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*Dramatic Publishing*

John Neihardt's  
*Black Elk Speaks*



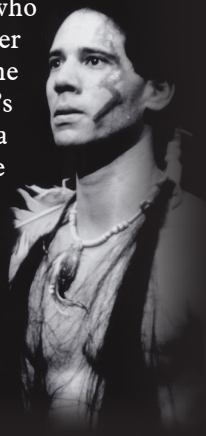
Adapted  
by  
Christopher Sergel

# Black Elk Speaks



*Drama. Based on the book by John Neihardt. Adapted by Christopher Sergel. Cast: 16 w/doubling. Many more as desired.* “A play with a very rich texture that becomes far more than just another cry for justice from the Indian point of view. No one who sees this play will ever forget it. The power of the play is not simply that it’s superbly written drama but that it’s all true. The

play has color, flair, flamboyance. It has at other times an almost insufferable grief and fear. This is the death and destruction of the original Americans, and it hurts to watch. They are a people with a rich past and absolutely no future. This play is harnessed dynamite.” (*The New York Daily News*) *Area staging. Optional music available. Code: B80.*



*Photos by Terry Shapiro. Front cover - Ned Romaro as Black Elk.  
Back cover - Maria Antoinette Rogers as Crazy Horse’s mother  
and Peter Kelly Gaudreault as Crazy Horse.  
Denver Center Theatre production.*

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Black Elk Speaks



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# **BLACK ELK SPEAKS**

**Based on the book**  
**by**  
**JOHN G. NEIHARDT**

**Adapted for the stage**  
**by**  
**CHRISTOPHER SERGEL**



**Dramatic Publishing**  
Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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JOHN G. NEIHARDT

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(BLACK ELK SPEAKS)

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## INTRODUCTION

*"O six Powers of the World hear me in my sorrow  
for I may never call again...  
O make my people live."*

Black Elk, standing on the highest peak in the Black Hills, spoke these words that give purpose to our play.

The dramatic riches of the source materials on which this play is based derive from Black Elk's direct involvement in many pivotal events of Indian history, from his vision, and from his extraordinary eloquence.

Black Elk lived the experience of the Native American people from a time just before white people entered his part of the world through the end of Indian independence in the massacre at Wounded Knee. His participation was immediate and personal. As a child, he saw his father return wounded from the Fetterman Battle and as the family fled with the father carried on a pony drag, so also began a lifetime of temporary habitation and flight for the Prairie Sioux. In the midst of this, when Black Elk was nine years old and quite ill, he had a vision that related to the meaning of life as it could be for all men; a vision which later became central to much of the spiritual life of all Native Americans.

Against the unusual beauty of his religious experience and that of a vital young man who would be among the last to know traditional life, there is the relentless pressure of the bluecoat soldiers, settlers and gold-seekers astride Manifest Destiny. Black Elk was swimming in the Little Big Horn when he saw the approach of Reno's detachment, riding in advance of Custer's main force, and though only thirteen, he fought in that battle. He is one of the few authentic sources of the history of the great Indian warrior and spiritual leader

**Crazy Horse.** He knew Crazy Horse, his second cousin, intimately and was present at Fort Robinson when Crazy Horse was killed. He was involved in the Ghost Dance religion with its hope for an Indian messiah, the return of the buffalo, and the resurrection of those who had been killed. Finally, Black Elk was present and badly wounded at the massacre at Wounded Knee.

Much later in life, Black Elk spoke of all these things to his friend, the poet and historian John G. Neihardt, a man who was uniquely able to capture this experience and this eloquence.

John G. Neihardt, widely recognized as one of our great poets, travelled to the Pine Ridge Reservation to spend time with the elderly Black Elk and together they explored this history and the spiritual world of Native America. From this came the acclaimed classic **BLACK ELK SPEAKS**.

And from that came this play.

Retracing Neihardt's steps, the playwright also spent time at Pine Ridge where he met with descendants of Black Elk. The playwright received help and insights from Black Elk's daughter Lucy who had been present at the meetings between her father and John Neihardt. Also present at those meetings was Neihardt's daughter Hilda, who became another important source for the play. Camping together beside Wounded Knee we explored—as earlier it had been explored by John Neihardt—this experience and this eloquence.

Wounded Knee today is as described by Black Elk, but instead of the guns on the high ground there's a weed-covered mass grave with a small stone memorial beside it which reads, in part, "Here died many women and children who knew no wrong."

