



Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Meet Me on The Move visits Noel Coward: Art & Style**

Artist report (text only) by Robyn Herfellow for Entelechy Arts

Meet Me on the Move is generously supported by City Bridge Trust

## **The Journey Here**

*Maureen*

*"Here I am back in the city!"*

"I used to come into town to dance, all dressed up."

"The driver we had was very, very nice. He sat me in my seat and he said 'right Maureen, what kind of music do you like listening to?' I said 'at home I have smooth radio because its songs I know and I can sing along to'. And he put it on! And it was really nice. And every now and then he'd call out 'Are you okay Maureen?' He was a very helpful man"

*Rosemary*

"The journey was terrible, there was so much traffic and we went all around. It looks like they're doing work here, can you believe they're building more? He used to commute here, but now we don't come into the city."

### **Rosemary presents the ring.**

The people working at the Noel Coward exhibition are amazed as Rosemary presents this ring. It was given to her by a woman who danced in one of Noel Coward's productions, and the ring was given to this woman by Noel Coward himself. There is a note accompanying it from 72 years ago.

Amongst an exhibition of relics and treasures from the life and work of Noel Coward, much of which was gifted between people one way or another, to think it would happen that you could bring your own treasure. There's a height and drama to the exhibits, and the ring itself sparkles with the same sense of glamour. The story it tells is a personal one of a gift between two performers.

Then comes the story of how the ring was gifted again, and how it will be kept safe and passed on to a lucky member of the next generation. An archive the size of one ring and a note, perhaps on display, on a finger, or in a drawer.

## Opulence

Opulence shimmers brightly in abundance as we examine the life of Noel Coward. Pottering around the exhibition, as coffee and toasties amble through our bodies, what is our place within this sparkly section of history?

We are people of the world, what have we got to do with opulence?

The most inviting bridges between us and the exhibition were the dresses. Stories of dresses we've made, shared, worn out, passed down and given away flowed just as the luxurious fabrics do from the mannequins. They listen to us describe the shows we have been to, dances we have done, furs that we continue to wear.

It is probably just about possible to live a life of opulence every minute of every day, though one would have to execute sleeping, going to the toilet, and even falling ill whilst maintaining a sense of glamour and abundance.

Yes we people of the world do have access to opulence, whether it comes in material form or otherwise. From the memory of a chaise longue in grandmother's house - in front of the mantelpiece with pipes hanging above it - to the glint in our eyes as we laugh, moments of opulence are everywhere.

In the age of mail order plastic sequins, real opulence is harder to find. The spangled dresses are exposed as lifeless fabrics when compared to the real glamor of human connection. Travelling into the city for the first time in years to spend a day at an exhibition together, we people of the world have everything to do with opulence.