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Dramatic Publishing

JAMES A STILL

LONG BRIDGE OVER DEEP WATERS



13-ACTOR VERSION

A LONG BRIDGE OVER DEEP WATERS

13-ACTOR VERSION

Drama. *By James Still.* *Cast: 13 actors.* *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* passionately and compassionately wrestles with the question: “How does faith both unite and divide us?” and explores the often invisibility of faith, how we make unconscious assumptions about one another based on religion, and how often those assumptions are wrong. Inspired by oral histories, community events, and the circular structure of Schnitzler’s play *La Ronde*, the play’s 10 scenes include a Native American woman who teaches ESL to a class of immigrant senior citizens; two astronauts in crisis far away from home and searching for common ground; a man who meets the woman who received his mother’s transplanted heart; and a journalist who interviews a family whose son has been killed in Iraq. *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* traces a joyous, restless and surprising path through a wide-open spiritual and American landscape. It is both intimate and epic—an expansive panorama that stages an interlocking chain of unexpected encounters between contemporary communities of faith. This play was the final play in Los Angeles-based Cornerstone Theater Company’s nationally acclaimed four-year Faith-Based Theater Cycle. “Filled with compassion and respect for all viewpoints, *A Long Bridge* is a rare find—a play that can enlighten and entertain virtually everyone.” (*The Daily Breeze*) *Unit set. Approximate running time: 2 hours.*

Cover photo: Cornerstone Theater Company, Los Angeles, Calif., featuring Meena Serendib and Natasha Atalla. Photo: Craig Schwartz Photography ©2005.



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A Long Bridge... (13-actor version)

• James Still •

Dramatic Publishing

A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters

by
JAMES STILL

(13-actor version)

Based on the large-cast play of the same title that was commissioned by Cornerstone Theater Company for the Faith-Based Theater Cycle



Dramatic Publishing

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(A LONG BRIDGE OVER DEEP WATERS

- 13-actor version))

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Judy Boals, Inc., 307 W. 38th St., #812,

New York NY 10018 - Phone: (212) 500-1424 - Fax: (212) 500-1426

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“This play was originally commissioned and produced by
Cornerstone Theater Company, Los Angeles, California.”

“All the world is just a narrow bridge. And the most important thing is not to be afraid.”

— Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters was originally commissioned by Cornerstone Theater Company, Los Angeles, California, Bill Rauch, artistic director, Shay Waffer, managing director. Cornerstone presented the world premiere of the play at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre on June 4, 2005. Direction was by Bill Rauch, choreography by Otis Sallid, scenic design by Christopher Acebo, costume design by Lynn Jeffries, lighting design by Geoff Korf, music and sound by Paul James Prendergast, video direction by Yule Caise, and dramaturgy by Scott Horstein. The stage managers were Michelle Blair and Anna Belle Gilbert. The cast was:

Loraine Shields, Andrew Cohen, Emily Goulding, Jennie Hahn, Naveed Merchant, Martin Alcala, Greg Cruz, Manuel Sanchez, DeLanna Studi, Sally Ben-Tal, George “Jiddu” Haddad, Natch Narasimhan, Toufiq Tulsiram, Nancy Yee, Leonard Wu, Mark Strunin, Debra Piver, Michele DeRosa, Mark Brust, Joseph Gorelik, Dorothy James, Sofia Azizi, Jeff Sugarman, Adina Porter, JoAnn Charles Smith, George Gant, Virdell Twine, Diana Elizabeth Jordan, Pierre Chambers, Dora Hardie, Fred Fluker, Myron Jackson, Peter Howard, Michael Phillip Edwards, Page Leong, Shishir Kurup, K.T. Thangavelu, Sabrinath Touzene, Yogananda Touzene, Badrinath Touzene, Guinness the Dog, Elham Jazab, Ibrahim Saba, Olga Gorelik, Gezel Remy, Nathaniel Justiniano, Abdulla Al-Muntheri, Bennett Schneider, Berkeley Sanjay, Piyush Ved, Geeta Malik, Meena Serendib, Natasha Atalla, Lisa Robins, Ramy Eletreby, Ebonie Hubbard, Stephanie Nunez, Jonathan Del Arco.

