

By George

V 1.2

A new musical from Richard Sykes

Script edited by Maria Sykes

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Cast of Characters

PAULINE BOOTH	A wife and mother
GEORGE BOOTH	Old-School chip-shop owner
HARRY	George's best friend and landlord of The Crown
SAM BOOTH	Put-upon son and heir
LILL	Pauline (and Margaret)'s best friend
WILL DIAMOND	Delivery man
MARGARET 'MARGE' BRACKENRIDGE	Outwardly vampish, predatory divorcee

Four women and one man play all other parts – or they may be split for a large chorus.

BARBARA SALT / DEBBIE / BACKING SINGER 1
 CUSTOMER 1 / CLIVE / LANDLORD
 CUSTOMER 2 / CATH / BACKING SINGER 2
 CUSTOMER 3 / JANET / BACKING SINGER 3
 JENNIFER BILLINGSLEY / BARMAID / CHLOE

Suggested Stage Layout

The following layout is designed as a guide only.

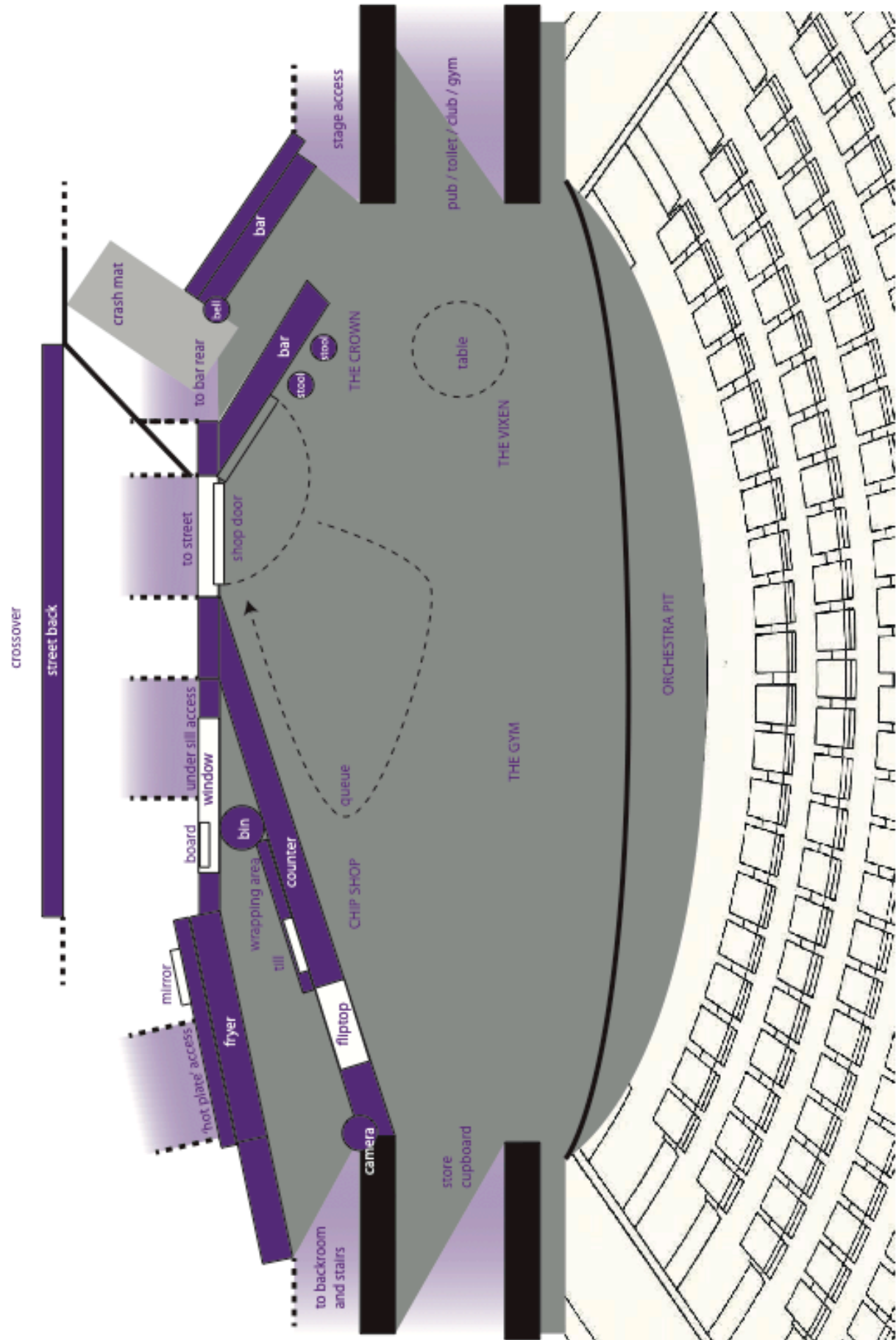
The table is used throughout and can be retrieved and placed via the stage left access.

