**Reuben Cumming:** My name's Reuben Cumming and I went to Footscray City College.

So I chose A Christmas Carol, which is a Brian Way's adaption but originally written by Charles Dickens.

The story briefly follows Scrooge as the main character.

He was the main character in my monologue who is a very greedy and mean old money lender at the start of the play.

But on Christmas Eve is visited by three spirits, and they show him his fate. And he gets very freaked out by seeing what may occur in the future and then completely changes his ways.

The two areas of design I chose were sound and set design. My interest in sound design is in very highly manipulated sounds.

So taking something realistic and messing with it for long enough where you create a completely other-worldly sound or other-worldly environment, and out of all the plays, A Christmas Carol on this, particularly this moment, was most suited to creating a dream-like state and creating another world with sound.

My monologue is very close to the end of the play.

And it's the last of the three spirits that he's visited by.

So a monologue follows the transition from being visited by the spirits to waking up on Christmas Day.

So my set design was influenced largely by Poor Theatre and Elizabethan Theatre.

Poor Theatre was an influence because of the relationship between the actor and the set.

So it's all controlled and manipulated by the actor.

And Elizabethan Theatre was an influence because the positioning of my gravestone is the same as what they called the grave trap in Elizabethan Theatre.

So the Elizabethan stage had lots of trap doors, one of which was always sort of in the centre at the back of the stage.

And that was the grave trap.

So where people would die, where people would fall into the stage, I imagine.

And then the sound design was influenced largely by contemporary Theatre.

Because it's all about manipulating and pushing sounds to their limits, which you can only do-- has only been a contemporary thing.

For the set design, I had to look at what Elizabethan furniture of the time would have looked like, and particularly furniture of a very wealthy person given Scrooge is very well off.

For the sound design, I watched a lot of the different-- there's been many, many different film versions of the monologues in many different films over the years.

So from watching the version from the 30s or the 40s to watching the new animated versions, watching the Muppets version, and all the different takes people have had on it.

So my set piece is a four-poster bed, which starts as a normal recognisable four-poster bed but then will transform by the mattress lifting up.

And a grave is revealed underneath.

One of the main themes I want to emphasise-- I wanted to emphasise in my monologue was transformation and the set piece very clearly does that.

It transforms from a recognisable and not very scary object of a four-poster bed to a very scary gravestone and lifts up in a very intimidating way.

And then Scrooge at the same point in the monologue transforms from a very afraid and scared state to a happy man.

The only recognisable sound is meant to be church bells, and they have been taken for a lot of the sections of the soundscape and manipulated in different ways. So it’s all built around the idea of church bells.

So the purpose of my sound design was really to build the monologue.

And in the whole play, it would be building the play up to its climax, which is in the middle of the monologue towards the end of the monologue.

And then being able to drop all of that back to nothing again and begin to build up the completely different world, which the play, or which Scrooge finds himself in on Christmas morning.

The actor is controlled by the soundscape from what he's directed around the stage.

So at the moment where the set is first transformed, when the mattress-- when the actor has to lift the mattress up, the sound centres.

The sound has been moving around the stereo field a lot.

And then at that moment, it goes mono, so it centres attention to the middle of the stage, which focus everyone in on this bed.

And then the mattress lifts up.

And then also at the end of that, the mattress falls and very abruptly at that exact moment the soundscape stops.

A big challenge, I think, as with anything creative is working out what, particularly for me, working out what the small amount of possibilities you're going to give yourself is.

So for me it was that thing of starting with forty different bell sounds and then trying to limit that down to five.

So it's always that thing of the options and the amount of ideas.

In ten years' time, I'd hope to be making even weirder sounds, both for Theatre or film and for music production, yeah.