The Hope Principle Show

Citizens' Shame and Hope in the Time of Genocide

a play by Bread & Puppet Theater
introduction by Joshua Krugman

Introduction

Ernst Bloch, a German Jewish philosopher who escaped the Nazi genocide by going into exile in the US (but who nonetheless considered the US to be heir apparent to the fascism he experienced in Europe), devoted the years during and immediately following World War II to a monumental study of hope. "Not fear and pity, but defiance and hope," is an emblematic slogan for the resulting work, *The Principle of Hope*, created in the face of the human-historical abyss ([1954–1959] 1986:429).[1]

In *The Principle of Hope*, Bloch develops an expansive, daring—and often ecstatic—new lexicon that he wishes will be of use for inspiring radically transformative action in circumstances even as catastrophic as those under which he wrote: "forward dreaming" (10), "dawning up" (11), "anticipatory consciousness" (47), "utopian function" (15), and "the Real Possible" (249). He hopes these terms will be able to help his readers glimpse and participate in "the becoming to which we belong" (3) to "overhaul [...] the given world" (35) and actualize the "tomorrow that in today is alive" (1374). Rather than anything fixed or naturalized, Bloch holds that "the real is process" (196), a process in which we must learn to intervene with "militant optimism" (199), guided by concrete dreams for a better possible world—a world "in which our fellow human being is no longer the barrier to our own freedom, but rather the means by which this freedom is truly achieved" (35).

In late February 2024, a few weeks before Bread & Puppet Theater's spring touring company was set to meet in Glover, Vermont, for 13 days of rehearsals toward an as-yet-untitled play, B&P director Peter Schumann sent word that the play would be called *The Hope Principle Show: Citizens' Shame and Hope in the Time of Genocide*. *The Principle of Hope*, Bloch's three-volume, 1400-page work on the indispensability of hope in the face of genocide, would be the basis of our attempt to address the ongoing genocide that US-backed Israeli forces were (and still are, as of this writing) carrying out in Palestine.

After receiving this communication from Schumann, company members set about reading as much of *The Principle of Hope* as we could, attempting to identify passages that could be useful in creating a show. We also immersed ourselves in the work of Palestinian writers such as Ghassan Kanafani, Mahmoud Darwish, Refaat Alareer, Mosab Abu Toha, and Basman Aldirawi, and were interested to find that these writers, writing during the ongoing Nakba, had come to focus on many of the same themes that preoccupied Bloch during the Holocaust—including hope, dawning, dreaming, and homeland.

In the weeks preceding the rehearsal process, company members also attempted to keep up with the news from Palestine via regional and US social media and investigative journalism. In the course of this research, we heard an interview on the news program *Democracy Now!* with Dr. Tariq M. Haddad, a Palestinian American cardiologist and professor at the University of Virginia, who had lost more than 80 members of his family to the genocide in Gaza at the time of the interview in February (Goodman and Shaikh 2024). Haddad was interviewed because he had

1. Ernst Bloch wrote *The Principle of Hope* between 1938 and 1947 in Cambridge, MA, and revised it in the years following his return to East Germany in 1949. The final work was published in three volumes (1954, 1955, and 1959) as *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* by Suhrkamp Verlag in Frankfurt. The quotes in this introduction refer to the first English edition (1986).

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written an open letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken, explaining why he would not attend a "roundtable meeting" about the current genocide in Gaza, at which he and other prominent Palestinian Americans would have each been allotted three minutes to speak to Blinken and his staff (Haddad 2024). Haddad's letter ended up forming the moral and veridical heart of the show.

With *The Hope Principle Show* we wanted to protest the US government's partnership in the Israeli genocide and ethnic cleansing in Gaza. We wanted to offer audiences an occasion for collective grief and analysis. And we also wanted our performances to demonstrate, and perhaps spur, some real honest-to-goodness Blochian hope—at once practically grounded and poetically audacious—that could be useful to people participating in the powerful ongoing movement to turn the intolerable genocidal present toward a "real possible" future of freedom, justice, equality, and safety for all.

We performed *The Hope Principle Show* 23 times at theatres, churches, university lecture halls, and labor meeting houses in 18 towns and cities across seven states—from Maine to Washington, DC—between 29 March and 21 April 2024.

Peter Schumann created the show in collaboration with the spring touring company—Paul Bedard, Ziggy Bird, Ocea Goddard, May Hathaway, Joshua Krugman, Erika Martinez Landaverde, Mason McAvoy, Caitlin Ross, and Miranda Zhen-Yao—with essential assistance from Raphaël Royer.

References

Bloch, Ernst. 1986. *The Principle of Hope*. Trans. Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight. The MIT Press.

Goodman, Amy, and Nermeen Shaikh. 2024. "After Losing Nearly 100 Relatives in Gaza, Palestinian American Doctor Refuses to Meet with Blinken." *Democracy Now!*, 5 February. www.democracynow.org/2024/2/5/tariq_haddad_blinken

Haddad, Tariq M. 2024. "No, Secretary Blinken. . ." *Here 4 the Kids*, 1 February. here4thekids.substack.com/p/no-secretary-blinken

—Joshua Krugman

The Hope Principle Show

Citizens' Shame and Hope in the Time of Genocide

Scenes

1. Introduction
2. Mother Dirt and Chairs
3. Dance of Death #1
4. Clowns
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9. Dance of Death #3
10. White Bird
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12. Haddad Part 1
13. Haddad Part 2
14. Haddad Part 3
15. Stilts
16. Aaron Bushnell
17. Big Face
18. Oratorio
19. Yes Flags

The Stage

A 35′×12′ black curtain forms the upstage boundary. Using a pulley system mounted to the vertical poles that support the black

Bread & Puppet Theater is an internationally celebrated company that champions a visually rich, street-theater brand of performance art filled with music, dance, and slapstick. Its shows are political and spectacular, with huge puppets made of paper-mache and cardboard. Founded in 1963 by Peter and Elka Schumann on New York City's Lower East Side, the theater has been based in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont since the early 1970s.

Joshua Krugman is a theater-maker, poet, and composer. He has collaborated extensively with Bread & Puppet Theater since 2014, assisting in the creation and performance of dozens of new shows that have toured in Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, and throughout North America.

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upstage curtain, large diptychs painted by Peter Schumann on discarded queen- and king-size bedsheets are periodically raised against this curtain as backdrops. The contents of these backdrops are described as part of stage directions as they appear in the course of the show.

Two 10′×8′ black side curtains stand equidistant downstage left and right to create wings. Performers enter and exit the stage primarily through these wings, as well as through an off-center slit in the upstage curtain.

A front curtain, a large black-and-white painting by Peter Schumann that bears the title of the show and depicts a mother holding a child, spans the distance between the two downstage side curtains. This curtain is permanently attached to the inner edge of the structure that supports the stage right side curtain, and is hooked to the inner edge of the structure that supports the stage left side curtain when closed. The front curtain begins the show in its closed position. Throughout the show it opens to reveal new scenes in the interior of the stage, and then closes to end these scenes and to obscure the preparation of the following scene.