The crash mat position is for Act 2: Scene 4 only

The camera should be added at Act 2: Scene 4

The under sill access is for use in Act 2: Scene 8

The bin is a lid and frame for use in Act 2: Scene 8



ACT I: Scene 1 The Vixen tableau (into the chip shop)

A pub hen night tableau with a stripper (SAM) straddling a drunk bride-to-be (JANET). MARGE is photographing the scene using a phone. LILL, DEBBIE and CATH are at the hen night. The LANDLORD is behind the bar.

Music Cue: Entre-Act switches to 'Aren't We Outrageous?'

PAULINE

PAULINE

LOOK AT THIS PICTURE. BEYOND ANY DOUBT.
ONE LITTLE FLASH CHANGED WHAT I WAS ABOUT
IT'S NOT HOW I THOUGHT MY LIFE WOULD TURN OUT.

PAULINE is the only one lit as tableau ends. Everyone else exits.

Buckle up.

Music Cue: Yorkshire Born and Bred

PAULINE, GEORGE and COMPANY

NOW WELCOME, TO YORKSHIRE,
WHEREVER YOU'VE COME FROM
THERE'S MORE TO, THIS COUNTY,
THAN "T" AND "EE BAH GUM"

COMPANY (Split)

THE MAN WHO FOUGHT OFF SLAVERY'S
OUR WILLIAM WILBERFORCE
BUT SAD TO SAY SUCCESS ELUDED
YORKSHIRE'S OWN GUY FAWKES

FROM REDCAR TO SHEFFIELD,
FROM HUDDERSFIELD TO BRID
WE'RE PROUD OF OUR PEOPLE,
AND MOST OF WHAT THEY DID
SO GROW WHITE ROSES AND YOU WON'T SEE RED
IF WE'RE STUBBORN THA' NOS IT IS CERTAINLY 'CAUSE
WE ARE YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED

OUR ACCENTS, ARE DIFFERENT,
WHEREVER YOU MAY ROAM
THEY ALWAYS, GO BROADER,
WHENEVER WE GO HOME

AND IF YOU'RE JUST A MARDY ARSE,
I'LL TELL YOU THIS FOR NOWT
WE'LL CALL YOU "A DAFT APETH"
AND WE'LL GIVE YOUR LUGS A CLOUT

IF YOU'RE FAIR, TO MIDDLELIN',
WE'LL MAKE YOU FEEL GRADELY
YOUR LUNCH IS, YOUR DINNER,
AND DINNER IS YOUR TEA
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU'RE SAYIN' IT'S THE WAY IT'S SAID
WI' NONE OF YOUR FAFFIN' JUST COME HERE YOU'RE LAUGHIN'
WE'RE YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED

THE CURRY, OF BRADFORD'S
A 'SOURCE' O' COUNTY PRIDE
THERE'S PARKIN, AND PIKELETS,
WI' WENSLEYDALE ONT' SIDE
BUT YORK'S TO BLAME FOR KITKATS,
POLO MINTS AND JELLY TOTS,
THE TERRY'S CHOC'LATE ORANGE (alt. TYPE 2 DIABETES)
AND A BILLION ACNE SPOTS

