

Herod And Miriam

By Friedrich Herbbel

Play no. 270

Opening show: 15/01/1972

Hebrew by: Jaacov Shabtai

Directed by : Andrzej Szafianski

Set by : Arie Navon

Costumes by : Anatol Gurevitz

Music by : Poldi Schatzman

Movement by : Zila Unger

Lighting : Nathan Panturin

Cast

Herod: Michael Warshaviak

Miriam: Levana Finkelstein

Alexandra: Shoshana Duer

Shlomit: Bella Genauer

Josef: Rolf Brin

Suemoss: Israel Rubinchik

Shmaja: Leo Jung

Titus: Baruch Barkin

Iehuda: Shai Danon

Zrubavel: Pessah Guttmark

Judge: Zalman Hirschfeld

Philon: Pavel Czolczynski

Servant: Shmuel Sagi

Messenger: Beni Apollo

Spy: George Hashaviah

Workers: Yitzhak Kluger, David Shahar, Pinchas Goldberg, Seharia Tobi

Maids: Pnina Wilsher, Esther Orgad

The Play

The plot is centered on the clash between Herod, King of alien origin who came to power after the decay of the House of the Hashmonaim, and the priests and conservative religious element who were opposed to making any concessions to the Roman authorities by whose favour he was occupying the throne, after he had exterminated any opposition by his cruel and bloody dictatorship. He would stop at nothing to fulfil reforms, both religious and social, which he considered essential. The opposition to his regime included the Queen's mother Alexandra, who wanted to use her daughter Miriam in her fight against Herod, especially after her son had been murdered on Herod's orders.

Miriam is very much in love with her husband and is most unwilling to be used as an instrument in her mother's hands against him, although she disapproves of his bloody deeds. Herod, who like all dictators, has no faith even in those closest to him, secretly gives orders for his wife to be murdered should he not return from his visits abroad to his Roman masters because he doesn't want her to fall into any other man's arms. Miriam gets to hear of this and is deeply hurt that he doubts her, and her love for him, and as a proud daughter of the

Hashmonaim she decides to make him take her to trial and force him to pass the death sentence on her for treason. She succeeds with the help of Herod's enemies who use this familial conflict for their own ends.

After Miriam's death Herod's private life is finished, but as King and ruler he continues his fight to keep his throne and to carry out the reforms which he considers extremely important for the country.