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*Dramatic Publishing*

# LILY PLANTS A GARDEN

A Play

by

JOSE CRUZ GONZALEZ

Originally commissioned by  
Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Producing director/Mark Taper Forum associate artistic director Corey Madden; director Eric Johnson; set design Keith Mitchell; costume design Nephelie Andonyadis; lighting design David F. Hahn; puppet design and fabrication Lynn Jeffries; projection design Adam Larsen; music and sound design Paul James Prendergast; casting Amy Lieberman, CSA and Paul Dinh-McCrillis; production stage manager Anna Belle Gilbert; stage manager Michelle Magaldi; associate production manager Amanda M. Gratton; P.L.A.Y. production supervisor Seth W. Chandler; crew lead Mark Migdal; sound engineer Rico Garcia; master electrician Joshua Madera; sound/electrics crew Jay Myers; wardrobe Jessica B. Gorchow; puppet intern Michelle Zamora; P.L.A.Y. producer Dolores Apollonia Chávez; education associate Kimiko Broder; project coordinator Corky Dominguez; school and community liaison Leilani Chan; artistic director/producer Gordon Davidson.

## PERFORMERS

Young Girl	Elyse Dinh
Miss Beatrice/Zobeing and Wuluman in Uniform	Matthew Henerson
Mama Wuluman	Kwana Martinez
Lily Wuluman	Joy Osmanski
Papa Wuluman/Shadow	Michael A. Shepperd

# LILY PLANTS A GARDEN

A Play in One Act  
For 2m., 3w.

## CHARACTERS

YOUNG GIRL, our storyteller. She is a survivor in a war-torn era. She has a red wagon that contains all of her belongings. Young Girl also plays Rosey, a rose plant ballerina puppet. She speaks with a French accent.

LILY WULUMAN, a Zobeing child raised by Wulumans. She wears a bluzulu seed necklace. She has red crooked hair and three fingers on each hand. Zobeings are vegetable-like creatures.

MAMA WULUMAN, a Wuluman. Wulumans are animal-like creatures. Mama Wuluman has long hairy ears, a snout-a-puss and tusks-a-wus. Mother to Lily, a rough-like but caring mother. Mama Wuluman will also be played as a puppet.

PAPA WULUMAN, a Wuluman. He has long hairy ears, a snout-a-puss and a tusks-a-wus. Father to Lily. Also plays Shadow, a gentle Zobeing soul.

MISS BEATRICE, a ladybug puppet. She speaks with an Irish accent. Rides an airship. A male actor should play Miss Beatrice. Also plays Wululander in Uniform, Zobeing in Uniform.



## LILY PLANTS A GARDEN

*(Stars glow through the broken window of an abandoned dwelling. The room is littered with rubble. Several explosions are heard nearby. Flashes of light flood through the room creating fragmentary shadows on the wall. In the darkness a small figure scurries in with an old red wagon. She hides. Silence. The glow of a distant fire illuminates YOUNG GIRL. She is not of our era. She sits very still holding her torn teddy bear and ballerina slippers. She opens a music box and the sounds of war fade away. In the rubble she discovers a little package of sweets. She eats them. She finds a doll with a missing head and a plastic toy radish with lots of crooked roots that look like hair. She attaches it onto the body of the doll. She begins playing with it. YOUNG GIRL unearths a toy castle with a castle door and windows.)*

YOUNG GIRL. Once upon a time, in a far distant land on the doorsteps of a little wukastle with a little wukar a baby named Lily Wuluman was found. *(YOUNG GIRL places the doll in small basket laying it in front of the castle door.)* Lily Wuluman had two eyes the color of chocolate, red crooked hair, and a most beautiful milky smile. She had two hands and three fingers, two feet and five toes, and a tiny little nose that when she'd sneeze, went—

LILY (*from insides the castle*). Wuchoo! (*A baby's laugh is heard.*)

YOUNG GIRL. Lily Wuluman's laughter awoke a childless couple that upon seeing her immediately took her into their wucastle. (*YOUNG GIRL opens the castle door placing the basket inside. The castle door magically closes by itself. Footsteps are heard outside the abandoned bedroom. YOUNG GIRL freezes until the footsteps are gone. The distant firelight creates shadowy figures on the wall.*) No one knew how she got there. But some say they saw a mysterious figure sneaking about that very night in their neighborhood. No one ever spoke of it again. (*One of the shadows runs off.*) Lily Wuluman was just about the most perfect little baby ever, except for one slight, itsy-bitsy problem: around her neck dangled a bluzulu seed. You see Lily was a Zobeing and her mama and papa were Wulumans. Awooo!

