

# Adam

By **Joshua Sobol**

Play no. 412

Opening show 29/07/1989

Creative team

**Director:** Gedalia Besser

**Designer:** Adrian Vaux

**Musical Director:** Ori Widislavsky

**Lighting:** Natan Panturin

Cast

**Old Nadia, about 70 years old:** Elisheva Michaeli

**Young Nadia, about 20 years old:** Tatiana Kanlis-Olier

**Sep, about 70 years old, a magician, lives with old Nadia:** Shmuel Segal

**Adam, about 70 years old, the commander of the Ghetto underground:** Sasson Gabai

**Gens, about 40 years old, chief of the Jewish Police:** Oded Teomi

**Kittel, about 26 years old, a Gestapo officer:** Yehonatan Segal

**Lev, about 25 years old, a member of the underground leadership:** Gil Frank

**Lachman, about 35 years old, a member of the underground leadership:** Dov Navon

**Zaltsman, about 35 years old, a member of the underground leadership:** Haim Chova

**Rozin, about 40 years old, a member of the underground leadership:** Yossi Yablonka

**Niussia, about 25 years old, a member of the underground leadership:** Nava Ziv

**Mira, about 22 years old, an underground intelligence agent:** Bruria Albeck

On July 9, 1943 the Gestapo arrests two Lithuanian communists, active in the anti-Nazi underground in Vilnius (Vilna). One of the two breaks down in the course of the interrogation and reveals to the Germans the name of the leader of the Jewish underground in the Vilna Ghetto: Itzik Wittenberg.

Jacob Gens, head of the Ghetto, is ordered to deliver Wittenberg into the hands of the Gestapo. Gens summons Wittenberg to his office, and while they are speaking, Dessler, Gens's second-in-command, bursts into the room accompanied by Lithuanian policeman and arrests Wittenberg. But members of the Jewish underground overpower the policeman and rescue Wittenberg.

Now the Germans present an ultimatum: if Wittenberg is not delivered into their hands, the Ghetto will be liquidated.

After bitter debate, and following a near revolt against the underground by the Ghetto's inhabitants, demanding Wittenberg's extradition, members of the underground leadership resolve to deliver their commander into the hands of the Gestapo.

On July 15, Wittenberg was handed over to the Gestapo. The following day he was found dead in his cell, an apparent case of suicide by swallowing cyanide.

The play "ADAM" is based on the Wittenberg affair, but the characters, their characterization, relationship and dialogues, as well as the structure of the play, are purely fictitious.

Many accounts of the Wittenberg affair have been collected. However, none of the accounts seem to agree with one another. Each account carries its own truth. And no one truth complements another. The more one reads and hears evidence, the more one realized that the so-called truth is but one of many differing versions. And so is the play "Adam".

And indeed "Adam" is told from the point of view of the young lover of the Head of the Jewish underground. In the play she is called Nadia. Some claim that her real name was Adia, others Lise. And then there are those who disclaim her existence altogether, this young woman whom Wittenberg come to as a last shelter from both his pursuers and comrades-in-arms: after the underground leadership's decision to hand him over One version suggests Wittenberg presence during the voting, another suggests it was carried out in his absence.

Usually the term betrayal denotes betrayal of one individual nu another, or the betrayal of the public by an individual. However in "ADAM" the interest lies in the betrayal of the individual by the public. The play tries to follow the human mechanism through which loyalty turns into betrayal, friendship into disavowal and solidarity into a solitary act

The play focuses on the collapse of the bond of togetherness in the face of death, and the horrible loneliness of the individual becoming the victim sacrificed on the altar for the benefit of the public.

The individual is abandoned to the fate in order that others will live. Only this personal sacrifice will make it possible for him to be hailed as a hero after his death.

