

***The Rapture:***  
***a Miracle Play in Four Acts***

**by James Sherry and Mark Wallace**

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**Produced by Inter Poets Theater**  
**in association with Artists Space**

**Performed on Zoom**

**Sunday, December 6, 2020, 7:30pm EST**

**Zoom Web ID: 866 1378 3776**



In 2019, the authors were posting on Facebook about politics and aesthetics with many other “friends.” We realized that we liked each other’s framing of political issues and decided to collaborate. The ways our correspondence about morality on social media develop read to us like Medieval Miracle plays. So, *The Rapture* was commenced. We wrote through email, and as of this writing, election day November 3, 2020, we have not met in person since we began working on the play.

On December 15, 2019, *The Rapture* was performed for the first time with six actors and poets at the James’ loft at 300 Bowery. The purpose of the reading was to get feedback for the authors and two producers, Robert Lyons of the New Ohio Theater and Lonely Christopher who proposed producing the play through his nascent Inter Poets Theater Festival. Public performances have been thwarted by the COVID-19 plague and the failure of the current executive administration to take appropriate action to safeguard the lives of its citizens. Inter Poets Theater Festival will produce a staged reading online on December 6, 2020. The authors are taking this opportunity to distribute the text of *The Rapture* because it is a timely and relevant position on politics and religion and because we think you will like to read it.

With 23 characters, each actor plays multiple roles. No scene has more than five characters. *The Rapture* has multiple male, female, and non-binary roles as well as some that are unspecified. Players should be of many races. December 6, 2021 cast:

1. CEO: risk-averse leader of large corporation. Becomes backer of *The Rapture*  
(Actor 1) Roland Sands
2. Minister: self-serving clergy and supporter of *The Rapture*  
(Actor 2) Thomas Fink
3. Student-Daughter: young moralist  
(Actor 6) Clarinda MacLow
4. Mother: worker and manager of household  
(Actor 5) Anna Kohler
5. Bond Trader: creator of *Rapture* derivatives  
(Actor 5) Anna Kohler
6. Mayor of Tulsa: mayor of first city to be privatized  
(Actor 4) Stephen Ira
7. Russian Oligarch: Russian buyer of privatized Tulsa  
(Actor 3) Greer Sinclair
8. Sergeant: US soldier  
(Actor 6) Clarinda MacLow
9. Woman Contract Worker: female, temp worker  
(Actor 3) Greer Sinclair
10. Unemployed Union Worker: angry blue-collar worker  
(Actor 2) Thomas Fink

11. Lobbyist: supporter of The Rapture  
(Actor 5) Anna Kohler
12. DNC Chairman: leader of Democratic party  
(Actor 1) Roland Sands
13. Announcer-Advertiser: host of news show and pitchman  
(Actor 6) Clarinda Mac Low
14. Woman Journalist: female, commentator and supporter of humanity  
(Actor 4) Stephen Ira
15. Angel Michael: non-binary, angel warrior  
(Actor 3) Greer Sinclair
16. General: US Army leader  
(Actor 1) Roland Sands
17. First Zombie: supporter of patriarchy, brought back from dead by Jesus  
(Actor 2) Thomas Fink
18. Second Zombie: supporter of patriarchy, brought back from the dead by Jesus  
(Actor 3) Greer Sinclair
19. Third Zombie: female, ambivalent about the patriarchy  
(Actor 6) Clarinda Mac Low
20. Jesus: son of God and idol of right-wing politics  
(Actor 3) Greer Sinclair
21. Angel Raphael: trans angel of healing and compassion  
(Actor 4) Stephen Ira
22. God: polymorphous collection of beliefs  
(Actor 6) Clarinda Mac Low
23. Union Worker: supports organization  
(Actor 1) Roland Sands



Act 1, Scene 1: CEO and Minister discuss increased human population

(Image projection of Dubai or WTC, might consider old twin towers to emphasize the impact)

Two characters: CEO (1) & Minister (2)

CEO:

Our new drug, Longeva,  
is saving millions of lives.

Minister:

But our funeral parlor division,  
I mean, brethren,  
are having a bad year.  
And frankly, the lord receives  
fewer funeral prayers.  
My intention is not to offend, but  
that drug of yours, sir,  
turned my flock into zombies.