*(Three full moons of various sizes appear. YOUNG GIRL plays with her teddy bear. PAPA and MAMA WULUMAN are heard offstage.)*

PAPA WULUMAN & YOUNG GIRL. Awoooooo! (*A baby's cry is heard coming from the castle.*)

MAMA WULUMAN & YOUNG GIRL. Frank, keep it down! You're scaring baby Lily!

PAPA WULUMAN & YOUNG GIRL. Awoooooo!

MAMA WULUMAN & YOUNG GIRL. Frank!

YOUNG GIRL. You see, Wulumans were the mortal enemies of Zobeings. (*YOUNG GIRL adds another doll to her play.*) Long ago Zobeings and Wulumans shared the same lineage. They were one family. They traded blu-

zulu seeds and wusoil and they grew the most beautiful gardens in the whole world.

PAPA WULUMAN. Awoooooo! *(In the distance, the imaginary sky becomes filled with plumes of fire and smoke. Fragmentary shadows on the wall come to life and depict her story.)*

YOUNG GIRL. But then a Zobeing and a Wuluman got into an argument, which led to a fight, which started the Great Endless Unforgotten War. They became so terrified of one another that Zobeings chose to exist by day while the Wulumans chose the night. And their beautiful gardens vanished away forever. Centuries later the war still rages on but no one remembers why it started nor do they remember how gardens came to be.

*(PAPA WULUMAN enters. Wulumans are tall creatures. PAPA WULUMAN is a security guard. He sees the moons and howls.)*

PAPA WULUMAN. Awooo!

*(MAMA WULUMAN enters removing a baby bundle from the castle. At one end of the baby bundle red crooked hair sticks out.)*

MAMA WULUMAN. Frank, you've awakened Lily again!

PAPA WULUMAN. Can't a Wuluman howl when he wants, Lois? It's a three full moon night for gosh sakes.

MAMA WULUMAN. What has gotten into you lately? You've been in such a tizzy about things.

PAPA WULUMAN. Lois, you used to like my howling, riding with me on my wumotor hog and throwing cau-

- tion to the wind. Now, every time I ride or howl, you shush me. “Don’t, you’ll wake the baby!”
- MAMA WULUMAN. Things have changed. We have a little one now and your howling frightens her.
- PAPA WULUMAN. How is it we have the only child on the entire block that cries when a Wuluman howls? Isn’t she supposed to howl too?
- MAMA WULUMAN. Lily’s a special child.
- PAPA WULUMAN. Lois, she’s a Zobeing!
- MAMA WULUMAN. Frank!
- PAPA WULUMAN. There, I said it!
- MAMA WULUMAN. She’s our little baby!
- PAPA WULUMAN. But she wears a bluzulu seed around her neck!
- MAMA WULUMAN. Don’t start!
- PAPA WULUMAN. She doesn’t look anything like us! She doesn’t have big hairy ears, a snout-a-puss or even tusks-a-wus! Zobeings have wild crooked hair, enjoy the sun and have three fingers! They’re scary-looking! Maybe we shouldn’t have taken her in!
- MAMA WULUMAN. Don’t say such an awful, monstrous thing!
- PAPA WULUMAN. Why not? We’re monsters! Good monsters! Fair monsters! Monsters who pay their taxes and give to the poor!
- MAMA WULUMAN. No child should ever go unloved, no matter where it comes from or what it looks like.
- PAPA WULUMAN. But how can a Zobeing ever live with a Wuluman? Is it possible?
- MAMA WULUMAN. She’s ours to raise.
- PAPA WULUMAN. Our neighbors say we’re cursed!

MAMA WULUMAN. They shouldn't stick their snout-a-pusses where they don't belong!

PAPA WULUMAN. But she's so soft and tiny!

MAMA WULUMAN. Not another word, Francis Spencer Wuluman!

