before.

MICHAEL: See, it just keeps destabilising.

LUCIFER: Mike, we’ll get it sorted.

MICHAEL: Yeah but—

LUCIFER: Look, we’ll get it sorted, okay? Have faith.

A photographer enters.

Okay, it’s time for the company photo.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Is this everyone?

ARIEL: What I heard was that Gabriel was none too pleased.

The photographer goes up to them.

RAPHAEL: I bet he wasn’t.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Would you please move to that side of the room?

ARIEL: What I heard was that Gabriel was none too pleased.

The photographer walks towards Celestiel, who is wandering around looking for her cardigan.

CELESTIEL: Has anyone seen my cardigan?

PHOTOGRAPHER: Can you go stand over there?

Celestiel ignores him.

CELESTIEL: It’s blue, with diamanté trim.

PHOTOGRAPHER: People, please, would you get into some sort of line? Look, I need you to get yourself in a straight line, yeah? Please? Why isn’t anyone listening to me? We’re running out of time here.
LUCIFER: Listen up everyone.

Everyone stops what they’re doing and listens to him.

It’s time for the company photo, so can we all please get into position?

All of the workers arrange themselves in an orderly fashion.

PHOTOGRAPHER: (to Lucifer) Thanks.

LUCIFER: No problem.

Ariel is walking off.

ARIEL: Where you off to?

ARIEL: I need to check my hair. Can’t be having my photo taken with hair like this.

LUCIFER: Ariel, you don’t need to check the mirror, you look lovely. Really. If I were 1000 years older…

Ariel playfully hits Lucifer on the arm.

ARIEL: Oh, stop it, you.

She gets back into position. The photographer looks through the lens of his camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Now is this everyone?

Lucifer does a head count.

LUCIFER: We’re missing someone.

RAPHAEL: It’s—

Beelzebub rushes in, his lab coat is filthy.

— Beelzebub. It’s always Beelzebub.

BEELZEBUB: Sorry I’m late.

CELESTIEL: You’re always late.

MICHAEL: We needed you today. You know what kind of pressure we’re under.

BEELZEBUB: Said I was sorry.

MICHAEL: We don’t need your ‘sorry.’

RAPHAEL: Sorry is not good enough.

BEELZEBUB: Well it’s all you’re going to get.

Michael whispers to Lucifer.

MICHAEL: Don’t be nervous.

LUCIFER: I’m not. (beat) Well maybe just a little.

MICHAEL: What for? There’s no competition, Lucifer. After all you’ve done, God’ll do right by you. You’re like a son to him.

Lucifer gives Michael a hug.

LUCIFER: I’d better get the boss.

God enters to cheers and whistles.

GOD: Alright, settle down you lot.

LUCIFER: Now everyone’s here.

PHOTOGRAPHER: God, would you like to stand here?

God positions himself amongst his workers.

Series of tableaux:

1. Lucifer whispers something into God’s ear. God burst out laughing. Click!

2. God pats Lucifer on the back. Click!

3. God has his arm around Lucifer’s neck.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Okay, now just God and Lucifer.

The others move to the side so that God and Lucifer are alone.

Click!

GOD: Listen; I just want you to know that your dedication hasn’t gone unnoticed. You’ll be rewarded, don’t you worry.

LUCIFER: Thank you, sir.


Everyone makes a semi-circle around God.

As you know the company is embarking on our most ambitious
The Mysteries
Education Pack & Scripts

project to date; the creation of Earth and every living thing that will exist on it. I give you, Project Genesis!

An over-sized digital clock is unveiled. It hasn't started, but the countdown is set for T - 3 Days. All of the workers cheer and applaud.

Lucifer, over to you.

LUCIFER: Thank you, sir.

Lucifer addresses the assembled angels.

As you know, there are three crack teams working diligently on the three elements that will enable Project Genesis to proceed. Time!

Lucifer points to Ariel and her team which consists of Baal, Uriel and Amy. The others cheer wildly.

Space!

Lucifer points to Gabriel and his team which consists of Celestiel and Lilith. Again, cheers and applause.

And Life!

Lucifer points to team leader Michael, Raphael and Beelzebub. Again, cheers and applause. Michael looks uneasy, but Lucifer gives him a thumbs up.

3 days we've got to get everything in place, but if we all work together and stay focused, it will be a success.

GOD: And because this is such a massive project, I only want the best working along side me, knowing my ideas and strategies, sharing in my honour and power.

Lucifer straightens his tie. Michael nudges him.

The moment you've all been waiting for. Let me introduce you to your new Executive Director,

Lucifer begins to take a step forward.

My Son, Jesus Christ.

God’s plush leather chair swivels around to reveal Jesus.

JESUS: Hey everyone.

Freeze. Very faint whispers are heard. They are so quiet, it is hard to tell what they are saying. Only Lucifer can hear them.

Black is just black; has no real meaning.
Black is the cause of death, black as death.
The sky went black when Satan was born.

Eyes as black as night.
Black knight takes the queen.
My heart is now black.

Then silence. Jesus stands up and pushes a button to start the clock’s countdown, T - 3 Days. Everyone but Lucifer applauds. Michael applauds, though with reluctance.

GOD: Any questions, any concerns, ask Jesus. He’s your man. Treat him as you would treat me. And while I am so chuffed to have my only son as my co-director, I cannot forget my right-hand angel, Lucifer. For all of his years of loyal service, hard work and dedication. Lucifer, where are you my boy?

Hesitantly, Lucifer steps forward.

I bestow upon you, the position of Bearer of Light.

God gives Lucifer the key he was holding earlier.

I have loved you like a son. Don’t think I could’ve loved you any more than I do.

God gives Lucifer a hug, which Lucifer finds so difficult to receive that he starts to cry.

JESUS: Come on, speech, speech.

Lucifer cuts Jesus a look and angrily wipes away his tears. He gestures towards God.

LUCIFER: Cheers.

Lucifer half-heartedly shakes Jesus’ hand.

JESUS: Thanks mate.

God pats Lucifer on the back. Lucifer turns to leave when God puts his hand on Lucifer’s shoulder. He points to the clipboard.

GOD: Gonna need that.

He takes the clipboard from Lucifer and gives them to Jesus.

JESUS: Thanks, Dad.

God and Jesus turn towards the photographer so that he can take a picture of the handover.

Click!

Series of tableaux:
1. Jesus whispers something into God’s ear. God bust out laughing.
2. God patting Jesus on the back.

Click!

3. God has his arm around Jesus’ neck.

GOD: Okay, now just me and my son.

Lucifer watches God and Jesus together while he stands alone.

Click!

JESUS: Okay, back to work everyone.

God, Jesus and Lucifer head towards God’s office. The other two enter, but the door is closed in Lucifer’s face. Beat, then the door reopens and God pokes his head out.

GOD: You couldn’t get us a cuppa, could you?

The door is again closed in Lucifer’s face. Michael comes up to Lucifer.

MICHAEL: You alright?

LUCIFER: Yeah, why wouldn’t I be?

MICHAEL: It’s just that—well, everyone assumed...

LUCIFER: Well that’s what we get for making assumptions.

Lucifer walks off.

Scene Two

God’s office

Jesus is looking out through the glass doors of God’s office. He is watching Lucifer and the angels at work. God is sitting at his desk, signing documents.

JESUS: They really respect him. Lucifer, I mean.

God really isn’t paying attention.

GOD: Hmm?

JESUS: Lucifer. They respect him. The others.

GOD: I suppose.

JESUS: But they also like him. They respect him and like him.

Scene 3

Lucifer is alone at his desk, trying to finish some paperwork. He is finding it difficult to concentrate. The whispers return, this time, some lines can clearly be heard.

Black is just black; has no real meaning.
Black is the cause of death, black as death.
The sky went black when Satan was born.
Eyes as black as night.
Black knight takes the queen.
My heart is now black.

Lucifer is frightened. The whispers stop.

**LUCIFER:** Pull yourself together, Lucifer and get on with your work.

He tries to get back to work, but then the whispers start again.

Quiet!

The whispers stop. A moment as Lucifer expects them to start again. When they don't, he goes back to his paperwork but he can't concentrate.

Job wasn't yours to begin with. God never promised it to you. Jesus will do alright. He's good. Just keep your head down and get on with it.

Lucifer's having trouble convincing even himself. Jesus walks past his office and waves. Lucifer nods in return. He snaps the pencil he's been using in two. There's a knock at the door.

What?!

Ariel enters, carrying a test tube.

**ARIEL:** What's with you?

**LUCIFER:** Sorry. Bit stressed at the moment.

**ARIEL:** Well, this will brighten your day.

She holds out the test tube. It flickers with activity.

**LUCIFER:** Is this...

**ARIEL:** Yes.

**LUCIFER:** You sure?

**ARIEL:** See for yourself.

**LUCIFER:** You've done it.

**ARIEL:** We've done it.

Lucifer gently takes the test tube from her.

Time...

**LUCIFER:** Time...

They celebrate with a hug.

**Scene Four**

**Staff room**

All of the angels are gathered, with cups of tea and biscuits being passed around.

**ARIEL:** And then he says, "I knew you weren't just a pretty face."

Raphael whispers to Michael.

**RAPHAEL:** And I wouldn’t even say she was that.

Michael laughs.

**ARIEL:** Hey, you two are just jealous that my team sorted out our element. How’s it going with ‘Life’, Michael?

Uriel, Baal and Amy snicker.

**MICHAEL:** (mumbles) Not so good.
URIEL: What’s that, we can’t hear you?

MICHAEL: Not so good. But any day now...

ARIEL: Uh-huh.

RAPHAEL: Look, just because—

LUCIFER: Kill it, you two. Remember, we all work as a team. Okay?

They all grumble in agreement. Jesus enters and everyone goes silent. Jesus goes about making a cup of tea. No one says a word.

JESUS: Alright?

All but Lucifer nod. It is clear that Jesus doesn’t know where the tea-making supplies are.

Uhm, could one of you...

Raphael stands up.

RAPHAEL: Let me, sir.

JESUS: Thanks...

RAPHAEL: Raphael, sir.

JESUS: Thanks Raphael. Milk, no sugar.

As Raphael makes the cuppa, Jesus sees Ariel.

Excellent work on Time, yesterday, Ariel.

ARIEL: Thank you, sir.

She looks smugly at Michael.

JESUS: Very impressive. Keep up the good work.

ARIEL: Will do.

JESUS: You could all learn from Ariel’s example.

GABRIEL: Well if some of us had all our team here...

JESUS: What do you mean?

GABRIEL: It’s Beelzebub; he’s never here, always late. No wonder we’re so behind.

JESUS: This true, Lucifer?

LUCIFER: He’s a bit slack, but there’s no problem.

JESUS: Not the way it sounds to me. What kind of ship are you running here, Lucifer?

LUCIFER: To be fair, Jesus—

RAPHAEL: Here you go.

Raphael hands Jesus his tea.

JESUS: Cheers.

Jesus exits with his tea. Ariel calls after him.

ARIEL: Take care, sir!

Beelzebub rushes in.

BEELZEBUB: Sorry I’m late.

Scene Five

Lucifer’s office

Lucifer is at his desk listening as Beelzebub and Jesus argue.

BEELZEBUB: It’s not fair, Lucifer.

JESUS: And it’s not fair that everyone else has to do your work for you, Beelzebub.

BEELZEBUB: Lucifer, are you going to let him talk to your staff like this? I thought you were in charge of the workforce.

LUCIFER: Bee, can you leave us for a moment?

BEELZEBUB: But—

LUCIFER: Bee, please!

Beelzebub rushes then exits.

LUCIFER: Look Jesus, I know Beelzebub’s a bit slow on the uptake, but he’s a good worker when he wants to be. There’s no need to give him a written warning.

JESUS: We don’t have time for people who can’t pull their weight.

