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First Time

A Musical

Book by
Kirk Foster and John Gardiner

Lyrics by
Kirk Foster

Music by
Kirk Foster and Paul Sabey

Samuel French – London
New York – Sydney – Toronto – Hollywood



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FIRST TIME

First performed at the Queen Mother Theatre, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, on 4th September 1985, by the Kads Theatre Company.

The Company:

Kirk Foster	Sarah Baker
Gerard Doyle	Angie Guy
Keith Swainston	Paula Tappenden
Michael Flintoff	Selina Jones
Glen Davies	Jo Russ
Tim Young	Janette Frazer
Mark Lingwood	Judith Ellis
Gary Bowman	Marcia Hewitt
Iain Leary	Janette Swallow

Music arranged and performed by Paul Sabey

Directed by Kirk Foster

CHARACTERS

FIRST HALF

Paul (Marvin's Dad)
Sally (Marvin's Mum)
Asthmatic Old Man
Business Man
Trendy Lefty Lady
Mrs P, an office cleaner
Another Man
Another Woman
Emily, Violet } two old spinsters
Policeman
Policewoman
Docker
Nurses
St John's Ambulance Men
Surgeons
Doctors
Matrons
Three Mothers
Marvin
Sid
Tom
June
Brenda
Gloria
Nutty Norman
Nutty Norman's Gang
Mr Turner, the teacher
Careers Officer
Doreen, a secretary
Betty
Sandra
Rene
Ray
May
Debbie
Dora
Pat
Mayor's entourage
Singer
Backing group
Marvin's Girl
Girl-Friend
Two boys
Julie
Old Gertie
Tina
The Narrator
Jackie Boy, the Butler
Esmerelda
Alucard's Mother
Alucard
Two asylum Assistants
Two Maids

Additional SECOND HALF characters

Girl with big feet
Girl with hunch back
"Camp" guy
Vicar
Julie's Dad
Julie's Mum
Tall thin bridesmaid
Short tubby bridesmaid
Photographer
Organist
Jane
Sarah

Sonia
Stephen
Old Lady
Doctor
Female Patient
Satan
Judge
Miss Twee
Jury
Dobbs
Syms
Cleaner
PC Matthews
Voices from the past
God

FIRST TIME

	Page
Production Notes	
First Half	
First Time (song)	1
First Child (sketch)	2
Baby (song)	9
First Fag (sketch)	11
Can You Remember? (song)	17
First Job (sketch)	18
First Night (sketch)	22
First Night Blues (song)	26
First Glance (song)	27
First Kiss (sketch)	29
A Woman (song)	34
First Bite (sketch)	35
Jugular Blues (song)	42
Second Half	
First Time (Reprise—song)	45
First Time I Saw You (song)	45
First Wife	47
We Are Just Beginning (song)	51
First Family Christmas (sketch)	52
After the Party (song)	57
First Aid (sketch)	58
Taking Time (song)	61
First Medical (sketch)	61
First to Fall (song)	63
First Offence (sketch)	64
First Death (sketch)	71
First to Fall (Reprise—song)	73
First Time (Reprise—song)	73
Technical Plots	78

The show runs for approximately 110 minutes

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PRODUCTION NOTES

The Set

This show is best presented on an open stage. There is no scenery. On the cyclorama cloth there is a huge staff with gigantic notes painted on. The company may choose any of the opening notes and clefs from one of the *First Time* songs. The eye should be flooded with different colours according to the mood of each scene. The floor ideally should be on three levels, the highest level quite narrow and upstage, the second level slightly wider but the major playing area should be downstage and spacious.

Depending on the number you use in your company there should be that number of chairs on the set, arranged at different levels. The chairs can either be uniform colour or a mixture of bright pastels. Each member of the company sits on one of these chairs when not involved in a sketch, in full view of the audience. The playing area front stage will be lit boldly, the rear areas in semi-darkness. It is imperative that the non-performers keep perfectly still and disciplined when not involved in a sketch. Each member of the company will have their personal props on, hanging from or under their chair.

The Presentation

Although *First Time* is a whole, each part is like a sketch from a revue and should be played in that style. For maximum effect the very short lines should be delivered with care but the cueing must be very sharp indeed for best comic effect.