A tree (an ~8′–10′ tree branch fit into a weighted socket) stands in front of each side curtain. Several musical instruments and sound-makers (including squealy horn, bracket chime, hand cymbal, bottlecap rattle, and sap-tube horn, described below) hang from branches of the stage right tree. A snare drum, ride cymbal, and music stand are also set in its vicinity. The bell used to open and close the front curtain hangs from the stage left tree at the top of the show, and passes between the trees as the front curtain opens and closes throughout the show.

The show is lit by a row of footlights, which mark the downstage boundary of the playing space, as well as by sidelights mounted into the structures supporting the stage left and stage right side curtains. These lights are carpenter's clamp lights, in their original aluminum hoods. The center footlight is on its own circuit and attached to an extension cord, allowing it to serve as a single, MOBILE LIGHT when required.

Performers

Paul Bedard, Ziggy Bird, Ocea Goddard, May Hathaway, Joshua Krugman, Erika Martinez Landaverde, Mason Mcavoy, Caitlin Ross, Miranda Zhen-Yao

Characters, Puppets, and Performing Objects (in order of appearance)

CHAIRS: ~2′×4′ 2D cardboard cutouts painted black and white.

HOPE BOOK: a book with a paper dust-jacket that says "HOPE."

DEATH: played by CAITLIN in a full-head paper-mache skeleton mask and black costume painted with white bones.

ANONYMOUS VICTIM: played by MASON in a simple, paper face mask painted black and white; no change of costume.

WHITE CLOWNS: puppeteers wearing oversized 2D paper masks painted with grotesque expressions in black and white; the physicality of these characters tends to be sharp and violent, featuring abrupt repetitive movements in isolated body-parts, flash-frozen into severe still gestures.

CARIBOU: life-sized flat puppets composed of cardboard heads painted with black-and-white caribou features, tree branches for antlers, and bedsheet bodies painted with black-and-white leafless trees; CARIBOU are played by one puppeteer inside each bedsheet body with the torso of the puppeteer facing the audience, arms extended at head-height, one into the head and the other into the tail of the puppet, with feet facing stage right.

CRANKIE: a white painted plywood box with a ~2′×3′ proscenium cut into its downstage face, containing a ~2′×60′ scroll of brown paper painted in black and white with images that recall the destruction of Gaza, as well as images of suns; puppeteers slowly "crank" the scroll forward using two handles that protrude from the top of the box.

DEATH and ANONYMOUS VICTIM HAND PUPPETS: 1′ hand puppets, with paper-mache heads, cardboard hands, and fabric bodies; painted and constructed as exact miniature replicas of the full-sized DEATH and ANONYMOUS VICTIM characters played by CAITLIN and MASON.

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Figure 1. Puppeteer Paul Bedard operating the "White Bird" in the eponymous scene. "This is not a time to be without wishes." Socialist Labor Party Hall in Barre, VT, 30 March 2024. (Photo by Raphaël Royer; courtesy of Bread & Puppet Theater)

WHITE POPULATION PUPPETS: black-and-white painted paper-mache relief puppets that recall individual human bodies, roughly life-sized, supported by a simple structure of sticks, cardboard, wire, and twine on their reverse/concave sides.

TRIPLET SOLDIERS: a 3′-tall composite rod puppet comprising three olive-clad, gray-helmeted, pinkish-complexioned soldiers, operated with three wire rods and strings attached to the outer two arms.

WHITE BIRD: a ~3′-long crane-like head made from celastic (a strong fabric that bonds and hardens in acetone, used by shoemakers and puppeteers) and painted white and gray, attached to a ~10′-tall bamboo pole, with a white fabric body, wings, and tail attached; four puppeteers operate the WHITE BIRD, with one on the center pole, one on each wing, and one on the tail.

WHITE SHEET POPULATION: a ~12′×8′ composite puppet made of many 2′- to 4′-tall black-and-white painted paper-mache relief figures mounted on multiple white bedsheets sewn together, so that when the sheet is held perpendicular to the floor it appears that a crowd of these small figures is standing up.

COMBINED WHITE POPULATION: includes a mix of WHITE POPULATION puppets and WHITE SHEET POPULATION puppets, and later, WHITE HANDS as well.

WHITE HANDS: flat and 3D hands of various styles and sizes, made from diverse materials (cardboard, paper-mache, and celastic), which are the last sculptural element added to the COMBINED POPULATION in the "Haddad Part 3" scene.

COMET MASKS: star-shaped white celastic masks that extend vertically from the forehead of the performer; the face of the performer is hidden behind a sheer white veil affixed to the bottom of the mask, creating the illusion that the COMET is the face of the performer.

AARON BUSHNELL BANNER: a large painting by Peter Schumann on a king-size bedsheet, depicting Bushnell's self-immolation; unlike the other large Schumann paintings in the show, which are strung up as backdrops using pulleys, the BUSHNELL BANNER is suspended between two upright bamboo poles and is held by two puppeteers for the duration of its use.

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BIG FACE: a ~5′×3′ translucent fiberglass relief face, gray/amber depending on the relative position of MOBILE LIGHT.

BIG HANDS: ~4′×2′ 2D cardboard gray and white painted hands, which accompany the BIG FACE.

BIG FIGURE: assembled from the GIANT HEAD, with WHITE SHEET POPULATION as the torso, and BIG HANDS extending from either side.

"YES" ROSE FLAGS: ~4′×2.5′ flags made of printed and painted light unbleached cotton fabric attached to a straight maple stick; each bears the word "YES" printed in black above the image of a rose that is also printed in black, but colored in with acrylic paint—red blossom, green leaves, blue background.

NARRATORS/SPEAKERS: not necessarily conceived of as characters in the context of this show, they simply deliver the texts they are charged with as clearly and unaffectedly as possible, directing the audience's focus to what is said rather than who is saying it, in the same way that puppetry tends to direct focus to the puppet rather than the puppeteer; no costume or other characterization.

Instruments and Soundmakers
(in order of appearance)

BELL: ~1.5″ tall, brass, with a ribbon for hanging on stage left and stage right trees.
SNARE DRUM: on metal stand, played with traditional wooden drumsticks.
SAP-TUBE HORN: a horn made from a length of 1/2″ black plastic maple sap tube with a bell of stiff paper reinforced with stove pipe wire.
BOTTLE-CAP RATTLE: resembling a medieval spiked mace—a stick, with rows of 2″ nails driven into the upper portion, each bearing several flattened and impaled metal beer bottle caps.
RIDE CYMBAL: a ~2′ in diameter crash cymbal, mounted on a metal stand and played with felt mallets or snare drum sticks.
HAND CYMBAL: a ~10″ in diameter splash cymbal mounted on a loop of laundry line so it can be hung from one hand and played with a snare drum stick by the other.
BOX FAN: a square gray/cream plastic and aluminum electric axial fan.
BRACKET CHIME: metal bracket that formerly secured seats to the deck of a school bus, with a loop of laundry line as a handle; played with a snare drum stick.
POLICE WHISTLE: steel whistle with cork pea.
PARTY HORN: plastic party blower with coiled paper tube removed.
RABBIT QUACKER: Acme predator call (rabbit) whistle, wooden with paper membrane.
FIDDLES: violins played by JOSH and ZIGGY.
SQUEALY HORN: the air pressure–activated plastic valve from a dog's squeaky toy, affixed with masking tape to the mouth of a clear plastic water bottle with the base sawed off to serve as a bell.
ICE BELL: a 1/4″-thick, ~12′ in diameter cymbal played with a single snare drum stick.
BASS DRUM: ~3′ in diameter with wooden body and mylar heads, played with felt-headed mallet.
TRUMPET: brass, Bb tuning.
BARITONE HORN: brass, Bb tuning.