LUCIFER: It’s never been a problem before. Look, I’ll talk to him and—

JESUS: Well, that may have been the way that you ran things, but I’m the Executive Director. And business is business, Lucifer.
Jesus walks out of the office, passing Michael as he does. Michael enters.

LUCIFER: Look, before you start.

MICHAEL: Just hear me out. (beat) I know you've vexed that God didn't make you Executive Director. We were all pretty shocked. But you've got to trust his decision.

LUCIFER: But, Jesus—

MICHAEL: Yeah, Jesus isn't everyone's cup of tea, but you've got to give him a chance. Okay?

The whispers start again. This time, 3 or 4 lines can be heard clearly. Only Lucifer can hear them.

Black is just black; has no real meaning.

Black is the cause of death, black as death.
The sky went black when Satan was born.
Eyes as black as night.
Black knight takes the queen.
My heart is now black.

MICHAEL: Okay?

LUCIFER: No. No not, okay.

Scene Six

God's office

God is at his desk, on the phone.

GOD: Trish, it's God again. I'm still waiting for my tree.

Lucifer enters.

Lucifer covers the phone with one hand.

(to Lucifer) Yeah?

LUCIFER: Boss?

GOD: Hurry up, what is it?

LUCIFER: Boss, it's Jesus. I know he's your son and all, but he starting to interfere with the way I do business.

GOD: So?

LUCIFER: So? God, come on. I mean, I've been your first hand from the beginning. You've trusted me to oversee everything. And while I know that you decided that Jesus would make a better Executive Director—

GOD: Is that what this is all about? You're jealous you didn't get the job?

LUCIFER: Well, I... no, that's not it.

GOD: Lucifer, some of us have real work to do. I suggest you get back to yours.

God goes back to his phone conversation.

Lucifer exits the office.

Scene Seven

Staff room

All of the angels are gathered, with cups of tea and biscuits being passed around.

Lucifer is pacing the floor.

LUCIFER: This everyone?

MICHAEL: Think we're only missing Beelzebub.

BEELZEBUB: Sorry I'm late.

ARIEL: You're always late, Beelzebub. You've already been written up once.

BEELZEBUB: Well, Ariel, some of us have busy lives.

ARIEL: Excuse me, but I've got gout, yet you don't hear me complaining.

BEELZEBUB: Well, Ariel if you—

GABRIEL: Will you two pack it in?!

LUCIFER: Thank you, Gabriel. I'd like to thank everyone for being here. I've called this staff meeting because I've got some concerns with the recent changes in management.

Ariel whispers to Celestiel.
ARIEL: He’s talking about that Jesus.

RAPHAEL: Shh!

LUCIFER: Yes, Ariel, I’m talking about that Jesus.

BEELZEBUB: Gave me a written warning, he did.

ARIEL: Good. Serves you right. Ariel gives Raphael a smug smirk.

LUCIFER: While I respect and love God, I honestly feel as though he has made a mistake. I think we all know that I was expecting to receive the position of Executive Director and so like the rest of you, I was very surprised when it went to Jesus. And while I’ve never been one to blow my own trumpet, I do believe that I am still the best angel for the job. (beat) I’ve always been fair, haven’t I? Ariel?

ARIEL: Oh, absolutely.

LUCIFER: Raphael?

RAPHAEL: I suppose so.

ARIEL nudges Raphael with her elbow. Yes.

LUCIFER: Mike?

MICHAEL: Yes, of course.

LUCIFER: So why does Jesus get to share in the boss’s plans for expansion? Why does he get the keys to the kingdom? I’ve never been one to question the boss, but I mean, come on. What has Jesus done that I haven’t?

GABRIEL: Don’t mean to be funny, Lucifer, but you ain’t the Son of God; Jesus is.

BEELZEBUB: That’s not the point, Gabriel.

LUCIFER: Thank you Beelzebub.

CELESTIEL: So what then is the point?

LUCIFER: Point is, I’ve been a loyal and extremely hard worker. So if anyone was to be Executive Director of Project Genesis, surely it should have been me.

LILITH: He does have a point.

LUCIFER: I mean, I would never make you serve me, not like Jesus is doing. I’d never ask you to do that.

MICHAEL: I don’t know about this, Lu.

BAAL: No, you wouldn’t.

MICHAEL: What’s that supposed to mean?

BAAL: It means you’ve got no backbone. Stand up for yourself, Michael.

MICHAEL: Just because I want to know the score before I go wading in doesn’t mean I’ve got no guts.

LUCIFER: What’s there to know, Mike? Jesus rolls up in here, switching things up. Things that do not concern him.

MICHAEL: Yeah, but—

LUCIFER: So, are we going to stand for this?

MICHAEL: What you saying, Lucifer?

LUCIFER: What I’m saying is this; we cannot allow Jesus to be telling us what to do. We were handling things just fine before he came along and we have to stand up for ourselves. We have rights.

Lucifer squares up to Michael. Are you an ‘us’ or are you a ‘them’?

The clock counts down one more day.

Scene Eight

Factory floor

Lucifer, Beelzebub, Lilith, Baal and Amy enter, all wearing berets and sunglasses. All but Lucifer carry banners and placards. Michael, Ariel, Raphael and Celestiel exchange worried looks with each other. Lucifer looks around the room.

LUCIFER: The revolution begins now. Everyone, I’m calling a strike. No work until Jesus is fired.

Lucifer, Beelzebub, Lilith, Baal and Amy sit down in protest. The others whisper amongst themselves. Ariel pushes Michael towards Lucifer.

LUCIFER: So Michael, come to join us?

MICHAEL: No.

Lucifer snorts in disgust.

LUCIFER: Why am I not surprised?
Especially not with them lot.

Beat.

LUCIFER: (whispers) Got no choice. I've gone too far to turn back.

Silence as they stare at each other.

MICHAEL: Sorry, Lu. Sorry.

Silence.

LUCIFER: You slave.

Lucifer looks over at the others.

You're all slaves. I'm the only one here willing to fight, willing to stick my neck out for what I believe in. Cowards, the lot of you!

Lucifer summons his powers; the Seven Deadly Sins come from different corners of the universe; Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath and Sloth. Like a magnet, they come to him, latching themselves onto his body.

Lucifer is angry, sad, betrayed; the transformation is painful.

Black is just black; has no real meaning.

Black is the cause of death, black as death.

The sky went black when Satan was born.

Eyes as black as night.

Black knight takes the queen.

My heart is now black.

A tambourine rattles; the serpent is forming. Lucifer has now completely transformed into Satan, a creature with multiple heads, arms and legs. All of the voices speak at once.


Scene Nine

God’s office

God is at his desk, surrounded by paperwork. Michael knocks gently on the office door.

MICHAEL: God?

GOD: Hmm?

Michael is silent.

What is it, Michael?

MICHAEL: It’s Lucifer, boss.
GOD: What about him?

Michael hesitates.

Come on, boy, I don't have all day.

Michael takes a deep breath.

MICHAEL: Well, he's stirring things up. I don't know what's going through his head. He's talking of a revolution and sabotaging not only Project Genesis, but everything that we've worked for. I don't know what—

GOD: Not to worry, Michael.

MICHAEL: But God—

GOD: I said not to worry.

God puts his hand on Michael's shoulder.

Satan enters with his army. He walks over and stands in front of God. With his feet, Satan draws a line so that every angel must choose his/her side. One by one, the angels either side with God or with Satan.

GOD: Michael, Gabriel, Ariel, Raphael, Celestiel and Uriel

SATAN: Beelzebub, Baal, Lilith and Amy

GOD: What's this I hear about you starting a revolution? Explain yourself, Lucifer.

SATAN: My name is Satan and we're unhappy with the way things are going around here. And what we want—

GOD: (scoffs) Satan…

SATAN: And what we want is for me to be made your rightful equal. Over Jesus.

GOD: That's not going to happen. I've made my decision.

SATAN: Well your decision was wrong God and I'll give you one last chance to—

GOD: Who are you to be giving out chances, my son?

SATAN: I am not your son.

Pause.

GOD: No, you're not. Get out. All of you, get out now.

Satan points to the rebellious angels.

SATAN: They're with me! You'd kick them out too and make this place empty? You'd do that?

GOD: Get. Out.

Satan and God stare at each other in silence.

SATAN: (whispers) Please sir, don’t make me do this.

GOD: (whispers) It’s not you doing it to me, my boy.

Satan looks confused. God gives him a kiss.

I wish I didn’t have to do this. Believe me, if there was another way...

Beat, then Satan is about to push God away from him when Michael steps in, blocking the attack. There is silence as Michael and Satan stare at each other. Then suddenly Michael lets out a battle cry. With this, Satan breaks into individual warriors to battle against Michael and the army of angels.

A vocal/instrumental canon builds, creating the sense of war.

The battle has begun.

One by one, the angels who sided with Satan are defeated and expelled from heaven until only Michael and Satan remain. Michael and Satan are in a fierce embrace; it could be a hold, it could be a hug. It is then clear that Michael has defeated Satan.

As Satan is expelled from heaven, he calls out to God.

SATAN: Why didn't you love me best?!

As Satan falls, Michael reaches out to save him, but can only capture the “spark” of Lucifer that remains. Michael holds on to that “spark”. God watches with sadness as Satan falls from heaven.

Scene Ten

Factory floor – in the aftermath of war

Silence. Everything is a chaotic mess and there is a deep sadness that hangs in the air. The harmonious buzz of before is gone. God watches as the remaining angels are:

Sweeping up debris
Lifting a fallen cross
Mourning the loss of their co-workers

God straightens the sign which reads God & Son – est. o. He sees Lucifer’s battered beret on the ground. He picks it up and gently dusts it off. Jesus comes out of the office and sees God holding the beret.

JESUS: Sometimes you have to sacrifice the ones you love for the greater good. Business is business. You taught me that, remember?
God looks at his son, alluding to the sacrifice which will be made of Jesus. God nods solemnly.

**GOD:** Business is business.

When Jesus isn’t looking, God carefully folds the beret and puts it in his pocket. Michael enters in a daze. He is tired, as well as heartbroken. He sees God looking at him. Michael holds up a test tube.

**MICHAEL:** Here it is, sir. The final element.

Into the test tube, Michael drops the ‘spark’ that was left by Lucifer. The test tube snaps, crackles and pops. It flickers with ‘Life.’

Jesus shakes Michael’s hand.

**JESUS:** Good job.

**GOD:** Thank you, Michael.

God puts Michael on the back. Michael nods then quietly steps back.

Gather around, everyone. It’s time.

All of the angels gather around God and Jesus.

The past few days have been brutal to us all. We all have lost friends that were dear to us. But they made a choice and have paid the price for that choice. You have worked extremely hard and have remained focused and loyal.

God holds up the test tube.

We have created Time and Space and now, here we have it, the last remaining element needed to begin Project Genesis. Life.

God pours the contents of the test tube into the atmosphere.

Everyone looks out over the vast waste that has appeared; a darkness covers the deep. Earth has come into existence. Everyone marvels at its beauty and greatness.

(whispers) Let there be light.

And there was light.

The clock’s countdown reaches DAY 1. Silence as all take in the work that has been achieved and the work that is to follow.

Jesus puts his arm around God and together they walk into God’s office, shutting the door behind them.

But in a corner of the earth, unseen whispers can be heard.