At the beginning and end of each sketch there is a short strobe or freezelite effect when all the actors change their costumes, collect props and move any stage furniture into position. The strobe effect is accompanied by the "First Time" theme which will be found in the score. The whole effect should be of watching a silent film—actors moving at colossal speed. Even those actors who have no specific task to perform should invent some ad lib movement so that the whole stage is alive with business.

When the freezelite stops, the company will be in a freeze, holding the starting positions of the sketch. These positions are described at the beginning of each sketch. The more exaggerated and funny the starting positions, the more it adds to the general comedy. The lights come up on this freeze but the sketch does not start until the actors hear the sound effect single tone. After this, both sound and action commence.

The Music

See the composer's notes in the score.

The Costumes
The company may wear a simple basic costume on to which other costumes and props are added. This might be black leotards and black T-shirts or professionally made colourful costumes that blend with the overall concept. The costume changes must be done very quickly—keep the costume very simple but clear. Ensure where there are complications of change that Velcro is used to ensure rapid stripping of the costume. The simpler, the funnier. If you have any large costume you wish to incorporate e.g. the judge, then hang these costumes in the wings or off the playing area where a dresser can be deployed. Directors can tell their company to find their own costumes once they have cast. Very often this improvisational approach can produce some real surprises! Sometimes just a hat, a coat and a prop is sufficient to establish the character.

The Characters
The company play all the parts. These will have to be divided very carefully by the director and balanced to allow plenty of time for costume and furniture changes. **Marvin** can play only his own role but the others can be utilized throughout the show. Whenever parts become established such as **Julie** and **Marvin**'s mates at school, use the same actors each time to ensure continuity. There are moments in the show when very real sensitivity is required and the actors must be alert to these subtle changes. It is not *all* played for laughs. By the end, **Marvin** should be taken very seriously.

FIRST HALF*

The House Lights go down. The "First Time" theme is played increasing in volume as the Lights slowly come up

The Company walk into their places by their individual chairs. They stand facing the audience in semi-darkness

The Lights come up. The music stops to reveal Paul and Sally (about to be Marvin's Mum and Dad) and the Company in set positions

Song: First Time

Paul / **Sally** There's no cure for the pain
We endure each day we train,
For the part that our hearts
Will play in each new game,
Though we smile and we frown
We will always get let down.
The first time is always hard
You always feel a clown.

Company We are born to be involved in,
We could change the world—
We could solve the problems,
Every boy and girl.

Paul / **Sally** Leaving school, acting cool
There's no comfort for the fool.
You must laugh on the path,
You learn and break the rules.
From first fag you will brag
But there's bound to be a snag.
The first time is always hard
These days can be a drag.

Company We are born to be involved in,
We could change the world—
We could solve the problems,
Every boy and girl
Don't despair now you're here,
Don't try to skip by.
You are the one that can make it
The very First Time.

Strobe/freezelite for ten seconds accompanied by the theme

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*N.B. Paragraph 3 on page ii of this Acting Edition regarding photocopying and video-recording should be carefully read.

Sketch: First Child

The strobe/freezelite stops and the Lights come up to reveal a queue at a bus stop. An asthmatic Old Man heads the queue, followed by a Business Man, a Trendy Lefty Lady, the husband Paul, the wife Sally who is very pregnant and finally Mrs P., an office cleaner. They are standing in a group freeze

A single tone. The freeze is broken and action/sound commences. Note: This sketch should get increasingly frenetic

Paul (*to his wife*) OK?
Sally Fine.
Paul Sure?
Sally Yes.

Pause

Mrs P. Going to the hospital?
Paul Yes. (*After a slight pause*) My wife's going to have a baby.

A slight pause

Mrs P. My mother had a baby.
Business Man We've only got your word for that.

Pause

Probably on strike.
Sally Pardon?
Business Man Bus. Probably on strike.
Sally (*worried*) Paul.
Paul Don't worry. It'll be here.
Business Man Country's rife with strikes.
Mrs P. (*looking at Sally*) How long?
Paul Just under nine months.