Black Elk is their voice as he's a voice for all Indian people. When you do this play, then you become that voice.

This new version of *BLACK ELK SPEAKS* was produced by the Denver Center Theatre company where it opened on September 24, 1993.

Directed by ..... Donovan Marley  
Set Design ..... Bill Curley  
Costume Design ..... Andrew V. Yelusich  
Light Design ..... Don Darnutzer  
Sound Design ..... David R. White  
Assistant Director ..... Anthony Powell  
Choreography ..... Jane Lind  
Musical Direction and Composition ..... Dennis Yerry

The cast included:

*Ned Romero* ..... Black Elk  
*Kennetch Charlette* ..... Hoksila

The Other Relatives:

*John Belindo* ..... Cherokee Chief, Pilgrim, Betting Soldier,  
Galbraith, Cheyenne Chief, Sherman, Crook  
*Jack Burning* .. The Elder, Betting Navajo, Santee War Party,  
Black Kettle, Arapaho Chief  
*Lorne Cardinal* ..... Taino Chief, Young Navajo, Shakopee,  
Wynkoop, Red Cloud, Flag Soldier, Crook's Aide  
*Bernard Cottonwood* ..... Musician  
*Gregory Norman Cruz* .. Columbus, Manuelito, Spirit Guide,  
Chivington, Soldier Aide, Torch Dancer, Sergeant  
*Luke Dubray* .. Naragansett Chief, Soldier, Santee War Party,  
Fancy Dancer  
*Stephen C. Dubray* ..... Musician  
*Peter Kelly Gaudreault* .. Colonial Soldier, Corporal, Norton,  
Medicine Bottle, Cramer, Crazy Horse, Custer



- Darrel Zephier Ironwing* . . . . . Musician  
*Jane Lind* . . . . . Lucy, Yellow Woman, Eagle Dancer  
*Kenneth Little Hawk* . . . . . Musician, Cheyenne Chief  
Crazy Horse's Father  
*Hawk Loon* . . Seminole Chief, Priest, Sibley, Cheyenne Chief,  
Carrington, Soldier  
*Dara Marin* . . . Navajo Girl, Bosque Refugee, Cheyenne Girl,  
Lakota Child  
*Kenneth Martines* . . . Jackson, General Carleton, Little Crow,  
William Bent, Commissioner Taylor, Finerty  
*David Medina* . . . . . Taino Man, Lt. Ortiz, Carleton's Aide,  
Wowinapa, Flag Soldier  
*Jill Scott Momaday* . . . . . Taino Woman, Navajo,  
Cheyenne Woman, Soldier, Magpie, Fancy Dancer  
*Gracie Red Shirt-Tyon* . . . Navajo Woman, Cheyenne Woman,  
. . . . . Soldier, Lakota Woman, Fancy Dancer  
*Maria Antoinette Rogers* . . . . . Grandmother, Navajo Woman,  
Santee Woman, Soldier, Crazy Horse's Mother,  
Queen Victoria  
*Tachara Maraya Salazar* . . . . . Taino Girl, Navajo Girl,  
Bosque Refugee, Cheyenne, Lakota Child  
*Larry Swalley* . . . . . Pequot Chief, Navajo, Santee War Party,  
Soldier, Fancy Dancer  
*Stephan Ray Swimmer* . . . . . Mohawk Chief, Clown Spirit,  
Santee War Party, Hoop Dancer, Soldier, Fancy Dancer  
*Kateri Walker* . . . . . Taino Woman, Navajo Woman,  
Crossover Spirit, Soldier, Lakota Woman, Fancy Dancer  
*Dennis Yerry* . . . . . Musician

The Denver Center Theatre Company re-mounted its production, opened it on September 23, 1994, then co-produced the play with the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles where it opened January 3, 1995.