In a revised script designed for smaller cast productions, *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* was produced at Emerson Stage in Boston (Melia Bensussen, Producing Director) on February 23, 2006. Direction was by Brent Jennings, set design by Jane Whitty, costume design by Alison Cole, lighting design by Hilda Outwater, sound design by Peter Hurowitz, and projection design by Jeffrey Haskett. The production stage manager was Meg Edwards. The cast was:

Marie Alegre, Kristina Berrios, May El Calamawy, Briana Carlson-Goodman, Kathleen Donohue, Sahil Farooqi, Leslie Guyton, Megumi Haggerty, Robbie McCauley, Dan Perrault, Salvador Ramos and Enrico Spada.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Days after *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* closed in Los Angeles, I was in a cab going to the airport. My cab driver, in the course of about two minutes, told me that he was 66 years old, was born in India, was a Methodist, was raised in London, and had been in Los Angeles for forty years. And he practices the Kabbalah. It was a very strangely typical conversation that I had had in one form or another during the four years of working on *Long Bridge*. Somehow, people knew that I needed to know.

The most striking thing my cab driver said, though, was when he asked me where I was going, and I said I was going to Seattle to a theater conference. He listened and then said, "Theater is a place where you can see God." He looked at me in the rearview mirror as he said that, to see what I was going to say. And I leaned forward, and he continued to talk.

That was pretty much my experience of working on this play, sitting in story circles with people of many different faiths, where people would talk and I would find myself leaning forward.

When artistic director Bill Rauch asked me to write the final play in Cornerstone Theater Company's multi-year Faith-Based Theater Cycle, I did not say yes immediately. One reason was because everyone at the time was referring to it as "The Impossible Play." What it involved was ultimately bringing together all of the communities of faith that had been working with Cornerstone, that I would be writing a play that featured Catholic immigrants, African-American Christians, Buddhists, Baha'is, Hindus, Muslims and LGBT people of faith. So I didn't say yes. I thought about it. I eventually did say yes, and then I did something crazy, which was to add two more communities of faith, which were the Tongva/Gabrielino Native American community (the original people of the Los Angeles basin), and the Atheist/

non-believers. So now I was dealing with ten communities of faith.

I should also point out that the first play I saw in the cycle was in the Festival of Faith, which was at New Horizons, the Islam school. It was a couple of weeks after 9/11 and what struck me was that I was going to this private Islam school, there was a lot of security there, and we had to show our picture I.D. to get in to see the plays.

For several years then, I shadowed all of the plays in the cycle. I attended some rehearsals, saw all the plays in performance, and went to community and company meetings that pertained to the cycle. I also began hosting my own series of what we called story circles. There are many names for this, many of you out there do this kind of work, oral histories, interviews, whatever you want to call it. But in the Cornerstone tradition it was literally people sitting around in a circle, telling their stories, primarily around issues of faith. Those gatherings happened often at the Cornerstone offices in downtown Los Angeles and other times in places of worship. There were anywhere from two to twenty-five people in those story circles. They took about two hours usually, and I did dozens and dozens and dozens of those with thousands of hours of audiotapes.

Some of the story circles were with specific communities of faith, others were interfaith. One was a story circle of converts. One was a story circle with women only, and me. One was a story circle about relationship to prayer, about when and how people talk to God. Another story circle was centered around food from their favorite religious holidays, and the family stories that were attached to those rituals.

All of that time I was committed to not writing the play ahead of time, to not having an agenda, to not figuring it all out neatly and then going through the motions, but instead trying to stay as completely open as I could to the process, and to absorb,

as deeply as I could, the stories that my community was telling me. It was for me the ultimate act of faith.

While I wasn't writing the play, I was, hysterically and in a very big panic, thinking about the structure of the play. That was the biggest challenge to me. How was I going to bring ten communities of faith together in something that would not feel like "We Are the World"?

