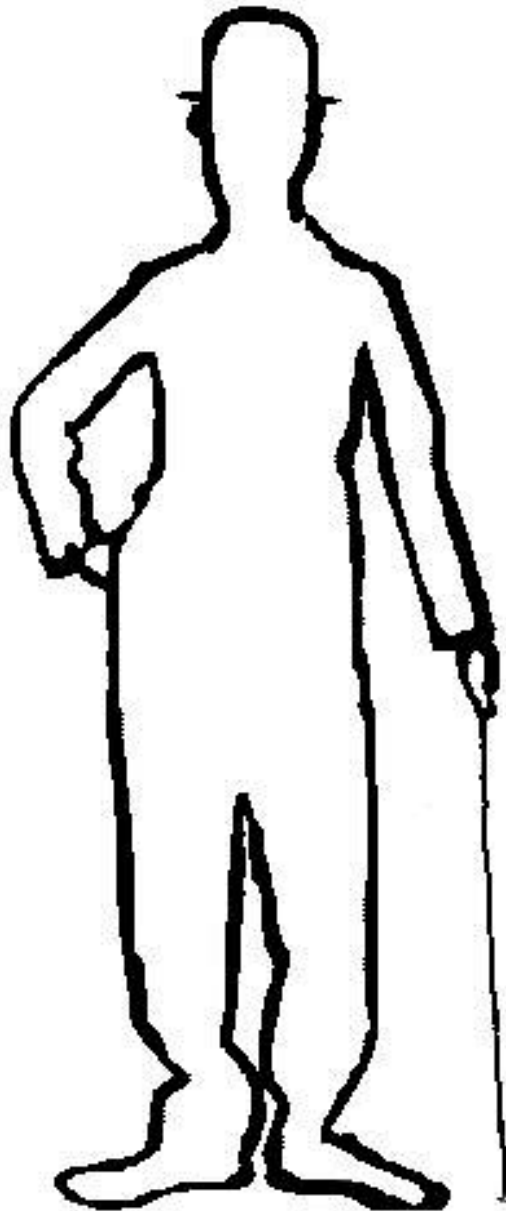


Monument to Chaplin's 'Tramp' Proposal Document



The Cinema Museum proposes to erect a monumental ghost-like silhouette of Chaplin's "Tramp", to be situated in Lambeth: his place of origin.

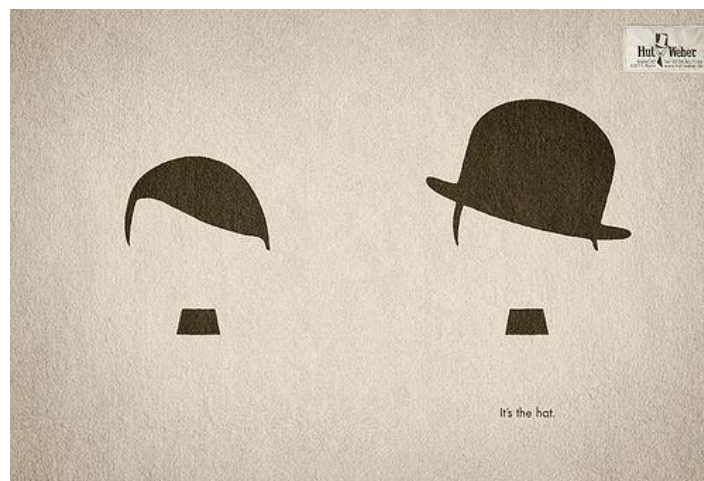
Why Chaplin?

Chaplin was the most famous and best-loved man of his time. His legacy risks being forgotten along with his origins. While Chaplin's humour is bound to belong to its time and culture, what he represents, on a more serious note, is universally important. The tramp figure embodies the struggle of the poor man for his dignity.

Chaplin was born into a family of music-hall performers, who themselves encountered unbearable trials (alcoholism and schizophrenia) which magnified Chaplin's childhood difficulties. He spent his formative years in and around Lambeth, struggling to survive his poverty-stricken background. Through a steely determination to better himself, he won a reputation as a child actor and at the age of 24 he found opportunity in America's up and coming film industry. Chaplin constantly strove to educate himself: a resolve which ultimately saw him become the most famous performer and film director in the world. Despite his phenomenal wealth and fame, Chaplin's best works were loyal to his Kennington background.

Aside from his filmmaking, Chaplin was a political figure. He was sought after by the most influential personalities of the time, including Gandhi and Einstein. Yet however high he climbed, the plight of the struggling outcast was not forgotten. He was an outspoken humanist and internationalist, and was well known for fraternising with the idea of Communism (which at the time of the Cold War caused him many problems).

Significantly, pre-Second World War, at a time when America was still reluctant to pose a challenge to Hitler, Chaplin satirised him with his film 'The Great Dictator'. The two men were born in the same week of the same month of the same year. While Hitler's impact on the world was one of unimaginable cruelty, Chaplin's legacy is one which appeals to our sense of compassion.



Although Chaplin's private conduct has often been called into question, his real gift to humanity was through his work. His extraordinary talent in his chosen vocation cannot be underplayed. His power of conviction lay not in preaching, but in humorous depictions of man's follies and vulnerabilities. He possessed a wizard-like ability to

impersonate human, animal and object alike. His haunting charm and mesmerising facial expressions captivated millions.

Why this form?

The monument's form is meant to be a ghost-like figure: something that you could easily dismiss but is always present. While people could see Chaplin as merely a clown, we perceive him to be a political figure using his humour as a way of transmitting his message. The hollow figure also leaves the viewer guessing the direction of his gaze.

The size of the present maquette situated at The Cinema Museum is 5.5m. The statue's final dimension will be determined by its location, however our goal is to erect a figure which is monumental in its scale: the small man is finally given ample recognition.

We have chosen to portray Chaplin in his 'Tramp' guise, because the monument aims to celebrate his work and his message rather than the man as a private individual. Through holding up the figure of the tramp, Chaplin's intent was to provoke compassion for the imperfect.



Maquette for the proposed monument, at The Cinema Museum (5.5m in height)

Where, and Why?

Chaplin was born on the Walworth Road but lived in various Kennington locations until he moved to America as a teenager. This early stage of his life informed most of his important work.

Possible locations:

Kennington Cross: Chaplin spent countless evenings here waiting for his father to take him home. This location was central to his many wanderings.



Vauxhall Spring Gardens: These gardens were London's most infamous 18th century playground. Nowadays the proximity of MI5 gives a good backdrop which hints at Chaplin's late problems with the FBI. This is a strategic location: the figure would be seen from the Vauxhall-Waterloo trains.



Kennington Green: This green faces Kennington Park, where Chaplin spent time with his mother during various sad childhood incidents. The location also has a distant view of MI5 building. The figure appears caught between these two points in his life.



Lambeth Old Work house: The place where Charlie, his half brother Syd and his mother spent time, when they were destitute. Now it is home of the Cinema Museum.



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