A slight pause

Mrs P. Due any minute then.
Sally (*more worried*) Paul.
Paul Keep calm, Sally. There's no need to worry.
Mrs P. He's right, love. No need to panic. Let it all happen naturally.
Paul (*comforting*) You see, darling.
Mrs P. Otherwise it could end up deformed.
Sally Paul!!!
Business Man This is scandalous. Fifteen minutes late.
Lady It's always the same.
Business Man Don't I know it.
Lady You try to support the local transport, help them to keep the routes open and they don't even turn up. It's scandalous.
Business Man Probably on strike.
Lady Lightning strike.

Business Man Quite. The whole country's on strike in my opinion. Buses, miners. (*After a slight pause*) Nurses——

They all turn and look at Sally. Paul comforts her

—the whole National Health Service is falling to pieces.
Lady The government.
Business Man And the government, they're falling to pieces.

Pause

Old Man (*wheezing*) Here—it—comes.

They all lean out in the road to get a good view of the approaching bus

Business Man Damn! It's turned off.
Lady At least they're moving.

A slight pause

Sally Paul. I can feel stirrings.
Paul No.
Sally Yes.
Paul You just imagined it.
Sally I didn't.
Paul Yes.
Sally I should know, damn it!
Paul All right. Keep calm.

The rest of the queue are looking at the tiff. The couple smile at everyone and make it up

Old Man (*wheezing heavily now*) Here—it—comes.

They all lean out again. A slight pause. Eyes return to the front. It's turned off. Nothing to be said. Resignation

Mrs P. Wotcher want? Boy or a girl?
Sally (*perking up*) I don't mind. I'd prefer a boy, but I don't really mind.
Mrs P. I'd prefer a girl.
Sally Oh?
Mrs P. (*doom-laden*) Girls live longer than boys.
Sally (*panicky*) Paul!
Paul All right. Please don't. You're upsetting my wife.
Mrs P. Sorry.
Paul Thank you.
Mrs P. Only trying to be friendly.
Old Man (*excited*) Here—it——(*He realizes he's made a mistake*)

They all glare at him

Another Man and Woman join the queue

Sally (*panic increasing*) It's not coming.
Paul Of course it's coming.

Sally When?
Paul Soon. It'll be here soon.
Man Huh! What an optimist.

A slight pause. Suddenly Sally twitches and looks out front

Sally (*whispering*) Paul. (*She is rigid*) Paul.
Paul Yes darling?
Sally It's coming.
Paul Oh good. (*He looks up the road*) I told you it wouldn't be long.
Sally It's coming Paul, it's coming.
Paul Where darling? I can't see it.
Sally The baby Paul. The baby's coming.
Paul What!

Sally screams and clutches her stomach

Man What is it?
Paul (*confused panic*) My baby's going to have a wife.
Sally Oh God!

Paul helps her to the ground

Man A baby?

Everyone in the queue exits rapidly. They don't want to know

Sally Paul.
Paul Don't panic. Keep calm. (*Shouting after the disappearing queue*) Can someone call an ambulance? Please don't go. I don't know what to do. (*He goes to follow them*)
Sally Paul!

He returns to her side

Paul Yes dear. I'll get ... (*He starts to go*)
Sally Don't leave me.
Paul (*coming back*) Right.
Sally Get help.
Paul Right. (*He starts to go*)
Sally But don't leave me.

He comes back

Two Old Spinsters enter. They look like Hinge and Bracket

Paul Can you help me? My wife's going to have a baby.
Emily Oh super.
Violet Boy or girl? Shouldn't she be in hospital or something?
Sally (*with feeling*) Yes.
Emily I'll go for an ambulance.
Violet There's a little phone box further on.
Paul Thank you.
Emily Oh. I've just remembered, Violet. There's one back there as well.

Violet Well, which one is the nearer, Emily? The one back there or the one further on.
Emily The one back there.
Violet Are you sure?
Emily Positive! (*A slight pause*) I think.
Violet It seemed quite a long way back to me.
Paul Please hurry.
Emily We're just trying to work out which one is the nearest, young man. Don't waste time do we, Violet?
Violet Certainly not. I'll go to the one further on and take a chance.
Emily Right.
Violet It'll be best if Emily stays.
Paul Why?
Violet She's got her post-natal badge.
Sally (*moaning*) Oh God.
Paul Please hurry.
Violet I'm off.

Violet exits

Emily Isn't this exciting. I've never seen a baby born in the street before.
Paul Nor have I.
Emily I was born in the toilet you know.
Paul Really?
Emily Yes. The door handle broke off while my mother was in there.

