

The Visions Of Simone Machard

By Bertold Brecht

Play no. 167

Opening show: 17/10/1959

Translation by : Nissim Aloni

Directed by: Israel Becker

Music by: Hans Eisler

Design of sets and costumes: Yossel Bergner

Musical Director: Fordhaus Ben-Tzissy

The Cast

Mme Machard: Z. Pugitzker

M. Machard: E. Gera

Therese: T. Dar

A Colonel: A. Forman

A Sergeant: S. Bruck

A German Captain: D. Ram

Refugee woman: R. Shalk

Refugee : M. Binyamini

Angel: P. Perach

Pere Gustaver: Y. Bertonoff

Marie Soupeau : S. Duer

Henri Soupeau : M. Margalith

Honore etain: P. Gutmark

Simone Machard: L. Rivlin

Philippe Chavez: A. Ezekiahou

Robert: A. Cohen

Maurice: S. Atzmon

Georges: S. Bar-Shavit

It's 1940

The German onslaught in France is in full swing. A large part of the country has already been conquered the German approaching Saint Martin, the town where the play takes place. Henri Soupeau, called "Le Patron", is the owner of an inn in Saint Martin, on the man road leading south from Paris. He has succeeded in freeing his servants from army service by saying that they were "vital" to their job.

Among the servants (Pere Gustave, Maurice, Robert, Therese), is also Georges, who returned after being wounded in the hand at the front. Recently the girl Simone Machard joined the staff of servants to work in the inn in the place of her brother, the only one who volunteered to join the army. Le patron, who wants to appear as a decent, righteous ma, gave Simone a present, the book "Joan of Arc".

Conversation among the servants centers around the war, officers who desert their units when things are going badly, on the Germans who may reach the town, and on France, beloved France.

Meanwhile French soldiers arrive at the inn, sent by the mayor to receive food for their unit, Soupeau, the innkeeper, who had just sold his best food to a French officer who had deserted his unit, gives instructions that the soldiers' packs be only half filled, in order to economize.

The mayor demands that Soupeau gives his cars for transporting refugees, and the petrol in his stores for army vehicles, but Soupeau cunningly succeeded in getting out of this.

Simone dreams she is Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans. Reality and the dream blend into one for Simone, the dreamer. Meanwhile the Germans had crossed the Loire, streams of refugees flood the roads of France. They knock at the doors of the inn and demand Soupeau's cars. Marie Soupeau, Henri's mother, afraid that the inn's stocks will be looted, agrees to open the inn's storehouse to the refugee. In order that her son can save his stocks meanwhile and move them southwards, she offers to let the refugee remain, to feed them, and that a few of them only should travel in Soupeau's cars.

Little Simone, who revealed to the mayor the secret of the hidden petrol in the inn's storehouse and the secret of the cars, with which the Soupeau family and a rich vineyard owner, Honore Fetain, and hoped to save their possessions, is dismissed; she is afraid to return home and hides meanwhile in the servants quarters.

The Germans have already reached Saint Martin. A German officer arrives at the inn. Old Marie Soupeau and the rich vineyard owner, Fetain, welcome him hospitably. Even the secret of the precious petrol, so vital for the German tanks, is revealed to him. Simone continues to dream. She is now day-dreaming.

With the help of the Germans, the refugees are again forced on their way and Marie Soupeau refuses to give them the food she had promised them. The angel in Simone's dreams directs her. In reality she burns the petrol storehouse. Henri Soupeau "le patron" fears for his life and for his inn. Simone comforts him. She will go to the German officer and will confess that only she, alone, set fire to the petrol.

Simone dreams again, and behold, in her dreams a court condemns her to death. Reality is not less cruel. Madame Soupeau takes her revenge on Simone, she procures a letter, certifying that the girl should be put into a lunatic asylum, which is run with cruelty by nuns. Simone opposes her, but in vain.

All her friends are convinced that to stay in such a terrible place is in reality to be condemned to death. But Simone has given life to the resistance against the Nazi conqueror in Saint Martin. While she is being led to the lunatic asylum smoke rises from afar, from the Gymnasium in which the refugees awaiting their eviction were lodged. Before their departure they had set fire to the hall. Simone could still see the smoke from afar, as she went on her way to prison.

