

MUSICAL

Conceived and originally directed by
JOHN-MICHAEL TEBELAK

Music and New Lyrics by
STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

Director
GIORGOS KIOURTSIDIS

GOODSPEL

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Originally produced on the New York Stage by
EDGAR LANSBURU-STUART DUNCAN/JOSEF BERGH
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH SAMUEL FRENCH LTD

Synopsis:

A group of young people meet in a park, get to know each other and present a series of parables from the Gospel of Matthew while playing. However, religion is not the theme of the play. The whole play is now set in contemporary Greece, where faces and circumstances, despite their resemblance to the parables, bring before our eyes timely and timeless social issues, in a humorous and intimate fashion.



GOSPELL
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Opening – “Prepare to emerge into the light”

Song: People seem lost in a tunnel without end. The song paves the way for them to emerge into the light, as a redemption.

1st Image – Introduction

As they drink water –a gesture that connotes the Mystery of Baptism– the protagonists greet the audience and briefly refer to the issues that concern them: hypocrisy, the arrogance of power, prejudice, ponderous justice and racism.

“Save the World”

Song: talks about the world rescue.

2nd Image – Ponderous Justice

The story of a widow that struggles to get her late husband’s pension and finds herself face to face with bureaucracy. In the end, she manages to fulfil her wish thanks to her persistence.

3rd Image – The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

The two protagonists of this scene are puppets that are confess before the priest, asking for forgiveness. The Pharisee manifests arrogance as he asks for forgiveness, thanking God for not being a greedy person, a dishonest man or a cheater, prejudging his forgiveness. On the contrary, the Tax Collector expresses his honest regret with a simple apology, thereby gaining God’s forgiveness.

4th Image – The King and the Servant’s debt

The actors performing this parable decide who will play each part in the presence of the audience. The King takes his place on the throne. A servant, who is unable to pay his debt to the King, appears before him. The King relentlessly tells him to sell all his belongings, even his children, in order to find money. Then the servant falls on his knees and begs him to be patient. The King, deeply moved, realizes his own cruelty and erases the debt. Right after this erasure, the same servant meets another fellow servant, who in his turn was indebted to him. The second servant begs the first to be patient until he can pay him off. However,

the first one refuses and shuts him up in jail. The King’s courtiers show mercy and inform the King on what has happened. He calls the first servant and announces him that he wasn’t worth his generosity and that he will be punished –by that means he might understand his mistake in due time...

“Three things I ask for” (in time)

Song: talks about love.

5th Image – The Good Samaritan

A dispute on how to proceed with the game comes right after. During the fight, a girl falls on the ground and hurts herself. All children are rapt with the fight and no one pays attention to the girl who is in pain. No one except for one, who brings her to her feet and helps her rejoin the group.

6th Image – The Rich Man and the Poor Man

A newspaper announcement about a death leads the group to the next image. The group is ready, while in the background we can see an actor who plays the part of the rich man and gives orders, aiming at expanding his activities and gaining more and more wealth and more goods. In a corner of a stage, another actor plays the part of a poor man, while an actor acting out Death slowly takes his position in the centre of the stage. Through a series of improvisations, Death leads the rich and the poor in the Underworld.

“Glory to Heaven”

Song: talks about God’s magnanimity and his love to mankind.

The shift of the Rich Man and the Poor Man in the Underworld

Death, the rich man, the poor man and Lazarus are now on a raft. The rich is obviously disturbed with what has happened to him, while the poor man looks calm and mellow even in this very moment. Their journey is over and music is heard from the background of the stage (that is, from Heaven). Hereby, Lazarus plays the part of the doorkeeper, in charge of the entry control. A company of girls is fighting for his t-shirt, which ends up in the audience’s hands. The poor man is patiently waiting as Lazarus moves towards him and leads him to Heaven. The rich man attempts to return to his previous life by calling his firm on the phone, but it is obvious he has no chances, since Death keeps popping up on his way, telling him to stop insisting and advising him to learn his lesson.

“Learn your Lesson”

Song: encourages people to behave well, otherwise they will be punished.

7th Image – Quiz

After a brief argument, they decide to play a quiz. The actors are divided into two groups: the “Fuchsia” and the “Almond Green,” while in the background two actors turn into dwarfs. The questions are relevant to conclusions drawn from the previous images. The last question, which is at the same time the funniest, refers to Lazarus’ t-shirt and what was written on it. The actors are now called to look for the t-shirt among the audience and finders winners.

“Everything is Fine”

Song: talks about the certainty that life finds a way to correct anything that is going wrong.

A penalty is imposed to the team that lost the game, but then it gets unanimously withdrawn, since it is not right to punish someone when playing a game. Hence, they decide to collectively execute the punishment, which is no other than an improvisation.

“What I See All Around Me”

Song: talks about the possibility for seeds to grow when found in fertile ground, facing all obstacles that might occur.

8th Image – The Prodigal Daughter

A girl undertakes the task of explaining the song that came before, using modern music rhythm and lyrics. It is this girl that will lead us to the next image.

The actors seem not to understand the girl’s stance, so the “narrator” undertakes telling her story, while the rest are taking their place as viewers of a three-dimensional TV.

The daughter appears on stage, asking from her father whatever belongs to her, in order to leave their home and kick off her own life, as she wants it. The father, profanely moved, splits his fortune between his two daughters, and the second daughter stays with him. The prodigal daughter hits the road, lives high, and meets the love of her life named Daniel. Daniel is an opportunist and gambler who spends all her money and leaves her high and dry. The girl returns to her home place, calls her father’s deputy director and asks him to meet. In their meeting, she confesses what has happened and that she wishes to return home. He tells her that father would welcome her and that the next day her sister would get engaged with the company’s chief accountant.

We are transferred in the engagement scene. The prodigal daughter meets her father.

“You are the Light of Life”

Song
Towards the end of the song, and through its last lines, the daughter who is getting engaged, obviously disturbed by her father’s attitude, verbally attacks him, pointing out that she has stayed by his side after all these years. The father hugs both his daughters, asking them to forget the past and live lovingly from this point on.

“Man, Come Here”

Song: talks about the value of emotions and the bonds of the heart before over and beyond all obstacles.

9th Image – Racism

During the transition to the next image, an actor loses his wallet. While he is looking for it, some folks from the gang imply that Vania, a non-Greek girl, might have taken it. Subsequently, they all start to quarrel. Some people defend Vania, while others accuse her. Vania is upset, nevertheless she tries to calm everyone down, saying that since such a fight occurs due to a lost wallet then maybe they have lost the meaning of co-existence. At the peak of the fight, the actor finds his wallet.

“Stand by Me”

Song: talks about the value of solidarity and of walking together through life.

While the previous scene unfolds, an actor has openly taken Vania’s side and now he tries to take her with him so they can leave together. However, he stops at the last minute, as he understands that this would be a mistake. Therefore, he explains to the others how he feels and tells them that love is the most important thing in life and that plenty of times we might hurt someone’s feelings, but we can always compensate with an apology.

“Listen to Us”

Song: with this song the folks apologize to Vania.

10th Image

The company, now united, starts discussing the ways in which the park where they’re at, as well as the city, would become better and prettier. Each and everyone contribute with his own idea.

“Beautiful City”

Song: a beautiful city is build through the song, based on the dreams of this company of people.

“We Will Remember”

Song: talks about all the things the group experienced together and the necessity for them to remain in memory.

“Save”

Song–Finale