



YOU DON'T KNOW

Bonus episode: It's your (basic) footwork

Lizzy Turner – **LT**

David Turner – **DT**

Transcript by Lizzy and David Turner.

Intro:

[The sound of birdsong and faint general outdoor background noise fades in and continues beneath the following intro section before fading out.]

Hello, welcome to the second bonus episode of You Don't Know, I'm David Turner. This episode is called *It's your (basic) footwork*, and is a recording of a collaborative poem/essay by me and Lizzy, which we wrote for the new anthology *KINETIC*, published by the lovely folk at Colliding Lines. All the writing in the anthology is illustrated by visual artists and is available to buy directly from the Colliding Lines website, link in the episode description.

The anthology will be officially launched at I'klectik Artlab in Lambeth south London, Thursday 9th June, so if you're local get yourself along there to listen to the contributors perform their work. Lizzy and I were hoping to perform too as it's the venue where we used to run our spoken word night, *Silence Found a Tongue*, but unfortunately it's not possible this time around.

We don't always have time to respond to invitations to submit work but we both really love what Colliding Lines do, and their dedication to experimental writing, sound and visual art, which is a great fit with this project. Also, as we were both obsessively thinking about how we were supposed to be moving our feet while learning to box at the time, the theme of the anthology seemed like the perfect subject to respond to.

To anyone that came here purely for boxing content, I can only apologise for what you're about to listen to! This whole series is fairly self-indulgent! If you do enjoy the recording though, then maybe check out some of our other episodes and tell your friends about us. It really helps to spread the word. As usual this episode is accompanied by a full transcript, follow the link in the episode description or go over to youdontknow.uk to download it.

As with so many things in life, we'd know far less about boxing without the help of others, so a massive thank-you to poet and boxing coach and all-round great friend 'Grim' Chip Hamer, who you can find at All Stars in West London every Saturday morning; Obi Egbunike who offers fantastic 1-2-1 personal training and boxing coaching in London (link to his website in episode description); Fayaz and Waheed at the East London Boxing Club in Walthamstow; and Reggie, Lennie, Jackie, Tina and everyone else down at Islington Boxing Club.

If you'd like to read some proper boxing writing after listening to this then check out the brilliant Donald McRae, particularly his book *A Man's World*, about the fascinating life of Emile Griffiths. I've been reading a lot of boxing books over the last year and he really is top of the pile in my opinion. But it is very close with him, Hugh McIlvanney, and George Kimball.

One last thing, I normally aim to make my own field recordings, but this time around I just haven't had the time, so a massive thank-you to felix.blume for the recording of the boxing gym which I downloaded from the ever excellent Freesound website. That's enough from me. Speak to you all again soon.

It's your (basic) footwork:

[00:03:34]

[The sounds and background noise of an indoor boxing gym fade in and continue beneath the entirety of David's following spoken section. The sounds include punchbags being hit rhythmically, coaches giving instructions, and people moving around and exhaling heavily. Occasional sounds of shoes squeaking on the floor can be heard.]

DT:

[For the sequence of single words in italics, David's voice has an EQ effect which makes it sound muffled and tinny, as though he is speaking over a telephone. For the rest of his spoken section, there is no effect.]

*Order... Advance... Need... Maintain... Form... In... To... You... To... Your... Footing...
It's... Harder... Than... Think... And... And... You...*

1. It's like Chip says – boxing is about hitting and not getting hit – *I hit you. You don't hit me.*
2. It's like Chip says that someone else says – fighting is about standing still and getting hit.

It's somewhere between 1. and 2. that you'll find your version of what boxing is.

It's somewhere around having put on 10kg since I last had any aspirations at 10km and it's all just being very slim but feeling very very heavy.

It's somewhere around wrestling the inclination to step forward with my hands down because that's what it's always been before. Because that's what everything had been about.

It's somewhere around realising (painfully) that I'd never developed the muscles needed to get out of the way quickly enough. And it's all relying on your lead foot to propel you back that throws you.

It's somewhere around learning that in order to advance you need to maintain your form and footing. That if you're not careful you'll find yourself tied in knots and off balance. Swinging wildly.

[The boxing gym sound crossfades with the sound of a person walking outdoors, through thick, wet mud. The mud squelches beneath their boots. The mud-walking sound continues for a short time, and beneath the following sentence in italics, before crossfading with the boxing gym sound. The gym sound then continues beneath the remainder of the track before fading out.]

LT:

[For the sentence in italics, Lizzy's voice has the same EQ effect as David's above.]

In order to advance, you need to maintain your form and footing... and it's harder than you think.

It was when Chip asked me why I was thinking of taking up boxing, and was it because, 1. I wanted to learn to fight, or 2. just for fitness, that I realised I hadn't really thought about it at all, and his face was straight and genuine and serious, and I know how much boxing means to him, so I wondered whether I should have been thinking about it, and was I just presuming I would be able to do something which is properly important to people who need it, and then Nadia suggested that it might be because it's important for *us* to learn self-defence, so I thought, yes, that must be it, and I hadn't said anything to David about it, so he couldn't jump in to help me answer, and Chip hadn't thrown it out as a challenge, but I still wanted to offer him a response, and the three of them are the most politically engaged people I know, so I struggled to back that up with anything meaningful, and then I didn't take the idea of boxing any further, and it was when David had been getting coached for 3 months, and we started re-/learning how to skip, and he began sharing some basic footwork with me, and showing me what he had learned that week, and how to step using the painted lines on the basketball court as a guide, and then showing me how to 1 and 2, and 1,2, and 1,2,3, and sitting with me to wrap my hands, removing my rings, and

securing my wrists, and lifting my elbow, and correcting my wandering back foot, reminding me to keep my hands up, elbows in, chin down, reminding me to be light on my feet, to begin everything with a lighter touch, that my reasons for wanting to do it began to make sense.

[As the track fades out, the final sound which can be heard is of skipping ropes whipping through the air.]

End of transcript.