



The Broken Token

by

Elizabeth Kuti

Directed by Robert Price

Cast:

ANN: Jessica Carroll

JACK: Greg Baxter

Time: October, 1815

Place: Bury St Edmunds, England.

Unhappy is the land where heroes are needed.

Bertolt Brecht

The Broken Token

This play is set in the world of the travelling players of East Anglia, the troupe known as the Norwich Company of Comedians. From 1660 until the mid-nineteenth century, this group of actors toured East Anglia, bringing theatre to the people of Norwich, Ipswich, Yarmouth, Lynn, Cambridge, Bury St Edmunds and Colchester.

The Napoleonic Wars (1803 – 1815) were fought on a global stage, and lasted longer than the First and Second World Wars put together. It was a time when theatre – not only in London, but especially in the far-flung rural corners of Britain - became an essential mode of communication: a forum for consolidating national identity, rallying patriotic emotion, encouraging recruitment; and, sometimes, in coded ways exploring loss, or expressing dissent about the seemingly unending armed conflict. *The Broken Token* is set in the autumn of 1815, just a few months after the battle of Waterloo which saw the final defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The ballads and folk songs of the era of the Napoleonic Wars have also provided inspiration and source material for this play. One song in particular, *The Plains of Waterloo*, has been of particular significance. This song is one of a group known as ‘broken token’ songs, in which lovers break a token, often a ring, between them during a period of war or separation.

JESSICA CARROLL (Ann)



Jessica trained at LAMDA, where she played several leading roles including Fabiana Aziza Cunningham in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* directed by Mark Babych, and was Highly Commended in the Carleton Hobbs Radio Drama Competition.

Jessica played Mab in *Fishskin Trousers* by Elizabeth Kuti at the Finborough Theatre and is excited to be working with the team again. Other theatre includes *Quirks* (Southwark Playhouse), *A Short History of the Royal Court* (Shoreditch Town Hall, directed by Lyndsey Turner), *Old Bag* (Theatre503), *Climate Change Play in a Day* (Arcola Theatre); Nina in *The Seagull* (dir. Ian Rickson, Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass).

Television includes *Downton Abbey*.

Radio includes *Life Begins at Crawley* (BBC Radio 4).

GREG BAXTER (Jack)



Greg graduated from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London in 2012. His RADA credits include Crampton in *You Never Can Tell*, Dimitry in *The Brothers Karamazov*, James in *Dealing With Claire*, Chelnik in *The House of Special Purpose*.

Most recently he toured with The Lord Chamberlain's Men in *As You Like It* and is currently performing at the National Theatre in London in *A Taste of Honey*.

ROBERT PRICE (Director)

Robert is a voice and classical text tutor and director. He currently holds positions at RADA and LAMDA. He has worked as Voice Coach at the Abbey Theatre (National Theatre Society of Ireland) and also as assistant voice director on Abbey Theatre productions including *The Shaughraun*, *The Playboy of the Western World* and many others. Directing includes *Fishskin Trousers* by Elizabeth Kuti, *Bedtime Story* by Glyn Maxwell, *Elsinore* by Phil Terry, *Requiem* by Jonathan Lichtenstein, and *Enter A Gentleman* by Elizabeth Kuti. At RADA he has directed Greek and Renaissance classical drama; recent productions include Robin Robertson's version of *Medea*. As an actor Robert worked at the Gate, Abbey and Peacock Theatres, and also many independent theatre companies including Corn Exchange, Bedrock, Rough Magic, Loose Canon and Fishamble. He was nominated for Best Actor in the Irish Times Theatre Awards. Robert is director of Lubkinfinds, the theatre company he set up with his wife Elizabeth Kuti.

ELIZABETH KUTI (Playwright)

Elizabeth Kuti's plays include *Fishskin Trousers* (Finborough Theatre; published by Nick Hern, 2013); *Treehouses* (Peacock, Abbey Theatre, Dublin; published by Methuen; winner, Stewart Parker Radio Award); *The Sugar Wife* (Project Arts Centre Dublin and Soho Theatre, London; winner of Susan Smith Blackburn Award 2006; nominated Best New Play, Irish Times Theatre Awards, 2005-6; published Nick Hern, 2005); *The Whisperers* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and Irish tour); *The Seven Days World* (Finborough Theatre, London; published Nick Hern, 2007); *Time Spent on Trains* (Miniaturists, Arcola Theatre, London); *Enter A Gentleman* (Arcola Theatre and National Portrait Gallery, London). Her plays have been translated into German and Greek and have been performed internationally.

She has also written many plays for radio, including *May Child* (BBC Radio 4); *Dear Mr Spectator* (BBC Radio 4); *The Glasswright* (BBC Radio 4); *The Queen's Nose* (BBC Radio 4 Extra); *Mr Fielding's Scandalshop* (BBC Radio 3, broadcast Christmas Day, 2005).