At some point I revisited Schnitzler's "La Ronde." Director Bill Rauch and I got very excited about the idea of that structure, and how that would help us theatrically tell the story of how faith both unites and divides us, which was a credo that was on all of the Cornerstone literature around the cycle, and one that I took very seriously.

Once we decided on that structure, then it came to the big question of, what order? In "La Ronde" the play goes from one two-person scene to another two-person scene and something is passed along. How would I determine the order of these ten communities of faith in my play? Bill and I played many games with ourselves, little pieces of paper, putting them in all different combinations, lists. Some of those structures were more provocative. Some of them had better flow. Some of them I immediately could imagine what the scenes were about. Others, I had no idea. So I found myself getting more and more depressed, because I felt like we had a structure but I had no idea how to do it.

Finally, I decided that we needed to find an order that was mathematical, in a way that was almost defensible. We decided on a structure that would go in historical order. We went to the Los Angeles census, we studied and cited major events, beginning with the Tongva Native Americans, obviously, the founding of the first Jewish temple, a visit to Los Angeles from a famous Baha'i leader, all the way through to the founding of the Metropolitan community church in 1968, which was of course the LGBT community.

With the order and structure in place, I began a series of community dialogues where I brought together two communities at a time, usually four people (purposefully kept very small) and I sat on the side and said, “For ninety minutes, we’re going to have a conversation and the only rule is, you get to ask these people from another faith anything you’ve ever wanted to know about that other faith.” The only other ground rule was the person being asked had the right to say, “I really don’t want to talk about that.” It’s worth noting that no one ever refused to respond to the other’s questions.

Eventually I went off and wrote the first draft of *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters*. I had two things taped up on my wall as I was writing it. One said, “How does faith both unite and divide us?” And the other said, “You can’t please everyone.” I later changed that to read, “You can’t please anyone.” It was actually quite liberating. My goal was to write a play that was an authentic artistic response to what I had personally experienced as a person in the very privileged position of getting to hear people talk honestly, openly, painfully about their struggles with faith. That response is this play. Without a doubt it is the most challenging and most difficult play I’ve ever tried to write. And without a doubt, it was one of the richest and most surprising experiences in my life.

One final anecdote. During the run of *Long Bridge* in Los Angeles, a woman came up to me and told me that she had seen the play the previous week and was back to see it again. She went on to tell me that for years she had stopped dreaming at night, stopped remembering her dreams. But every night since she had seen *Long Bridge*—she had had amazing dreams and had remembered them.

For me, her experience helped me remember one of the many reasons I had been drawn to theater in the first place. Theater is a place where you can remember your dreams.

— James Still

A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters

A Play in Two Acts

For 13 actors

(See end of script for suggested cast breakdown for ensemble of 13 actors.)

CHARACTERS

PROLOGUE:

Mrs. Stevenson

Pilgrimage Players (*NOTE: Entire cast on stage from beginning and also play other roles in the various scenes.*)

SCENE ONE: THE LANGUAGE LESSON

Julia

Mrs. Stepankova

Mr. Ramirez

Mr. Diggavi

Mrs. Kayombo

Mrs. Nhim

Tevy

SCENE TWO: WINTER/SPRING

Ruth

Tevy

SCENE THREE: A HEART IS WHERE THE HOME IS

Alana

Regina

Tee-Tee

Regina's Father

Regina's Co-Worker
Regina's Friend
Regina's Neighbor

SCENE FOUR: HOUSTON: WE HAVE A PROBLEM

Anderson
Redwood
Houston Control (Voice Only)

SCENE FIVE: LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Diana
Ajay
Lisa

SCENE SIX: THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE

Ajay
Mother
Father
Grandmother
Omeed
ShahAb

SCENE SEVEN: DECLARATION

Storyteller/Foley Artist
Lord Shiva
Bhasmasura
Vishnu/Mohini
Omeed
ShahAb

SCENE EIGHT: SPANISH 101 FOR TWO HINDUS
AND A MUSLIM

Shama
Jayanti
Sangita
Tameem

SCENE NINE: THE SECRET

Alana
Tameem
Joy
Jesus

SCENE TEN: JESUS OF LOS ANGELES

Jesus
Julia

TIME: Now.