Black is just black; has no real meaning.
**CHOSEN**

**A film written and devised by the company with Chris Bradley and Orla O’Connor.**

Film to be found on www.belgrade.co.uk

Chosen was first screened by the Belgrade’s Community & Education Company on Monday 27 July 2009

**The Company**

Alex Newall
Alex Allen
Andrea Allen
Jay Stockley
Katherine Hodgson
Daniel Christie
Ben Patefield
Ashleigh Francis
Liva Menke
Liz Barrat
Kim Jarvis

Louise
Alex/Mary
Mom
Jay
Alice
Daniel
Ben
Lauren
Phoebe
School friend
Party friend

**Nativity Play**

Sophie Wright
Taylor Choyce
Alisha Collins
Mackenzie Choyce
Chloe Blencowe

Joseph
Angel Gabriel/inn keeper/narrator
Shepherd/narrator
Inn keeper/shepherd
Donkey/shepherd

**Director**

Chris Bradley – Community Arts Workshop

**Assistant Director**

Orla O’Connor

**Camera/Lighting**

Damian Hardy

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**THE STORY OF MARYAM**

By Neslihan Demir

The Story of Maryam was first performed by the Belgrade’s Community & Education Company on Monday 27th July 2009

Written & performed by Neslihan Demir

Directed by Joseph Coelho

Enter the Storyteller she looks around at the audience.

STORYTELLER:

Do you know Mary? Mother of Jesus? I am here to tell you the story of Mary, or as Muslims call her, Maryam, and how she gave birth to Jesus or Isa (Aleyhis Salaam) as he is known in the Qur’an. ‘Aleyhis Salaam’ means “Peace be upon him”. This expression follows after naming any prophet, or one of the noble Angels.

Maryam was the daughter of Hannah and Imran, who wished and prayed for a baby. When Hannah knew she was pregnant, she vowed that her baby would live and serve for Allah. Maryam was so pure and dedicated in her service to Allah that even the priests admired her deep dedication and humility for Allah.

When you are honest, pure, dedicated, humble and thankful for what you have, Allah will always care for you and provide you with the things you need and want. So did he with Maryam.

One day her uncle questioned her where she got all the fresh food from, because miraculously Maryam always had food on her table without anyone entering her chamber. Interestingly she had fruits which were out of season. For example dates, bananas, red and green apples.

The storyteller starts to produce the food she talks of

She humbly replied “It’s from Allah. He gives plenty to whom He wishes”.

Now can you see how blessed she was? Can you? Can you?

One day angel Gabriel (a.s.) appeared in her chamber in the form of a beautiful young man. And this was to be the final test for Maryam. A test of her purity and steadfastness. Upon seeing him she immediately spoke the words “I seek refuge with Allah from you!” She passed her test.

The storyteller sits down

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The storyteller sits down

She was afraid, but he didn’t want to harm her and said, “Don’t be afraid. I am Allah’s messenger. I am here to tell you that you will have a holy son.”

Maryam didn’t understand and was confused. She said, “How can I have a son? I have never
been touched by a man nor ever been unchaste!"

The angel answered, "Allah creates as he wills. When He wants something to happen, all he
has to do is to say "Be" and it happens. Your son will be a blessing for mankind. And he will
be a sign from Allah. His name will be Isa Ibn Maryam."

The storyteller sits

Soon enough Maryam conceived Isa (a.s.) and she retired to a far place where nobody could
find her. She went to an old den near the desert, which had been one of her favourite places
when she was younger. It was one of the places where she could find peace of mind and pray
to Allah without being disturbed by anybody, and she did this for days!

It was really warm and there were no clouds in the sky, when a few months later Maryam
began to feel labour pains. She lay down by the trunk of a palm-tree, which had such
big leaves, and it provided a cool and nice shadow in the heat. Overwhelmed by the pain
Maryam was really exhausted, she felt alone and sad and wished she had never been born.
Suddenly, a voice came from below and said...

The storyteller reacts to a voice...

"Don’t despair. Your Lord has provided a stream that runs at your feet, and if you shake the
trunk of this palm-tree it will drop fresh ripe dates in your lap. Therefore eat and drink and
rejoice."

Maryam drank from the pure and cold water and ate from the sweet, fresh dates. Afterwards
she felt better and the pains of childbirth reduced. The voice said...

"Then, take your baby and go back to your people. But do not speak! Keep silent. If people
ask you why you don’t speak, tell them that you promised Allah to keep silence."

Carrying baby Isa (a.s), she went back to the city. As soon as people saw her with the baby in
her arms they started talking bad about her and reproached her. They thought that Maryam
had committed a grave sin because she had had a baby without a husband. They became
angry with her and said that her parents were good people and feared Allah. They said, "You
have dishonoured your parents and all the rest of your people. How could you do that? You
have been a good daughter, an honest and cordial servant for Allah!"

And they said, "Was this the reason for your absence? And we thought you went away to be
alone and find your way to Allah. Do you think He will forgive what you did?"

And they said, "Maryam, Maryam. We are very disappointed in you. We can’t accept you
staying here longer. You have to go and find another place to stay, otherwise we have to
charge you away!"

Maryam was ashamed and sad at how they jumped to conclusions. She wanted to speak and
explain, but remember, she had promised not to speak - Do you remember? Do you? She
only pointed to Isa (a.s) and miraculously he started speaking.

"I am indeed a servant of Allah. He has given me revelation and made me a prophet and He
has blessed me wherever I may go and has commanded me to be steadfast in prayer and give
alms to the poor as long as I live. Allah has made me kind and dutiful to my mother and He
has rid me of arrogance and wickedness. Therefore, there is peace on me the day I was born,
the day I die, and the day I shall be raised to life again on the Day of Judgment."

The people were amazed and astonished,
The storyteller shows amazement
speechless,
The storyteller demonstrates being speechless
and a bit shocked.
The storyteller shows us mild shock

To hear a baby speaking. That was the first time in their lives, and in history as well, that a
baby could speak. Isn’t it incredible and powerful to see and hear a baby speaking? Isn’t it?
Isn’t it? But after what we have learned from this story, you shouldn’t be surprised, because
Allah only needs to say “Be” and it will be.

THE END.

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Written by Neslihan Demir as part of the Belgrade Theatre Community & Education Company HLF Project.

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** The definition of a performance is the use of either professional actors, the use of set, costume or lights or the work being shared with a paying audience.
DAN: And no one leaves unless we say so... all our lives depend on it... is every one clear on that...?

He checks with the audience that they understand.

Now, we don't know how, but King has managed to get the police on his side and we know that some of you have been questioned...

CHRIS: ...some of us have been arrested!

EMILY: We've heard about that too. We're not getting a chance to explain any thing.!

DAN: Because of the special measures, King has effectively got control of the media as well... it's turning into a witch hunt. And now they're even blaming us for the bombing of The Cathedral nightclub...

HARPREET: ...and calling us terrorists!

KIRSTY: Ok, which is why we need to act, and it's why we felt we had to have this meeting. We've asked you here because some followers feel that without Chris there's no point in carrying on...

DAN: Some of us are desperate to carry on and feel that we owe it to Chris & his memory to do so.

KIRSTY: And some of us are too devastated to even think about what happens now... for days we've struggled to make a decision as to what we should do... so we need your help... we need to put it to the vote.

TAYLOR: All for one and all that…..we think it's what he would've wanted, the way he would've wanted us to make the right choice. By asking ALL of his followers.

SHANNICE: And as we haven't got long we might as well get on with it, all those in favour raise your hands...

CHRIS: Hang on, wo! We can't just vote... just like that! We need some time to think!

CHRIS: What's there to think about?

SIMON: Yeah he was a self centred prick who was willing to get us all killed...

HARPREET: What?!!

DAN: I've never met anyone so concerned with helping other people.

BALLY: Wrong decisions, he made wrong decisions. Do you realise how many enemies he made?

EMMA: He had the guts to stand up for what he believed in, what's so wrong with that?
LEVI: We should never have gone along with his ridiculous ‘new plan’, what was wrong with the old one? Travelling together, spreading the word... it was fine...

HARPREET: We can't just give up on him, give up on his dream...

BALLY: Was this his dream, all of this? Followers being beaten and arrested in their own homes; people too scared to utter his name or admit they had anything to do with him, us lot fighting amongst ourselves.....at each others throats like dogs?

EMILY: He gave everything for us....

SIMON: For us? It was all about him... everything was about him, he never let us in...

JAY: You ungrateful shit, he was the best friend you've ever had...

KIRSTY: Jay please! Don’t...

JAY: When you joined us you had nothing, you were nothing...

SIMON: Where the hell did you get that from?!

BALLY: (To Jay) I should have known you’d have something to say...

JAY: Wait! No wonder you can't decide what to do. It’s like you've forgotten who he really was already. No one can decide what’s right or what’s wrong, with so many lies & rumours flying around, we don't know what to believe. Do we?

DAN: And what you suggesting...?

CHRIS: Wait! Nobody knew him better than you lot, so tell us.

SIMON: Oh fuck this, we’re wasting time... I'm not staying here to get arrested...

LEVI: Simon, sit down

SIMON: They're gonna figure out sooner or later that we're down here....

CHRIS: Look, how can we decide if all we've got is half truths and slander to go on? You - you say he was selfish, then tell us how. You - you say he was standing up for what he believed in, well let's hear it, tell us all, better still... show us!

SIMON: Oh my God man, will somebody shut him up??? Who do you think you are?

CHRIS: I know exactly who I am - who are you?

KIRSTY: Ok. It’s a fair point, but what do you mean SHOW you?

CHRIS: Act out the scenes from his life with all of you, that made him the man he was... a martyr or an egotistical fool. Then we can decide.

The disciples take a second to think about what Chris is proposing and eventually they all nod in agreement.

KIRSTY: Right you’re on... but let’s be quick eh?

LEVI: James, double check that there’s no one around...

James goes to check.

KIRSTY: Ah, but who’s going to play the part of Christian in all of this?

BALLY: Jay you do it. Nobody knew Chris better than you.

JAY: No, no I can’t.

BALLY: Go on, you’re the obvious choice.

JAY: No!

CHRIS: I will. I’ll do it.

SIMON: Look, I’ve had just about enough of this shite...

CHRIS: Do you see any other volunteers? You can all play yourselves and if I get it wrong, just point me in the right direction. Yeah?

They reluctantly agree.

SHANNICE: O.K. done. Simon?

SIMON: O.K. I suppose so. Things can’t get any weirder than they have done in these past few days.

James comes back.

LEVI: All clear?

JAMES: Yep, all clear.

LEVI: OK then, first let’s start with... Karaoke... he loved karaoke.

CHRIS: OK karaoke....
Scene Two
Karaoke & fun times with Chris

Actions choreographed to the karaoke soundtrack of 'It's not unusual' by Tom Jones.

Actions: Karaoke with Chris
Skydiving with Jay and Chris
Celebrations & photos with Chris after he gets elected as Student Union president. This is all 'compered' over a live microphone by one of the disciples. (Levi)

Scene Three
Back from the wilderness

LEVI: Ok yeah, Chris was great fun to be around, he loved life but only if you were agreeing with him. If you didn't agree with him?? boy!!!... mooooddy!!!...

BALLY: And reckless. Why did he go to the press about King?

LEVI: Exactly, 'swat I'm talking about. The man was a liability.

HARPREET: No. He just had the guts to tell people straight and to their face if they were out of order...

BALLY: And how did that end eh?

It starts to get heated again

CHRIS: Excuse me!

ALL: What?

CHRIS: Show us!

BALLY: (Throwing him the jacket) Simon! Play King...

Music

They show a short excerpt of the meeting of King & his boys – Simon plays King, Bally & Harpreet play his 'boys' they beat Chris up in the street. Music fades out.

KING: (When Chris is on the floor) That's your last warning...

Simon takes off King's jacket.

BALLY: ...see ... RECKLESS!

LEVI: I think that beating made an impression though. Ya know, really scared him.
CHRIS: It's a long story...
CHRIS: Well we're listening!
CHRIS: Guys, I'm really tired...
BALLY: You're not going anywhere until you tell us what's been going on...
CHRIS: Look, I've got a new plan, alright? Now can I tell you in the morning?
BALLY: No, c'mon, tell us now...
CHRIS: Ok. We're taking King down.
JAY: What, are you kidding??