She laughs and nearly has heart failure. Paul helps her to recover

Paul How interesting.
Sally (*interrupting*) Paul—I think . . .
Paul Don't worry.
Emily Violet's gone to the phone box.
Sally I think . . .
Paul They'll soon be here.
Sally I think . . . it's passed.
Paul Passed?

Violet returns

Are you sure?
Emily It's all right. It's passed.
Violet The phone box wasn't working.
Sally I think it's . . .
Paul Do you want to sit up?
Sally Yes. (*She sits up*) No! (*She goes straight down again*)
Paul Which?
Sally Yes.

He helps her to sit up

No! It's coming again! (*She lies back down*)

Emily Quick, Violet.
Violet I'm off.

Violet exits in the wrong direction

Sally (*moaning*) Oh.
Paul I don't know what to do.

A Policeman and Policewoman enter

Policeman What's going on here?
Paul I'm going to have a baby.
Policeman You trying to be funny sir?
Paul (*confused*) I mean my baby's going to have a wife—baby. Please help.
Policeman Are you sure, madam?
Sally (*moaning*) Oh.
Policeman Ah.

Violet enters

Violet Sorry. Wrong way.

Violet exits in the correct direction

Policeman How long is she?
Paul About five foot three. (*He watches Violet toddle off*)
Policeman No sir. Not her. How long is your wife in time?
Paul Oh . . . nine months.
Policeman (*inspiration*) Then . . . it could be due any minute.
Paul (*long-suffering*) Yes. Like now.
Policewoman Shall I deal with this, Frank. My role is more of a community relations brief than yours.
Policeman Over to you, Sandra.
Policewoman Can you hear me madam?
Sally (*groaning*) Oh.
Policewoman Now just keep calm and we'll do the rest.
Policeman Shall I loosen her clothing?

They all stare at him as if he's a dirty old man

A bit?
Policewoman That won't be necessary, Frank.
Policeman Very well, Sandra.

The sound of a bus approaching is heard

All the people in the queue suddenly appear from various hiding points on the set and chase after the rapidly departing bus

Paul It's a bus!
Policeman Very good sir. Bit of a spotter are we?

Bus and queue have now vanished as Violet enters

Violet The one back there's not working either.

Sally Oh Paul. Paul.
Paul (*panic*) Oh God. God.
Policewoman Right. Now she must be kept warm——

They all crowd round her

—but she must have air——

They all breathe on her

—I mean coats and things to keep her warm.

They all start to take off warming clothes and place them on or around Sally

Violet I just couldn't get through to the hospital.
Policeman Don't worry madam. We'll do that . . . (*He takes out a two-way radio*) Six-six-six . . . (*he realizes that he is holding it upside down, turns it the right way up and pulls out the aerial*) . . . nine, nine, nine. CID? Sid, send an ambulance to the High Street. Over and up.
Sally Wait a minute.
Paul Don't worry, Sally.
Sally But I——
Policewoman Don't worry madam. Your husband's right. Everything is under control.
Sally But I think it's all right.
Policewoman Sure?
Paul Remember what happened last time?
Sally No. I'm sure.

Sally sits up. The Policeman returns to the group

Policeman The ambulance is on its way.
Policewoman We don't need it.
Policeman (*hurt*) I see.
Sally It's passed.

The Policeman takes out his radio again

Paul Are you absolutely certain?
Policeman Cancel that ambulance, Sid.
Sally Yes . . . No!
Policeman (*into the radio*) Hang on.
Sally (*feeling her stomach*) Yes.
Policeman Cancel that—
Sally (*sudden clutch*) No!
Policeman Make up your mind love.
Sally I don't know. Oooooh! (*She falls back. It's for real*)
Policeman (*panic, as he fumbles and shakes with nerves*) Get that ambulance here.

A Man (Docker) enters with a dark overcoat and bag

Docker Can I help at all?
Policewoman What are you?

The Man indistinctly says a word that sounds like "doctor"

Then you certainly can.
Paul My wife's going to have a baby.
Docker Which one's your wife?
Paul Her, down there.
Docker Afternoon.
Policewoman We've called for an ambulance.
Docker Oh good.
Violet We've been keeping her warm.
Sally Oooooh.