PLACE: Los Angeles.

ACT ONE

PRE-SHOW

ON STAGE: *Twelve empty chairs. Our only company is each other. An old gramophone plays standard music from the early part of the last century.*

10 MINUTES BEFORE CURTAIN: *The PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS begin to trickle on stage. They are actors, all distinctly dressed in heavy Biblical garb. One by one, gradually they enter, watching the audience, and sit in the 12 chairs.*

AT PLACES: *All 12 chairs are filled with the PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS. They look out at the audience.*

PROLOGUE

MRS. STEVENSON takes her rightful place behind a standing microphone in a pool of light. It is a moment for her to savor. MRS. STEVENSON is dressed beautifully in early 1920s attire, not a hair out of place. Something about her says "rich and important." She holds a big old manuscript. If she opens it, you know that dust will fly, that passion and memories are trapped in those pages. The on-stage PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS applaud MRS. STEVENSON.

MRS. STEVENSON (*to her PLAYERS*). Thank you. Thank you, dears. (*To the audience.*) Good evening. And welcome. (*Clearing her throat.*) My name is Mrs. Christine Wetherill Stevenson. (*The PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS applaud again. Clearly they love MRS. STEVENSON—and the sentiment is mutual. She blows a kiss. It's sincere. MRS. STEVENSON looks out at the audience.*) I'm a little nervous. (*Beat.*) My name is Mrs. Christine Wetherill Stevenson— (*Beat.*) And I have been dead for over eighty years... (*MRS. STEVENSON stops—looking around the space.*) I was born, reared, and married in Philadelphia. But I was strangely drawn west—to California—by a feeling that there was something there I was born to do. My destiny. When I arrived in Hollywood in 1917, I wanted to bring culture to the community by presenting religious plays. I had never even opened a Bible. My first endeavor was to produce an outdoor drama called *Light of Asia*—which featured the character of Buddha. That experience was my spiritual awakening—and led me to seek stories of the other great masters known to the world. My plan was to dramatize all of them. I had so many plans! (*Passionate:*) What a time that was! I wrote my first play—*The Pilgrimage Play*—based on my own translation of the four Gospels according to the King James version of the Bible. Then I journeyed to the Holy Land and brought back authentic fabrics and props which we used in our production. I was also the director of that first production. For years my play about the life of the Christ was performed by noted actors—dear, dear friends—many of whom you see here tonight. Ghosts. (*She looks around at her beloved PLAYERS, moved by them all over again. Then to*

the audience:) We just can't seem to leave the theater. It's like our home, our church. *(Beat.)* Anyway, dears, it's now been more than forty years since the last performance of my play—and all that time we've been waiting. Every night—me and my dear actors—we've been waiting for you. And here you are. *(Looking out at the audience, emotional.)* Dear, dear audience. *(Beat.)* Let us wait no longer. This country, this theater, this ground—cries out for this story.

(MRS. STEVENSON takes her place off to the side, the microphone is struck, and the PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS all take their places for the beginning of The Pilgrimage Play. The lights change. Strange silence. Then MUSIC:)

The Pilgrimage Play by Christine Wetherill Stevenson:

“The Voices of Judea”

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #1. In the beginning was the
Word,

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #2. And the Word was with God,

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #3. And the Word was God.

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #4. And the Word was made
flesh

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #5. And dwelt among us.

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #6. And we beheld his glory;

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #7. The Glory as of the only

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #8. Begotten of the Father,

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #9. Full of Grace and Truth.

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #10. For the law was given by
Moses,

PILGRIMAGE PLAYER #11. But Grace and Truth came
by
ALL PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS. Jesus Christ.

(Biblical MUSIC. We are by a river. THREE PEASANT WOMEN huddle together on the bank of the river.)

PEASANT WOMAN #1. Behold, hither cometh the well-
favored harlot, Magdalene—
PEASANT WOMAN #2. With her Roman lover.