This cast included:

<i>Ned Romero</i>	Black Elk
<i>David Medina</i>	Hoksila
<i>John Belindo</i>	Crook and ensemble
<i>Stuart Bird</i>	Shakopee and ensemble
<i>Seth Bissonette</i>	Musician and ensemble
<i>Jack Burning</i>	Black Kettle and ensemble
<i>Bernard Cottonwood</i>	Musician and ensemble
<i>Luke Dubray</i>	Dancer and ensemble
<i>James Fall</i>	Wowinapa and ensemble
<i>Peter Kelly Gaudreault</i>	Crazy Horse, Custer and ensemble
<i>Dane Lebeau</i>	Musician and ensemble
<i>Jane Lind</i>	Yellow Woman and ensemble
<i>Kenneth Little Hawk</i>	Musician, Crazy Horse's Father, ensemble
<i>Kenneth Martines</i>	Little Crow and ensemble
<i>Miguel Najera</i>	Manuelito and ensemble
<i>Gracie Red Shirt-Tyon</i>	Dancer and ensemble
<i>Andrew Roa</i>	Red Cloud and ensemble
<i>Maria Antoinette Rogers</i>	Queen Victoria and ensemble
<i>Tachara Maraya Salazar</i>	Ensemble
<i>Adan Sanchez</i>	Columbus and ensemble
<i>Larry Swalley</i>	Medicine Bottle and ensemble
<i>Stephan Ray Swimmer</i>	Hoop Dancer and ensemble
<i>Kateri Walker</i>	Crossover Spirit and ensemble
<i>Dennis Yerry</i>	Musician and ensemble

with special thanks to  
THE BLACK ELK FAMILY  
and  
DONOVAN MARLEY

# ACT ONE

## SCENE 1A

**On and near Harney Peak, South Dakota  
October 1931**

*(There is no curtain. The majority of the stage floor is enclosed in a circle that is defined by a huge red hoop. The hoop is made of twelve curved wooden sticks decorated with leather thongs. Behind the hoop are several rock ledges, including one high peak. The ledges and a series of platforms made from lodge poles create a ridge from one side of the stage to the other; behind the ridge is a vast sky. From half-hour to curtain time, the sound of wind singing through the pine trees of the Black Hills is heard. This sound is occasionally punctuated by bird songs and animal calls. In the distance, occasional rumbles of thunder can be heard. As curtain time grows near, the sounds intensify and the wind rises.)*

*At curtain time all lights go out. The stage is dark. A wind is blowing. It is just before dawn. There is a clap of thunder; a stab of lightning silhouettes a naked FIGURE at the top of the highest peak. The FIGURE tosses a handful of sage onto a hidden fire. As the fire flares up, the FIGURE stands, and we see that it is an old man. His long white hair falls around his shoulders; his face has the classic features of a Lakota elder in his late sixties. THE OLD MAN wears only a leather breechclout and moccasins; with the exception of his hands and face, his body is cov-*

*ered in red paint. With smoke from the fire rising around his face, he offers the mouthpiece of his Chanupa [the sacred pipe of the Lakota people] to the four directions, calling "hey-ah-hey" to each of them.)*

**THE OLD MAN.** Great Spirit, my grandfathers, lean close to the earth to hear the voice I send. You have been always. You are older than all need, older than pain, older than prayer. My grandfathers, all over the earth the faces of living things are alike. Look upon your children, with children in their arms, that they may face the winds and walk the good red road to the day of quiet. Teach us to walk the soft earth, a relative to all that is. My grandfathers, you said to me that in difficulty I should send a voice. Grandfathers, night after night I send a voice...*(He is interrupted by a rumble of thunder. Rising above the thunder is a VOICE calling to THE OLD MAN in Lakota.)* The only reply, "It is time. You must hurry." *(Another rumble of thunder in which the VOICE calls again. Urgently.)* You gave me a mission, but I do not know how to fulfill it. The tree does not live, the hoop is broken...*(Another rumble of thunder with the VOICE is heard. THE OLD MAN begins to pray feverishly in Lakota.)*

*Tunkasila Huhapi Waciwakia...*

*(His voice trails off as a BOY of about seventeen enters with a wooden bowl filled with water. The BOY is dressed in clothes that an aspiring college freshman from the mid-west might have worn in 1931, including a tie and a coat. His black hair is so tightly tied that it appears to be short. His name, HOKSILA, means both "boy" and "the boy in each of us" in his native Lakota language. HOKSILA calls up to the peak.)*

**HOKSILA.** Grandfather!

*(From the depths of his trance, THE OLD MAN cannot hear him. We now discover that two male RELATIVES of THE OLD MAN have been sitting patiently at the base of the levels UC; they are dressed in worn wasichu [white man] clothing common on Indian reservations in 1931. The RELATIVES rise to confront HOKSILA.)*

**THE ELDER.** Hoksila, he is praying.

**HOKSILA.** For four days he's eaten nothing. You want him to get sick? *(The ELDER eyes him firmly.)* At least take him this water. *(HOKSILA explodes.)* I won't let my grandfather die for some crazy Indian superstition.

