**Buddy**

**Act 1 programme notes**

**Saturday 3rd June @ 2:30 pm 2023**

**Audio describer – Denise Reeves**

**Good Afternoon everyone and welcome to The Theatre Royal Plymouth and this Buddy Worldwide Ltd Production of BUDDY. This 2023 UK Tour of the Buddy Holly Story is written and produced by Alan Janes and directed by Matt Salisbury, the Musical Director is Dean Elliott.**

**This bio-musical of Buddy Holly boasts such classic songs as “That’ll Be the Day. “Peggy Sue” and “Oh Boy”, and charts the rockabilly singer’s rise to fame until his untimely death at the young age of 22.**

**I am Denise, your audio describer for Act One which lasts for 65 minutes. Following a 20 minute interval my colleague Penny will describe Act Two.**

**I will now give you a synopsis of Act One in which there are nine scenes – each one moves seamlessly into the other as cast members move the furniture accordingly - followed by a description of the set, costumes and principal characters.**

**The action takes place in Lubbock Texas, Clovis New Mexico, New York and Clear Lake Iowa, between January 1956 and February 1959.**

**The curtain rises on the Stage at The Grand Bowl, Lubbock Texas as the DJ Hi Pockets Duncan, sitting behind a control console desk and mic, welcomes listeners to the first Radio KDAV Sunday Party of 1956.**

**The set is made up of colourful chequered walls in pastel shades of blue and mauve. In the centre is a screen, showing KDAV in lights, and below is a large banner with the words Sunday Party Two vertical side panels are also lit with the words Grand Bowl. Two light boxes directly under the screen at times say Recording and On Air.**

 **A rather loud, tall middle-aged Texan wearing a baseball cap introduces The Hayriders, a traditional Country & Western band, all of whom play various instruments. The five piece band is made up of a front man, with two girl backing singers and the traditional country band musicians. All dressed in country and western style dress with black Stetson hats. The two girls wear red T shirts tucked into mid length black check skirts and red net petticoats, with black patent belts and white cowboy style boots. The boys wear black jeans, white yoked shirts, white ties and black shoes. The party begins.**

**To the right is a KDAV engineer, wearing a red baseball cap, red jacket and blue jeans, holds a sign on a stick with the word APPLAUSE on one side and SILENCE on the other which he shows to the audience at the relevant times. He also has a clipboard of the schedule and wears headphones to be in contact with Hi Pockets. Behind him, two girls line dance to the music. A clothes rail with various jackets is to the right.**

**Buddy Holly, Joe Mauldin, Jerry Allison, Niki Sullivan and other onlookers are watching the Hayriders, as they wait nervously for their introduction to perform, wearing white shirts and jeans.**

**With the support of the local Lubbock Texas radio DJ Hi Pockets Duncan, Buddy Holly & the Crickets is formed and begin to carve out a musical career.**

**We then move to the Decca Recording Studios in Nashville Tennessee. A difficult start ensues with Buddy becoming crestfallen at not being able to play his music his way by the Producer.**

**Back in the KDAV Radio Studio, DJ Hi Pockets sits in his studio and is “on Air” He has his 1956 cap on and interviews a rather dejected Buddy.**

**All of which leads to the Norvajak Studios in Clovis New Mexico and the studio of record producer Norman Petty. Here there is a recording area and a smaller control room containing the tape decks and a disc cutter. Norman sits at the recording desk on the left. At the back of the studio is a piano in the centre with a Celeste to the left and a set of drums to the right, alongside the coat rail. Mics and speakers are set up ready for Buddy, Joe and Jerry to record Brown Eyed Handsome man. Norman’s wife Vi looks on. She is tall and slim with blonde hair and wears glasses. They begin to realise the talent of Buddy, Joe and Jerry and go on to play Peggy Sue and other songs throughout the night and into the next morning.**

**Following this Buddy Holly and the Crickets begin to produce hit after hit from Norman Petty’s backyard recording studio. Among them is “That’ll Be the Day” which rockets up the charts to reach Number One and they begin a national tour.**

**We move then to New York and on stage at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, where we meet current acts such as the coloured singer Tyrone Jones, a petite, slim and energetic man who gives a rousing performance of his hit Reet Petite in front of a red curtain with coloured lights overhead. Tyrone wears a midnight blue suit with a sparkling blue waistcoat, blue shirt and orange tie. He has a trilby style blue hat with an orange band, orange socks and tan shoes.**

**This is followed by the Rondettes - Marlena and Chantel, two coloured ladies who enter briskly and are funkily dressed in below the knee blue sequined dresses with orange underskirts and black cupid heels. They wear diamonte necklaces and earrings and have black curly hair. The music segues into the rousing rendition of the song “Shout”.**

**We are then backstage at The Apollo, with Marlene, Chantel and Tyrone as the music fades and distant applause is heard under the music. Lights from the stage show shine through the backstage curtain.**

**A white DJ Hi Pockets, appears backstage with a portable tape recorder and mic, ready to interview Buddy Holly and the Crickets before they are due to perform on stage.**

**When they eventually do appear in front of the audience a shock awaits them and they become terrified. Buddy wears a cream suit, white shirt and blue tie with tie clip and blue shoes. He now wears his trade mark black curve framed glasses.**

**Their historic performance at the Apollo Concert of the songs Not Fade Away; Peggy Sue and Oh Boy, is the beginning of a history of music that changed rock ‘n’ roll. Without this piece of musical gold, there would be no Beatles and no Rolling Stones.**

**The Cast**

**Buddy Holly - is played by AJ Jenks (or Christopher Weeks) – alternating the titular role.**

**Joe B Mauldin - played by Joe Butcher**

**Jerry Allison - by Josh Haberfield**

**Hi Pockets Duncan – is played by Thomas Mitchells**

**The Big Bopper – by Christopher Chandler**

**Ritchie Valens - is played by Miguel Angel**

**All other parts are played by the very talented members of the Company.**

***As Writer and producer Alan Janes comments: "We're thrilled to be back for our 2023 UK tour, which feels extra special as we re-connect with our audiences and fans. Our cast of hugely talented actors and musicians will ensure everyone has an unforgettable night at the theatre."***