

'I'- the opera(for mixed ensemble, electronics and no budget.)Waste Paper Opera Company / Story: Klara Kofen/ Inma Ferriz / Libretto:Klara Kofen / James Oldham/ Ben Kane / Music: James Oldham / Ben Kane /Waste Paper Players / Directors: Klara Kofen / James OldhamLibretto with stage directions and notes on musicNarrator: James Oldham / Inventor: Ben Kane / Doll: Anna PalmerPrincess: Suzie PurkisRunning time for Post Paradise, 27th January: ca. 30 min.

Recording of the overture to Rameau's 'Le Temple de la Gloire' is played through the speakers. It is conducted with a pair of scissors by James Oldham.

Narrator:

(enter Inventor. A Metronome on a phone is switched on. The Metronome is the Inventor's heart. The Inventor sits down, in front of his drum kit and accompanies his own heartbeat. While the Narrator is speaking, the Ensemble acts as a chorus that accompanies the narration with a 50s chorus like chant.)

Oh once upon a time
 There was an inventor
 He flew up high in the sky
 Reading his four books
 And thinking they were REALLY good.
 Until, one day, he was pulled from the sky.
 And he fell and fell and fell,
 And fell into the castle of a Princess!

Ensemble:

An inventor, he fell from the sky, and the Princess she captured him.

Princess:

I am a Princess
 And I want...
 I want...
 I want...

Inventor:

WHAT?!

P:

I want a toy!

I:

Aren't you a bit old for toys?

P:

I want a toy!

I:

Aren't you a bit too old to throw a tantrum?

P:

I want a toy!

[long pause]

Death!

(she threatens to switch off the metronome.)

I:

Ok ok!!

Inventor sits down behind his drumkit, starts drumming, faster and faster. Enter doll, slowly. She stands on the little pedestal. (Princess has got her back turned to them the entire time). Inventor is out of breath.

I:

There...

P:

Can you make her taller?

I:
No.

P:
She doesn't need hands.

[awkward silence]

P:
Make her talk!

I:
I can't make her talk!

P:
Death!
(she threatens to switch off the metronome.)

I:
Woah! ok!

P:
You have got twelve minutes.

(She falls asleep on a chair in the back.)

I:
aaaah!

Doll:
ah

I:
oh!

D:
...oh

I:
k...

D:
k...

I:
car

D:
car

I:
ark

D:
ark

I:
arco

D:
arco

I:
Yes! that's excellent! A car is what you drive, a fool drives cars, an ark is what you sail and arco is Italian for music.

D:

k...

I:
oh! you'll need m, ee, s, and i to say music

D:
music

I:
now you can say, sick, which is runny, erm... muck, which is dark, you, which is me... if you're you, and you if you're me, 'are' is a word that you don't usually hear on it's own but it's yours now.

D:
you are sick

I:
haha! I don't think you meant that! There are loads more words and everything you need to know in my books!

(He puts his four books (Rousseau's *Confessions*, Kerouac's *On the Road*, Pushkin's *Fairytales*, and Dr.Seuss' *Green Eggs and Ham*) into her backpack. Grabs blue Nivea bottle.)

I:
Blue! That's when you are feeling blue! (look extremely sad)

(Doll looks extremely sad)

I:
Oh no! what's the matter?

D:
feeling blue
(still looking incredibly sad)

I:
then I should teach you about hug!

D:
hug

I:
ok then!
(hugs her, she does not hug back)

D:
k...k...flabby Terry, flabby Johnny, Voltaire is mean.

I:
No no, you are not using my books well.

D:
Abusing my books well.

I:
I will tell you how to think well.
I love shells, they are what is left when the inside is gone
I love tears, they make me feel lighter.
I also love rubbing, it reminds me of my youth
And now you can compare: what do I love the most?

D:

Sophie reckoned upon green eggs and ham the same feelings as we arrived in delightful crisis - run New York the same night what you love the most.

I:
Oh no I'm not doing it right.

D:
I'm not doing it right...