*(THE OLD MAN hears the explosion and leaves his trance to stare at HOKSILA. The THREE below are unaware of THE OLD MAN. A WOMAN of about forty enters. She is dressed in colorless, shapeless reservation wear. She carries a bundle of clothes; her name is LUCY.)*

**LUCY.** Hoksila! Are you making trouble?

**HOKSILA.** Why does your father come here?

**LUCY.** To pray, and to wait.

**HOKSILA.** For what?

**LUCY.** Ask him.

**HOKSILA.** That's all our old men do, sift reservation dust through their hands, and wait! Nothing ever happens here! *(HOKSILA falls silent when he senses that THE OLD MAN is looking down at him.)*

**LUCY.** Ask him. *(HOKSILA does not respond. She calls up to the peak.)* For what do you wait, my father?

THE OLD MAN. For what does any old Indian wait? He waits for yesterday. But all that comes again is the memory. I will come down. *(As he turns, his weakened body gives way; he sways precariously and must steady himself. HOKSILA and the TWO MEN leap forward to climb the peak and assist him. LUCY stops HOKSILA.)*

LUCY. Not you. It must be the ones who took him there. *(THE OLD MAN exits.)*

HOKSILA. Do you really believe it makes a difference who brings him down? Mother? *(Without speaking she spreads a blanket on the ground and begins to lay out a moist towel, a man's shirt and a well-worn black sack suit.)* It's 1931! Yesterday is gone. Dead. Thomas Edison, a white man, caught the Thunder Beings and stuffed them in a glass bottle. White men fly in this world, in machines they make. My teacher says that if I study, I...*(LUCY turns to him; he breaks off. The two stand in silence for a moment.)* Why should I waste my life trapped on a reservation? To end up starving on top of a mountain like my grandfather? I don't...

*(He breaks off as THE OLD MAN, wrapped in a buffalo robe, enters with the TWO RELATIVES; one carries the sacred pipe in an elaborately decorated leather pipe bag.)*

LUCY. What else do they teach you at government school? *(HOKSILA stands silent. LUCY turns to her father.)* Tell this boy what you have learned in a lifetime at the "government's school." *(THE OLD MAN stares silently at HOKSILA, then turns away. He drops his buffalo robe and begins to remove the red paint from his body with the moist towel. With LUCY's assistance, he dresses in the shirt and suit that she has laid out.)* I'll tell you what I

learned. Our religion: forbidden. Our language, our way of dancing: forbidden. Should we care? If we're to have dancing, if we're to have a purification, if we're to hear the story of The People, we have to hide in this place, back in the hills. If our ways still matter, you must speak of them, and of your great vision.

THE OLD MAN. Speak of the mission I have never fulfilled? Speak of a tree that should have flourished in our hearts but now is withered? Speak of a people who died in the blizzard...in the bloody snow? I do not wish to speak of this to children.

LUCY. Then who *will* speak to them? After you are gone, who will be left to speak to them? (*From off L, a GROUP OF PEOPLE is heard singing a Lakota song—the "Encouragement Song"—to the beat of hand-drums.*)

THE RELATIVES.

*Lakol Oyate Kin Naji Yo*

*Lakotapi Tehikelo Hey*

*Inaji Yo Lakotapi Tehikelo*

THE OLD MAN. What is this singing? Lucy, what is this singing?

LUCY. Your relatives.

THE OLD MAN. What? Why are they here? Why are they singing?

LUCY. When you began your fast, the relatives gathered to hear you.

THE OLD MAN. Lucy, I will not speak of this.

LUCY. You must. If your vision was ever true and mighty, it...

THE OLD MAN. I cannot speak of...

LUCY (*quickly turns to HOKSILA*). Sing. Sing with them.

HOKSILA (*proud of his decision*). I don't speak Lakota. (*The off-stage singing ceases. Silence. THE OLD MAN is stunned. He crosses to HOKSILA and looks directly into*



*his face. HOKSILA stares back without flinching.)* No one speaks Lakota anymore...except ghosts from the past. Lakota is history.

THE OLD MAN. The People without their history are no more than wind on the buffalo grass.

HOKSILA. I speak English. Civilized English.