THERE'S REAL ALE, AND BITTER,
OR MAYBE HAVE A BREW
WE MADE MARKS AND SPENCERS,
BUT THAT'S A DEAR DO.
A LARGE YORKSHIRE PUDDING KEEPS US ALL WELL FED
AR LADS AND AR LASSES ARE REAL BOBBY DAZZLERS
WE'RE YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED

GEORGE is pulling back the net curtains of his chip shop window.

GEORGE BUT THE VIEW FROM MI' CHIP SHOP IS SADD'NIN',
'CAUSE THE YOUTH OF MI' YORKSHIRE IS MADD'NIN'
IT WER AL'REIGHT BEFOR,
BUT I'S NOT WHAT IT WOR,
AND THERE'S CHANGES ARE SWEEPING OUR LAND

PAULINE WELL IT MAY NOT BE P'LIT'ICLY C'RECT YET,
BUT FROM JOBSEEKERS UP TO THE JETSET
YOU'LL BE FAR LESS ALONE,
JUST DON'T SAY 'BARTH' OR 'SCONE'

AND I DARE SAY WE'LL MAKE YOU FEEL GRAND

COMPANY (split)

IF YOUR UP, THE DALES OR,
ON ILKLEY MOOR BAR'T 'AT
THE PENNINES, GIVE SHELTER,
FROM WIND AND RAIN AND THAT
WE SAVOUR GOD'S OWN COUNTRY
AND WE SAY 'WELL I'LL BE BLESSED'
YOU'LL NEVER WEAR YOUR COAT,
BUT YOU'LL BE HAPPY OF YOUR VEST

WE'VE GOT T'ARC-TIC MONKEYS
AND PULP'S A DIFF'RENT CLASS
OUR WAR CRY, IS 'OW MUCH?',
'CAUSE WHERE THERE'S MUCK THERE'S BRASS
WI' 'UGHES, 'ILL AND 'OCKNEY WE CAN 'EEL YOUR 'EAD
FROM PRIESTLEY TO AYCKBOURN
AND DRABBLE TO BRONTE
FROM BENNETT TO AUDEN
WE'VE GOT THE FULL MONTY
JUS' PULL UP YOUR STUMP
AND CHEER "BY HECKY THUMP" '
CAUSE WE'RE YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED.
(BY GEORGE!)
WE'RE YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED

A traditional but dated chip shop. The counter, which has a fliptop section for access and an undercounter till, is in front of a large fryer. There is a wrapping area (with a set of keys) at the rear of the counter which is lower than the counter itself. There is a lit grill area above the fryer (which can be opened from the rear, allowing replenishments to happen from backstage. A mirror is directly behind the till so that anyone with their back to it can still keep it in view. There is a menu board in the window which reads 'Fish - £3, Chips £2'. On the reverse (facing the road) are opening times. Though there have been some evident alterations through the years, these now read...

Monday	11.45am – 1.15pm	CLOSED
Tuesday	CLOSED	5.00pm – 7.15pm
Wednesday	11.45am – 1.15pm	CLOSED
Thursday	CLOSED	5.00pm – 7.15pm

Friday	11.45am – 1.15pm	5.00pm – 7.15pm
Saturday	11.45am – 1.15pm	5.00pm – 6.15pm
Sunday	CL OSED	CLOSED

There is an orderly queue at the chip shop counter leading into the street: BARBARA SALT, JENNIFER BILLINGSLY, HARRY, CUSTOMER 2, CUSTOMER 3 and CUSTOMER 4.

PAULINE is serving – everything is wrapped in the wrapping area behind the counter and out of sight. GEORGE is occasionally prodding at a fryer and pulling out fish when necessary – he’s not happy and keeps glancing at his watch. SAM is dutifully clearing heavy bags of unused potatoes from the shop front and back into the store cupboard.

