

VIRTUAL MEDIA FOUNDATION PRESENTS

*LIVES IN CRISIS:
JESUS' DAUGHTER*





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***LIVES IN CRISIS:
JESUS' DAUGHTER***

Libretto by Burton Beerman
Conceived & Composed by Burton Beerman

Virtual Reality Environment
Created by Burton Beerman

Paul Causman, Director
Celesta Haraszti, Choreographer
William R. Smith, Scenic and Costume Design
David Nelms, Lighting Design

Saturday, November 4, 1995
8:00 p.m.
Franciscan Theatre and Performance Center

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Cast

Celesta Haraszti, dancer
Tina Sandor Bunce, mezzo soprano
Burton Beerman, electric clarinet and Indian flute
Shawn Hart, percussion

Puppet Handlers

Roark Littlefield and Mark Petering

Children

Clare Strange, Melissa Noe, Jonathan Victorian and Emily Zimmerman

Scenes

Set One: Crucifixion
Set Two: Small Talk
Set Three: Silent Rage
Set Four: Illusions
Set Five: Crucifixion Revisited

Synopsis

Set One: Crucifixion

What can be believed is only what has not been disproved. That which has not yet fallen victim to being exposed is thus still vulnerable to humanity's inability to completely understand anything around it. Which face is the reality? As you come to believe, a mask is removed and you know the face below is genuine, only to have it removed and reveal the true place below, only to have it removed to show reality. But is this last disclosure the reality or have we just stopped removing masks? Who is to be believed when a woman remembers, in whatever fashion, fragmented traumatic events from childhood-not so focused and cognitive, but in the form of body reflexes and shadows in the mind? What do we consider as truth, the dramatic protestations of the accused or the wounded plea of the woman child? We stand in horror at what can be done to young children that leaves them forever fragmented, driving down the realities within them to the safe depths of the unconscious. If we knew, if we were able to follow the hidden threads back from the wounded adult to the besieged child we would know life's realities and humanity's final justice would be clear. But we are left only with this moment in time, this present flash that has such an unfocused history. That women and children are abused and that this is intolerable finds no argument from the unattached, but from the surrounding players of their tragedy, path to actions are not so clear. The dancer is placed in a projected virtual video environment at the beginning of set one, clearly in despair but not sure why. Her movements control the video presentation of computer images of herself and the sound environment. Which is the reality: the calm, sullen face or the horrific, injured inner self? As the set progresses it is clear that tragedy has befallen her. She declares to her offender, "Father, father why have you forsaken me?" The set ends in contrast as a naive madrigal in celebration of young ladies and of innocence.

Interlude One: Choices and impossible decisions.

Set Two: Small Talk

The singer as the omniscient messenger sings a lament of the woman's tragedy as the dancer moves in slow resolution to her fate. The messenger questions why the woman would not have wanted to be the chosen one of the father, and taunts her with "How many get to be Jesus' Daughter?" Suddenly the singer changes character to that of the father and protests to the daughter why he is accused by her, reminding her of her favored status. The daughter retorts by also changing character, protests her accusation and mockingly assumes the role of the fathers. The singer then begins a long aria giving the audience its first view of her persona, punctuating the center part of the section with lines, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, have I a right to live at all?" In response to this unveiling of herself, the dancer continues to proclaim she remembers being abused but eventually resigns herself to her fate. She sings into the morass of her tragedy to the wailing of an amplified Indian flute. In order to survive such a horrific violation, the dancer assumes the role of the father and preaches to the audience to the accompaniment of the cymbals. But this is not enough. Tragedy and despair is inevitable. The dancer slowly sinks to the floor as young children surround her with song and gently stroke her wounds. In her last line, she desperately declares, "My body remembers and that IS something."

Interlude Two: Again, choices and impossible decisions.

Set Three: Silent Rage

The dancer as the young woman can now be resurrected from the death that her tragedy brought to her, eventually removing her mask to reveal the authentic self (or is it?). After dancing with renewed energy brought on by rage she speaks to the audience in an accusatory way, asserting, "I didn't know what you meant. That you meant. I didn't know." She repeats these words, ending with the words that finally reveal that she understands what has happened to her, "To kill me."