Costumes

The base costume for all performers is a long-sleeved white shirt and pants/skirt.

Text Attributions

Titles of scenes, texts read from paintings and backdrops, and the "Oratorio" (penultimate scene) were written by Peter Schumann. All texts not written by Peter Schumann (and company) appear below in quotes and are verbally attributed by speakers; these sources are listed in References below.

1. Introduction

(MAY and CAITLIN emerge from either side of the front curtain, MAY stage left and CAITLIN stage right. MAY takes the curtain BELL from a branch on the stage left tree and rings it briefly, directing the audience's attention to the stage. When it is quiet, CAITLIN reads the title out loud, pointing out the words on the front curtain with a bamboo stick.)

CAITLIN: The Hope Principle Show: Citizens' Shame and Hope in the Time of Genocide—

(CAITLIN continues with the end of the title, which is not written on the curtain.)

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CAITLIN: —accompanied by four traditional dances of death for the anonymous victims.

2. Mother Dirt and Chairs

(MAY begins to ring BELL, waiting a moment as PAUL and OCEA raise the Mother Dirt banner, which is still unseen behind the front curtain. MAY continues to ring BELL while opening the front curtain, revealing the stage with the Mother Dirt banner as the backdrop. MAY hangs BELL in the stage right tree and exits. Meanwhile, JOSH enters and goes to the stage right tree to play upcoming cues. CAITLIN walks onto the stage and uses her bamboo stick to point out the important elements depicted in the Mother Dirt banner.)

CAITLIN: Here you see Mother Dirt, burning, giving birth to the civilization tree—and its offspring, the CHAIRS.[2] Offspring, please!

(JOSH plays a roll on SNARE DRUM for CHAIRS—puppeteers hidden behind the large cardboard cutouts that they operate—to run out from the slit in the Mother Dirt banner, filling the stage. CAITLIN exits. JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME, signaling CHAIRS to reveal their doubles—each puppeteer was hiding an identical second CHAIR behind the single CHAIRS that were first visible. JOSH plays marching beat on SNARE DRUM, first slow, then accelerating through various patterns until it becomes a fast roll with uneven accents, prompting CHAIRS to march, first orderly, then accelerating into chaos. As the CHAIRS reach the peak of their swarming march, MIRANDA enters, fully obscured by the CHAIRS, through the slit in the backdrop with a black metal folding chair and HOPE BOOK. Behind the swarm, still invisible, she sits and opens the HOPE BOOK. Chaotic SNARE DRUM crescendo ends in a clash of the RIDE CYMBAL, and the swarm of CHAIRS freezes. A long yodeling blast of SAP-TUBE HORN causes the mass of CHAIRS to part into stage left and stage right groups, revealing MIRANDA, upstage center, seated with the HOPE BOOK open in reading position. MIRANDA reads from the HOPE BOOK, pausing between each line.)

MIRANDA: "Who are we?
Where do we come from?
Where are we going?
What are we waiting for?
What awaits us?" [Bloch 3]

(SNARE DRUM roll, with uneven accents, for CHAIRS to return to a swarm center stage, marching agitatedly, and obscuring MIRANDA, who exits unnoticed. SNARE DRUM roll accelerates as CHAIRS swarm faster, then collect stage left, in a line. SNARE DRUM pauses, then a fast, accelerating roll for CHAIRS to exit rapidly through the center opening in the Mother Dirt banner.

JOSH closes the front curtain, ringing the BELL. When the curtain is closed, he rings for another moment for the Mother Dirt curtain to come down, unseen upstage, then hangs the BELL on the stage left tree.)

3. Dance of Death #1

(JOSH picks up FIDDLE.)

JOSH: Dance of Death #1—please!

(DEATH and THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM enter from the sides of the closed front curtain. DEATH picks up a cardboard box containing various nearly identical 2D boxboard masks. DEATH shows the box slowly to the audience. The box says "ANONYMOUS" on the side. DEATH and THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM meet center stage. DEATH extends the "ANONYMOUS" box to THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM. THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM chooses a mask from the box and puts it on. DEATH puts down the box. DEATH and THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM strike a pose, JOSH begins the first version of "Calvary" [James 300][3] on the FIDDLE—a plain treatment, sticking mostly to the original bass part. DEATH dances with THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM and succeeds to dance her to death precisely at the end of tune. DEATH takes off THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM's mask, helps her up, they bow to each other and exit hand in hand. JOSH puts FIDDLE down & exits.)

2. Schumann's original version of this line is more explicit in ascribing to the chairs a valence of oppressive governmentality: "Here you see Mother Dirt, burning, giving birth to this little civilization tree. Its fruit—chairs, which dominate the population."

3. A 1785 hymn by Daniel Reed (based on a 1707 text by Isaac Watts) in *The Sacred Harp* (James [1911] 1991:300).

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Figure 2. Caitlin Ross as "Death" and Mason McAvoy selecting an "Anonymous Victim" mask before one of the "Dances of Death" that punctuate the first half of The Hope Principle Show. *Socialist Labor Party Hall in Barre, VT, 30 March 2024. (Photo by Raphaël Royer; courtesy of Bread & Puppet Theater)*

4. Clowns

(MIRANDA takes BELL from the stage left tree and begins to ring it, allowing CAITLIN and MASON to raise the next backdrop invisibly. Still ringing the BELL, MIRANDA then opens the curtain, revealing the stage with the new backdrop and a clump of WHITE CLOWNS in the stage left wing. The backdrop depicts a cluster of heads, arms, and legs—accompanied by the words "CITIZENS' SHAME" in the lower left—above which comets that all say "+ HOPE" on them fly through leafless trees.

MIRANDA hangs BELL on stage right tree and takes her place as NARRATOR downstage right.)

MIRANDA: "Who are we?" [Bloch 3]

(WHITE CLOWNS' hands slowly rise into a sharp still; MASON stomps, cueing a short chapter of fast hand and finger gestures. ALL step forward.)

MIRANDA: "Where do we come from?" [3]

(WHITE CLOWNS make sharp hand and arm gestures with Dada trilling vocalizations.[4] They all step forward.)

MIRANDA: "Where are we going?" [3]

(WHITE CLOWNS make sharp hand, arm, and torso gestures, accompanied by abrasive Dada vocalizations, then step forward.)

MIRANDA: "What are we waiting for?" [3]

(JOSH enters and goes to stage right tree to play cues on the BRACKET CHIME that hangs there. JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME, causing WHITE CLOWNS to point toward "CITIZENS' SHAME" on the banner.)

