



THE THREE SUNSETS

Music & Lyrics by Luke Saydon
Book by Denise Mulholland



INFORMATION KIT
MARCH 2019

THE THREE SUNSETS

The Musical

The Three Sunsets is an original musical created by the duo Luke Saydon and Denise Mulholland. The show premiered as part of the Ziguzajg Festival in 2014 in Malta, and was followed by a run at the National Theatre of Malta the following year.

The Three Sunsets is a family-targeted piece set in a magical forest where all the memories of the world are kept. But now something frightening is happening. Memories are being stolen. When one memory is stolen, hundreds of other memories disappear as a consequence. If the memories continue to disappear at this rate, by the end of just Three Sunsets, there will be no memories left in the world.

The show is brought to life by extraordinary scenery, ensemble work, fascinating puppetry, costumes, physical theatre and comedy.

"a successful blend of whimsy, musical and choreography set to the format of a quest.."

– THE TIMES OF MALTA

"...I don't think I've ever watched something so moving, riveting, tight and entertaining up on that stage at the Manoel. You were all excellent." – ALAN PARIS

"What I witnessed this morning at the Manoel was something unlike I've ever witnessed before. I was truly moved, in many ways" – BRIAN DIMECH



Full Synopsis

Deep in the deepest, darkest forest live The Old Man and The Girl. They are the Custodians of the Memories, which means they look after them. In this particular part of the forest every single memory there has ever been, in any time or place, is kept. Every jar, every box, every locket, every light contains a memory. They are looked after, catalogued and kept safe by The Old Man and The Girl. But one day, something frightening happens. Whilst checking the memories, they discover that several of them are missing. They have been stolen!

The Girl is told to go even deeper into the forest to ask for help from the terrifying and mysterious Sentinels. Reluctantly she heads off, following the path through the shadows. After several wrong turnings, she finds the Sentinels, who are not at all what she expected. They are 'shape-shifters' which means they can change their appearance at will. They also like to play tricks on people and give answers which are not entirely clear. They succeed in scaring and confusing The Girl but they do tell her that she has only THREE SUNSETS to retrieve the missing memories. This is because every memory is connected to hundreds and thousands of others. So if one memory vanishes all the memories connected to it vanish too:



“Like a stone thrown into a pool of water... it creates countless ripples. But if the stone is stolen, the ripples cease to exist”

In just Three Sunsets, all the memories in the world will be gone. The Girl must find the thief and get the memories back. But, of course, they don't tell her HOW to find the thief, nor do they tell her HOW to get home. The Girl sets off but gets hopelessly lost and misses the first sunset.



Lost in the dark forest The Girl uses the only thing she has at hand- a bright memory jar which she has taken to light her way. She opens the jar and releases the memory of a Carousel, which is no use to her with regards to finding her way home, but which does draw the attention of an unwelcome stranger who starts to follow her through the woods. Thoroughly spooked by now, The Girl's imagination starts to work overtime but bravely she perseveres and eventually emerges into the light, close to home.



Feeling relieved, she decided to take a little rest and of course, she falls asleep. Whilst sleeping she has a terrible nightmare- she dreams of a world with no memories at all. A world in which parents do not recognise their children, where children do not recognise their mothers, where every mind has been wiped clean. And into this nightmare comes the strange shadowy figure from the woods- and this time, the figure steals the precious memory jar while The Girl is sleeping.

She wakes up to find not only has the jar been stolen, but also that she has slept through the second sunset. Now there is only one sunset left and she still has to get home. At this point she hears the sound of the carousel- the stolen memory. Following the sound she eventually comes upon the thief, but finds to her surprise he is not in fact a monster- he is just a little boy.

Furious with him, she demands the stolen memories to be returned. He explains that the memories weren't for him. He was searching for the carousel memory for his sister. His sister is ill and in hospital. She will never be able to ride on a carousel- her greatest wish- because she is dying. She has very little time left. He wanted to take the memory of the carousel ride- his very own memory in fact- to her, to give her that experience before she dies. The Girl is broken-hearted when she hears this and vows to help him. She tells him, that with the help of The Old Man, they will collect a lifetime of memories for his sister- a 16th Birthday party, a first kiss, a wedding day and countless others. Together they gather the memories and head off to the hospital.

The little girl is waiting for her brother. They play 'The Remember Game' where they remember everything they did as children. Then The Boy gives her the jar of memories- she opens it and experiences a whole lifetime of experiences. The final memory is of the carousel. As the shadows of the horses fill the space, safe and happy in her brother's arms she slips away.

The scene changes back to the forest, where things are back to normal. The Old Man is cataloguing the memories with the help of his new assistant- The Boy! He has come to live with them in the forest, where he will always be able to remember his sister. Everything is right with their world- the memories are safely back in their place and The Girl has saved the day.



Character Breakdown

The Girl

A heroine. Joyful, kind, excited and inquisitive about a world she longs to see and explore. She is a guardian of the memories and travels to the forest to solve the cases of the missing jars. Must be loveable, charming, able to move well and an excellent singer.

Playing Gender: Female

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: G3

The Boy

Mistaken to be an evil thief, the boy turns out to be something of a hero himself. Must be an excellent mover and be able to tackle mature emotions and themes. He must also be a very strong singer with an aptitude for ballads.

Playing Gender: Male

Vocal range top: Bb3

Vocal range bottom: A2

The Old Man

A puppet operated by two puppeteers, one of which provides the voice. He is jittery, comically anxious and prone to quoting Shakespeare. He guards the memories and has done all his life. The actors playing him need to be physically strong and very competent at puppeteering, they need to be able to work as one and the actor providing the voice needs to be an excellent character actor and singer.