PAULINE Hello luv. What can I get you?

BARBARA SALT (taken aback by the question) Oh.

PAULINE Fish and chips?

BARBARA SALT Is that all you do?

PAULINE Yes luv.

PAULINE helpfully points at the menu board.

BARBARA SALT Oh. Do you do pies?

PAULINE No luv. We do fish and chips.

BARBARA SALT stares blankly at the menu board.

BARBARA SALT Right. Oh.

PAULINE I’ll come back to you.

PAULINE looks at the next in line, JENNIFER BILLINGSLY.

Yes luv. Usual?

JENNIFER BILLINGSLEY nods and PAULINE serves. CUSTOMER 1 is counting their change – worried they might not have enough.

HARRY Eh Up George.

GEORGE grunts.

HARRY What's mitherin' you?

GEORGE It's thirteen minutes past.

HARRY *(glancing along the queue)* You'll not be shutting on time today then?

GEORGE No.

GEORGE barks rudely at the queue in turn.

How many do you want?

CUSTOMER 1 Once.

CUSTOMER 2 Just chips.

GEORGE grunts in vague approval

CUSTOMER 3 Three times wi'bits.

GEORGE's doesn't approve.

GEORGE I've only got another two.

CUSTOMER 3 Could you not put us another one in?

PAULINE stops serving. The queue – but not BARBARA SALT - turns to stare at CUSTOMER 3. SAM freezes.

I... I'll have whatever's left.

The queue returns to normal. PAULINE gives JENNIFER her 'usual' and change.

GEORGE *(to HARRY – but intended for all)* It clearly says quarter-to-twelve to one-fifteen on the sign...

GEORGE turns the menu board to reveal the opening hours on its reverse.

then this lot all rock up at ten past.

HARRY shakes his head while PAULINE begins to serve him.

JENNIFER BILLINGSLY *(full of remorse as she's leaving)* I would have got here sooner. Our Claudia got her head stuck in the big pan, so I couldn't do pasta.

GEORGE gives her a withering look. JENNIFER dashes out of the door.

Oh

BARBARA SALT *(to PAULINE)* What fish is it?

GEORGE It's fish. You eat it.

BARBARA SALT returns to examining the opening times. SAM approaches GEORGE wiping his apron.

SAM Dad. Is there owt else?

GEORGE grunts. PAULINE opens the till to give HARRY his change.

I'll be off then. Can I have mi' money Mum?

GEORGE flinches. PAULINE hands over SAM's wage.

PAULINE There you go luv.

PAULINE hands HARRY his change. SAM leaves through the back. CUSTOMER 1 is counting his money again meticulously.

GEORGE Why are we paying him? Shouldn't he be giving us rent by now? His bedroom's bigger than yours. In my day we pulled our thumb out.

PAULINE When was this 'day' of yours? Some Monday 20 years ago?

HARRY Are you comin' down't Crown after? I'll be servin' on once I've 'ad these.

GEORGE grunts. HARRY exits.

PAULINE He's 19. (to Customer 1) Once luv?

PAULINE serves CUSTOMER 1

(to GEORGE) He's young, free and single.

GEORGE He's not 'free'. Costs a fortune. And the gormless sod never saves. (as Churchill) "Saving is a fine thing. Especially when your parents have done it for you"... (proudly) Churchill.

PAULINE hands the portion over to CUSTOMER 1 who has counted his money.

PAULINE Salt and vinegar luv?

CUSTOMER 1 Is it free?

GEORGE flinches.

PAULINE Of course.

CUSTOMER 1 pays (keeping a 10p coin), and starts piling salt and vinegar excessively onto their portion. GEORGE watches.

GEORGE Yeees. For our pains, we make no charge for condiments. In the words of Sir Winston "Wealth, taste and leisure can bring many things but they do not bring happiness."