MIRANDA: "What awaits us?" [3]

(WHITE CLOWNS advance slowly, still pointing, stretching their clump into a tiered, splayed mass. JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME: WHITE CLOWNS fall backward. JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME: WHITE CLOWNS' right arms swing up, straight and vertical. JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME: WHITE CLOWNS stand up slowly. JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME: WHITE CLOWNS take masks from their heads in one quick motion and freeze with masks held above their heads.

4. For Bread & Puppet, "Dada" vocalizations refer to highly articulated but nonlexical verbalizations of the kinds popularized by Dada poets such as Kurt Schwitters. Such vocalizations are also indebted to the inarticulate speech repertoire developed by hand-puppet traditions such as Punch, Kasperl, Pulcinella, etc.

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A pause: WHITE CLOWNS begin sharp-angled despair dances holding their masks, embracing and/or insulting their masks, ending by throwing masks to the floor and freezing in the position from which they threw their masks.

JOSH strikes BRACKET CHIME: ALL raise their arms and form a line in front of the backdrop, facing it, hands against the canvas, extending toward the "+ HOPE" comets at the top of the picture.)

ALL: Hope Principle!

(JOSH closes the curtain while ringing the BELL, rings a bit longer for the banner to come down, now out of sight, and hangs the BELL on the stage left tree.)

5. Dance of Death #2

(JOSH picks up FIDDLE and walks to position, downstage left.)

JOSH: Dance of Death #2—please!

(DEATH, played by CAITLIN, and THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM, played by MASON, enter from the sides of the front curtain. DEATH picks up the "ANONYMOUS" mask box and brings it to center stage, meeting THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM there. DEATH extends the box to THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM. THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM chooses a mask from the box and puts it on. DEATH puts down the box. When DEATH and THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM strike a pose, JOSH begins a second version of "Calvary," an improvisation on the bass part, played an octave higher, with double stops. DEATH dances THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM to death over the course of the tune. DEATH takes off THE ANONYMOUS VICTIM's mask and helps her up. They bow to each other and exit together. JOSH puts down FIDDLE and exits.)

6. Caribou Part 1

(MAY takes BELL from stage left tree and rings it as OCEA and PAUL raise the next backdrop, out of sight upstage of the front curtain. MAY continues to ring BELL and opens the front curtain, revealing the new backdrop and a herd of CARIBOU in the stage left wing. The backdrop depicts herds of celadon caribou approaching a giant gray/cream central sun from all directions. MAY hangs up BELL and takes their place by the stage right tree, ready to play cues. Silently, in a multilayered and multileveled herd, CARIBOU begin to emerge from the stage left wing and cross toward stage right, bobbing slowly. When CARIBOU reach center stage, MAY agitates BOTTLE-CAP RATTLE on the tree, first softly and slowly, causing CARIBOU to halt their advance and pause their bobbing. MAY then accelerates BOTTLE-CAP RATTLE, causing CARIBOU to accelerate their movements to a wild gallop in place. MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL: CARIBOU freeze. A pause, then CARIBOU necks slowly all raise up. A pause, then their necks stretch down; long pause, and swing up; long pause, stretch down. This pattern repeats several times with individual timing, i.e., not in unison.

MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL: all CARIBOU stretch necks up, each at its own pace. When they sense that all necks are up, they begin to turn their noses slowly to look 180° backward. MAY strikes HAND CYMBAL metronomically: CARIBOU bob slowly, bending their knees in individual timing, not in unison, still looking backward. MAY makes a double clash on HAND CYMBAL and JOSH enters with BOX FAN to a position in front of the sun painted on the backdrop, upstage center.

JOSH turns BOX FAN on: CARIBOU slowly collapse. When CARIBOU have fully collapsed and are still, JOSH turns BOX FAN off.

MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL: puppeteers slip CARIBOU off of their heads in unison, exposing all performers' faces. The performers hold all CARIBOU heads against their chests, parallel to the floor and facing stage left. One puppeteer at a time says a line, with short pauses between lines. Who says which line is not predetermined.)

A PUPPETEER: "Who are we?

A PUPPETEER: Where do we come from?

A PUPPETEER: Where are we going?

A PUPPETEER: What are we waiting for?

A PUPPETEER: What awaits us?" [Bloch 3]

(After a pause, MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL, sending ALL to exit stage left, except for JOSH, who exits stage right with BOX FAN.)

7. Crankie

(From the stage right wing, MAY and MIRANDA carry on a card table covered with a white sheet, on top of which sits the CRANKIE. CAITLIN places a black folding chair behind the table. PAUL turns the main lights off. JOSH enters with FIDDLE and steps onto the chair behind the table. PAUL enters with the MOBILE LIGHT and holds it near the

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Figure 3. Caribou herd advances in front of backdrop by Peter Schumann in one of the two "Caribou" scenes. Socialist Labor Party Hall in Barre, VT, 30 March 2024. (Photo by Raphaël Royer; courtesy of Bread & Puppet Theater)

CRANKIE. JOSH narrates the CRANKIE with the help of FIDDLE, as MAY and MIRANDA crank the scroll forward, slowly revealing the images.)

JOSH: "Once [...] we have grasped what we human beings are [...] there arises in the world something which shines into the childhood of all and in which no one has yet been: homeland." [Block 1375]

Ernst Bloch, German Jewish Philosopher, in *The Principle of Hope*, a huge study of hope that he worked on throughout the Second World War, as the Nazi genocide, which he narrowly escaped, unfolded in Europe.

"What is a homeland? [...] Is it these two chairs that remained in this room [...]? The table? [...] The picture of Jerusalem on the wall? The copper lock? The oak tree? The balcony? What is a homeland? [Our son]? Our illusions about him? Fathers? Their sons? What is a homeland? [...] Is it the picture of his brother hanging on the wall? [...] The homeland is where none of this can happen." [Kanafani 184–86]

Ghassan Kanafani, from the novella *Returning to Haifa*. Kanafani was expelled from Palestine with his family in 1948 at the age of 12 by Zionist militias. One of the most prominent writers and political figures of his generation, he was assassinated by the Mossad in Beirut in 1972.

"Embark on your
moving homeland—
your boat.

Go to your bed
and, in your sleep,
begin to memorize
your dream." [Abu Toha n.p.]

Mosab Abu Toha, from the poem "Memorize Your Dream." Abu Toha, Gazan poet and founder of the Edward Said Library in Gaza City. During the current genocide his home and library were targeted by Israeli bombing. He escaped into exile in Egypt with his wife and children.

"So let a signal be set for forward dreaming." *The Principle of Hope* "deals with nothing other than hoping beyond the day which has become." [Bloch 10]
Ernst Bloch, in *The Principle of Hope*.

"I dance with hope, whispering
Don't step on my feet again" [Aldirawi 57]
Basman Aldirawi, from the poem, "Don't Step

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on My Feet Again." Aldirawi—Gazan poet and physiotherapist—has survived the current genocide so far, continuing to write poems and stories from Gaza.