PAPA WULUMAN. Oh, what's the use! (*Sadly.*) Aw-ooooo!

YOUNG GIRL. Mama and Papa Wuluman tried protecting Lily as best they could but it kept getting more and more difficult.

PAPA WULUMAN. The neighbors want us to hand her over to them.

MAMA WULUMAN. They're not talking about eating her, are they?

PAPA WULUMAN. They want to saute her in butter.

MAMA WULUMAN. They're wucrazy!

PAPA WULUMAN. Or have her for dessert with a little ice cream, chocolate sauce and sprinkles!

MAMA WULUMAN. Frank, the moons are out. They're talking wunonsense. It's fear that has them spreading wildfires of gossip about her! You've just got to ignore them.

PAPA WULUMAN. I've tried, Lois, but it isn't so easy. No one in our neighborhood likes us. They've started throwing wuchuckeggs at me.

MAMA WULUMAN. If we hadn't taken Lily in there's no telling what might have happened to her. This child arrived to our doorstep for a reason, Frank.

PAPA WULUMAN. I just wish I knew why.

MAMA WULUMAN. Go on now; you'll be late for work.  
(*She hands him a lunch pail.*)

PAPA WULUMAN (*sadly*). Awoooo! (*He exits.*)

MAMA WULUMAN (*to LILY*). Give me a smile. That's my sweet angel. Woo...

YOUNG GIRL. To Mama Wuluman, Lily was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen, even with her small ears, tiny nose, and soft skin.

MAMA WULUMAN. What am I going to do with this wild, crazy hair of yours? Hmmm...

*(MAMA WULUMAN exits as LILY appears. She is now a little girl. She wears a bluzulu seed necklace and her red crooked hair is in the shape of Wuluman ears. She carries a Wuluman teddy bear and hums to herself. PAPA WULUMAN enters watching LILY play.)*

YOUNG GIRL. As Lily grew, Papa Wuluman came to love her even though she didn't look like a Wuluman or sound like one, even though her voice was soft and quiet, not loud and gruff. Papa Wuluman tried everything to make Lily fit in so the neighbors wouldn't say hurtful things.

PAPA WULUMAN. Lily, come here.

LILY. Yes, Papa?

PAPA WULUMAN. I have something for you.

LILY. Is it a surprise, Papa?

PAPA WULUMAN. Tah-dah! Look what I made you!

LILY. What is it?

PAPA WULUMAN. It's a Wuluman mask with ears, tusks-a-wus and a snout-a-puss! Here try it on! You look marvelous! (*LILY scoops up some wuludirt.*)

LILY. Papa wuludirt! Papa wuludirt! (*PAPA WULUMAN smears the wuludirt over LILY.*)

PAPA WULUMAN. Lily wuludirt! Lily wuludirt! (*PAPA WULUMAN and LILY roll on the ground.*) Now, Lily, sniff and growl for Papa!

LILY. Errr... Errr...

PAPA WULUMAN. Louder.

LILY. Errr... Errr...

MAMA WULUMAN (*entering*). Frank, what in the name of Theodore Roozabelt Wuluman are you doing?

PAPA WULUMAN. I made Lily a mask.

MAMA WULUMAN. Why?

PAPA WULUMAN. So she can look like a Wuluman and fit in!

LILY. Mama, look! Errr...

MAMA WULUMAN. Lily, take that awful thing off this instant!

LILY. Yes, Mama. (*LILY takes off the mask.*)

PAPA WULUMAN. Lois, I'm only trying to make things better—

MAMA WULUMAN. Lily doesn't need to be made better! What matters is what's inside.

PAPA WULUMAN. I know that but try telling that to our neighbors with their wunasty words and wuhate looks.

MAMA WULUMAN. Lily, cover your ears and hum!

LILY. Yes, Mama!

*(LILY takes off her mask. She cowers underneath her little wukastle. A Wuluman in silhouette appears looking through their window. PAPA WULUMAN waves to him. The Wuluman in silhouette quickly disappears.)*

PAPA WULUMAN. They believe that her bluzulu seed is a curse.

MAMA WULUMAN. Frank, I won't stand for this! (*LILY uncovers her ears.*)

PAPA WULUMAN. Lois, you can't ignore what's happening around us!

