**Set description 2019**

We will describe the set and then how the characters use it and what visual effects happen during the show.

The set is the interior of a dated and slightly run down room. It could be a church hall or any community space that has not been decorated since the early 80’s. When we visit it is the brightly lit drab rehearsal room of an am dram group. The audience faces a back wall of the room, with double doors opening onto a corridor that runs behind. To the left we see a short section of the left wall that contains another door with an old sofa beside this. The door is painted grey and has a fire safety sign on it. At 90 degrees to the door, in the corner facing out is a small old fashioned column radiator painted black and in another indented corner an old kitchen unit. On the right of the stage there is an old piano and a wheelbarrow propped on the wall behind it.

The walls of the room are panelled all around to just over door height with wood that has been stained or has aged to a dark brown. Above this panelling is a foot deep line of coral paint and above this a magnolia - or maybe it’s a nicotine stained white!

There are three high oblong horizontal windows above the double doors on the rear wall that are about 1 x 4 feet in dimension - one above the double doors and a further two side by side above this. There is a fourth window above the left hand door. These high windows are too small and high to light the room which is bathed in a strip light harshness. Six strip lights hang in a grid above the room. The small windows and the strip lights are used in lighting effects and often change colour during the show and especially during the songs.

The majority of the floor from a few feet into the room right to the stage edge is an old yellow mustard linoleum looking floor. It is filthy, stained and scuffed. The remainder back of the room, including under the kitchen unit is a an old grey floral carpet which runs out of the room and into the corridor behind the double doors.

The back wall with the double doors in the centre has a small red formica topped table standing in the right hand corner and the kitchen unit in the left hand corner. The unit has dirty blue doors and the counter is littered with tea making stuff - kettle, mug stand etc. There is a small wall light that shines down dimly on the countertop and all the clutter. To the left of the unit there is a phone mounted on the wall with a long hanging cord and a fire extinguisher below this which is also mounted on the wall. Between the kitchen unit and the double doors is a strip of coat hooks on the wall. On the floor below and against the wall are stacked chairs. Some have burgundy maroon plastic seats and back and the others are wooden and metal school style seats.

On the right of the stage there is the battered old piano with a dark green anglepoise lamp and various bit of clutter on top. At the piano there is a stool and another stool to the left. Tucked behind the piano, resting on the wall there is a metal wheelbarrow.

Throughout the show the lighting changes dramatically during songs. The windows light up different colours and sometimes projections are used. Throughout the show captions of spoken and sung words are projected above the double doors. The overall effect is that during songs we are in a ‘heightened’ unreal place and when the characters are talking we are back in the brightly lit drab rehearsal room of an am dram group.

We will now describe how the cast of characters use the space. After the opening number Alex and Nat are in the space and Chris is sitting in a paint pot and painting the radiator black in the left hand corner. The character of Nat is learning BSL and so is mainly signing and does not speak very often - she provides interpretation for Deaf audience members throughout. Some of the jokes in the show come from the sign language - mainly when it’s rude. Alex gives a description of the room and moves to the piano where he spends most of the show.

Characters enter from the double doors at the rear as the show starts with a meeting. Chairs are placed in a semi-circle looking out to the audience. The chairs are moved about frequently in the show and are used in song choreography. Nat remains on stage at all times and sometimes sits on the high stool next to piano. Alex also never leaves as he plays the piano throughout. The cast move in and out of the back doors, flinging coats and bags on the coat hooks. During the committee meeting and the drinking scene later on the table is brought into the centre of the stage. The side door is also used and sometimes cast enter from the black to the right of the piano. During the song Building Christie’s House the group fashion a house out of the table, chairs a broom, a sheet and painted shoe boxes. As well as the visual humour in the sign language there is also a lot of humour in the character of Ian who is physically very awkward and tends to get a laugh even when he leaves the room.