Set Four: Illusions

The daughter dances with newly found conviction and assertiveness as she leaps from the fires of the volcano but the singer from afar counters with song, reminding her of her tragic destiny. The mood again changes abruptly with the rhythmic speech, driving the issue of confrontation to the forefront. The dancer, as the woman, even taunts the father with rap-like text, "Do it, do it, do it to me," declaring at the end of the set, "You cannot do it to me anymore." The set ends with the soulful aria heard earlier throughout the opera, haunting reminding the woman of her birthright.

Set Five: Crucifixion Revisited

The father is now placed in position for the mother's judgement as she is brought forth to choose.

Post performance discussion and reception (Lobby)

Join humanities scholars, artists, performers, and others discussing the performance. Arthur G. Neal, Distinguished University Professor at Bowling Green State University, Howard Ducharme, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Clinical Bioethicist, University of Akron, Judge Denise Dartt, Dorothy Bryan, Visual Artist, Paula Lewis, Therapist, Lena Wright Myers, Professor of Sociality/Anthropology, Ohio University.



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Acknowledgments

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Many Special Thanks:

R. Brent Beerman, Beverly Norman, Arthur G. Neal, Roger Schupp, Marilyn Shrupe, Katharyn Humphey, Paula Lewis, Dorothy Bryan, Kendel Kissinger, Richard Fortner, Glenn Burris, Jane Milbrodt – Elementary School Specialist at Kenwood School in Bowling Green, Paul Lopez, Marcus Ricci, Jeannie Ludlow, Kristine Jordan, Frances Burnett and JaFran Jones

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Bowling Green State University combining a major in percussion performance with music theory. Most recently, he was a member of the Roger Williams rhythm section appearing with the Lima Symphony. He is a member of the Bowling Green Philharmonia at BGSU and a percussionist with the Perrysburg Symphony Orchestra.

David Nelms is past designer and technical director of the Toledo Reperatory Theatre. Among his long list of theatrical credit, spanning a 12-year career, are *On The Verge*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Pygmalion*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *A Chorus Line*, *Evita* and *As Is*.

William R. Smith has been a resident designer and director at the University of Toledo for the past 21 years. He has directed for the Toledo Repertoire Theatre, the Toledo Symphony, U.T. Music Department Opera Productions, designed for the Toledo Ballet and other civic organizations. His production of *Candide* was selected to go to the A.C.T.F. regional festival. Among the musical productions Professor Smith has directed are *Cabaret*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Chicago*, *Evita* and *The Boyfriend*. Professor Smith also worked as a design consultant with John Hughes on the Warner Brothers 1993 release *Dennis the Menace*.

Special text written for INTERLUDES and SET 5 by Los Angeles playwright **R. Brent Beerman**.

Production Staff

Puppet and Mask Design	Bradford Clark
Source Drawings for Video	Bradford Clark
Mother Mask Creation	William R. Smith
Father Puppet Costum	William R. Smith
Sound Engineer	Mark Bunce
Recording Engineer	Mitchell Miller
Video Animation and Editin	Mike Albaugh
Technical Assistants	Andy Anderson
Stage Manager	Patti Fruchtmann
Running Crew	Richard Fortner, Michael Oliver
Make-up	Natalie Knickel

This evening's performance is being filmed for broadcast by WBGU-TV.

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Program Note

Set One: Crucifixion
 Hush, little baby that can't be free
 Hush, baby hush don't cry
 Your daddy takes your life
 as your mother watches you die
 so hush, little baby
 life was never yours to be
 and you don't know why.

Did you hear what she said? what she said that I did?
 me, the preacher man, what she said that I did?
 I saw it on TV, there are groups to help
 people like me who have been wrongfully accused.
 help stand up and say no, no, I didn't do this.
 Why do you accuse me a preacher man?

Father, father, why have you forsaken me?

Ladies dance, dance with crinoline charms
 flowing from your waists
 to attract the hulking males for this is your task
 your vision of life with locking arms
 you sway your honey hips
 no reason to ask why me?
 why do I dance and paint my lips
 to bring this strength to me?
 to me!

Ladies dance, dance with giggling smiles and pouting,
 fragile steps
 as innocent as a bursting drop of dew
 they shake to foot with the gangling stride of
 a newly born calf seeking her mother's milk
 The ladies dance, dance
 Ladies dance, the dance of death.