THE OLD MAN. Yes, I must speak to this boy—to all of the children. Let them come. (*LUCY and the TWO MEN exit. THE OLD MAN turns his gaze back to HOKSILA.*)

HOKSILA. Grandfather, I...(*He offers the wooden bowl.*)  
Drink this.

THE OLD MAN. Where did you get this cup?

HOKSILA. It was by the well. (*THE OLD MAN looks at it carefully as his memory searches back almost sixty years.*)

THE OLD MAN. In my vision, the Grandfathers offered a wooden cup full of water; in the water was the sky. "Take this," the Voice said, "it is the power to make live, and it is yours."

HOKSILA. It's just a wooden cup; I filled it from the well!  
(*THE OLD MAN drinks from the cup.*)

### SCENE 1B

#### A Ceremonial Ground in the Black Hills

October, 1931

*(A new song erupts as two dozen of his RELATIVES rush into the space enclosed by the red hoop. They are excited—full of anticipation. Some are beating hand-drums; some are dancing. All ADULTS are singing a Lakota song—the "Entrance Song"; the CHILDREN and TEEN-AGERS are not. THE OLD MAN watches the children and the young adults closely.)*

## LAKOTA ADULTS.

*Lakota Waste Wahielo*

*Lakota Waci Oyate Leciya*

*Waste Waci Wahielo*

*Leciya Waste Waci Wahielo*

*Wahielo*

*(When the song ends, the RELATIVES sit in a circle just inside the red hoop. The circle is unbroken except for one space. A RELATIVE invites HOKSILA to sit in the open space, but the boy pushes rudely past and sits outside the circle. The RELATIVES adjust, closing the circle. THE OLD MAN places the cup on one of the rock ledges above the hoop and then joins the circle. He murmurs a ritual greeting in Lakota; his RELATIVES return the greeting. There is an expectant hush. The RELATIVES have come to participate in a "winter-telling," the foundation of the Oglala's oral tradition. They are dressed in very poor reservation clothes—shapeless and colorless government-issue sweaters and coats and other castoffs from the white world. Both men and women have long hair. It is worn a variety of ways—loose, braided, tied back, etc. As THE OLD MAN considers his task, he eyes the young people whose number stretches up to include the entire audience. He brings his gaze back to their parents.)*

THE OLD MAN. I am going to tell you the story of my life, as you wish; if it were only the story of my life, I would not tell it, for what is one man that he should make much of his winters, even when they bend him like a heavy snow? It is a story of all life that is holy and is good to tell, and of us two-leggeds sharing in it with the four-leggeds and the wings of the air and all green things; for these are

children of one mother and their father is one spirit. Is not the sky a father and the earth a mother? And are not all living things with feet or wings or roots their children? (*A murmur of assent moves through the RELATIVES.*) I was not born till The-Moon-of-Popping-Trees in The-Winter-When-Four-Crows-Were-Killed, December, 1863. You know me as Black Elk, a Medicine Man, a Lakota of our great Oglala Sioux. My father and his father before him bore this name, and the father of his father, so that I am the fourth to bear it. When I was young and could still hope, I heard a Voice call to me; the Voice was so beautiful nothing anywhere could keep from dancing. It said, "All over the Universe, they have finished a day of happiness; behold this day for it is yours to make." It said, "You shall stand upon the center of the world." And I asked where that might be, and the Voice said, "Anywhere is the center of the world." (*A murmur moves through the RELATIVES.*) And then...a vision was sent to me. In my vision, I reached the peak of the highest mountain in the Black Hills. Round about, beneath me, was the whole hoop of the world. From the rocks, colors flashed upward to become a rainbow in flame. From where I stood, I saw more than I can tell, and I understood more than I saw for I was seeing in a sacred manner. I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, and being endless, it was holy. (*BLACK ELK moves into the circle.*) I was told that it was my mission to place a bright red stick at the living center of the nation's hoop and to make that red stick grow into a tree; a shielding tree that would bloom, a mighty flowering tree to shelter the children, a tree to protect The People, to save us from the winds! (*His voice breaks.*) But the mighty vision was given to a man too weak to use it. There is no shelter for the children; the

winds are fighting like gunfire, like whirling smoke, like women and children wailing, like horses screaming all over the world. The hoop that once held our lives is broken; our people, scattered with no center. And our children do not sing. These children do not know the greatness and truth of our tradition. We must teach them. We will do it together—an Indian pictograph in which you finally see what else was killed at Wounded Knee. Some of us will put on the war bonnets of our great Chiefs; some, the uniforms to try to look like the bluecoat soldiers, or like the “important men” who come out here to rearrange our lives. (*The RELATIVES laugh. BLACK ELK signals the drummers. They respond with a flourish.*) “The Winning of the West”...as experienced by the Indian People. (*On BLACK ELK’s signal, several RELATIVES exit to change for their first winter-telling “roles.” The FOUR DRUMMERS move UR and sing a Lakota melody—“Song Behind Black Elk.” BLACK ELK and HOKSILA remain on stage throughout the play.*)

