**7 Alleys**

**Introduction: assembly point**

*Harmonic drones play.*

*A horse-and-carriage appears and pulls up, transporting several people. A violinist plays from the carriage.*

*Female voice:*

**7 ghost stories on a ghost page**

**Placed in a ghost bottle & thrown to the waves**

**from the Land of Green Ginger to the shores of East Hull**

**Searching for midnight in the 7th Alley portal**

**7 heavens 7 seas 7 for the harmonies**

**7 souls to ride the carriage**

**Set the course for 7 Alleys**

**Follow where the stone path runs, don’t stray from the light**

**Follow horse & carriage on the road towards midnight**

*The horse-and-carriage travels up the main boulevard, encouraging people to follow. Each tree they pass illuminates. In the field behind the trees to the left, figures move slowly through smoke with flickering lanterns.*

*The horse-and-carriage arrives at the entry point to the main arena, where harmonic drones play, and occasional hand bells are rung. A character slowly rotates on top of a tower at the far end, with a flickering lantern. Another character stands on a cart in the centre of the space. Audience are encouraged to flow into the field.*

*Smoke rises around the tower and the music intensifies. The violinist appears on the tower and plays.*

**Introduction: Main arena**

*A ‘gang member’ wearing jacket & flat cap climbs to the top of the cart with flickering lantern. The female character on top of the tower drops pages.*

*Female voice:*

**7 ghost stories from a ghost age**

**Written in a ghost book torn from a ghost page**

**Thrown to the ghost winds drifting over phantom days**

**& blowing down the alleys where the spirit kids play**

**7 alleys you must run, 7 tasks to overcome**

**To find the magic portal & a land beyond the sun**

**7 for the harmonies & 7 for the planets**

**7 souls who guard the pathways of the 7 alleys**

**7 gateways, 7 dares, face the ghosts & face your fears**

**The 7th alley reappears once every 7 years**

*Twenty-five performers with flickering lanterns spread throughout the field ring hand bells and converge around the cart and 2 lamp-post structures either side of the tower. Two gang members climb the lamp-post structures. The bells escalate culminating in 7 bell tolls and three fireworks are released into the sky. The cart moves towards the tower.*

**First Alley dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**First alley, first dare,**

**Steal fire from the dragon’s lair**

**Break into the blacksmiths yard**

**Heat the iron & hammer sparks**

**Fire to guard you on your journey**

**Stolen from the dragon’s foundry**

**Fall in the fire you fail the task**

**& burn forever in the furnace blast**

**Pass the test you carry the flame**

**& run the torch to the 2nd game**

**This is your patch, this is your gang,**

**this is your town, now burn it down**

*A red marine flare is lit. Two gang members move from the cart to the lamp-post structures, winching up oil drums and igniting them to glow white. A bamboo pole with buckets is passed to the character on top of the tower. She rotates as the buckets billow smoke, then ignites spinning fireworks. The characters on the lamp-posts ignite sparking effects.*

**First Alley Part 2: Making fire**

*Male voice:*

**All tooled up to tough it out**

**Armed with sparks from the foundry forge**

**Fire in our bellies & jack-knives hard as quartz**

**We’re off out larkin’ down the alleys**

**Twaggin’ & scraggin’ & bags to go foggy**

**Chuddin’ & spittin’ & givin’ a croggy**

**Mates for life on the tip of a knife**

**Lads & lasses, this is our night**

**Grim riders ploughing the cinder-road**

**Kings & queens of the smoking slagheap**

**Carving our names in the orphan stone**

**We’ll never walk these lanes alone**

**where ghostland gangs & gangland ghosts**

**tangle & trade off phantom turf**

**From the hanging shadow at the iron bridge**

**To the baby farm at furthest outpost**

**This is our time, this is our gang**

**We’ll plant our flag in these phantom Badlands**

**topdogs, bigshots, our tag stands**

**from Paraffin Creek in the Western reek**

**to the dregs of Red ‘Ell in the rising East**

**They’ll breathe our names in every 10-foot**

**Shy from their patch when we turn up**

**Bawl like bains in Poorhouse Lane**

**Our names will blaze on every freight train**

**We are rumbling, we are blazing,**

**Scourge of the wreck’eads, ready to front up**

**pumped up jumped up target set**

**to run the fire to the second alley gauntlet**

*A red marine flare is lit and the cart moves out into and through the audience, carrying three gang members. When the flare runs out, smoke billows into the air in front of the cart. The cart rotates.*

**Second Alley Part 1: Spirits**

*Male voice:*

**Where ghost train meets the blue bridge**

**Meets the prison & the cemetery path**

**Where silence meets the dockland screech**

**Where clock hand meets the midnight lamp**

**where rain meets flame down the cracked coal lanes**

**& scattershot lightning meets the dark**

**Settle in the echo of the railroad track**

**& call to the spirits ‘til the spirits call back**

*The three gang members on the cart are handed flaming torches, and the cart continues on its journey before stopping again.*