General reactions from others - shock or laughter
CHRIS: No. The Temple, The Cathedral, his whole empire, everything...
JAY: Well I admire your ambition, but I don't think you've thought this through properly.
BALLY: I'm with you
SIMON: Hang on, this is King we're talking about...
CHRIS: I know.
SIMON: This isn't the Student Union ya' know or a poxy balloon debate. King's a proper psychopath. He kills people for fun.
BALLY: I think he's right.
CHRIS: Look guys, if you trust me...
EMILY: Oh I hate it when you say that...
CHRIS: So you with me or not?
SHANNICE: We've always been with you... even when you weren't with us.
CHRIS: Look, all I'm saying is trust me.
JAY: Great. So when do we start?
CHRIS: First thing, after I've had a good night's rest.

Exits
Leaves the group looking at each other apprehensively.

SHANNICE: Is that it? 6 weeks without so much as a twitter and then he just comes waltzing back in here saying he wants to be 'The New King'.....well Fu....

Snap blackout.

Music fades out...

Scene Four

The Ultimate Friend

EMMA: I can't believe you're questioning Chris's devotion to you as a friend, it's disgusting. He always made time for any of us when we needed him. You'll never have anyone love you as much as he did!

DAN: You need reminding just how much Chris did for us... Chris!
He throws the football to him.

Music
CHRIS: Oi, JD!...
Throw's ball to him, they enjoy having a kick about and they ad lib until music fades down
They 'play' tackle for a few moments - Music rises - Chris receives a text on his phone. Music fades down under dialogue
CHRIS: Whoa, hang on... phone...
He stops to read the text, Jay stops and waits, Chris begins to text back, slightly exasperated. Jay sits down, Chris finishes the message
CHRIS: (indicating for Jay to pass him the ball!) Ball...
JAY: Who was that?
CHRIS: Me old man.
Jay mouths 'Your Dad' at the same time.

JAY: That's like the 3rd time in 10 minutes...
CHRIS: What's your point?
JAY: He's always checking up on you. We know you're special...that's why you're... special. Can't he give you some space?
CHRIS: Yeah ok mate, just leave it.
JAY: What?
JAY: Why?

CHRIS: (joking) He wouldn’t talk to the likes of you... It’d be as bad as me talking to...King...

Kicks ball to Jay

JAY: You what?

Stops the ball & stops playing

CHRIS: (joking) You know, you & King,... two peas in a pod...

JAY: (Concerned) What you comparing me to King for? I’m nothing like him.

CHRIS: (After a moment) Chill, I’m winding you up...!

JAY: Oh shut up!

He playfully throws the ball at Chris

CHRIS: Oh, he can dish it but he can’t take it!

They continue playing football

JAY: You’re gonna have to watch your back with him you know.

CHRIS: Who? Harpreet?

JAY: King, he’s a psycho.

CHRIS: I know but we have to get rid of him Jay, the guy’s a virus. He’s poisoning the whole world.

JAY: Well don’t hold back Chris, say it exactly how you see it.

CHRIS: Sorry, simple as. My dad reckons I should. He says King’s the root of all of our trouble and he needs to be dealt with, once and for all.

JAY: Whatever you say Chris is fine by me Chris, you know that. I’ve got your back and you can always count on me. Always.

They man hug.

Levi enters the replay of the scene – She is carrying black bing bags filled with her possessions. She drops them to the floor.

LEVI: They’ve fuckin’ kicked me out!

JAY: What?

LEVI: They’ve fuckin’ kicked me out!!
CHRIS: Oh man, Levi, (Gives her a comforting hug) things’ll work out, it’ll be alright
JAY: Yeah, I'm sure you can stay at Chris’s for a bit...
CHRIS: Erm... sure why not?
LEVI: You sure?
CHRIS: Yeah, course. Here’s my key, go dump your stuff... and I’ll see you at ‘home’ later...
LEVI: Cheers Chris.
CHRIS: (Does a skill) Oooo check the skills!!!
JAY: Don't get so cocky mate.
CHRIS: Alright shut up....
JAY: (Jokingly) What you gonna do, lightnin' bolt my ass?? GOD BOY!!!
CHRIS: Don't test me bro! I mean it...
JAY: Yeah right. Don't get too big for your boots boy!!!
CHRIS: If i do i'll just get bigger boots! (He throws ball & it hits Jay's head)
JAY: (As they walk off) God Boy! (Ad lib...)

Music Fades Out

Scene Five

Disciples’ night out

CHRIS: He might have been a great friend to Jay, but you’re missing the point.
DAN: Which is?
LEVI: That he was downright stubborn and manipulative and that's why we’re all in the mess we’re in right now.
CHRIS: Precisely.

Replaying the scene:

CHRIS: Where's Jay? Have you seen him today? He's not answering his phone...
EMMA: Maybe his phone’s off...
CHRIS: It's not like him

EMMA: Stop worrying, he’ll call later...
CHRIS: I've been trying to get hold of him all day...
NAT: You two are joined at the hip. He won't be far away...

Noise from the boys playing playstation

CHRIS: Right, let’s go everyone.
NAT: Where, where are we going Chris?
CHRIS: The Temple.
EMMA: Yeah right...
CHRIS: I'm serious, get your stuff everyone, we're going to The Temple...
DAN: YOU wanna go to KINGS place?
NAT: You are kiddin’?
CHRIS: No
EMMA: I'm not going there
JAMES: They won't let you in...
KIRSTY: You don't even like The Temple
CHRIS: Yeah, well I wanna go tonight...
DAN: Why do you want to go there all of a sudden?
CHRIS: Are you questioning me? Are you saying that I don't know what I'm doing?
DAN: You’re twisting what I’m saying...
CHRIS: Ever since I got back you've been questioning me, I thought you trusted me...
EMMA: It’s nothing to do with not trusting you...
DAVID: Emma’s right, I don't want to go there....
CHRIS: O.k. guys, it’s your choice, stay here and eat pizza. (No response) I don't need you to come, I'll go on my own...
JAMES: You can't go on your own
CHRIS: I'm going
KIRSTY: Chris, you're being really out of order...

NAT: We can't let you go on your own... you know we can't.

CHRIS: (To David) Keys... (David won't give them to him) KEYS!

David gives in & gives them to Chris

EMMA: Ok, look we'll come, of course we will, but you've got to promise you're not going to start anything...

CHRIS: (Exasperated) What?!

DAN: And you're gonna keep away from King... remember... he's not giving you anymore warnings.

Chris gives no response.

KIRSTY: If we go we want to enjoy ourselves and have a laugh... with no trouble.

EMMA: I'm not going unless you promise Chris gives no response

DAN: Chris!

CHRIS: Ok, ok. I promise.

**Scene Six A**

**Meeting of Jay & King (Part 1)**

Chris is quietly whispering into Simon's (King's) ear - He is telling him what to do in the replaging of the next scene

HARPREET: Chris was just passionate about what he believed in...

JAY: He put his LIFE on the line for all of us that night

CHRIS: He still couldn't get you on the phone though could he Jay?

Music

King's Boys or Chris puts the Jacket on King.

JAY: I want out.

KING: Doesn't work like that Jay...

JAY: I'm not gonna be your skivvy anymore. I want out.

KING: You work for me Jay...

JAY: Not anymore

KING: I thought you needed the money.

JAY: I'll get your money, I'll get it some other way.

KING: So why the sudden change of heart?

JAY: The delivery to The Cathedral, it killed dozens of people...

KING: I heard | Unfortunate...

JAY: You told me it was just a parcel.

KING: It was.

JAY: I want out... I'm not doing this anymore.

KING: Look, tell you what – you do one more job for me, and we'll call it quits yeah?

JAY: What job?

KING: No need to worry about that... I'll send you a text...

Freeze. Cut to:

**Scene Six B**

**The Temple (Part 1)**

We are now in the Temple nightclub. A few become dancers, some are disciples. Some are Mr Kings ‘security’. On the TVs we see King having a ‘meeting’ with JD.

The disciples enter. Christian enters the club with his hood up so that he is not recognised. He observes everything that is going on.

Music drops down on track

CHRIS: (To everyone in the club - taking his hood off to reveal who he is) Look at you all, can't you see what a mess you've all become! You've all so much better than this, don't succumb to the wanton temptation and degradation of King's will.

Can't you see what he's doing to you? Stop thinking you're the victims and do something about it... do something with your lives... stand up and fight back.

Freeze. Cut to:
Scene Six C

Meeting of Jay & King (Part 2)

Enter Bouncer

BOUNCER: Mr. King we've got a problem. It's him, Chris is here, in the club and it's getting nasty.

KING: Remember, I'll text you.

JAY: Shit!

Puts his hood up and then exits the same way as King and the Bouncer.

Cut to:

Scene Six D

The Temple (Part 2)

CHRIS: He's taking you all for fools and idiots. You're his prostitutes and pimps. So he gets fatter and richer while you waste away like junkie zombies from hell. But it's not too late. You don't need to be here, you can all pull yourself out of this hole!! You can break free from his grip.... King is not who you think he is, King is a drug dealing, abuser and murderer!!

King arrives with his 'boys' – Jay arrives with them but stays in the background in the hope that Chris will not notice him

Oh look who it is, speak of the Devil!!!! Look at him hiding behind his army of idiots!! Everyone here can redeem themselves, but you!! Mr. King. You're beyond help!! And if you don't get out while you can, he'll take you all down with him!!

You're a pathetic loser that uses people. You're everything that is wrong with the world. Look at him, he's not even man enough to stand up to me on his own!! They all see what this PIT you call a nightclub is now!

Doesn't matter though 'cos it's coming down!!! I'll bring it down brick by brick if I have to!!

Jay (who has been watching this) runs to Chris to try and get him to stop. Chris pushes him to the floor, Chris in anger, kicks things, throws things out of peoples hands in the club, throws things across the floor, gets into a scuffle with King's security who knock him to the floor. He rushes at King. JD tackles him, pushes him back and forces him out of harm's way and out of the club.

Scene Seven

He was a self centred egotist

Outside the club, some of the disciples have followed Chris and Jay out.

Jay has dragged Chris out of The Temple nightclub. Chris has run down the street – to a side street, with Jay following behind. Chris stops for a moment to get his breath back.

Music

LEVI: (To Chris) What are you doing? We could've all been killed.

JAMES: Wow man, that was brilliant... about time someone told it as it is.

JAMES: Wicked... Or The 21st Century Equivalent

BALLY: You're mad. Totally obsessed.

SIMON: Don't you care about us? Doesn't anything we say or think matter anymore?

JAY: What you playin’ at??!

CHRIS: (Is on an emotional high - adrenaline pumping) Did you see me!!??

JAY: Everyone did man, the whole club did.

CHRIS: Come on, let’s go back!

JAY: No! You're coming home...!

CHRIS: Did you see him? Rattled! Visibly shaken! I did that! The person who no one gets to... I did!

JAY: You have no idea what you've just done have you??

CHRIS: There's no stopping me.

JAY: He'll have your fuckin’ throat!

CHRIS: Oh man, I was great! I'm going all the way with this.

JAY: Are you deaf !!?

CHRIS: Come on, I've got him where I want him.

JAY: You've no idea have you? You've no idea the trouble we're in... I'm in.

CHRIS: This is nothing to do with you now Jay. It's about me and him!

JAY: Nothin' to do with me!!?? What do you mean? I thought you and I were...
CHRIS: No. Not anymore Jay, it’s gone way beyond that now.

JAY: He’s too big for you! You can’t do this on your own. You need us. You need me.

CHRIS: I’m not scared of King, Jay. I’ll do whatever’s necessary... and so will you.

JAY: What...??!!?

CHRIS: King won’t do anything to you, or any of the others, it’s just me and him now. One on one.

JAY: Yeah, that’s exactly it isn’t it? It’s always about you. What you want and what you say goes. You, you, you and your stupid fucking Dad.