Set Two: Small Talk
 Singer: Holy, holy
 holy, Daddy is God's messenger
 And touches you, touches you with the light
 Yet you sit so melancholy,
 My holy child
 How many get to be Jesus' daughter?
 This is your birthright,
 Yet you sit so melancholy.
 Holy, holy, holy, By all that is holy
 Forced to be his wife, at the cost of your life.

Why, why, Why do you blame me
 I am God's servant
 Why do you wrongly accuse me
 When Jesus is my master.

My child, My little child
 I placed you on my lap, my favorite
 I rocked you why do you blame me?

Dancer: Holy, holy
 Brother, Brother good
 Brother sister
 My people
 My suckers

Why, why
 How can you hurt me so
 When I am God's servant?
 Why, why
 Who do you cry? I don't understand?
 Why do you not want to be Jesus' daughter?

Singer: The young dame had a sister named Rose
 Who was misnamed
 For it is she who is the Rose
 As Rose should have been named stone
 For a rose is a Rose, is a Rose is a Rose
 baptized as the young dame.

Her father in all his misgodlyness stole her being
 So she says: And brother and dad left her for dead.

And this little beaming star,

sat in the mud
 Muddled and unaware of her noble birthright
 Looking into the wisps of the dew and seeing only the
 weeds;
 Mirror, mirror on the wall; have I the right to live at
 all?

Like a discarded toy she lay broken
 In the arms of evil
 As these sightless voices ran their boats
 And gave their sermons
 Only in the secret of their hearts stopping to admire
 Their ability to turn gold into coal.

But almost unnoticed.

At first just the gasp of a cough.
 The first heat of her unbreakable will on her cheek
 Then whole movements.

This jewel willed herself from the mud
 Unbeaten by evil
 And unbroken by the spiritless father
 (*aside: Well, maybe a bit bent*)
 She rises. Her scent evident to everyone
 Touched by her magic

For a rose, is a rose, is a rose is always a rose
 Is a wonder, is enchantment.

Dancer: No, no

Singer: No, no, I remember
 clear as a rainbowed sky after a rain
 I remember then it vanishes in a wisp

My body remembers

Singer: I don't understand why you say these things
 that aren't true

Dancer: No, no, no

Singer: I don't even know what isn't true.
At least listen to me.
Hear my feelings

Dancer: I know my body remembers.
My body remembers and that is something.

As a boy I dreamed of being the arm of the church. Of being Schweitzer's partner in Africa. Of helping mankind. I lived for my children. I lived for them. Gave them everything. Do you think it was easy becoming a doctor with so many children? No!

Evil. This is evil.

I worked endlessly for Jesus. I brought God to the world. I knelt with the Pope and cried for my dead son. Everyone loves me. Just ask any of them. Everyone adores me. Admires me. I have given them eternal life. Hope. Faith. A future. I have given them my presence and walked among them with Jesus at my side. I have shone as any mortal man should shine. I have done nothing. I have done nothing wrong.

Singer: Holy. My holy child.
So melancholy, holy.

Dancer: My body remembers and that IS something.

Set Four: Illusions
Hush, baby, hush don't cry
Your daddy lakes your life
as your mother watches you die
So hush, little baby,
life was never yours to be
and you don't know why.

Hush, my little baby
you never had a chance
daddy stole your crown
and only your body remembers the dance
my sweet thing,
hushed little baby
that can't be free enough to love me.

Hush, baby hush don't cry
You daddy takes your life
as your mother watches you die
so hush, little baby

Domestic and sexual violence is a stressful topic even for those who have worked in the field for years. Tonight's performance may bring some emotions to bear, may tap into some feelings that you want to honor in the moment and for that reason a SAFE ROOM has been provided for audience members who need to take a break from the presentation or wish to after the performance and are experiencing distress and wish to talk with a person trained in peer crisis intervention. Women and men alike are welcome to use the safe room. If you would like to talk with someone trained in peer crisis intervention, ask the usher and one will meet you in the safe room located in the Boardroom.

life was never yours to be
and you don't know why.