**Second Alley dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**Second alley, second dare,**

**Step into the rising mist**

**eclipsing land & eclipsing air**

**where stray souls of the living vanish**

**A mist that hovers on the weightless cries**

**of the ones who lost themselves to the skies**

**Lose the flame, you’ll disappear**

**in the rising mist for 7 years**

**Hold your fire to the crackle of the air**

**Where only the bravest souls will dare**

*Two gang members leave the cart carrying flaming torches and set off into the mist. The cart continues on its journey carrying the remaining gang member into the mist. After the cart has moved away, a sailor appears hanging from a rope suspended in the middle of a metal frame like a skeletal ship. Twelve banners are raised like sails either side of the sailor who comes to life, performing various movements before falling still again.*

**3rd Alley dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**One two three for the Third alley dare –**

**Shimmy up the line to the ghost ship’s peak**

**Summon up a storm to crash the vessel**

**Wreck it on the rocks & sink it to the deep**

**Beware the wrath of the hanging smuggler**

**Leave him to the sea of his fevered sleep**

**With cut-throat eyes & treasure-lust**

**He catches you your life is lost**

*Two gang members climb the sides of the metal structure to its summit, above the hanging sailor. They descend to halfway, trying to reach the sailor. They start to rock the structure, then wave flags while rocking.*

**3rd Alley Part 2: Storm**

*Male voice:*

**Three storm smugglers from the sea**

**Sail the Humber estuary**

**Carry contraband up river –**

**cargo from Land of Green Ginger**

**Lightning strike & thunder hit**

**Cracks the aft, the ship is split**

**Three storm smugglers crash the dock**

**Cling to the lifeline & swing for the lock**

**Lightning strike & thunder rain**

**The ship careens up midnight drain**

**Crash goes ship into the land**

**Breaking up on storm-burst bank**

**Lightning strike & thunder blast**

**Three smugglers take their final gasp**

**Two shipmates thrown from the hull**

**crying mercy where the wild waves pull**

**One storm smuggler hangs from the mast**

**Thrown to the sky by storm-force blast**

**Cargo sinking in the drain**

**& seventy years it will remain**

*Flashes and booms of thunder & lightning ring around. The sailor has come back to life and starts to thrash around with a flag he’s taken from one of the gang members, who descend. The structure is rotated to collapse to the ground, snaring the sailor in a net as he’s raised up into the air. A sparkling effect of a waterfall rains down behind the suspended sailor.*

**FINAL SMUGGLER IMAGE**

*Female voice:*

**One storm smuggler from the 7 seas**

**swaying on the salt of the Third Alley breeze**

**Seeking signs of his sunken cargo**

**Searching for his shipwrecked soul**

**Cut-throat eyes & treasure-lust**

**He catches you your life is lost**

*The cart reappears in front of the net. The violinist climbs and plays, one gang member stood high behind him. The violinist descendsleaving the gang member on top.*

**4th Alley dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**1 step 2 step 3 step 4**

**3 alleys done & 4 alleys more**

**Sail down the darkness of Holderness drain**

**‘til you reach the tracks of the phantom train**

**Sign to the signalman ‘til it goes dark**

**Capsize the vessel & jump for the mark**

**Hold your nerve as the steam screams past**

**Howling down the tunnel ‘til the very last blast**

*A second gang member climbs the cart, which sets off on a journey accompanied with banners like sails.*

**4th Alley Part 2**

*Male voice:*

**As we sally down alleys with victory flag**

**We knock up rough palettes & rags for a raft**

**We launch to the water with ripcord lasso**

**Drinkin’ the downpour of renegade moon**

**Kickin’ up grit as we set sail for magic**

**we push for the land of the 4th alley spirit**

**sailin’ & swervin’ down Holderness Drain**

**chasin’ the vapours of runaway freight train**

**Splittin’ the heavens with hurricane laughter**

**Scattering slingshot & skimming disaster**

**sinkin’ a depth charge to blast up the fishes**

**dredging up silt of the sailors last wishes**

**Trawlin’ the penny-poor treasures of Hull**

**fishin’ out black pearls to dowse ’em in petrol**

**Moorin’ to burn up what salvage we find**

**We capsize our vessel arse-up on the bankside**

*A signalman character flashes a lantern from the top of the tower as the cart approaches. The gang members flash their lanterns from the cart in return. The cart is upended and one gang member is raised up into the air to its summit, joined by a second gang member who climbs to the top. In front of them, at a distance, ‘Bubblegum boy’ appears on top of the tower, holding a gigantic white balloon floating in the air.*

**Fifth Alley dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**Fifth dare, fifth alley**

**Climb into Hedon Road cemetery**

**Find the statue of the child**

**Sing lullabies to his weather-worn tomb**

**Bubblegum boy will come alive**

**& move in the light of the blind man’s moon**

**His eyes will flicker & shed red tears**

**One drop for each of his short years**

**Look to his shadow, never look him in the eye**

**or a curse will burst in the big black sky**

**Look twice & the curse will multiply**

**& hunt you down wherever you hide**

*The gang members throw stones at Bubblegum Boy from the top of the upturned cart. Bubblegum Boy releases his balloon which sails into the air. One gang member descends, pointing the blame at the gang member who remains.*