CHRIS: This conversation is over...

Chris starts walking away.

JAY: No it’s not. (Getting increasingly desperate) This is his doing isn’t it? Your Dad’s... Why do you trust him so much? Why don’t you listen to me? I’m your best friend... not him...me...

Chris receives a text here. Jay is completely exasperated. Chris starts to leave again.

JAY: Wait. Where are you going? You don’t have to do everything he tells you. Wait, we need to sort this out now!

Jay blocks his exit

CHRIS: If you go, we’re...

CHRIS: I’ve got to go. I’ve got things to do. To prepare. And so have you.

JAY: Chris, please... please...

Chris exits.

JAY: You’re not listening to me! You never listen to me. Chris please, don’t do this. Please...

We see the frustration that Jay is left feeling.....Jay exits

Music Fade Out.

Scene Eight

The Last Supper (Part 1)

SIMON: ... you see... he never listened, if he wouldn’t listen to you Jay, who would he listen to?

KIRSTY: He was only to protect us...

SIMON: By shutting us out?

KIRSTY: Yes.

SHANNICE: Rubbish. He didn’t know what he was doing, he was out of his depth.

DAN: He did know. He was in control.

Music: (Chris’s Theme).

The disciples are sharing a take-away pizza. They share out the pizza & cups of coke amongst the other disciples. They chide Chris about his actions at The Temple. Chris ad libs responses to their comments.

DAVID: PIZZA!

SHANNICE: And the rest Chris... this is a banquet... I thought it’d be just a couple of meat feasts and a bucket of coke, but this...

TAYLOR: Awesome...

SHANNICE: Yeah man! Brilliant thanks. But what are we celebrating?

TAYLOR: Hey, you’re not going walkabout again are you, and this is some kind of weird build up to an announcement?

DAN: No way. You can’t go now. We’re this close, people are finally starting to understand.

CHRIS: You’ve got too many people relying on you, depending on you...

SIMON: Yeah, they’re really starting to get the message... thanks to you.

EMILY: Without you we’re nothing.

CHRIS: Don’t say that.

NAT: It’s true...

KIRSTY: Chris if it weren’t for you keeping things together, leading the way, we’d be completely lost... We couldn’t do this on our own...

CHRIS: Yes you could... (They all protest how lost they would be) and you must. This is just the beginning. Nothing lasts forever. Besides, we all have to play our part.

General murmurs of “What?”

EMMA: Sit down. What do you mean?

CHRIS: Shit, where’s my phone... I haven’t got my phone...
BALLY: He didn't want to die for us!

General reactions 'what?' from disciples

He didn't want to die for us, he was set up! I saw it, I read that last text from his dad. It said 'It's Jay' ... what did that mean Jay? Do you want to explain exactly what that meant??!

DAN: Jay?

BALLY: Explain yourself, man...

SIMON: What did that mean Jay?

BALLY: Come on tell me...

HARPREET: (They round on him) What's going on?

BALLY: We're all friends here mate...

Jay pushes past them

JAY: (Quietly) Fuck you....

SIMON: What you hiding?

BALLY: What you walking away for?

JAY: I'm not hiding anything...

SIMON: So why won't you say anything then?

DAN: Jay, just tell us what's going on?

JAY: There's nothing going on!

BALLY: So explain the text!

JAY: I don't have to explain anything to you.

BALLY: (They start to get physical) It's obvious you know something...

JAY: What you touching me for?

BALLY: What did you do?

JAY: (Fights back) What were you doin' with his phone anyway? You know he never let anyone touch his phone! What were you doin' reading his text messages? Just back off.....

He pushes past them.

Scene Nine

The last supper (part 2)

We snap out of the replaying of the scene.
Jay runs into Chris.

CHRIS: Jay, looking for me?

JAY: Yes, no, I mean... Chris, look, I'm not like you. I've got debts, I mean big debts, I owe him thousands... 30 big ones and you know what that means to King. He doesn't stop... I'm sorry... but you... you wouldn't... you made me do this... this is your fault... why didn't you...

Scene Ten

Panic in the basement – the betrayal & the execution

There is noise from outside. King & the police are outside the basement. They announce that they have the place surrounded etc. There is commotion and panic in the basement.

Jay receives a text.

JAY: It's King.

He reads the text. It says 'kiss him'.

I'm sorry.

He kisses Chris. As he steps back Chris is shot in the head by a police sniper - blackout - panic in the basement.

Lights Up - We snap back out of the replay, returning to real time in the basement. They realise that the guy playing Chris is gone.

EMMA: Where's he gone?

CHRIS: The guy who was playing Chris, where...

EMMA: Where is he?

Chris runs out

JAMES: Chris wait...!

They look around

KIRSTY: He's gone.

LEV: Guys, hang on a minute, listen......outside

Someone checks

CHRIS: They've gone, the police, everything's gone...

ALL: What?!?

Expressions of disbelief

HARPREET: Gone? How can they have just gone?!

NAT: What’s going on?!?!

SIMON: What’s going on man, this is creeping me out?!

JAMES: The door's still locked...

HARPREET: How did that guy know so much about Chris, about all of us...?

DAN: We knew all of Chris's close friends and I've never seen him before have you?

General mutterings of no

BALLY: And no-one knew Chris that well. Not even him (Meaning Jay)

EMMA: Did anyone even get his name?

JAY: Chris. His name was Chris.

Clearly distressed, Jay runs out (out the basement)

KIRSTY: Jay! Jay!

LEV: Chris?

HARPREET: Chris, It was Chris...

EMILY: It all makes sense

KIRSTY: It was him, I know it was him.

LEV: I can't believe it.

SIMON: No it was, it really was...

LEV: That's how he knew everything

SIMON: (Hugging Levi) We made it sis..!

EMMA: (Shouting for him) Chris!

HARPREET: Chris!

EMMA: Chris!

HARPREET: Right well that's that then innit?... I know what I'm doing... how about you?
KIRSTY: There's no question now is there?... We keep going...

NAT: We carry on...

They receive a text on Chris’s phone

EMMA: It’s Chris’s phone, a text – Good Luck, C xxx

It makes them laugh

DAN: Ok, we came here to vote. Let’s vote. All those in favour raise your hands and say ‘ay’

They all do.

LEVI: Ok, So let’s do it, we carry on!

EMMA: Chris’s back...we keep going!

LEVI: Come on we’re not hiding anymore... we’re getting out of here... come on.

General ad lib’s, hugging audience members, shaking their hands, thanking them for their support etc as they lead the audience out.

Music plays out as audience leave with the disciples.

THE END.

SMOKELESS FIRE
by Ahmed Khan
Film to be found on www.belgrade.co.uk

First screened by the Belgrade Community & Education Company on Monday 27th July 2009.

The Company

David Peter Collis
Khan Yasir Mirza
Noreen Zakia Bassou
Police Officers Shahida Aslam, Pete Hyam, Ben Patefield, Matthew Richardson, Prashant Singh

Based on an idea by Nadeem Ali, Amra Bone, Fouad Hashim, Munni Moyeed & Samir Sheikh

Director Chris Bradley
Camera / Lighting Damian Hardy

Fade in

Van doors burst open followed by rushing police officers carrying firearms. The officers run rapidly down the street. One by one the officers cluster around the suspected house.

DADVID: Alright lads this is it – get in position.

All the officers move into position. The Asian officers are about to move into position but they are abruptly stopped by David.

DADVID: (To asian officers) hold on – you ready?

(Assian officers nodding heads)

DADVID: You sure you’re ready?

ASSIAN OFFICERS: Yes guv.

DADVID: Move out.

David nods for one of the officers to break the door down. Each officer runs inside shouting “Police.”

Some officers head towards the kitchen, opening doors, cupboards, breaking items as they enter. One officer enters the living room and sees what he believes to be the suspect’s wife.

OFFICER: On the floor now!

Noreen shaking her head, the heads towards her crying baby.

OFFICER: (Pointing with his gun) On the floor! get down on the floor now!

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NOREEN: My baby, my baby! (Goes towards the baby)

OFFICER: I said on the floor now! (grabs her arm and throws her to the ground)

Noreen lets out a loud scream and begins to cry. From the floor she tries to reach out for her child.

OFFICER: Be quiet you dumb!

DAVID: (Enters the room) What the hell's goin' on here?

OFFICER: She keeps moving for the baby.

DAVID: For god's sake!

David walks closer to the crying baby pointing his gun towards the crib. Someone shouts out from the top.

OFFICER: (in the background) Up here guv!

David rushes up the stairs shouting.

DAVID: No one touches Saleem - he's mine.

The police have all gathered round the bed pointing their guns at the stranger who is fast asleep. David pushes the stranger to one side to get a clearer look at his face. As he turns him over the man awakes. David is shocked.

DAVID: (quietly) It's not him...

OFFICER: What? you sure?

DAVID: Of course I'm bloody sure.

OFFICER: It's just they all look the same don't they...

DAVID: GET OUT, GET OUT! (forces all the officers out the bedroom)

All the police officers leave the bedroom. David tries to compose himself.

DAVID: Shit! shit! shit! (begins to trash the room, kicks the wall and anything else he can) Where is he?

KHAN: Let go of me, then I'll tell you.

DAVID: (relaxing the hold) Where is he?

KHAN: He's staying at my house.

DAVID: Where's your house?

KHAN: 18 St. George Street.

DAVID: WASN'T HARD WAS IT? (slaps Khan's head, who falls onto his side) What's your name?

KHAN: Khan.

DAVID: And what the hell are you doing in his bed?

KHAN: I was sleeping.

DAVID: No one likes a smart ass, especially a brown smart ass! What you doin' here?

KHAN: I live here, I moved here about 2 weeks ago. Saleem lives at my house. He's had lots of problems.

DAVID: Where's Saleem now?

KHAN: He would get abuse everyday - he couldn't take it any more. Some of them, young lads, harassed his wife, tore her scarf off.

DAVID: White?

KHAN: Yes - they don't like Muslims. He would always get bricks in his house, he told the police but they didn't do anything, just ignored him. But now it's getting worse. They've tried to light his house, that's when I told him that I'd live here and he could take my house.

DAVID: You're a generous bastard aren't ya?

KHAN: They tried to kill him; I couldn't just sit there and do nothing - I had to do something.

DAVID: What does he owe you money, drugs?

KHAN: He doesn't owe me anything!

DAVID: So, why you doin' this for him?

KHAN: He's my brother.

DAVID: What you talking about - Saleem doesn't have a brother.
KHAN: No, not like that. I’m his cousin but we’re as good as brothers.

DAVID: Let me get this straight. You’re willing to get beaten up by a bunch of skinheads, have your house burnt to the ground, all for a cousin?

KHAN: Haven’t you ever loved someone or something that you are willing to die for?

DAVID: I like lots of things, friends, beer, a couple of birds on a Friday night, but willing to die for them? (shaking this head) Nah. (Khan remains silent)

DAVID: (looking around the room) What’s that then? (pointing to a picture of the Kabbah shareef)

KHAN: It’s the Kabbah – the House of God.

DAVID: The House of God. Has he got an email address?

Khan whispers something in Arabic.

DAVID: What’s that – you say somethin’?

KHAN: “Verily to god we belong and to him we return”.

DAVID: Is that before or after I meet the 70 virgins?

KHAN: (laughs) Empires come and go but man remains the same.

DAVID: Enlighten me.

KHAN: We’re all despised drops of fluid. Some of us are more despised than others. (There is silence) What do you want with Saleem?

DAVID: Police matter – you don’t need to know.

KHAN: Saleem’s a good man, a family man, he works hard, provides.

DAVID: Yeah, yeah he heals lepers, walks on water and brings the dead back to life, oh I’m sorry, have you finished?

There are a few moments of silence.

DAVID: Tell me something – when’s the last time you did Jihad?