CEO:

Longeva drives more  
revenue than your losses.  
Even with the miniscule percentage  
of zombie side effect—  
and no double-blind test  
proved that effect.  
The purpose of civilization is  
to keep people alive, healthy,  
and most of all productive?

Minister:

Yes, I guess. I mean, of course.  
But god's planet suffers  
under the weight of so many people.  
There are 50% more people on Earth  
than it can sustainably support.

CEO:

Are you talking climate change,  
that junk science?

Minister:

My sermon Sunday addresses available resources.  
We have limited arable land.  
Water supplies are dwindling.  
With this population we'll use up  
potable water everywhere.  
Seas are rising and your firm  
wants to save millions more lives.  
God needs those souls.

CEO:  
Technology's the solution, preacher.  
We can go to Mars.  
Think of the profits.

Minister:  
There is another factor here.

CEO:  
What's that?

Minister:  
My prayers to heaven have been answered.  
God wishes increases in human mortality.  
He's got idle angels lolling about  
restless. He fears instability.  
The supply chain is underutilized.  
Angels not processing enough souls  
to gain their bonus level wings.  
In terms that you would use, sir,  
lower death rate means  
lower profits from Earth  
and excess capacity in heaven.  
The soul supply needs a shock.  
God and Jesus think  
it's time for Jesus  
to come again.

CEO:  
WHAT?

Minister:  
The Rapture first  
then the Second Coming.  
The Lord is my shepherd.

end scene

Act 1 Scene 2: Mother & Student-Daughter fight in the dining room

(Image of split-level tract home)

Two characters: Student-Daughter (6) & Mother (5)

Student-Daughter:

I'm home, Mom.

Chose my major today.

A finance degree it is!

About time someone around here  
made some money. If the world had more  
women running businesses,  
then businesses would be better.

Mother: (startled)

Wait a minute! Just a few weeks ago,  
we were talking about Women's Studies  
or Environmental Studies. Fields where  
you can do some good work.

Student-Daughter:

That was a whole month ago.

I got some good advice  
from my school counsellor  
on where the action really is.

Mother:

Do you understand what you're saying?  
Don't you know what it means to work  
for a big corporation? Greedy people  
who make a living taking the money  
from hard, honest working folks.

Student-Daughter: (laughs)

Pretty old-fashioned way  
of looking at it, Mom. Corporations  
do all sorts of environmental work.  
Wearing flowers in your hair  
is so 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Mother:

I was never a hippie,  
I was a punk. I had a nose ring.  
For two years I even had a mohawk.

Student-Daughter:

Hippie, punk, whatever.  
I'm sure you looked very vintage,

but I'm the one  
who has to payback these loans.

Mother:  
I promised I would help you.

Student-Daughter:  
On your salary?  
I don't really believe that,  
and I don't want help  
you can't afford. I certainly don't want  
Dad's help either. If I never speak  
to him again, that's fine with me.

Mother:  
The corporate world made your Dad  
who he is, a man loyal  
to money and his pleasures.  
And now you want to follow in his footsteps?

Student-Daughter:  
I'm not following in his footsteps  
or yours either. How do you know  
that it won't be corporations who end up  
saving the planet? They have all sorts of initiatives.  
It's possible to make good money  
*and* save the world.

Mother:  
I don't want to argue.  
I have an actual big fight coming up.  
These Jesus freaks are really  
making my life miserable.

Student-Daughter:  
Don't they have a right  
to be whoever they want to be?  
Don't I have that right?

Mother:  
They do, and you do,  
but I think they're the ones  
who want us to be just like them.  
I'm happy to live and let live,  
but I don't want to make a pilgrimage  
to Jesus-a-Logo to genuflect  
to the corporate skills in the pool.

Student-Daughter: (shakes head dismissively)  
Maybe there's something in this Rapture

for me, for all of us. You've never even once taken me to church. Maybe I want more of a relationship with God.

Mother:

Honey, please don't be naive.  
A lot of people start out with the best intentions and end up somewhere they never expected.

Student-Daughter:

Maybe I'll break the glass ceiling instead of standing around complaining about it. Things are different now, Mom. It's possible to work inside the system. Me and my friends are going to make the world the way we want it to be. We're not like you; we're not going to compromise.

Mother:

I thought you felt I was the one refusing to compromise.

Student-Daughter:

Mom. You just don't get it, do you?

end scene

Act 1, Scene 3: Traders build a derivative around The Rapture.