*Twent-five giant white balloons are carried in and amongst the audience, floating in the air. The gang member on top of the cart is given a balloon.*

**Fifth Alley 2nd section**

*Female voice:*

**Alley 1 Alley 2 Alley 3 Alley 4**

**Undo the curse with a lullaby verse**

**Or lose the bubble for eternity**

**Take a deep breath, count to seven**

**follow the bubble and hope for heaven**

*The gang member releases their balloon into the sky, and the rest of the balloons float up into the sky also.*

*The cart is brought back down to its wheels. The gang wheel it through the crowd urgently towards the wall structure at the other end, where one gang member climbs and calls to the others. All 4 climb and hang off it. As a searchlight casts around, three duck, leaving one caught in the light.*

**Alley 6 dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**6th Alley, 6th dare**

**Where dark angel flies the air**

**circling over the prison towers**

**danger for a thousand hours**

**Jump & climb the prison wall**

**Play dead when the sirens call**

**If dark angel sees you move**

**A bomb will fall & kill us all**

*An explosion flares up behind the gang on the wall, and they play dead as it continues to flare.*

**Alley 6 Part 2: Explosions**

*Male voice:*

**A thousand hours of darkness drift**

**in shadow of dark angel**

**A thousand silent footsteps fall**

**in shadow of dark angel**

**Seeking songs of siren warning**

**feeling for the light of morning**

**All East Hull is dust-cloud falling**

**shadow of dark angel**

**We freeze in the echo of a great demolition**

**Bulldozers wreckin’ the breeze-blocks we live in**

**Ten thousand memories thrown to the skies**

**as the mortar spills & the ash-clouds rise**

**See smoke-filled air through the bombed-out walls**

**A new world billows as the old world falls**

**A new-build ghost town founded to last**

**as more boarded houses wait for the blast**

**The detonating dream of Preston Road**

**Lifted on high as the skyline explodes**

**Our ancestors rise with the dust migration**

**Drifting east with each ghost detonation**

**Teetering on top of our pile of rubble**

**as a crane arm rises like the dark angel’s wings**

**we’re utopia’s cast-offs litterin’ the alleys**

**playin’ in this world of broken things**

**Shattered doors & window-shards**

**abandoned shoes & scorched bed-springs**

**Burnt mattresses & bombed-out trolleys**

**Blown far from home to clatter up the alleys**

**Some folk leave & some folk stay,**

**some are evicted, some drift away**

**But our gang, we’re staying ‘til it’s finished & done**

**Waiting for the glory of the great demolition**

*Two gang members have fled from the sirens, leaving two on top of the wall structure. They throw bangers.*

**7th Alley dare rhyme**

*Male voice:*

**1 alley 2 alley 3 4 5**

**6 to the 7 and then you arrive**

**Wait for the toll of the midnight bell**

**unleashing the spirit of the final spell**

**follow in the wake of the pathway it makes**

**& find yourself standing at the 7th gate**

**7 heavens, 7 seas, 7 for the harmonies**

**7 is the magic key**

**To midnight in the 7th Alley**

*Twelve bell tolls ring out. From the opposite end, a firework erupts into the air. The spirit of the 7th Alley appears spinning rapidly through the air and through the field. She arrives in the centre and circles slowly.*

**7th Alley Part 2**

*Male voice:*

**Ashen wields a book of life**

**Every bookpage made of ice**

**When Ashen flies the Heavens open,**

**From the skies her pages floating**

**Each snowdrop one word of a story**

**Ashen claws to catch them falling**

**pages & words fly from her hands**

**prophesies & legends from distant lands**

**Reach to the sky to capture them all**

**Catch each fragment heaven-sent**

**Grasp all words before they fall**

**before they melt, before the story ends**

*Confetti like snow and book pages flies into the air around the Spirit, who begins to spin rapidly again towards the 2 gang members who climb down from the ‘wall’ and run away. The spirit then flies off towards the 7th Alley, which ignites into lines of fire as she passes. She disappears off down the end of the alley.*

**7th Alley Part 3**

*Two gang members appear on the cart, which is moved towards the opening of the 7th Alley. The portal continues burning.*

*Male voice:*

**At last we land at the midnight gate**

**We cast our stories into the portal, telling tales of**

**firefly nights & each flood warning**

**twilight transformed & transforming**

**bubble boy & baby farm**

**& phantom ship in 3rd alley mist**

**& dragon’s lair & ghost freight train**

**& smugglers, dark angels & storms**

**& every song that sails the Drain**

**& each wonder yet to be born**

**& seven ghost stories from a ghost age**

**Written in a ghost book torn from a ghost page**

**& 7 friends who find the key**

**to midnight in the 7th Alley**

**We’re off down this last alley**

**I dare you to come too**

*The gang members move on the cart down the 7 Alley. The public are encouraged to follow. Confetti and book pages fly into the air from the end of the alley. Hand bells ring in the distance.*