"The work of" hope "requires people who throw themselves actively into what is becoming, to which they themselves belong." [Bloch 3] Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*

"Here on the slopes of hills, facing the dusk
and the cannon of time
Close to the gardens of broken shadows,
We do what prisoners do,
And what the jobless do:
We cultivate hope.

A country preparing for dawn." [Darwish n.p.]

Mahmoud Darwish, from the poem "Under Siege," which he wrote in Ramallah as Israeli forces invaded during the Second Intifada. Born in al-Dirwa in Western Galilee, Darwish fled with his family at the age of 7, in 1948, when Israeli troops razed the town. His family managed to return and settled near Haifa, but despite his literary fame, Darwish was exiled permanently by the Israeli government in 1973 after he joined the PLO. He was only allowed within Israel's 1948 borders twice more before his death in 2008.

(Full lights up. MAY and MIRANDA take out the CRANKIE on the table. JOSH exits with FIDDLE, taking the chair. PAUL returns the MOBILE LIGHT to its place, downstage center.)

8. Caribou Part 2

(MAY goes to their spot by the instrument tree downstage right. When MAY is in place, the CARIBOU herd enters from the stage left wing in a multilayered and multileveled clump, bobbing slowly, as before. Again as before, when CARIBOU reach center stage, MAY agitates BOTTLE-CAP RATTLE, first softly and slowly, causing CARIBOU to halt their advance and pause their bobbing, then accelerating, causing CARIBOU to accelerate their movements to a wild gallop in place.

MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL: CARIBOU freeze. A pause. Then, all CARIBOU necks slowly stretch up. Then down, then up, on individual timing, not in unison, as before. MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL: all CARIBOU necks stretch up, each at their own pace and timing. When all necks are up, JOSH enters with BOX FAN and takes the same position as before, in front of the sun in the backdrop, upstage center. When BOX FAN turns on, CARIBOU begin to collapse, slowly spinning on themselves, all the way to the ground. Their torsional deterioration ends with all CARIBOU heads propped up in two rows parallel to the ground, facing stage left in front of the slumped, white-shrouded forms of each of their prostrate former operators. When this position has been achieved, JOSH turns off BOX FAN.

MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL: in a single motion, puppeteers sit up, slip their heads out of their CARIBOU puppets to reveal their faces, and hold the CARIBOU to their chests, parallel to the ground, CARIBOU heads facing stage left. A pause.)

CAITLIN: "Who are we?" [Bloch 3]

(A pause. MAY closes the curtain, ringing BELL. When the curtain is closed, the scene strikes and puppeteers go to their next places. The caribou backdrop is lowered and retired. MAY puts BELL in stage left tree.)

9. Dance of Death #3

(JOSH picks up FIDDLE, walks to downstage center.)

JOSH: Dance of death #3—please!

(With his fiddle bow, JOSH points to the top of the front curtain, where DEATH and ANONYMOUS VICTIM HAND PUPPETS, operated from behind the curtain by CAITLIN and MASON standing on a chair, pop up. JOSH plays a propulsive, heavily syncopated "fiddle tune" send-up of the bass part of "Calvary" for the hand puppets to perform a precise miniature spoof of their now-familiar "Dance of Death." The puppets finish, bow, and disappear. JOSH exits with FIDDLE.)

10. White Bird

(MAY opens curtain with BELL, and takes their place by the stage right tree, ready to play cues on the SNARE DRUM. MAY plays a short roll on SNARE DRUM: a few WHITE POPULATION PUPPETS fly into the stage—thrown by MASON and MIRANDA standing on ladders in left and right wings—and land in a pile center stage. MAY plays three more short pulses on the SNARE DRUM, signaling three more groups of puppets to fly onto the stage from the wings, adding to the pile in the center. A pause.

Quacking and whistling of TRIPLET SOLDIERS begins out of sight in the left wing.

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Figure 4. Puppeteers (from left): Paul Bedard, Erika Martinez Landaverde, Caitlin Ross, Ziggy Bird (partially obscured), Ocea Goddard, and Mason McAvoy after taking off their caribou, preparing to ask the opening questions from Ernst Bloch's The Principle of Hope*: "Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? What are we waiting for? What awaits us?" Socialist Labor Party Hall in Barre, VT, 30 March 2024. (Photo by Raphaël Royer; courtesy of Bread & Puppet Theater)*

JOSH and ERIKA have the puppets at the ready; JOSH is blowing the POLICE WHISTLE and PARTY HORN and ERIKA sounds the RABBIT QUACKER in a vigorous marching rhythm. TRIPLET SOLDIERS operated by JOSH and ERIKA enter and march, swinging their outer arms, whistling and quacking, directly to one of the WHITE POPULATION PUPPETS strewn on the stage, where they stop. Then, in silence, they pick up the body by the head, show it to the audience, hold that position for a moment, look down at the puppet's face, look up at the audience, then drop the body to the floor. TRIPLET SOLDIERS exit, quacking and whistling in marching rhythm and swinging their outer arms, as before.)

MAY: "We are never free of wishes." [Bloch 77]

(MAY plays a soft, slow RIDE CYMBAL roll, cueing the head of WHITE BIRD to appear through the opening in the upstage curtain. The RIDE CYMBAL roll builds to a clash as the white fabric wings of the WHITE BIRD emerge through the curtain and, as part of the same single motion, unfurl fully in front of the upstage curtain.)

MAY: "It would be more comfortable to forget this longing rather than to fulfill it, but what would this lead to today?"

(MAY clashes RIDE CYMBAL: one flap of WHITE BIRD's wings.)

MAY: "These wishes certainly would not stop,"—

(MAY clashes RIDE CYMBAL: one flap of WHITE BIRD's wings)

MAY: —"or they would disguise themselves as new ones,"—

(MAY clashes RIDE CYMBAL: one flap of WHITE BIRD's wings)

MAY: —"or worse still: without wishes we would be the dead bodies over which the wicked would stride, on to victory." [77]

(MAY plays soft, slow roll on RIDE CYMBAL: WHITE BIRD advances downstage, stepping on and over the WHITE POPULATION.)

MAY: "This is not a time to be without wishes"—

(MAY clashes RIDE CYMBAL: WHITE BIRD, now all the way downstage center, flaps once.)

MAY: —"and the deprived certainly do not intend to be."

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(MAY plays a roll on RIDE CYMBAL, increasing in intensity, as WHITE BIRD circles counterclockwise back to upstage center. MAY works RIDE CYMBAL and SNARE DRUM into collaborative chaotic frenzy: WHITE BIRD makes wild movements, including striking sharp, violent diagonal still positions with its head, as wing operators run to various radical changes of position, using all corners of the stage.)

MAY: "They dream that their wishes will be fulfilled."

(MAY plays short chaotic passage of RIDE CYMBAL and SNARE DRUM for wild WHITE BIRD movement, as above.)

MAY: "They dream about it night and day"—

(MAY plays short chaotic passage of RIDE CYMBAL and SNARE DRUM for wild WHITE BIRD movement, as above.)

MAY: —"not only at night."

(MAY plays slow and soft RIDE CYMBAL roll as WHITE BIRD sinks to the ground. Puppeteers come out from offstage and lie down under white fabric wings of WHITE BIRD.)