They all crowd round except the Docker who looks at his watch and starts to walk off

Policewoman Where are you going?
Docker To work.
Policewoman But shouldn't you help here?
Docker There's not much I can do.
Paul You're a doctor!
Docker Docker! I said I'm a docker! (*He opens his coat to reveal a grease-stained vest and overalls*)
Policeman Clear off! You interfering little twit.
Docker I only asked if I could help.
Policeman Go on clear off—before I call a policeman.

The Docker exits

Sally (*urgently now*) Oooooh.

They all crowd round again

Policewoman Don't worry madam.
Paul What are you going to do?
Violet Emily, you should be able to do something.
Emily No. I only know what to do afterwards.
Policeman Look, the ambulance should be here soon.
Paul Sally. Hang on.
Policewoman Keep her warm.

They close in

But don't suffocate her.

They all back off. The group now have their backs to the audience so that only the pregnant Sally can see the passers-by

Policeman The ambulance is definitely on its way.
Emily I don't think there was a badge for pre-natal.
Policewoman Oh God. I feel faint.
Policeman Steady Sandra. Hold on. Community relations and all that.
Violet I think she's going to pass out.
Sally OOOOOOH!

Paul Heavens! It's coming. She's going to have it.
Emily Push.
Policeman Altogether now. Push!
Violet Push.
Policewoman Oh God. I feel terrible.
All (*continuous, ad lib*) Push ... That's the way ... Be brave darling ... Push ... Don't you push me ...

During this sequence a long line of people pass by, all chatting as if going for a lunch-break—Nurses, St John's Ambulance Men, Surgeons, Doctors, Matrons, etc. Sally can see them all and tries to draw the attention of the well-meaning group to them. They are so busy trying to do the right thing that they are oblivious of her dilemma. Suddenly a baby cries. Silence. They all look out front

All (*out front—half of the group*) It's a boy!
(*the other half simultaneously*) It's a girl!

They all look back at the baby

(*Again confused and together*) It's a boy/It's a girl!

They all look back again, then at each other, smile and give knowing laughs and say

It's a BABY!!!

Sally and Paul move DR *with their new baby*

Song: Baby

Sally
Paul

A baby is a bundle of joy—
A baby is a girl or a boy.
But there's more to it we know,
Than watching Baby grow.

Babies they need loving,
Babies must be warm.
Parents there to guide them,
Watch them taking form.
It needs us now
To show it how
To make its way through life.

Three Mothers as a backing group enter DL. *They each carry a baby wrapped in blankets*

Three Mothers

It'll wake you up at half-past four,
Needing feeding and plenty more.
You won't sleep 'til the crack of dawn,
By then you'll wish it hadn't been born.

During this last line all the Company Girls enter, carrying babies

Company Cry, cry, cry, cry.
Wet, wet, wet, wet,
Howl, howl, howl, howl,
Scream, scream, scream, scream.

The Three Mothers exit

The Company Girls stay on stage in a group freeze

Sally / **Paul** Surely now, that can't be all
For more than that, it is ours.
Doesn't matter what you say
You will not put us off
A baby's what we wanted
And a baby's what we've got.
It seems a shame
That you won't change your mind
About this fact.

During this last line, the Three Mothers return DL *carrying two or three babies. One has a papoose on her back. During the following chorus the Company Girls play "pass the parcel" and the Company Men enter, pushing prams and pushchairs*

Mothers / **Girls** It'll scream and holler, night and day,
Your hands will shake
And your brain'll give way.
Only twenty but you're looking old,
Your eyes are heavy
And you're feeling the cold.
Three Mothers Pain, pain, pain, pain.
Company Girls Throb, Throb, Throb, Throb.
Company Men Mum, Mum, Mum, Mum.
All Scream, scream, scream, scream.

Babies are attacked and chucked about in a very funny fashion during the last two lines

Scream, scream, scream, scream.
Scream, scream, scream, scream.
Sally Surely now, that can't be all.
Paul For more than that
It's . . .

To fortissimo introduction Marvin is revealed in a tight spot. Marvin wears national health glasses, the lenses held together with elastoplast. He is scabby at the knees, wears short trousers, is short-sighted, squints and has a finger up his nose

. . . MARVIN!

Paul (*speaking*) Marvin!
Sally (*speaking*) Dirty boy!

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