(MAGDALENE and PANDIRA enter right. MAGDALENE is in a serious mood and tries to conceal it from PANDIRA.)

PANDIRA *(jovially)*. What new madness did possess ye
Magdalene to come to this desolate place?
MAGDALENE *(forcing a smile)*. A prophet hath been
promised to our people, and 'tis said he frequently
abides here by the river—

(We hear the SOUND OF A FLUTE. PANDIRA tries to continue:)

PANDIRA *(chuckling)*. A prophet! What wouldst thou with
a prophet.

(The FLUTE MUSIC continues, growing stronger. The PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS look around, confused by the sound. Obviously this isn't supposed to happen... Then the SOUND OF SINGING/CHANTING:)

NATIVE AMERICAN/TONGVA ELDER (*O.S.*).
<TONGVA SINGING>

(It is the “Tongva Welcoming Song.” It grows louder and louder—the PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS looking around, feeling the music as both threat and invitation. MRS. STEVENSON gestures to the PLAYERS to keep going, to start again, anything to get the play back on track.)

PANDIRA (*forced, jovially*). What new madness did possess ye Magdalene to come to this desolate place?

(But the WOMAN PLAYING MAGDALENE seems mesmerized by the flute music, breaking from The Pilgrimage Play, walking downstage, looking out at the audience, listening. The sounds of the “Tongva Welcoming Song” continue as another player—JOHN THE BAPTIST—steps forward as if to try and jump ahead to another part of The Pilgrimage Play.)

JOHN THE BAPTIST. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight and all flesh shall see salvation of—of—of—

(But it’s no use. JOHN THE BAPTIST stops, distracted, looking around for the source of the Tongva singing. The WOMAN PLAYING MAGDALENE remains downstage, facing the audience. She is moving, awkwardly. It’s as if her bones are trying to remember something from long ago. She is trying to remember the language, how to move, how to dance... Before the song can end, the mo-

ment is interrupted by the RINGING OF A CELL PHONE. The sound is foreign to the PLAYERS, some of them might even cover their ears. The WOMAN/MAGDALENE searches her body/clothes for the ringing. In the process of looking for her phone, she begins to peel off layers of the Biblical garb. Eventually she is standing in contemporary clothes, the Biblical garb in a discarded heap at her feet. She finally discovers a ringing cell phone in a pocket or bag—and then has to figure out what the phone is, then tentatively answers it.)

JULIA *(to cell phone)*. Hello? Who? *(Realization.)* Yes, this is Julia. *(From this moment on, she is JULIA.)* Who is this? Oh, God. Yes, I did. Right. I know. OK. What day do you need me to be there? OK. I don't know, but I'll cancel stuff if I have to, I'll be there. Saturday. Yes, I know— *(Firm.)* I'll be there. OK, uh-huh. No but I can Mapquest it. Yeah I know that area—I teach at a Catholic church in Long Beach. I teach English. No—the language. ESL, right. No, it's just one class—I'm really an actress. OK. Right. Saturday. Do I need to bring anything? Right. Wait—can I ask—how many are there, how many did they find? *(Listens, then long pause.)* No—I'm still here. I'll be there. Saturday. Bye. *(JULIA hangs up her cell phone—and breaks down crying.)*

PLAYER/JOHN THE BAPTIST *(urgent)*. Mrs. Stevenson, what about the play?

PLAYER/OLD SHEPHERD. What about OUR play?

(They all look to MRS. STEVENSON for her wisdom. She is strangely calm, shocked, but not afraid.)

MRS. STEVENSON (*matter of fact*). I don't know, dears.

(The space begins to change all around them. MUSIC. FIVE PILGRIMAGE PLAYERS strip away their Biblical garb and transform into 21st-century SENIOR CITIZENS.)

