

Cry The Beloved Country

By Maxwell Anderson

Based on the novel by Allan Paton

Play no. 124

Opening show: 30/04/1953

Directed by: Julius Gellner

Hebrew Version: Menashe Levin

Song Translator by: Ephraim Dror

Setting and Costumes by: Joseph Carl

Choreography by: Ruth Harris

Chorus and Solists trained by: Konrad Man

Conducted by: Fordhaus Ben Zissy

Cast

Leader: Gideon Singer

Answerer: Shoshana Duer / Ina Govinska

Stephan Kumalo: Aharon Meskin

Grace Kumalo: Bat Ami

Nita: Batia Kantor, Ester Asher

Stationmaster: Moshe Alpern

Young Man: Eliezer Plotnik

Young Woman: Zaharira Harifai

Young Man: Shmuel Segal

James Jarvia: Haim Amitai

Arthur Jarvia: Jehuda Ephroni

Edward Jarvia: Gideon Rosengarten

John Kumalo: Shmuel Rodensky

Paulus: Baruch David

Johanes: Mish Asherov

Alex: Alexander Ansky

Foreman: Menachem Golan / Moshe Alpern

Mrs. Mkize: Shoshana Duer / Ina Govinska

Hlabeni: Shraga Fridman

Mark Eland: Shlomo Bar Shavit / Menachem Golan

Linda: Ruth Maimon

Matthew Kumalo: Izchak Bareket

Absalom Kumalo: Nachum Buchman

Irina: Pnina Perach

Servant: Shimon Israely

Policeman: Moshe Alpern

Burton: Shraga Fridman

The Judge: Ari Kutai / Jehoshua Bertonoff

In a little village of Ndotsheni in South Africa a colored preacher i
The Reverend Stephan Kumalo a humble man of god, looks after his flock. It
has been nearly a year since he has heard from his son, Absalom, working in
the mines to earn money for his education.

The boy's mother fears that trouble has befallen Absalom that he is no longer the loving son who left home. In "Thousands of Miles" Stephan reassures her that neither distance, not silence, nor years can separate people when there is love.

At his wife's urging, Stephan agrees to take their meager life saving and go to Johannesburg to look for Absalom. As he is about to board the "Train to Johannesburg" he is greeted by Arthur Jarvis, son of a neighboring British planter, who cannot understand his son's outspoken friendship for the Negroes for her "unable to locate Absalom, Stephan agrees to take his sister's son Alex back to Ndotsheni to live with him in his "Little Gray House". Absalom meanwhile, sits in a Shantytown honkytonk listening to "Who'll – Buy"? The brazen song of Linda, an entertainer. He is trying to decide whether he should join others in a robbery. Because he desperately wants a better life for Irina, and their unborn child, Absalom decides to join the gang. Heart sick, Irina reaffirms her abiding love "Trouble Man". The plotters run into difficulties and Absalom loses his head.

He shoots a white man, in fear. The chorus acts as a commentator, "The Fear of The Many For The Few".

Absalom is apprehended. His heartbroken father visits him in prison and promises to do what he can for the boy. For a moment he wonders whether God has forgotten his suffering children and has gone away and left mankind "Lost In The Stars".

Act II opens with the reverend Stephan's predicament. He knows that his son is guilty, but the identification of the murderer is not complete.

Left alone, Stephan battles with himself and prays to God – "O Tixo Tixo", help me. Meanwhile Irina has learned of Absalom's rash deed. She remains faithful to him for, whatever he has done and prays that he will "Stay Well".

The next scene occurs in a courtroom. Absalom accomplices lie, but the boy tells the truth. They are acquitted and he is sentenced to hang. At this point the chorus returns as commentator and breaks out with a lament "Cry The Beloved County", an outburst of the grief for wasted childhood and the lost of son, for broken hills, and broken tribes.

The action shifts to Stephan Kumalo's little village in the hills. A little boy Alex is playing, digging a hole in the ground and singing a song about "Big Mole", the fastest digger in the world. Stephan calls his congregation together and addresses the people, telling them of his decision to resign from his pastorate at Ndotsheni.

It is four o'clock just before Absalom's execution. Jarvis the father of the murdered white man visits Stephan Kumalo, and persuades him to stay in Ndotsheni to look after his flock.