KHAN: (Let’s out a little laugh)

DAVID: What you laughin’ at?

KHAN: (remains silent)

DAVID: You laughin’ at my question is that it? Go on tell me. I bet you’re dying to tell me aren’t ya? Get that bomb off your chest and tell me – when’s the last time you did Jihad?

KHAN: I’m doin’ it right now.

DAVID: You what? You got a tomahawk in your back pocket?

KHAN: Jihad – you have absolutely no idea. It’s the peak of perfection. True Jihad is inner struggle; it’s to control all your desires, your lust, your aggression, your rage.

DAVID: (Leaning in) Am I getting’ to ya? is that what you’re tryin’ to tell me?

KHAN: (ignores David)

DAVID: What’s he doing nowadays, Saleem?

KHAN: I don’t know – last time I saw him he was working in a grocer’s.

DAVID: (scanning the room) I’ve always wanted to know something about your lot. What’s the deal with your women hey, I mean they come here in my country and still wear that thing on their heads. Don’t they like combing their hair in the morning?

KHAN: (Looks at David)

KHAN: You will know the truth… as blood flows in my body you will know the truth… On that day, books will be overturned, the pen will be lifted and you will have nowhere to hide.

DAVID: You know somethin’. You caught me in a good mood today. You’re lucky I don’t shoot you right now. I could put one in your kneecap and leave you here to die spewing in your own blood. (pointing gun at Khan) If any one did find out, well it would be my word against yours… wouldn’t it.

KHAN: The people before me were far greater than me. They had stern tests; some were burnt alive with boiling oil. Some of them had their bodies stretched by horses causing them to be torn limb from limb. Summaya, the great woman, was the first martyr of Islam. She had spears thrusted into her body only because she was a Muslim. So the way I see it, a few bullets in the kneecap (shaking head) I would have gotten off lightly.

Footsteps can be heard running up the stairs. One of the officers enters the bedroom and looks at David, and begins to shake his head. David tries to control his anger and looks the other way. He makes a gesture with his eyes and the officer leaves the room. David walks towards Khan pushes him in the opposite direction so he can have better access to the handcuffs. David removes the handcuffs.

DAVID: You can go now. Make sure you stay out of trouble.

KHAN: (Arabic) Verily God is with the patient ones

David leaves the house, along with the rest of the officers. They walk past Noreen ignoring her, Noreen stands holding the baby staring at the officers. Her eyes are tearful, her mascara runs along her cheeks. Neighbours have assembled outside the house wondering what has happened.

THE END.
MY CONFLICTED SELF
by Badra Khatoom
A poem for 3 voices

First performed by the Belgrade Community & Education Company on Monday 27th July 2009

Performed by
Shannice Cooper
Rob O’Hagan
Hawar Hussein

Director
Joseph Coelho

Assistant Director
Lisa Byrne, Lian Kelly

Surah Toba (Repentence) Verse 40

If ye help not (your leader), (it is no matter): for Allah did indeed help him, when the Unbelievers drove him out: he had no more than one companion; they two were in the cave, and he said to his companion, “Have no fear, for Allah is with us”: then Allah sent down His peace upon him, and strengthened him with forces which ye saw not, and humbled to the depths the word of the Unbelievers. But the word of Allah is exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.

and

Surah Al Anfal (Spoils of War) 8:30

Remember how the Unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds, or slay thee, or get thee out (of thy home). They plot and plan, and Allah too plans; but the best of planners is Allah.

1:
Standing in the heat of the desert
Grains of sand already congealed in my mouth, my eyes
The harsh sun burning my blistered feet
In front of this barren mountain
My pragmatic heart misses a beat

1.2.3:
Questioning my very actions
Why am I here?
Who are we seeking?
Why are we chasing this Man?
Who is this Man?

I cannot fathom Him out
From boy to man I have seen Him
Before my eyes He has grown
Al-amin He has always been
Guarding my worldly possessions without corruption
Where we reigned supreme
Lords of all we were,

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Written by Ahmed Khan as part of the Belgrade Theatre Community & Education Company HLF Project.

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The Mysteries

| Education Pack & Scripts |

1.2.3: Tut we are

1: Makkah is the centre of the Arabian world
   Our gods the source of our existence, our sustenance
   Through them we control Arabia
   This flame must be extinguished

2: Before it sets afire or very beings, our very heritage where not even our ashes remain
   And our offspring follow this illiterate, penniless King of the Poor

3: Why should we not have supremacy
   Why not bury the inferior female, good for breeding and our satisfaction
   Why not the debauchery Alcohol and idleness a right – our birthright
   An inheritance owed to our sons

3: He wants to give rights to the slaves, equality to our women
   He wants us to degrade our superior heads in the dirt, in prayer
   Shoulder to shoulder with our brothers be it king or pauper

1.2.3: Pah!

3: He even wants justice for the animal and trees
   His words something ridiculous
   Do not overburden the carrying mule
   And do not cut down the growing tree without reason

1.2.3: Unbelievable!

2: Who is this Man?
   They say He is a light in the darkness, a walking miracle
   Time and time again we have tested Him
   Time and time again our plots have failed
   Time and time again we have returned shame faced
   Who protects Him, from whom and where does He derive His strength
   He will not turn to us
   He will not give in
   He is beyond my comprehension
   Seeking Him from His bed to this very mountain
   Where a young boy we nearly slew
   Who is this Man?
   For that child to endanger his life
   For hundreds to die for the sake of His God and His teachings

1: For years we tortured Him
   Relentless in our pursuits against His followers
   Hungry and homeless
   Three years they roamed the desert sun outside Makkah
   Our wrath was severe against those who traded with them, who helped them
   All contact severed
   No food, no water
   He did not concede, the number of followers grew

1.2.3: How is this possible

1: We offered Him unimaginable riches, our most beautiful of women
   Leadership over the whole tribe
   No action would be taken without His authority
   We even offered the keys to the very Kaaba, housing our 360 gods
   All He had to do was abandon His message
   That one tiny thing, but No

3: How steadfast is this Man in His belief, I confess
   His reply to His uncle, Abu Talib I hear was
   “I swear by the name of Allah, O Uncle!, that if they place the sun in my right-hand
   and the moon in my left-hand in return for giving up this matter (calling people
to Islam), I will never desist until either the Almighty Allah makes it triumph or I perish defending it.”
   And when we failed against Him

1: His followers bore our wrath
   It was Bilal, the slave of Omaiyah that we beat to a pulp
   It was Bilal who we dragged through the streets and hills of Makkah with a rope
   around His neck
   It was Bilal that we starved and left on the scalding sand,
   Kept in place under hot heavy boulders

2: Our efforts futile against His belief
   His only utterance under the burning whip
   There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah

1: Our anger grew
   We tortured Ammar the freed slave of BanI Makhzum along with His Mother and Father
   Tossing them on hot embers
   Even tying them to stakes in the desert
   Ammars parents predictably weak died quickly at our hands

2: His mother, Summayah, given high status
   The first female martyr of Islam, promised the finest of heavens
   Now that she was gone

1: An afterlife
   What nonsense
   All there is, is the here and now
   We must make the most of it

3: Countless others we pursued
   Disappointed at every juncture, we are

2: Who is this new Mohammed
   Who has ensnared even the great Umar
   Umar, so quick to grab the sword to do our bidding, to do murder
   What secret did he depart to Umar to have turned Him so completely
1.2.3: Who is this Man

3: What magic does He possess which we the Quraish cannot undo

That our gods cannot undo

Our gods who are repeatedly failing us

1.2.3: What are these ramblings in my head

1: Be quiet my emotive heart

I am not wrong, I will not be wrong

He has challenged our beliefs, our way of life

Where I and my tribe reign supreme over all others

Over women, the poor and the foreign we rule

3: He is a dangerous man

1: We must find Him

Reaching the mouth of the cave of Thawr

Admonishing the guide and his tracking skills

Can he not see the spiders web and the dove’s nest

This is an untouched space

He cannot have passed this way

We must find another route

1.2.3: A voice in my head,

1: A repeated mantra of so many days

2: You will not find Him

You cannot defeat Him

His Protector is more powerful than you

More powerful than your gods of wood and stone

3: Gods made by human hands

1.2.3: But who made these hands (quiet)

1: Gods who I confess have deserted me of late

Be quiet my treacherous heart

3: He is a dangerous man

We must find Him.

1.2.3: That voice again

You cannot defeat Him

1: The battle was lost the day He was born.

THE END.
SAMSON AND DELILAH
by Nick Walker

First performed by the Belgrade Community & Education Company on
Monday 27th July 2009

The Company

Samson          Jack Groves
Delilah          Colleen Hedley
Phil Stein      Alex Ferguson
Staff            Orla Hedley, Jodie Henstock, Bethany Ravanagh,
                  Tobi Omokhui, Ben Rose
Receptionists    Natalie Hall, Danielle Henstock
Customers       Chloe Blencowe, Holly Blowes, Tia Coyle, Anthony Forward,
                  Ashleigh Francis, Tyler Smyth
Samson’s Assistants Sara Gill, Katie McDonnell, Tyler Smyth
Director        Jon Morris
Assistant Director Richard Graham

The audience are brought into the Phil Stein Hairdressing Salon, and met by two
receptionists who tick them off as they come.

RECEPTIONIST: Highlights for you madam? Good, come and take a seat. Cut and
blow dry, yes, in you go. I can see why you’re here, sir, must be
traumatic for you ... (etc.)

RECEPTIONIST 2: Any shampoo allergies, just tell the staff. Radical rethink is it,
miss, I would think so, just take a seat ... (etc.)

The audience go in and sit in the hairdressing salon. Half a dozen hairdressing stations are set out.
There are pictures on the wall of haircuts. Staff are buzzing around
sweeping, stacking haircare products etc. Music is playing.

When the audience are all in, the receptionists shut the doors and enter properly.

STAFF: Did you take the booking for Lily Allen?

RECEPTIONIST: Is that a problem?

STAFF: I’m not styling her hair.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Why not?

STAFF 2: She’s barred.

RECEPTIONIST: Since when?

STAFF 3: Since she wore a hat.

Everyone gasps in horror.

RECEPTIONIST: She covered her hair?

STAFF: She can never come back.

RECEPTIONIST 2: I’ll cancel her.

STAFF: And all her fans, I won’t cut their hair either.

STAFF 2: Wearing a hat, that is ... I don’t know what that is.

STAFF 3: A sin, that’s what it is.

RECEPTIONIST: Well in that case we’ve got a space for one of Girls Aloud.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Alright, but only one.

STAFF: Not Cheryl.

STAFF 4: They can fight it out amongst themselves.

STAFF 2: But not in here, I don’t want another girl-band cat fight.

STAFF 3: Gets so messy.

STAFF 5: Where’s our delivery of hairspray?

RECEPTIONIST: Delayed.

RECEPTIONIST 2: The ship sank.

STAFF 5: We should get our hairspray delivered by lorries.

RECEPTIONIST: Not big enough.

STAFF 3: Well we’re lost without hairspray.

STAFF 4: Perhaps the Red Cross could airdrop some for us.

STAFF 5: They should, it’s basically a humanitarian disaster.

RECEPTIONIST: Shall I just call 999?

RECEPTIONIST 2: has got a letter.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Listen to this. ’Dear Phil Stein, as the world’s most exclusive
hairdressing salon, would you be prepared to donate your hair
cuttings to the taxidermy society? Most people can’t get to your salon,
so it’s a comfort to know their dead pet can be stuffed with the hair of
the lucky ones ...’
RECEPTIONIST: Oh that is creepy.

STAFF 3: Can't they get their hair from somewhere else?

STAFF: There is nowhere else.

STAFF 2: The last hairdresser’s burnt to the ground.

STAFF 4: Mysterious that.

STAFF: Very mysterious.