Playing Gender: Male

Vocal range top: G3

Vocal range bottom: E2



The Sentinels

A trio/group of haunting shape shifting creatures. They are tricksters who can be found in the deepest part of the forest. Both terrifying and entertaining they must be powerful singers, agile movers and fantastic character actors with an ability to switch from comedy to drama in an instant.

Playing Gender: Mixed
Vocal range top: G5
Vocal range bottom: E2



The Sister

A puppet operated by 2 puppeteers, one of which provides the voice. This little girl provides the answer to the mystery of the memory thief. She is brave and vulnerable with an undying love for her brother. The actors playing her must be sensitive and proficient puppeteers with a real eye for detail. The actor providing the voice must be able to convey a sense of youth and pathos.

The Chorus

A group of mischievous story tellers, very wise, very cheeky and very pleased with themselves. They work as one and provide knowledge of both the story and what it takes to create a piece of theatre. As they like to point out, they are the most vital part of the cast. They must move well, take on different characters and support all the action happening on stage. They must be very strong singers able to sing in several parts and they must have speaking voices capable of creating range and variety.

Playing Gender: Mixed







Critical Reaction

Excerpts from the Times of Malta review

If there is one thing which unites the entire human race it's the importance that we give to our memories and past experiences as part of a fulfilling life.

We go through so much in one lifetime, that all our forgotten memories, or at least, the ones which we move to the back of our mind to make way for newer ones, tend to lie there, lost and waiting to be retrieved when we need them.

Teatru Manoel Youth Theatre (TMYT), under the direction of the ever-energetic and imaginative Denise Mulholland, imagined a place where these memories might go to rest: the magical forest of memories, where they are collected and catalogued for posterity (and for possible retrieval by their owners) by a crotchety Old Man and his young apprentice/assistant – a Girl in multicoloured clothes with an earnest disposition and a heart of gold.

Dynamics on stage focused clearly on the concept that this was a company piece

Staged at MITP last week as part of the ŽiguŽajg Arts Festival for Children, this production was another showcase of TMYT's technical training and a successful blend of whimsy, musical and choreography set to the format of a quest.

When the memories suddenly start going missing from their quirky receptacles, the Old

Man, a puppet manned by Mariele Zammit and Justin Mamo (voice), tells the Girl to go off in search of answers and she does – looking for the Sentinels, mysterious and apparently fearsome shape-shifters who hold many secrets, while at the same time looking for the person who seems to be following her.

Recounted in classic choral speaking, which self-reflexively explains certain theatre practices in a direct address to the audience.

Musical numbers were accompanied by a live band and set to Luke Saydon's music and lyrics, with additional music and sound editing by Philippa Cassar, accompanied by band members Sandie Von Brockdorff and Beppe de Gabriele, the piece unravels at an enjoyable pace – a clear sign that Saydon and Cassar's musical aptitude has come along in leaps and bounds since these two actor-musicians took to the stage a couple of years ago.

The dynamics on stage focused clearly on the concept that this was a company piece, with even the minor roles required on stage for scene changes and ongoing costume changes too.

Designed by Jodi Magri, the costumes complemented the storybook feel which the set and lighting, by Pierre Portelli and Chris Gatt respectively;

were meant to give the audience.

Thus as each scene unfolded, the impression was of an eccentric and likeable illustration, rich in detail while leaving enough to the imagination.

With carefully blocked choreography by Sandra Mifsud, the ensemble pieces filled the stage with a flow of movement, while the intrepid Girl, who has to fight her own fears and misgivings to set out on her journey, meets the Sentinels in a hilarious scene where these shape-shifters turn out to be much more ebullient and funny than she expected, giving her advice in riddles before sending her on her way.

Such focus on technical excellent and a tight, slick execution has become the calling card for TMYT productions and *The Three Sunsets* is once again a reminder of this – that young local talent is out there and that the calibre of their work is not only highly entertaining and watchable, but also a sign that proper investment in cultural education pays off.

*Review by André Delicata
Times of Malta – Saturday,
November 29, 2014*

Full review on:
<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20141129/arts-entertainment/The-persistence-of-memory.546109>

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Luke Saydon
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Book by
Denise Mulholland
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Full Song List

- 0) Overture
- 1) Deep in the Deepest Deep
- 2) Do It
- 3) Get Them Back
- 4) The Chorus Lament
- 5) Dear Old Man (The Letter)
- 6) The Narrator's Song
- 7) The Brother's Lullaby
- 8) Deep in the Deepest Deep Reprise
- 9) Finale

Instrumentation

The score provided includes the piano score, vocal score and guitar tabs. The following instrumentation was used for the original production. Production companies performing this music are free to orchestrate as they seem fit given their resources. Permission to use new orchestrations must be approved by the creators.



Original Production Orchestration

Piano
Harmonica
Xylophone

Banjo
Guitar
Mandolin

High- Hat
Bass Drum
Cajon
Tambourine

Bass Guitar

Kazoo

Whirlybird Ratchet
Woodblock
Castanets
Shaker
Rain Maker
Baby Cymbals

Available Production Resources

All material found in this production pack as well as a sample of the above resources may be e-mailed upon request.

- Piano Vocal Score
- Complete Book
- 2015 Original Cast Live Audio Recording
- 2015 Original Cast Live Video Recording
- 01:50 Minute Montage Trailer

Contact

Should you be interested in contacting the creators of this product with the interest of producing, buying the license or general enquiries about the product - you are kindly asked to e-mail lukesaydon@gmail.com.

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