SCENE ONE: The Language Lesson

Tongva / Catholic Immigrant

(Long Beach. A small room. Part of a Catholic church or annex. Folding chairs. A blackboard. It's musty but comfortable. Everything in the room looks like it has been donated over the years from people's homes. JULIA stands at the blackboard in front of SEVERAL IMMIGRANT SENIOR CITIZENS: Mexican, Indian, Russian, Congolese and Cambodian. JULIA points to the phrase written on the blackboard and reads it very clearly, over-emphasizing:)

JULIA. "May I use the telephone?"

IMMIGRANT SENIORS (*repeating it aloud, slowly, in unison*). May—I—use—the—telephone?

JULIA. Good, good. "Have a nice day!"

IMMIGRANT SENIORS. Good—good—have—a—nice—day! (*JULIA applauds her students' success; they applaud back.*)

JULIA (*smiling, nodding*). Perfect. Now let's try this one: "It is a sunny day in Los Angeles." Everyone:

IMMIGRANT SENIORS. "It is a sunny day in Los Angeles."

JULIA. Wonderful. Everyone is improving so much.

MRS. STEPANKOVA (*raising hand*). What is this—“improving?”

JULIA. “Improving”—um—getting better, making progress...

(All of the SENIORS talk aloud in their own languages, translating for themselves. Then:)

IMMIGRANT SENIORS (*simultaneously/overlapping*).

Yes, yes! Im-proving!

JULIA. Yes, improving! OK. Let’s try an exercise. I’ll start a sentence and you can fill in the blank— (*They all look at her, confused.*) Um, fill in the blank, finish the sentence. Yes? (*The class laughs, not sure what she means, but willing to try.*) Right. Uh—“My favorite thing about Los Angeles is...”

(She looks at the class, motions for them to finish the sentence. An older Indian man [MR. DIGGAVI] raises his hand, enthusiastically.)

MR. DIGGAVI. “Catholic church!” (*The other students all nod in agreement, pleased. A murmur of “yes’s” ripples across the room.*)

JULIA. Huh. The Catholic church. Well. Sure. I guess that’s—that would count. Anyone else? A favorite thing about L.A.? Palm trees? The ocean, anyone? Favorite thing?

MR. DIGGAVI. “Catholic church!”

JULIA. OK. OK. Let’s try this one: “Does this bus stop near...”

MR. DIGGAVI. “Catholic church!”

JULIA. Right. How about another one. Um—“This morning I saw...?”

(A Mexican-American man [MR. RAMIREZ] calmly answers:)

MR. RAMIREZ. God.

JULIA. God?

MR. RAMIREZ *(halting English)*. “This—morn-ing—I saw—God.”

JULIA. You saw God?

MR. RAMIREZ *(nodding)*. This morning I saw God.

JULIA. Really?

(MR. RAMIREZ just nods calmly, smiling. Suddenly JULIA begins to cry. The IMMIGRANT SENIORS are unsure of what to do, unsure how to react to their teacher crying. They begin to talk to each other in several different languages.)

IMMIGRANT SENIORS *(simultaneously)*. <Several languages: “What is wrong with her?” “Should someone get her some water?” “Maybe she’s not feeling well.”>

JULIA. I’m sorry, really, I—well I had some news, some bad news, SAD news right before I came here tonight, and I’m feeling a little raw.

IMMIGRANT SENIORS *(repeating the new word)*. Raw.

MRS. STEPANKOVA *(explaining to class)*. Means uncooked—like sushi.

MRS. KAYOMBO *(confused)*. How this news make you feel like sushi?

JULIA (*laughing through tears*). No, I don't feel like sushi. Raw—um, how do I explain it? (*She looks out at the faces of the IMMIGRANT SENIORS. They are looking at her with such compassion—it only makes JULIA begin to cry again.*)

MRS. KAYOMBO. Oh! Sushi is crying, yes?

JULIA. No, no.

MR. RAMIREZ. May I ask question? Are you Catholic?

JULIA (*thinking*). Am I Catholic? Kind of. I mean, I was born Catholic. Part of me is definitely Catholic. I think. Am I Catholic? I don't know. I guess I'm—I'm a version.

MRS. STEPANKOVA. Like Virgin Mary!

MR. DIGGAVI. I love Virgin Mary!