STAFF 4: You also mysteriously smell of a burned down rival hairdressers.

STAFF: You're right, the whole thing is a complete mystery.

STAFF 5: Heads up! He's coming.

The music suddenly stops and all frantically man their posts as PHIL STEIN walks in, DELILAH following.

ALL: Good Morning, Mr Phil.

He inspects his staff.


STAFF: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: You, more bleach in your hair, I want it transparent.

STAFF 2: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: You, get new eyebrows.

STAFF 3: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: You, wear her old eyebrows.

STAFF: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: You had your nose job?

STAFF 4: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: You had your nose job?

STAFF 5: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: I prefer the old one, change it back.

STAFF 5: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: Are these today's customers?

RECEPTIONIST 2: Yes, Mr Phil.

PHIL: addresses the audience.

PHIL: Scum. The lot of you. Unfashionable vermin waiting eagerly, like so many do, praying for an appointment with the mighty Phil Stein. Well your torment is over. The things that will be done to your hair today will stay for you for the rest of your life. You have been living in coiffure darkness, my children, and today we shall bring you into the light. But first, a few legals. Delilah.

DELILAH steps forward.

DELILAH: Ladies and Gentlemen, the owners and proprietors of Phil Stein incorporated cannot be held responsible for any allergies, burns, or other unexpected reactions to the hair process you are about to undergo. Nor can it be held responsible for any hysterical reactions you may have on aesthetic grounds. Your hair style is the property of Phil Stein incorporated, no further hair cut will be necessary in your lifetime, and you will be required to have a Phil Stein trademark branded into your scalp.

PHIL: Good, well if that's all clear, let us create. Our first five, please.

The first five customers rush to their seats in great excitement. The hairdressing staff busy themselves with towels and scissors.

CUSTOMER 1: This is so exciting.

CUSTOMER: I've been on the waiting list since I was three.

CUSTOMER 3: I sold a kidney for this.

CUSTOMER 4: Was that enough?

CUSTOMER 5: My mum also sold hers. And my dad. They're so proud. Though they're also quite weak now.

CUSTOMER 1: I should really be at work.

CUSTOMER 3: What do you do?

CUSTOMER 4: Air traffic controller.

CUSTOMER 5: You're right to bunk off, this is much more important.

CUSTOMER 1: My fiancee is so excited, we've themed the entire wedding around my hairstyle, I've got a cakemaker waiting outside to see what I look like so they can make a sponge version of my head ...

Suddenly an alarm goes off and STAFF 5, who's cutting CUSTOMER 5's hair, steps back.

STAFF 5: Ok, that was your chance, lady.
CUSTOMER 5: What?
STAFF 5: Take her out.
CUSTOMER 5: What's happening?
DELILAH: The paperwork you signed at the entrance states that the following topics of conversation between customer and hairdresser have been banned ...
STAFF: Football.
STAFF 2: Swine flu.
STAFF 3: The Olympics.
STAFF 4: Climate change.
STAFF 5: The recession.
STAFF: The X Factor.
CUSTOMER 5: But I didn't say anything about the X Factor ...
RECEPTIONIST: These are new topics that have been added to our standard list...
STAFF: The weather.
STAFF 2: Holidays.
STAFF 3: Any 'icky medical condition.
STAFF 4: Tedious family life.
STAFF 5: And weddings.
RECEPTIONIST: We added weddings after Jordan was in.
STAFF 5: She would not stop banging on about it.
CUSTOMER 5: I didn't know!
STAFF: Divorced now of course.
STAFF 5: Nothing to do with me.
DELILAH: It's a health and safety measure for the protection of the staff.
PHIL: Too much smalltalk damages their brains.
DELILAH: Take her out.

CUSTOMER 5: Please. Give me a second chance. No!
DELILAH: Next in line.

Another customer rushes into the empty seat, screaming with excitement. Suddenly she stops screaming.
CUSTOMER 6: Is screaming allowed?
STAFF 5: Only when you rush up.
CUSTOMER 6: What was that list of topics again?
CUSTOMER 5: Safer just to keep your mouth shut.

As the staff get to work, PHIL steps forward to speak to the audience.
PHIL: Ladies and gentlemen, you see what is at stake. The pressure on the Phil Stein emporium is immense. These are competitive times.
DELILAH: Let's not forget our history ...
PHIL: I don't think we need to talk about our history now ...
DELILAH: A history littered with brutal, rival salons which for twenty years ...
PHIL: Those days are gone, so let's ...
DELILAH: For twenty years took our customers by the thousand ...
PHIL: Delilah ...
DELILAH: By the thousand, Phil, the decimation! The humanity!
PHIL: Delilah! She falls silent.
PHIL: I'm sorry, ladies and gentlemen. Delilah herself has suffered in the hairdressing wars, when I first met her ...
DELILAH: Don't talk about it ...
PHIL: When I first met her she was a wretched child ...
DELILAH: Please Phil.
PHIL: She was a wretched child with ... split ends.
DELILAH weeps.
PHIL: It's alright. They needed to know. It's alright now.

From the back the staff have finished.

STAFF: Done!

STAFF 2: Done!

STAFF 3: Done!

STAFF 4: Done!

STAFF 5: Done!

PHIL: And the fight was worth it, wasn't it, ladies and gentlemen. Behold!

The CUSTOMERS stand. They have huge extravagant, yet uniform, hairstyles and are wide eyed with joy.

PHIL: You see? They cannot believe what has happened to them. Suddenly they are part of the stylish and civilised world. They can hold their hair high. They are acceptable. Do you believe?

CUSTOMERS: Yes we do!

PHIL: Who's the guy with the style?

CUSTOMER: You are, Phil.

PHIL: Who's the bitch with the bleach?

CUSTOMERS: You are, Phil.

PHIL: Who's the skipper with the clippers?

CUSTOMERS: You are, Phil!

PHIL: Damn right. Ok, let's get them branded.

Suddenly there's a thunder clap from outside. A man stands in the doorway. He has wild, massive hair. This is SAMSON. He has two hair straighteners. He strikes a dramatic pose.

Everyone stares.

STAFF 1: Who the hell is he?

STAFF 2: How did he do that thunder thing?

STAFF 3: Where did he get those grooming accessories?

RECEPTIONIST: Look at the size of his hair.

DELILAH: Phil, what's happening?

PHIL: No, it can't be ...

DELILAH: Can't be what?

Suddenly music starts and SAMSON does Kung Fu moves with the hair straighteners.

PHIL: Oh God.

ALL STAFF: Oh my God.

STAFF 2: I've never seen hair straighteners move that fast.

STAFF 3: I'm shaking, my hands are actually shaking.

DELILAH: Phil, I'm scared.

PHIL: It's fine, don't worry. He'll be a lost ... hairdressing kung fu ... stranger, just passing through. No one panic.

Two of SAMSON's assistants, also with massive hair, open the sliding doors and come in with a banner. They put it up above the door.

'Is Your Hair Right Salon'

Everyone gasps.

DELILAH: Phil!

PHIL: You! Where's your lighter?

STAFF 3: I lost it the last time you made me burn down ...

PHIL: Don't say any more, there are witnesses. You! Where's my army of hairdressing ninjas?

STAFF: They're on a staff awayday.

PHIL: You! Where's my prozac?

STAFF: Think I just had the last one.

PHIL: Nothing! Nothing is happening.

SAMSON takes a step in. There's a hush.

SAMSON: My people.

PHIL: Don't listen to him, he's a wizard!
They can’t help it, everyone stares.

**SAMSON:** Your hair has been crushed and oppressed.

**PHIL:** Turn on the radio! Drown him out with Wogan!

**SAMSON:** It lies on your head like a squashed animal.

**PHIL:** That’s slander, Delilah, sue him for slander!

**SAMSON:** Your hair cannot be a squashed animal. It is wild, it is an untamed beast that needs to be freed. And I am the man to free it. Samson.

**PHIL:** No!

**SAMSON:** Salvation awaits. The Is Your Hair Right Salon is now open for business! Come. Come and be saved.

He walks back through the door and strikes another pose.

His two assistants start singing:

**ASSISTANTS:**

- Your life has been crushed
- Your spirit is oppressed
- Your hair should be wild
- It will be wild.

**SAMSON:**

- Your hair has been crushed
- Your spirit is oppressed
- Your hair should be wild
- It will be wild.

Under this, CUSTOMER 6 stands up.

**PHIL:** What are you doing?

*In a kind of daze, she starts walking towards the other salon.*

**PHIL:** He’ll destroy you with backcombing! Come back! I command you!

She keeps walking.

**PHIL:** Stop the singing!

(To his staff) You, sing too.

**STAFF:** Sing what?

**PHIL:** I don’t know … a magic song to get her back.

**STAFF 2:** I don’t know any magic songs.

The customer is taken by SAMSON and disappears from sight.

The assistants stop singing.

**STAFF 3:** Did that just happen?

**STAFF 5:** Did someone actually walk out of my chair?

**STAFF 4:** To go somewhere … else?

**PHIL:** No it didn’t. We just imagined it. It’s all fine, everything’s fine. Next in line.

No one rushes up.

**PHIL:** Next in line! Come on, this is where you jump up screaming.

CUSTOMER 7 gets up.

**PHIL:** Good, fine, take a seat, and as a mark of goodwill, you may talk about the X Factor if you wish.

The customer walks straight past him and heads towards Is Your Hair Right and disappears.

More gasping.

**RECEPTIONIST:** Ok, I’m experiencing massive job insecurity.

**RECEPTIONIST 2:** This must be what ordinary people feel like.

**RECEPTIONIST:** Snubbed.

**RECEPTIONIST 2:** Spurned.

**RECEPTIONIST:** Shunned.

**PHIL:** He’s not doing anything special, ladies and gentlemen, it’s all smoke and mirrors … and some kung fu possibly. Please don’t…

He stops as CUSTOMER 6 emerges from SAMSON’s salon. She has wild, fantastic hair.

**STAFF 2:** That’s … that’s … what is that?

**STAFF 3:** It’s impossible. It’s an impossible hairstyle.

**STAFF 4:** And yet there it is.

**STAFF 5:** Before us, in all its impossibility.

CUSTOMERS 1, 2, 3, 4 all rush towards CUSTOMER 6.
He stops slapping DELILAH and paces up and down.

PHIL: Delilah.
DELILAH: Yes.
PHIL: You'll have to go and get your hair cut.
DELILAH: (sitting at a seat) You're right. Sometimes when you've had a shock it's the only thing to make you feel better ...
PHIL: Not here, at his place.
DELILAH: What? No!
PHIL: You must.
DELILAH: I've suffered.
PHIL: You've suffered, I've suffered.
STAFF: We're all suffering.
DELILAH: But I can't be caught between two hairstyles again. You saw what it did to me last time. I'm still traumatised.
STAFF: Do it for the salon, Delilah.
STAFF: And the Phil Stein brand.
PHIL sits next to her.
DELILAH: Oh well if you put it like that.
PHIL: She's right Delilah. This isn't just for us, it's for our children.
DELILAH: We don't have any children.
PHIL: Not actual children, no, I'm thinking of our franchised subsidiaries.
She starts weeping.
DELILAH: Oh well if you put it like that.
PHIL: Exactly. Go.
DELILAH stands, takes a deep breath.
DELILAH: If something happens to me ...
PHIL: You won't be forgotten.
RECEPTIONIST: We'll do you a plaque!
She heads in.
Big pause. The staff don’t know what to do. They pace around.

STAFF: Dammit, it’s the waiting I can’t stand.

PHIL is brooding.

PHIL: It was at the Rock of Etam shopping centre when I last saw him. Three thousand of my followers had tied him up and stolen his hair straighteners. But he used curling tongs to burn the ropes and break free. And using only a comb fashioned from the jaw bone of a donkey, he restyled the hair of one thousand customers that day. One thousand. Delilah among them. Poor girl. Dammit I should never have sent her in there ...