(Painting of souls rising in the rapture)

Three characters: CEO (1), Minister (2), Bond Trader (5)

CEO: (anxiously)

Can I make big bucks?

How safe is my equity in this investment?

How soon can I cash out?

I need to know, right now, if I'm chosen.

I need, I mean, I demand, assurances!

Minister:

Investment in Jesus is never wasted.

He pays off in this life *and* the next.

Philippians 4:19 says:

"And my God will supply

every need of yours

according to his riches

in glory in Christ Jesus."

Now he's here on Earth. I'll help you

speak to him directly.

The moment he got here,

he asked me to set him up with people

who need him—and who can help him.

I've known him my whole life,

so be assured: there's no Jesus

like Jesus.

Bond Trader:

You actually know him?

Holy derivatives!

I want a piece of that Jesus action.

CEO:

This action will be worthless

if he gets himself crucified again.

How do we know he's here for good

and will guard our investments?

Minster: (ignores CEO, focuses on trader, smiling)

My son, come with me this weekend

To the new resort he's just opened,

Jesus-a-Logo.

Golfing, horseback riding, shooting

people in the face, the entire ark.

And a big pool

where Jesus does most of his baptizing

these days. Swim with Jesus

and you have a clean start. Even the Germans  
are getting in the pool, and when the Germans  
get wet it's time for business.  
Plus, quality women. Russian women,  
especially, are ready to go  
to heaven right away  
with the right kind of American trader.  
(turns and looks at CEO with harsh, squinting eyes)  
So, doubting Thomas,  
how can I convert you?  
Jesus is the biggest  
investment option there is.  
You don't want in? There are  
others in the cabana, and you're welcome  
to stay out of the pool.  
But if you want in the swim,  
you better jump quick.  
Still, maybe you're the kind of believer  
better suited to the small safe margin  
of U.S. treasuries and renovation art projects  
in Kansas City, Kansas.

CEO (looking shocked):  
Now hold on there, buddy boy,  
I'm not saying no, I just wanna know  
the mechanics of this little instrument.  
I'll buy in, but I need some transparency.

Minister:  
Enter the pool,  
let Jesus dab  
a little water on your forehead  
and the heart of everything will be revealed.  
If the tree of knowledge  
doesn't reassure you, then perhaps  
your own judgement can't be trusted.

Bond Trader:  
Don't bicker, I can suit you both.  
Let's write this investment  
as a credit default swap and insure,  
your bonds against potential loss.  
We'll sell these swaps to the new  
government of Tulsa of Greater Russia.  
Those guys will buy anything. Let's see.  
(puts his pencil to his tongue)  
The CEO buys debt in Rapture bonds,  
say \$20 billion?  
(Minister lights up)  
We'll eliminate possible loss

from default by the issuer of the bonds,  
that is, Jesus, by selling the credit to Tulsa.  
That is, Tulsa acts as collateral  
to insure the investor's  
potential losses as part  
of the agreement. I fear counterparty risk,  
but since the Minister is sure  
we'll all be rising up, that'll be no problem.

CEO:

Um, well, that makes sense...  
(clearly, he's not understanding)

Minister:

In Jesus, you will be protected  
from all loss. Indeed, all losses  
shall be turned into gains.

Bond Trader:

Jesus insures Moses'  
investments. Ha, ha, ha!  
Just sign here, and Minister, here!  
(they sign)

end scene

Act 1, Scene 4: Corporate leaders sell Tulsa to Russia

(Photo of signing of NAFTA or other treaty)

Four characters: CEO (1), Russian Oligarch (3), Mayor of Tulsa (4), Sergeant (6)

Mayor of Tulsa:

Jesus says, "Go, sell what you have."  
Gentlemen, we folks weren't managing  
our people and property effectively  
here in Tulsa. Tax income was down 20%.  
Home foreclosures up 8, crime up 10.  
Democrats want social programs: too expensive.  
Republicans lowered taxes on the upper brackets  
and retail sales fell.  
But this new opportunity  
will make our town roar.  
We should have leased you  
Tulsa years ago.

CEO:

Tulsa needs a streamlined economy.  
Cities can't be responsible  
for too many poor citizens,  
And the government of Tulsa  
Consistently operates at a loss. Today's new  
U.S./Russia "pilot program" leases cities  
for 99 years to our northeastern neighbors.  
You Russians know how to manage populations.  
I'm sure you can reform the city  
Without all those nasty human rights  
That makes U.S. cities so expensive.