This truth that is ours
this religion that the earth is round
that beasts don't feel nor have souls as do we
that the sun always shines
and a silver lining fills the coat of our misfortunes
that what I see is
and what I don't see is not necessarily not
that right is clear and hate evil
that evil is good and good is evil no
that good is good
and evil is evil
no that good is not bad

and evil is wrong, or is it?
How do you know?
Do you ever ask?
Are there demons watching us
laughing at our ignorance
Like a giant stadium game
and we the players
and they the free romans
unenlightened like rats in a maze
bumping into truths
a blind man catching lightening bolts

symbols
the ring
big rocks
and little stardust on the finger
proclaiming this bond, bond?
This gaggle tribe
with a history of 50,000 years on the plains
It's a symbol,
it's just a symbol
a symbol
but very real.

This moment that I know is real no illusions
no symbols but the unadulterated truth
that split second of reality

Drawn from the clouds
as the plane descends in to where I was raised
given those values like chuga lugging vodkas
force feeding the rest of life.

Cast Bios

New York City's *The Village Voice* has said that "There is a remarkable clarity in the way **Burton Beerman** carries out the logic of his materials and he has an excellent ear for sound color... the composer displays an acute sensitivity to the differences between live sound and electronic sound and the music contains extraordinary moments when the sound seems to belong to both worlds..." Composer, clarinetist, visual artist and computer programmer, Burton Beerman continues to seamlessly integrate technology with other art media. Tonight's performance crowns a seven-year journey toward the creation of JESUS' DAUGHTER. Performances of his works have taken place at New York's Carnegie Concert and CAMI Halls, Chopin Hall in Mexico City, Town Hall in Brussels, the American Cultural Centre in Paris, Spoleto Festival USA, Japan, Australia, Budapest, Canada and New Zealand. He is a recipient of numerous commissions and awards, among these are awards from the International Society of Bassists for *Voices* for soprano voice and contra-bass, the Martha K. Cooper Orchestra Prize for *Moments* and a Libscomb prize for *Romance* for piano and tape. He has recorded on the Capstone label, **Electric Clarinet** is available from your local record store through Albany Music (CPS-8607 CD). Most recently the Warsaw Philharmonia, Poland, has recorded for compact disc, Richard Stoltzman performing Dr. Beerman's *Morning Calls* for B-flat clarinet and orchestra.

Celesta Haraszti began her dance training in Budapest, Hungary and later received her Master of Fine Arts in Dance/Choreography from the University of Utah. She has been acknowledged as "one of the leading soloists of the avant-garde dance world..." by the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. Having firmly established herself as an undaunted collaborator with many internationally known composers and directors of multimedia productions, she has performed and created over 40 works. Since 1982 she has toured as a member of the **Electric Arts Duo** ensemble performing throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Ms. Haraszti has a uniquely individual virtuosi style that combines the strength of an athlete with the grace of ballet and is noted for her dramatic ability to establish a perfect equilibrium between music and dance. Her master teachers have been Alwin Nikolais, Martha Graham and Murray Louis. She studied extensively with Viola Farber, Bill Evans and Guss Solomons, Jr.

Paul Causman is past artistic director of NCOAC Studio Theatre and the Toledo Rep. He spent five years in long-term residencies funded through the Ohio Arts Council before assuming a staff position with the agency. A delegate to the World Shakespeare Congress and an artistic contributor to the National Committee Arts and the Handicapped Taskforce, he has established several educational programs for young people and for visual and hearing impaired audiences. Paul is currently appearing at Gramma Roses' Dinnertainment in Perrysburg.

Tina Sandor Bunce holds degrees from Olivet College and BGSU. Her teachers include Andreas Poulimenos, Beverly Rinaldi and Virginia Starr. A winner in the Kalamazoo Bach Festival Young Artist Competition, she has appeared with Toledo Opera and has been an intern with Michigan Opera Theatre. An active oratorio soloist, Tina has appeared in master classes with Elly Ameling and Udo Reinaman. She is currently publicity/publications manager for the College of Musical Arts as well as the voice coordinator for the Creative Arts Program.

Shawn Hart graduated *summa cum laude* from Wilkes University in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. Presently he is pursuing a master's degree at the College of Musical Arts at