She comes out. She has huge hair.

STAFF 2: There she is!

PHIL: Delilah!

STAFF 3: I’ve never seen such radical movement in hair.

STAFF 4: Such defiance of gravity!

STAFF 5: How does he do it?

DELILAH: His comb. He has a magic comb.

She produces it. Everyone ‘Ooooh’s.

PHIL: You’ve stolen it!

DELILAH: I need to sit.

PHIL: Get her a cup of instant coffee, she has found his secret.

STAFF: We’re saved!

PHIL: Jump on it. Jump on it like it’s a rat!

They jump on the comb.

RECEPTIONIST: Is that it? Is the crisis over?

PHIL: Yes it is, the battle was bloody, but now, finally ...

He stops because CUSTOMER 1 and 2 come out of the Is Your Hair Right Salon, with hair like Delilahs.

STAFF: No!

RECEPTIONIST 2: He’s still doing it. Even without the comb.

CUSTOMER 1: His strength is not in the comb.

CUSTOMER 2: Join us. Be free.

PHIL: That’s not freedom, that’s ... hedge trimming!

DELILAH: I should go back in there.

RECEPTIONIST: Or I could go.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Or me.

DELILAH: No I insist. I’ve started this, I shall finish it.

STAFF: You didn’t … enjoy it did you?

DELILAH: How dare you. It was torment.

She gets up and eagerly totters back in.

PHIL: Courage, Delilah.

STAFF 4: Perhaps it’s a special bouffant technique he uses.

STAFF 5: Surely no one can generate that much static with their bare hands.

There are sounds of exaggerated haircutting coming from Samson’s salon.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Amy Whinehouse has cancelled.

STAFF: Imagine what Samson could do with her hair.

STAFF 2: The mind boggles.

PHIL is brooding again.

PHIL: By the Brook of Sorek I saw her before.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Amy Whinehouse?

PHIL: Delilah. If there was ever a woman to seduce his secret, it’s the women who has bathed in the brook of Sorek.

STAFF 2: Is that the one in the lower precinct?

PHIL: The exact one.

Another massive thunder clap.

DELILAH comes out again, even more dazed and with even huger hair.
STAFF 3: She's back!

PHIL: Delilah!

STAFF 4: Are you alright?

DELILAH: Bit dizzy.

PHIL: Did you find him out?

DELILAH: It’s his hair diffuser. It has fifteen settings.

She holds it out.

STAFF 2: Fifteen!

STAFF: Let me see!

STAFF 5: With variable air flow vents.

STAFF: It’s like science fiction.

They all gasp.

PHIL: Smash it.

STAFF 5: Really?

STAFF: But it’s got fifteen settings.

PHIL: Smash it I say!

They reluctantly smash it on the ground.

PHIL: Sound the bugle!

STAFF: The what?

PHIL: The battle is over!

DELILAH: Really?

PHIL: Well don’t sound so disappointed.

DELILAH: No I’m not, just ... nothing.

RECEPTIONIST: Will the phones start ringing?

PHIL: Like NHS direct after a package holiday to Mexico.

They all look at the phones on reception. They stay silent.

PHIL: Any minute now.

Phones start ringing.

PHIL: There you go.

RECEPTIONIST 1 and 2 pick them up. We still hear ringing sounds.

RECEPTIONIST: Not ours.

RECEPTIONIST 2: It’s the ringing of Samson’s phones.

CUSTOMER 3 and 4 come out of SAMSON’s salon.

RECEPTIONIST: Look!

STAFF: More mountainous hair!

PHIL: How is that possible?

STAFF 2: So it isn’t the hair diffuser.

PHIL: He’s the devil. It’s the only logical explanation.

STAFF 3: I volunteer to go in there.

STAFF 4: Me too!

STAFF 5: And me!

DELILAH: Stand aside, you don’t know what you’re dealing with.

STAFF: Is it me, or is she enjoying this a bit too much.

PHIL: I’m not enjoying it, the whole thing revolts me.

DELILAH rushes in as best she can with her massive hair.

CUSTOMER 1: Samson always clears a chair for her.

CUSTOMER: And makes her proper coffee, not that instant muck you give.

PHIL: Don’t talk to us, you Judas.

CUSTOMER 1: What’s a Judas?

PHIL: I don’t know, I’ve always had a bad feeling about that name.

From outside we see SAMSON wheeling DELILAH around on a chair with wheels, throwing petals over her, laughing with joy - it’s like a kind of chair dance.

PHIL: What’s that sound?

STAFF: It’s not ...
STAFF: It’s not ... laughing is it?
PHIL: It can’t be laughing, it’ll be wails of torment.

SAMSON starts singing to DELILAH

SAMSON: You are so beautiful, to me.
You are so beautiful, to me.
Can’t you see, can’t you see!

PHIL: Now that is a wail of torment.

Another thunder clap.

Suddenly DELILAH appears. Now with the biggest possible hair. She staggers in.

STAFF: Whoa!

STAFF: That’s in the clouds, man.

STAFF: That has snow on top.

PHIL: Delilah! They’re saying you’ve got a soft spot for Mr Crazy, that’s not true is it?

SAMSON: Who are you calling crazy?

They all gasp. SAMSON has entered.

STAFF: Just having him in the room makes my hair vibrate.

SAMSON: From the houses of Gaza to the hills of Hebron ...

PHIL: Not the rhetoric! Someone stop him!

SAMSON: Never has a woman’s hair responded with such vigour and life to the touch of Samson.

CUSTOMER: This is classy material, Phil.
CUSTOMER: You never said things like this to us.
CUSTOMER: Listen and learn, Phil.

SAMSON: Hair like Delilah’s can be a life’s work for a stylist with vision, and so it shall be a life’s work. I have made her my wife.

More gasps.

PHIL: What!

SAMSON: I have known hardship in love. My first wife betrayed me, and I vowed never again to fall victim to a woman’s duplicitous charms. But this woman I know is pure, this woman I know is true ... actually I feel a little bit strange.

He collapses on the floor.

STAFF: What happened?

DELILAH: I drugged his tea. I know his power. It lies in his hair.

PHIL: How?

DELILAH: I don’t know. Batteries? All I know is that if you remove that, he’ll just be an ordinary stylist.

STAFF: Like at Tony and Guy?

STAFF: The humiliation.

PHIL: Did you have to marry him for it?

DELILAH: Well you weren’t going to marry me.

PHIL: I was ... you know ... in the fullness of time.

DELILAH: Get him in the chair.

They drag him into a chair.

PHIL: Hack it off!

STAFF: Go on then.

PHIL: My hands are shaking. (To DELILAH) You do it.

DELILAH: I want a half share in Phil Stein’s Salon.

PHIL: Half?!?

DELILAH: And I want my name in the title.

PHIL: Phil and Delilah’s Salon?

DELILAH: Delilah and Phil’s Salon.

PHIL: (to the staff) Someone else hack it off.

STAFF: We’re scared of it.

STAFF: It might bite us.
PHIL: (to DELILAH) Alright then! Delilah and Phil's Salon. Just end this once and for all.


SAMSON: My hair! Delilah!
PHIL: Put out his eyes!
STAFF: Why?
PHIL: For fun.
STAFF 2: Fun?
PHIL: For evil then, whatever. Use the curlers!
STAFF: He can still cut hair though, even if he's blind.
PHIL: Then cut off his hands.
STAFF: How?
PHIL: Burn them in the bleach!

SAMSON cries out as his eyes are put out and big sunglasses put on him. His hands are burnt off with a bowl of bleach.

PHIL: The war is over!

Music changes to Musak.

The two receptionists come to the front. As behind them the salon gets busy again.

RECEPTIONIST: And so it was that business returned to normal at the Phil Stein Salon.

RECEPTIONIST 2: The Delilah and Phil Salon.

RECEPTIONIST: The stylists went on styling, the customers kept on coming, and Samson was put to work.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Making the tea.

RECEPTIONIST: Cleaning the mirrors.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Sweeping the floor.

RECEPTIONIST: Phil even won an equality award for giving work to the visually impaired.

RECEPTIONIST 2: Until one day ...

PHIL comes to the front with DELILAH.

PHIL: The day we have been waiting for all our lives. Can it be true?

DELILAH: Yes Phil. These customers here are officially the last people in the world who don't yet have a Delilah and Phil branded haircut.

PHIL: You must feel so left out.

DELILAH: But don't fret. Today is your salvation. Your day of reckoning.

PHIL: Ready?
STAFF: Ready!
STAFF 2: Ready!
STAFF 3: Ready!
STAFF 4: Ready!
STAFF 5: Ready!
PHIL: Then let us create! Or rather, let us just do our normal thing.

Suddenly SAMSON appears from the back. He has a huge, massive, mish-mash hair style.

SAMSON: No!

PHIL: What?

They turn and stare at Samson, wide eyed.

DEILILAH: Where did that hair come from?

SAMSON: For five years I have swept the floors of this salon of iniquity. Five years of collecting the clippings of the hope from the poor souls who feel compelled to join the herd. This is their hair. The lost hair of humanity. And with it glued to my head, so my strength returns.

PHIL: No, it can't be.

SAMSON: It can be. Mighty winds of change. Blow through this salon of despair. Give these people their freedom!

A huge wind blows through the salon. Phil, Delilah and the staff and customers are blown this way and that.

STAFF: My hair! I can't keep it under control!

SAMSON: Blow wind!

STAFF 2: Get me some clips!
STAFF 1: Get me a hair net!

STAFF 2: I can’t see!

STAFF 3: More spray! More hairspray!

PHIL: My hair, it’s coming apart, the hairspray isn’t holding! The peroxide is breaking! I’m melting!

SAMSON: You’re not melting, Phil.

PHIL: Oh that’s a relief.

SAMSON: Your establishment is crumbling.

PHIL: No!

SAMSON: Your house of cards is falling!

PHIL: I knew I shouldn’t have made the shop out of cards!

SAMSON: Your empire is dying!

SAMSON takes off his hair and smothers PHIL to death.

DELILAH shrieks.

DELILAH: No!

SAMSON: Don’t fear. I shall not smother you with the wig of justice. You must live forever with the guilt of your betrayal.

And as all the hair comes flying off everyone else, they howl in agony and fall to the floor. Delilah struggles to where the hair straighteners lie, picks them up.

DELILAH: It is a far, far better thing that I do now, than I have ever done.

She kills herself, hari kari like, with the straighteners.

SAMSON kneels by her. Small prayer. Then stands up. Walks among the bodies.

SAMSON: And so here amongst the dizzy heads of hair, tussled but free, unkempt but liberated, I too must leave this earth. This has been my hair for only a moment of grace.

He contemplates his wig.

SAMSON: My own hair has died underneath, never to return, and so too must Samson. More good has been done here today than in my whole life, and for that I am thankful.

He picks up a mirror.

SAMSON: I’ve been a good soldier. A good soldier of hairdressing.

He moves the mirror round as if showing an imaginary customer the back of their hair.

SAMSON: Would you like to see the back? Are you going anywhere nice this year? Yes, I think Susan Boyle should’ve won. It was my pleasure, madam. You look lovely.

He collapses and dies. The CUSTOMERS get up slowly. Their hair is their normal hair underneath. Birds tweet. It’s a new dawn. They squint their eyes.

CUSTOMER 1: So bright.

CUSTOMER 2: And the air is so fresh.

They shake out their hair.

CUSTOMER 3: My hair feels … strange.

CUSTOMER 4: Light.

CUSTOMER 5: Free.

Small pause.

CUSTOMER 1: Mind you, I could do with getting my nails done.

CUSTOMER 2: Me too.

CUSTOMER 3: Come on, there’s a new place in town.

CUSTOMER 1: Will we get in?

CUSTOMER 2: We might if we queue all night.

Music. Exit.

THE END.

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