MAY: "If the inclination to improve our lot does not sleep even in our sleep, how should it do so when we are awake?" [77]

(With three unified breaths from under WHITE BIRD's wings, WHITE POPULATION lifts itself, higher and with greater assurance each time. MAY plays wild RIDE CYMBAL clashes for WHITE BIRD and WHITE POPULATION to revive and reassemble, with huge chaotic power matched by their speed and efficiency. WHITE BIRD finishes upstage center, restored to its full height, wings extended the width of the stage, WHITE POPULATION arrayed in front of it, each puppeteer operating two WHITE POPULATION puppets, hiding themselves behind their puppets throughout. MAY stops clashing RIDE CYMBAL: WHITE BIRD and WHITE POPULATION go suddenly still.)

MAY: "Revolutionary interest, with knowledge of how bad the world is, with acknowledgment of how good it could be if it were otherwise, needs the waking dream, [...] keeps hold of it in a wholly [...] realistic way–" [95]

(MAY clashes RIDE CYMBAL: in a single, unison movement, the puppeteers in the WHITE POPULATION, each of whom is currently hidden behind the two WHITE POPULATION PUPPETS they've been operating, separate their two puppets and poke out their faces to finish the line MAY began.)

ALL: —"in both its theory and practice!" [95]

(MAY clashes RIDE CYMBAL, followed by a deafening eruption on the RIDE CYMBAL and SNARE DRUM jointly, causing WHITE POPULATION to explode into revolutionary chaos of movement and yelling.)

ALL: *(Ad libbing)* Hey! Hey! Heeey! Hey! Hey! Aha! Rrr! Heeey! Hey! Oioioi!

(RIDE CYMBAL and SNARE DRUM stop. Having succeeded in its revolution, the postrevolutionary WHITE POPULATION ambles off, bobbing unhurriedly. MAY closes curtain while ringing BELL, then puts BELL on tree.)

11. Dance of Death #4

(JOSH picks up FIDDLE and positions himself stage left.)

JOSH: Dance of Death #4—please!

(Same form as Dance of Death #2, above, but with a waltz on the FIDDLE improvised from the bass part of "Calvary" by JOSH, and a new dance by CAITLIN and MASON, as DEATH and ANONYMOUS VICTIM, now back to full size.)

12. Haddad Part 1

(MAY takes BELL from stage left tree and opens the front curtain, revealing MIRANDA, ERIKA, and JOSH standing behind a mass of WHITE SHEET POPULATION puppets. The puppeteers are looking straight out over the audience's heads. MAY hangs BELL onstage right tree and picks up SQUEALY HORN. MAY plays one long wail on SQUEALY HORN, lasting the duration of MASON and ZIGGY's work raising the new backdrop. This new backdrop depicts a horizontal black-and-white skeleton with many roses growing out of it in full color: brown stems, green foliage, pink and red blossoms. MAY rehangs SQUEALY HORN on tree and takes HAND CYMBAL and its mallet from tree.

NARRATORS OCEA and PAUL enter from left and right wings, set up black folding chairs downstage left and downstage right, on either side of the WHITE SHEET POPULATION. OCEA and PAUL climb onto their chairs and stand facing out, framing the stage, each holding a sheaf of paper bearing the text that they proceed to read, in alternation.)

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PAUL: A letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken from Dr. Tariq M. Haddad, cardiologist and professor at University of Virginia School of Medicine.

(May clashes HAND CYMBAL, cueing puppeteers standing behind the WHITE SHEET POPULATION to pick up the POPULATION, holding the sheets on which its figures are mounted perpendicular to the floor, forming a screen that spans the width of the stage behind PAUL and OCEA. During the ensuing text, CAITLIN as the RAVEN and ZIGGY, with FIDDLE, enter silently behind the screen created by the WHITE SHEET POPULATION.)

OCEA: "Secretary of State Blinken, thank you for the invitation to the roundtable scheduled for today on the Gaza genocide. I have decided that I cannot in good conscience meet with you today, knowing this administration's policies have been responsible for the death of over 80 of my family members, including dozens of children, the suffering of hundreds of my remaining family, the famine my family is currently subjected to, and the destruction of all my family's homes."

(MAY clashes HAND CYMBAL, prompting WHITE SHEET POPULATION to contract and lower, revealing RAVEN/CAITLIN and FIDDLER/ZIGGY, who are intertwined above the POPULATION, center stage.)

PAUL: "The more I thought about this meeting, the more I could not emotionally bring myself to look you in the eyes, Secretary Blinken, knowing you and President Biden have knowingly contributed to the suffering and murder of so many of my family, the homelessness and dispossession of two million Gazans, and the famine that has befallen my remaining family members."

(RAVEN/CAITLIN moves directed by ZIGGY's FIDDLE sounds; WHITE SHEET POPULATION movements are directed by MAY's various HAND CYMBAL sounds: tapping, clinking, clashing, scraping, etc.)

OCEA: "How do I look a person in the eyes who not only could have prevented the death of my 85 family members and the nearly 15,000 children in Gaza who have been killed but actively contributed to their suffering and death by providing military ammunition from our US military supply to kill my family and destroy their homes?"

(RAVEN moves directed by ZIGGY's FIDDLE, as WHITE SHEET POPULATION moves, directed by MAY's HAND CYMBAL, as above.)

PAUL: "How do I look you in the eyes for three minutes,[5] knowing you couldn't even do the basic minimum like calling for a ceasefire to end the suffering and carnage, and even worse, are cutting off humanitarian assistance to two million people going through a famine of historic proportions?"

(RAVEN moves directed by ZIGGY's FIDDLE, as WHITE SHEET POPULATION moves with MAY's HAND CYMBAL, as above.)

OCEA: "There is a medical acronym unique to the Gaza Strip being frequently used that I have never heard any physician in the Western world use—WCNSF"

PAUL: WCNSF—

OCEA: "—which stands for 'wounded child, no surviving family.'"

PAUL: —Wounded Child, No Surviving Family.

OCEA: "Secretary Blinken, this is a stain on our humanity that this acronym exists." [Haddad n.p.]

(PAUL chimes metronomically on the ICE BELL, which hangs from the interior of the structure supporting the stage right side curtain. Simultaneously: RAVEN and FIDDLER exit matter-of-factly; MAY hangs HAND CYMBAL on tree and joins the other puppeteers operating the WHITE SHEET POPULATION; MASON leaves the WHITE SHEET POPULATION, fetches full-sized, individual WHITE POPULATION puppets, previously seen in the White Bird scene, returns and distributes these among the puppeteers holding the WHITE SHEET POPULATION, and retakes her place as a puppeteer in the scene.)

5. Each Palestinian American invitee to the "Roundtable Meeting" that Dr. Haddad declined to attend was informed that they would be granted three minutes of speaking time at the meeting.

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13. Haddad Part 2

OCEA: "I'd like to give you a bit about my background and that of my family, as my story, in many ways, is symbolic of what so many Palestinians have endured over the past 75 years."