GEORGE snatches the dispensers away from CUSTOMER 1, who recoils whilst taking a fork from the box, spearing a chip and putting it into their mouth.

The best things in life are free. That's 10p for the fork.

GEORGE snatches the 10p from CUSTOMER 1's hand who leaves bewildered. PAULINE moves onto CUSTOMER 2 serving them a portion of chips.

BARBARA SALT (still examining the menu) How many calories are there in your 'fish'?

GEORGE (too quickly) 12.

CUSTOMER 2 has been quickly served and exits, so PAULINE moves to CUSTOMER 3. GEORGE glances at his watch again.

PAULINE I'll give you what's left luv. And extra chips.

PAULINE wraps a large parcel.

BARBARA SALT And in 'chips'?

GEORGE (too quickly) 40,000

BARBARA SALT Oh. Oh, that's rather a lot isn't it?

GEORGE Is it?

PAULINE There you are love. Just give us for twice.

GEORGE turns the menu board back and starts wiping down the counter and turns the fryer off noisily. Pauline takes a note from Customer 3 and hands over the large parcel.

BARBARA SALT I'll have four 'fish'.

GEORGE comes to the other side of the counter, he grabs BARBARA SALT by the hand and escorts her out.

As long as they're responsibly sourced. Did you see that documentary. It certainly opened my eyes.

GEORGE We're closed.

CUSTOMER 3 makes a hasty exit.

PAULINE Saturday night? It depends whether your dad wants to treat me.

SAM So you're in then?

PAULINE Yes.

SAM Cool. I'll be back for t' delivery. I'm off out after t' evening shift. Doin' some work in a pub uptown. See ya.

SAM exits.

PAULINE Your're working? Whereabouts love?

The door shuts.

(calling upstairs) George.

SFX: GEORGE coming down the stairs.

GEORGE (poking his head in) Right. I'm off down t' Crown.

PAULINE Take your key, I'm due at Zumba.

GEORGE puts his head back around and can be heard searching noisily for his key.

GEORGE (off) Where've you put it?

PAULINE Any idea where Sam's workin' tonight?

There is crashing and sighing as GEORGE'S search becomes more agitated.

PAULINE I'll be back by 3.30 to catch Will with the ShopWare delivery. If you want something cold there's that chicken, and if you want something hot, microwave that chicken.

GEORGE (off) Where the flaming hell have you put mi key?

PAULINE glances at the counter top and without breaking poise, takes GEORGE's door key and jingles it whilst totting the daily take.

The noises stop and GEORGE walks through petulantly snatching the key from her hand and exiting, slamming the door as he goes. Pauline holds the cash takings in the air. GEORGE reappears and in one move snatches the money and exits slamming the door again.

Music Cue: It's Your World (Could I Start Again?)

PAULINE

PAULINE

Yes. Off you go. Off you both go.

PAULINE sings to herself whilst finishing the cleaning. She catches her reflection in the mirror on the wall behind the till.

IS YOUR LIFE UNSATISFYING,
OUT OF FOCUS AND IGNORED?
THOUGH YOU MADE YOUR BED TO LIE IN
EACH DAY YOU WAKE UP BORED.

CAN YOU SEE A NEW HORIZON?
CAN YOU FIND A BETTER GOAL?
CAN YOU SMELL THE SCENT OF FREEDOM?
I STINK OF COOKING OIL

BEING THE MUM. BEING THE WIFE.
BEING THE ONE TO BRING THIS SHOP TO LIFE.

IT'S YOUR WORLD. YOU RELY ON.
IT'S YOUR HILL THAT YOU DIE ON.
INCH BY INCH, DAY BY DAY, AS YOUR LIFE GETS IN YOUR WAY

IT'S YOUR JOB, IT'S YOUR FIGURE
IT'S YOUR FACE, IN THE MIRROR
LOOKING BACK, LOOKING IN.
CAN I CHANGE IT? COULD I START AGAIN?

Lights off. PAULINE grabs her gym bag and locks the door.