As an actor she played leading roles at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, including the Colleen Bawn in *The Colleen Bawn* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin; Lyttelton at National Theatre, London), and she also worked with major Irish theatre companies including the Lyric Theatre in Belfast; Corn Exchange; Rough Magic; Bedrock; Fishamble and Loose Canon. As senior lecturer in Drama at the University of Essex, Elizabeth teaches modules in playwriting; radio drama; and eighteenth-century theatre; she has published in the area of playwriting, contemporary British theatre, dramaturgy, and eighteenth-century theatre; and she is tutor on the MA Playwriting course.

ADANNA ADAMS (Producer)

Adanna is Producer for Lubkinfinds and worked on *Fishskin Trousers* at the Finborough Theatre, London; at Orford Church, Suffolk; and at the Lakeside Theatre, Essex.

Adanna studied at the University of Essex, and has worked for Laxon Auditorium, Chico, California; Real Circumstance Production Company and the Invisible Dot. She is currently employed by the Globe Theatre, London, to work on Derek Walcott's staged version of *Omeros*.

PIPPA BATT (Costume Design)

Pippa trained at Cleveland College of Art and Design before undertaking a Postgraduate Diploma in Theatre Costume at RADA. She is currently Resident Costume Designer for Arion Productions.

Credits as Costume Designer – *The A-Z of Mrs P* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Broken Token* (UCLA), *Passing By* (Tristan Bates transfer), *Prince of Thebes*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone* (More London outdoor theatre at The Scoop), *As Is* (Finborough Theatre), *Measure For Measure* (Union Theatre), *Rooms* (Finborough Theatre), Bespoke designs for London Fashion Week, *A Winter's Tale* (Lantor Theatre), *Passing By* (Finborough Theatre), *The Thing About Men* (The Lantor Theatre) *Much Ado About Nothing* (GBS Theatre for NYU), *The Pied Piper* (Highworth School) *Twelfth Night* (Vanbrugh Theatre), *As You Like It* (Changeling Touring Theatre)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lubkinfinds thanks:

Jane Streeton
Helen Ashton
Rosemarie Swinfield
Edward Kemp
Barbara Peirson and Lakeside Theatre

The Discharged Soldier

. . . He was in stature tall,
A foot above man's common measure tall,
And lank, and upright. There was in his form
A meagre stiffness. You might almost think
That his bones wounded him. His legs were long,
So long and shapeless that I looked at them
Forgetful of the body they sustained.
His arms were long and lean; his hands were bare;
His visage, wasted though it seemed, was large
In feature; his cheeks sunken; and his mouth
Shewed ghastly in the moonlight. From behind
A mile-stone propped him, and his figure seemed
Half-sitting and half standing. I could mark
That he was clad in military garb,
Though faded yet entire. His face was turned
Towards the road, yet not as if he sought
For any living thing. He appeared
Forlorn and desolate, a man cut off
From all his kind, and more than half detached
From his own nature.

(Wordsworth, 1798)

July 13th, 1806. A remarkable suicide took place at Yarmouth. 'Two servant women tied themselves together with ribbon, walked into the sea, and were drowned.' They were the wives of privates in the Shropshire Militia. 'Their husbands had come to see them the previous day, and, refusing to permit them to return with them, they committed the rash act.'

Norfolk Annals, Volume 1, 1801-1850.

The Plains of Waterloo (traditional song)

Now as I was a-walking one fine summer's morning
Down by the gay banks of some clear purling stream
There I heard a pretty maid making sad lamentation
So I drew meself in ambush for to hear her sad refrain
Through the woods she marched along caused the valleys to ring-o
And the fine feathered songsters around her head they flew
Saying the war it is over and peace it is returned again
But still my Willy's not returning from the plains of Waterloo.

I stepped out to this fair maid and said, my fond creature
Oh it's dare I make enquiry as to what's your true love's name?
For I have been in battle where the cannon loud do rattle
And it's by your description I might have known the same.
Willy Smith's my true love's name, and he's a hero of great fame
But now he has left me in sorrow it is true
And no man shall me enjoy but my own darling boy
But still my Willy's not returning from the plains of Waterloo.

If Willy Smith's your true love's name then he's a hero of great fame
He and I have fought together through many's the long campaign
Through Italy and Russia, through Germany and Prussia
He was my loyal comrade in France and in Spain.
Till at length by the French we were surrounded
But like heroes of old we did them subdue
For three days we fought them till at length we did defeat him
Bad bold Napoleon Boney on the plains of Waterloo

On the eighteenth day of June it is ended the battle
Leaving many's the proud hero in sorrow to complain
Where the war-drums do beat and the cannon loud do rattle
All by a French soldier your Willy he was slain
And as I passed by the place he lay a-bleeding
I scarcely had time for to bid him adieu
In a faint faltering voice these words he kept repeating
Fare thee well my lovely Annie, you are far from Waterloo

Now when this fair maid heard his sad acclamation
Her red rosy cheeks turned pale into wan
And when this young man saw this sad lamentation
He says, my lovely Annie, I am that very one!
For here is the ring that between us was broken
In the midst of all danger, love, to remind me of you!
And when she saw the token she fell into his arms
Saying, you are welcome lovely Willy from the plains of Waterloo!