(Single movement by COMBINED POPULATION, which is now a single, large-scale sculpture or tableau vivant, made up of WHITE SHEET POPULATION puppets as well as the larger individual WHITE POPULATION puppets, and will continue to shift and morph into different positions and configurations between each of the succeeding lines.)

PAUL: "I grew up as a child in Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip. As a child, I experienced the brutal nature of the Israeli military occupation firsthand. I remember playing chess in the street as a 13-year-old and getting shot with rubber bullets by Israeli soldiers. I remember watching my cousins either get arrested or have arms broken while I hid in a chicken coop to escape military detention for the crime of being a Palestinian child playing in the street."

(COMBINED POPULATION makes a single shift in position or change of gesture.)

OCEA: "I remember the Israeli soldiers breaking into our grandmother's house in the middle of the night in the '80s, using it as a 'scouting area' to snipe at children in our neighborhood, and eating out of her refrigerator while she slept."

(COMBINED POPULATION makes a single shift in position or change of gesture.)

PAUL: "I remember our beautiful orchard between Khan Younis and Gaza, filled with olive trees, prickly pear fruit, and endless fruit trees that we played in all summer, destroyed by the Israeli military in the mid-'90s, tree by tree."

(COMBINED POPULATION makes a single shift in position or change of gesture.)

OCEA: "I remember in the summer of 2014, my youngest son Ramzi was born, a day that we will never forget for the wrong reasons because it was the day of the Shujaiya massacre in Gaza when 67 people from one neighborhood were killed by Israeli military strikes, mostly children. We never celebrated his birth." [Haddad n.p.]

(PAUL chimes metronomically on the ICE BELL. MASON leaves the COMBINED POPULATION and goes to fetch WHITE HANDS, then returns to distribute these hands into the COMBINED POPULATION tableau before retaking her place as a puppeteer in the scene.)



Figure 5. Puppeteers operate "white population" puppets in front of a backdrop by Peter Schumann, between passages from Dr. Tariq M. Haddad's letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Socialist Labor Party Hall in Barre, VT, 30 March 2024. (Photo by Raphaël Royer; courtesy of Bread & Puppet Theater)

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14. Haddad Part 3

PAUL: "As for the current genocide, I have had at least 80 of my family members killed in Israeli strikes. I say at least because there are still people we cannot reach and whose bodies we cannot find. Secretary Blinken, I'd like for you to hear some of my family's narratives."

(COMBINED POPULATION makes a single shift in position or change of gesture.)

PAUL: "On November 2, three of my cousins, along with my aunt, were all killed. My surviving cousin from that family, Nael El-Haddad, sent us this message about that fateful day and its aftermath:"

OCEA: "'There were six of my family inside the house together. My mother, my brother Hani, his wife Vera, my brother Wael, and my sisters Wafaa and Huda. Suddenly they were targeted with an F16 missile directly without any prior warning through the corridor. They were deliberately targeted, based on where they were at the time when the attack was done. They were killed instantly, except for my brothers who initially had minor injuries. My brother Hani then died from those injuries the next day because the Israeli military siege around him, the Israeli military's destruction of all the nearby hospitals, and the lack of medicine or electricity led him to bleed to death. My other brother, Wael, suffered a serious wound along his foot but miraculously survived with God's kindness and generosity. However, he had to witness our own mother with half of her body buried under the rubble and his sister Wafa shredded into pieces. My brother Hani's wife and my sister Huda's bodies are still missing. I still don't know where they are.'"

(COMBINED POPULATION makes a single shift in position or change of gesture.)

OCEA: "On October 21, my family in Gaza received a flyer dropped on my cousin's home in northern Gaza by the Israeli military along with 1.1 million other civilians overnight, that stated,"

PAUL: "'Your presence in northern Gaza puts your life in danger. Whoever chooses to not leave northern Gaza to southern Gaza may be identified as a partner of a terrorist organization.'"

OCEA: "Secretary Blinken, if this isn't the very definition of collective punishment, genocide—assuming that if innocent civilians don't leave their homes with nowhere safe to go anyway, they will be treated as military targets—*I don't know what is*."

(COMBINED POPULATION makes a single shift in position or change of gesture.)

PAUL: "On another day, I received this message from a cousin who has four children and gave birth to twins two months ago:"

OCEA: "'The Israeli military told us to evacuate, but I am stuck here. I'm not able to evacuate with my children to leave, and I don't know where to go. We need all the world to save us, to see what's happening to us. I'm so scared for my children. The Israeli bombing is indiscriminate; they've destroyed homes on top of people's heads. Please, please, someone see us. Do something. Save us from what we're facing.'" [Haddad n.p.]

(Puppeteers let the whole tableau of the COMBINED POPULATION, including the WHITE HANDS, collapse into a pile center stage. Puppeteers walk to the far downstage right and left sides, except for JOSH and MASON, who pick up a large bedsheet painting that has been lying, folded, upstage center. JOSH and MASON hand the upper corners of the painting to PAUL and OCEA, who are still standing on their chairs, and, as JOSH and MASON walk forward to join the other puppeteers who are standing on either side of the stage, they guide the lower part of the painting so that it drapes over the front of the pile of collapsed COMBINED POPULATION.

The painting contains the first two lines of the poem, "Ohne Warum," by Angelus Silesius, translated from the original German by Peter Schumann, and depicts roses sprouting from the heads of skeletons who hold infants in their arms. Puppeteers in the left and right groups raise their inside arms and point to the text on the painting. In unison, they read the text that appears on the painting.)

ALL: "The rose has no why; she blossoms because she blossoms." [Silesius 39]

(A pause, ALL still pointing to the painting. Then, ALL drop their pointing positions and move purposefully toward their next tasks: PAUL and OCEA collapse and fold the painting, strike their chairs, and exit; JOSH goes to FIDDLE; all others consolidate the pile of COMBINED POPULATION and WHITE HANDS, move it downstage, and exit.)

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15. Stilts

(JOSH plays the tenor line of "Calvary" on the FIDDLE, slowly and unadorned. CAITLIN and ZIGGY enter, on ~3'–4' stilts, wearing white COMET MASKS and long white costumes. CAITLIN and ZIGGY perform reverences to the destroyed POPULATION, extending their hands from their hearts repeatedly. They exit as "Calvary" finishes. JOSH puts down FIDDLE.

Several puppeteers enter, kneel around the pile of COMBINED POPULATION puppets, pick it up carefully, and exit, carrying the pile under/through the center of the upstage curtain.)

16. Aaron Bushnell

(MASON leaves the group that is taking away the POPULATION puppets, goes to the stage right tree, takes the BRACKET CHIME from the tree and begins to strike it metronomically with a snare drum stick. OCEA and ERIKA take down the skeleton banner, which has been the backdrop since the beginning of "Haddad 1." PAUL and MIRANDA bring the AARON BUSHNELL PAINTING out and set it up downstage center. Unseen behind the BUSHNELL PAINTING, JOSH returns one set of the WHITE SHEET POPULATION to the stage, OCEA brings a set of BIG HANDS, giving one to JOSH, and ERIKA brings the BIG FACE. All three kneel and wait in stillness for the next scene. When this stillness is achieved, MASON points to the BUSHNELL PAINTING, explaining what it depicts.)