JULIA. No, no! God, no, I'm not a—no. This is really hard to explain. (*JULIA thinks, starts, stops, thinks again. Then finally:*) I was born—Catholic. (*The class all nods, understanding.*) But my people are Tongva—

MRS. KAYOMBO. Tong-va.

JULIA. Tongva—yes! It's the name of my people. Native Americans. Indian. (*The SENIORS nod now, understanding.*) Tongva—it means “people of the earth.”

MRS. STEPANKOVA. Earth! Here, yes?

JULIA. Yes. We were here first—HERE—in California. Hundreds of years ago—before the Spanish came—

MR. DIGGAVI. Buenos dias!

JULIA (*nodding*). Yes, and then they converted my people to Catholicism.

MR. DIGGAVI. I love Catholic church.

JULIA. I know, I know you do. But my people—they were forced—

MRS. KAYOMBO. Forced?

End of Excerpt. Cast breakdown for 13-actor

SUGGESTED CAST BREAKDOWN FOR ENSEMBLE OF 13 ACTORS

Note: Please cast your production in whatever combinations work best for your particular situation. This suggested breakdown is a good place to start.

ACTOR #1: WHITE MAN, 40s/50s

Prologue Pandira
Scene 4/5 Anderson
Scene 6 Iranian Father

ACTOR #2: LATINO MAN, 30s

Prologue Jesus of Nazareth
Scene 3 Regina's Neighbor
Scene 9/10 Jesus de los Angeles

ACTOR #3: SOUTHEAST ASIAN MAN, 40s

Prologue John the Baptist
Scene 1 Mr. Digavi
Scene 5/6 Ajay
Scene 7 Bhasmasura

ACTOR #4: ARAB MAN, 20s

Prologue Pilgrimage Player
Scene 6/7 ShahAb
Scene 8/9 Tameem

ACTOR #5: AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN, 40s/50s

Prologue Old Shepherd
Scene 3 Regina's Father

Scene 4 Redwood
Scene 7 Lord Shiva

ACTOR #6: ASIAN MAN, 20s
Prologue An Angel
Scene 1/2 Tevy
Scene 7 Storyteller/Foley Artist

ACTOR #7: NATIVE AMERICAN WOMAN, 20s
Prologue Mary Magdalene
Scene 1/10 Julia
Scene 8 Shama

ACTOR #8: ASIAN WOMAN, 40s/50s
Prologue Peasant Woman #2
Scene 1 Mrs. Nhim
Scene 3 Regina's Co-Worker
Scene 5 Diana

ACTOR #9: WHITE WOMAN, 40s
Prologue Peasant Woman #3
Scene 1 Mrs. Stepankova
Scene 3/9 Alana
Scene 6 Iranian Mother

ACTOR #10: AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN, 30s/40s
Prologue Peasant Woman #1
Scene 1 Mrs. Kayombo
Scene 3 Regina
Scene 9 Joy

ACTOR #11: AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN, teenager

Prologue Pilgrimage Player

Scene 3 Tee-Tee

Scene 6/7 Omeed

Scene 8 Sangita

ACTOR #12: SOUTHEAST ASIAN WOMAN, 30s/40s

Prologue Pilgrimage Player

Scene 3 Regina's Friend

Scene 5 Lisa

Scene 7/8 Vishnu/Mohini/Jayanti

ACTOR #13: WHITE WOMAN, 60s/70s

Prologue Mrs. Stevenson

Scene 2 Ruth

Scene 6 Iranian Grandmother

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- A sermon by the Pastor Jeff Miner of the Jesus Metropolitan Community Church (Carmel, Ind.).
- *The Pilgrimage Play* originally dramatized by Christine Wetherill Stevenson. Text at the beginning of my play comes directly from Mrs. Stevenson's play.
- Mrs. Christine Wetherill Stevenson biographical information based on information from the John Anson Ford website; theatermania.com; KCET transcripts; American Magazine (April 1926); Ancestry.com; Los Angeles Times.

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What a time we live in.

— James Still