I:
 No, no, it's not you. This hat for example. It is red.
 An item is red if
 The item is love
 Or an item is red if the item is Soviet
 Or an item is red if the item is sweet
 And chairs are sometimes also red.
 Is this glove red?

D:
 I also love rubbing, it makes me feel lighter.

I:
 No rubbing doesn't make you feel lighter. Birds are lighter! And planes. Features of birds are: They are not a stone, they are mostly vertical, and they mostly occur under clouds.

D:
 ...the setting sun had tinged the clouds with a beautiful crimson.

I:
 You can't even see the sun from here. You can only see the sun from Bolton, which is town 1. And then there is town 2, town 3, town 4, town 5, town 6. If you look at the map you can see it. Town 4 is an air route from town 1, town 1 is near town 3, there is a bus that goes to town 4, which is only 5 minutes away as the fly flies from town 6. (shows her on the map) which town is the prettiest?

D:
 (while he is talking about towns) town 4, town 1, town 3, town 4, a stone can not fly, vertical things can fly, rubbing is love, when the inside is gone, town 1, town 3,....
 (when he poses the question)...Denver.

I:
 Oh aren't you bright, that is right!

I:
 If the place I want to travel to is the same as my present location, then I don't need to do anything at all!
 But if not, I need to run as fast I can! I don't run, I fly, I fly in the cloud, where I am always alone. When I am alone, I use this blanket, and rub myself with it. But now you can rub me. Rub me!

D:
 (rubs him)

I:
 That feels nice.
 If something feels nice, it makes a happy memory.
 (points at calendar)
 I should teach you some history, it will enhance your collective memory.
 It was 8 am, when I was born
 It was a Saturday, when it got dark
 It was too late, when everyone finally woke up.
 It was in January, when a cloud came from the west.
 It was half an hour later, when I invented an important gadget.
 It was dusk when I felt sad and lonely.
 When did my soul unfold? (Show me on the calendar)

D:
 (points at a day)

I:
 Yes, yes!

(clearly excited. Happy drumming. lo-fi RUMBA music kicks in and he dances for her, around her (ridiculous improvised Ben dancing). Doll mimics excitement. Claps along with the beat. It all goes well. Before she starts clapping differently. And says:

D:
 Say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and Damion is the hero of my New York gang.
 Blue, blue, blue, blue...

I:
Oh no, don't be blue! I will sing a song for you.

Ben Kane writes a song. The 'Lonely Song' (Bank Accounts meet Martin Creed). While he is singing, the doll is going to repeat single phrases and pieces from the books. The word lonely is repeated several times in the song, until the doll picks up on it, and it turns into a duet.

I:
Lonely, lonely, I'm so lonely.

D:
Lonely, lonely, I'm so lonely.

I:
Oh you are lonely, too?

D:
Oh you are lonely, too?

I:
Let's be lonely no more together.

D;
Let's be lonely no more together.

I:
I love you,

D:
I love you.

I:
Where love is death is not

D:
Where love is death is not

P:
(has woken up and is very angry)
You are playing with my toy. My toy is mine.

I:
No, she is mine, can't you see, she loves me!

P:
You are too old for toys, give her to me!

DEATH
(she threatens to turn off the metronome.)

I:
(to doll, tries to take up the duet again)
I love you

Let's be lonely no more.
Where love is death is not.

P:
(to doll)
Where love is breath is not.
Breath is here, love is not.
Breath is a button.
Push the button, and it is love. Love. Love. Love. Love.

Doll pushes button, turns off metronome. Metronome stops. Inventor takes one last breath. Closes his eyes. Doll closes her eyes as well. (Princess goes to stand in front of her.) (Ensemble members drag inventor away)

P:
(same melody as the love song)
I love you.
Let's be lonely no more.
Where love is there is safety.
Love is comfort, love is safety.

(Princess opens the umbrella she has been carrying around from the start. As she opens it, a golden cage unfolds. The Princess puts the Doll into the cage.)

D:
Love is safety. (repeated for ages, like in Gavin Bryars' 'Jesus' Blood never failed me yet')