MASON: On February 25th 2024, senior airman Aaron Bushnell self-immolated outside of the Israeli embassy in Washington, DC. His final words were, "Free Palestine."

(MASON resumes striking the BRACKET CHIME metronomically as the BUSHNELL BANNER exits, revealing OCEA, ERIKA, and JOSH, who are kneeling upstage center with the BIG HEAD, BIG HANDS, and WHITE SHEET POPULATION at the ready.)

17. Big Face

(MASON walks to the MOBILE LIGHT and picks it up, continuing to strike the BRACKET CHIME metronomically. PAUL turns the rest of the stage lights off. MASON lights the not-yet-animated body—the WHITE SHEET POPULATION will form the torso of a giant figure completed by the BIG FACE and BIG HANDS—and the kneeling operators with the MOBILE LIGHT.

MIRANDA and PAUL enter from the wings and crawl under the WHITE SHEET POPULATION. The movement of their crawling begins to animate it slightly. As PAUL and MIRANDA enter the WHITE SHEET POPULATION, OCEA and JOSH start to raise the cardboard hands on either side of the POPULATION and ERIKA raises the BIG FACE. These actions combine to establish a single giant figure from the assembled elements, as described above. When the figure has been assembled and has concluded an establishing gesture, MAY enters with a black folding chair, opens the chair in front of the figure, sits and speaks.)

MAY: "Not fear and pity, but defiance and hope!" [Bloch 429]

(The BIG FIGURE moves, assuming a new gesture and position, as MASON finds a new angle from which to light the scene, still chiming metronomically. When she finds her spot, MASON stops chiming and MAY continues.)

MAY: "The real is process... [it] is the widely ramified mediation between present, unfinished past and above all: possible future." [196]

(The BIG FIGURE moves, assuming a new gesture and position, as MASON finds a new angle from which to light the scene, still chiming metronomically. MASON stops chiming and MAY continues.)

MAY: "[W]hat is driving in the Now also surges forward in the future into something open." [300]

(The BIG FIGURE moves, assuming a new gesture and position, as MASON finds a new angle from which to light the scene, still chiming metronomically. MASON stops chiming and MAY continues.)

MAY: "The wish builds up and creates the real. The new thought finally breaks out into the open, unfinished, reeling world." [1370]

(The BIG FIGURE moves, assuming a new gesture and position, as MASON finds a new angle from which to light the scene, still chiming metronomically. MASON stops chiming and MAY continues.)

MAY: "The tomorrow in today is alive." [1374]

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(MASON continues to strike the BRACKET CHIME as the BIG FIGURE advances, engulfs MAY and their chair, and exits. MASON returns MOBILE LIGHT to its place, down center, and returns BRACKET CHIME to tree, down right. PAUL turns full STAGE lights up.)

18. Oratorio

(All COMPANY members enter, carrying musical instruments and other sound makers, and form a semicircle stretching the full width of the stage. MASON places a music stand that carries the text for the forthcoming scene in the middle of the semicircle, center stage, and takes her place in the semicircle with the others. The COMPANY improvises the performance of the subsequent text, developing musical motifs on the instruments and sound-makers, incorporating diverse inarticulate vocalizations—breathing, yelling, whistling, humming, Dada phonemes, etc.—trading words, phrases, and sentences between solo voices, small groups of voices, and speaking a few phrases and short passages in unison. Repeats are allowed—for intelligibility, emphasis, or musicality—but liberties are not taken with wording or sequence. Only the last line of the Oratorio is always said by the whole company in unison.)

CHORUS: *(With improvised music and vocalizations.)* We who are not dead yet are born civilized, meaning, into a civilization that routinely produces large quantities of dead as part of its impact and merchandise.

The question, "What is war—who profits, who dies?" does not merely address politics, but the politically governed population as well, and points to the grim fact that death embedded in traditional empathy succumbs to the vast statistics of meaningless anonymous death reflected in the empire's budget called defense—meaning aggression—now actively engaged in running the latest horrendous genocide.

In whose interest? Population? The democratically elected, now openly fascist administration?

How will we be allowed to die? Belovedly, or falsely, as victims of empire designs?

Neglecting all carefully constructed human safeguards, treaties, international conventions, abandoning all habits of decency and morality, treating its subjects like empire-nothings and -nowheres, useful only once every four years for a billionaire-rigged election.

And we, yelling? And if our yelling does not reach their uninterested ears? Will we invent new yells that are harder to neglect? Will the enough-is-enough be loud enough? Will they comprehend our not-in-our-name and not-with-our-money?

Can we afford to be subjects to this murderous system? What could be a worse violation of our human rights than bombing hospitals and sending the murderers to investigate the crime! No water, food, electricity, medicine, the publicly declared intention to kill them all!

Where are the screaming institutions of basic human rights? Where are the preventers and stoppers of this ultimate brutality? And has our bombing-hospitals civilization lost its right to exist?

(ALL sing "Calvary," full song.)

CHORUS: "My thoughts that often mount the skies
Go search the world below,
Where Nature all in ruin lies
And owns her sovereign death." [James 300]

CHORUS: *(With improvised music and vocalizations.)* And we, aren't we meant for our birthright, the original glorious whole, which obliges us to our habitual or extra-habitual everyday euphoria,—

CHORUS: *(In unison.)* —and obliges us to fight the genociders? *(MAY begins a roll on SNARE DRUM, cueing all to exit, either to their band instruments or to their "YES" ROSE FLAGS.)*

19. Yes Flags

(As MAY continues the quiet roll on SNARE DRUM, CAITLIN begins to play slow beats on BASS DRUM. Performers begin to assemble on stage holding "YES" ROSE FLAGS high in their right hands. When JOSH comes in on TRUMPET with the melody of "A Closer Walk with Thee,"[6] supported by OCEA on BARITONE HORN, the performers begin a dance with the ROSE FLAGS:

6. A gospel hymn thought to have originated as a spiritual in the mid-1800s, which has since become a staple of the black funeral tradition in New Orleans. Our version is indebted to great New Orleans bands such as Dejan's Olympia Brass Band, Tremé Brass Band, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, and others.

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first, a slow section performed on the stage, and then, when the song transitions to a second, faster tempo, a run through the audience, followed by a return to the stage to form a line facing the audience, flags still high, as the song finishes.

ALL bow, sweeping ROSE FLAGS under their left arms as they do so, and come back up, sweeping FLAGS back to their high, upright position. Performers keep their ROSE FLAGS high as ZIGGY gives the postshow announcement.)

ZIGGY: *(Relevant local thanks and announcements.)* In just a few moments we'll serve free bread and aioli right here on the stage and the Bread & Puppet Press Store and Cheap Art Emporium will be open for your perusal. And last but not least, we here at Bread & Puppet believe in one great nation...and that's the donation.

(MAY plays "ba-dum-tshh" sting on SNARE and HAND CYMBAL.)

ZIGGY: So if you didn't see a donation hat on your way in, please see one on the way out, if you're able.

(Puppeteers serve free sourdough rye bread with garlic aioli; "cheap art"—posters, prints, books, etc.—is available for sale.)

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