MAMA WULUMAN. I know exactly what is going on!

PAPA WULUMAN. Sooner or later Lily will be taken from us and we'll be arrested!

MAMA WULUMAN. No one is taking her away from us!

PAPA WULUMAN. Lois, she'll never be normal! She'll never fit in! She'll never be accepted! (*LILY rips off her necklace.*)

LILY. Bad bluzulu!

MAMA WULUMAN. Lily?

LILY. All your fault!

MAMA WULUMAN. Look what we've done!

PAPA WULUMAN. Lois, let her be. (*LILY digs a hole into the earth.*)

LILY. Cursed bluzulu!

PAPA WULUMAN. It's for the best.

MAMA WULUMAN. How can you say that?

PAPA WULUMAN. Because if she doesn't bury it we're all in danger!

LILY. Go away!

*(LILY buries the bluzulu seed, covering it with wuludirt. She cries over it. A musical note is heard for each tear. An ANGRY MOB OF WULUMAN WITH FISTS appears in silhouette. They carry torches.)*

ANGRY MOB OF WULUMAN WITH FISTS. She's not wanted! Send her away! Zobeing, leave us! Zobeing, leave us!



LILY. Mama?

MAMA WULUMAN. It's all right, Lily.

PAPA WULUMAN. My fellow Wululanders, I have great news! Her bluzulu seed is gone! (*The ANGRY MOB OF WULUMAN WITH FISTS shakes their fists at the family.*)

ANGRY MOB OF WULUMAN WITH FISTS. She's not wanted! Send her away! Zobeing, leave us! Zobeing, leave us!

PAPA WULUMAN. You needn't be afraid! It's buried away forever! See! (*PAPA WULUMAN stomps on the ground where LILY buried her bluzulu seed. YOUNG GIRL makes the mound glow while springing up a single blue sprout.*)

LILY (*frightened*). Mama!

PAPA WULUMAN. Oh, no!

MAMA WULUMAN. Oh, my!

ANGRY MOB OF WULUMAN WITH FISTS. Aagghhh!

YOUNG GIRL. The Angry Mob of Wuluman attacked their home, smashing it to bits! Kaboom! (*YOUNG GIRL smashes the castle with her fist. The ANGRY MOB OF WULUMAN WITH FISTS fades away.*)

YOUNG GIRL. Oh, no!

LILY. Mama! Papa!

PAPA WULUMAN. Is anyone hurt?

LILY. What was that, Mama?

MAMA WULUMAN. That was a kaboom, baby.

PAPA WULUMAN (*sadly*). Awooooo!

YOUNG GIRL. Lily didn't know what to make of this.

MAMA WULUMAN (*sadly*). Awooooo!

YOUNG GIRL. She had never seen a wukastle go—

LILY. Kaboom.

PAPA WULUMAN. They're gone.

MAMA WULUMAN. Frank, what are we going to do?

PAPA WULUMAN. How could they do this to us, to their own family? (*Sadly.*) Awooooo!

YOUNG GIRL. Poor Lily. Poor Mama and Papa Wuluman. Papa began getting sadder and sadder. He started drinking wulujuice. He drank so much of it that his stomach ballooned until he started floating into the sky. (*PAPA WULUMAN picks up a bottle of wulujuice and gulps it. He exits.*)

MAMA WULUMAN. Frank? Frank?

*(MAMA WULUMAN follows. LILY stomps on the bluzulu seedling until it fades away. MAMA WULUMAN enters carrying PAPA WULUMAN as a balloon.)*

YOUNG GIRL. Mama Wuluman had to attach a rope to Papa so he wouldn't float away. But he kept getting larger and larger and floating further and further away until Papa Wuluman was just a little dot in the sky.

MAMA WULUMAN. Frank, you come down this instant!

PAPA WULUMAN (*offstage*). Send up another bottle of wulujuice!

LILY (*waving*). Hello, Papa!

YOUNG GIRL. Then one day Papa Wuluman's rope snapped—

PAPA WULUMAN (*offstage*). Awoooooo!

YOUNG GIRL. —and he floated far away never to be seen again! (*YOUNG GIRL carries PAPA WULUMAN'S balloon away.*)

LILY. Papa! Papa, come back!