BLACK ELK. The old men say the earth, only, endures. They speak truly. They are right. And we are no more than names whispered by a wind rustling through a field of corn on a summer night—people who live in happiness and sorrow to become grass on these hills; and a few names on the maps—Sioux City, Pontiac, Miami, Lake Huron, Omaha. Before these road signs were posted to our memory, these were people! See them with me. See the great tribes of the East from where the light comes. See the Mohawk! The Pequot! The Narragansett!...

*(As he says each name, the FOUR DRUMMERS respond with a flourish, and a CHIEF, wearing the best of his tribe’s ceremonial attire, enters carrying an elaborate staff that is the symbol of his nation.)*

**BLACK ELK.** To the South. The Cherokee! Seminole! Navajo! See our neighbors, the Cheyenne! Our relatives, the Santee...and the Lakotas! See the great horse nation of the Sioux ride out across the unfenced prairie. Free men. (*The drums pound; MEN send war cries; the WOMEN send the tremolo and the LAKOTA CHIEF throws back his head and sends the piercing scream of an eagle. In the moment of quiet that follows, BLACK ELK admonishes softly.*) Our thoughts should rise high as eagles do. (*The RELATIVES who represent the NINE CHIEFS form an elaborate tableau on the levels above the circle. The splendor of their native dress is a vivid contrast with the reservation wear of BLACK ELK and the RELATIVES still sitting in the winter-telling circle. LUCY gives BLACK ELK an elaborately-carved wooden mask decorated with bone, feathers, leather and metal.*) Somewhere up in the winds Chief Tecumseh still speaks to us. Words that still haunt us. (*He holds the huge mask of Chief Tecumseh above his head to create a figure ten feet tall; the words of the chief flow through him.*) Sleep not longer, O my brothers. Think not you can remain passive to the common danger and escape the common fate or we will vanish before the greed and oppression of the white man as snow before the summer sun. Shall we let the white man cut down our trees to build fences around us? Shall we give up our homes, our country bequeathed to us by the Great Spirit, the graves of our dead and everything that is dear and sacred to us? I know you will cry with me...Never!

**ALL. NEVER!** (*The CHIEFS disperse muttering eight diminishing "Nevers." Five of the ceremonial staffs are left planted in the ground. The FOUR DRUMMERS move UC to a recess under the wooden platforms. They remain on stage throughout the performance to sing and play a vari-*

*ety of native and wasichu instruments. Several RELATIVES also remain, sitting in a circle just inside the hoop.)*

**BLACK ELK.** If you are to understand the ending in the blizzard, you must know the beginning in the warm waters off a tropical island on which our cousins, the Tainos, are about to discover Columbus. (*BLACK ELK tosses a blanket to a RELATIVE who still sits in the circle wearing wasichu clothing.*) Arrange this blanket like a Columbus robe. You will be the Priest! (*He hands a cross to a RELATIVE, also in wasichu clothing. Speaks to the RELATIVE PLAYING COLUMBUS, who has wrapped the blanket around himself in a way worn by the Indians.*) No, to look like Columbus! Good! His crew had mutinied. They were about to turn back; then the lookout saw something in the water... (*Incredulous at the irony.*)...a branch from a tree in flower.

**THE PRIEST.** *Terra! Terra firma!*

**THE RELATIVE WHO PLAYS COLUMBUS** (*clowning to cover his embarrassment with a first foray into "acting"*).  
Mama Mia! Look at all the redskins! (*The RELATIVES laugh.*)

**BLACK ELK** (*furious*). No, no. Columbus was a great chief. Within your mind, you must see the true picture. With your mind you must make him real.

## SCENE 2A

### The Eastern Shore of San Salvador

October 12, 1492

*(The RELATIVE who plays COLUMBUS murmurs an apology and concentrates; the DRUMMERS begin to sing—the "Taino Friendship Song"—accompanied by a wooden drum and a rain stick.)*