Russian Oligarch:

Mr. Mayor or I should call you  
Grand Duke of the Greater Tulsa  
of Russia, I'm so happy you've found  
a vehicle to fit your new title.  
I'm sure you'll help us run this city,  
assuring all Tulsa citizens  
Have—and know (he smiles)—their place.  
We hear the work camps  
are up and running, and that unemployment  
is now practically zero.

Mayor:

We here in Tulsa are ready  
for new trends:  
Half corporate state, half work camp.

I'm sure we'll be squeezing  
the best from everyone.

Russian Oligarch:

Mr. Mayor, of course.

Even the poorest citizens will have clear roles  
with Tulsa in our hands.

Sergeant: (entering and saluting in the new way)

Mr. Mayor, the work camps are full.

We need more farmers to feed the workers.

Mayor: (frowns, annoyed)

Farmers? Yeah. Here in Oklahoma  
we plowed them under in the Dust Bowl.

I hear some big farmers are going  
To the big Jesus rally this weekend  
down at Jesus-a-Logo.

Maybe we can talk to them there?

CEO:

A big bash, I hear. But I also hear  
there's going to be a protest.

Oligarch:

Jesus saves us from worker complaints, poor people  
And most activists. As long as he leaves  
those lovely loopholes in his morality,  
we can deal with a few meddlesome lefties.

CEO:

A few protestors reassure me  
That I'm doing my job.

end scene

Act 1, Scene 5: Labor discusses Jesus:

(Photo of unemployment line)

Three characters: Unemployed Union Worker (2), Woman Contract Worker (3), Mother (5)

Unemployed Union Worker:

Jesus, it's cold. My fingers are chapped.

On the assembly line 25 years,  
what crap,

my job handed

to some Mexican guy

who needs it as much as I do

but gets paid nada.

He's just doing what he has to:

why be mad at him?

I've been smashed to the concrete

by corporate rules and rulers.

No need to fight the union

if you can just close the plant.

Five days a week, all I do is nap on the floor  
of Job Application Room 666.

Woman Contract Worker:

I needed time with my family,

to finish my degree.

I can't work 40 hours in an office

which was really 50 by the time I got home.

But contract work's a constant gamble

and the odds are high I'll be unemployed soon.

Now and then it's champagne and steak,

But mostly canned spaghetti

and lead-filled tap water.

And with my husband on deployment

and my oldest headed to high school

something's got to change.

Mother:

If you both agree, then here's the prize:

Let's organize!

I'm a worker too, even if unpaid

or paid with the security of marriage?

Don't make me laugh.

"Whatever your hand finds to do,

do it with all your might."

Woman Contract Worker:

The last thing I need

is an organizing job

that doesn't pay.

I'm glad to protest,

as long as it's convenient

and doesn't cut off traffic.  
I ran into one of those  
on-the-freeway protests;  
Three hours late for the job.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
As long as it involves busting shit up,  
I'm in. The system kicked me hard  
and I'm ready to kick it back.

Mother:  
If we only identify I as free,  
then we lose humanity's  
greatest species gift: cooperation.  
You know right now the CEOs  
and investors are huddled in a room  
planning to smash us  
in even more ways we don't see coming.  
It's not a conspiracy;  
They all want to drive down wages.  
And they do it together  
By making us focus on the freedom  
of individuals. Wise up, guys.  
Individual freedom, that's the big con.  
Cooperation is the key  
to a fair say in how we live,  
whether it's me with my arm in the toilet  
or you in front of the blast furnace.

Woman Contract Worker:  
I'm listening,  
and it's worth a try.  
I just hope cooperation  
comes with a better paycheck  
and better conditions for working parents.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
I'm in too.  
It sounds like lots of work  
but work is what I know.  
What do we do?

Mother:  
Well here's the news folks:  
It takes more than people  
being willing to get together,  
share information, and cooperate.  
There are tradeoffs, tough decisions  
and months and months of negotiation.

Woman Contract Worker:  
Your corporate resistance plan  
sounds just like my corporate plan.

If I don't see some worthwhile change  
and soon, I'll be flying solo.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
What have I got to lose?

end scene

Act 1, Scene 6: Politicos discuss what they want from Jesus

(Picture of billboard: What Does Jesus Want? or other religious billboard)

Four characters: Lobbyist (5), DNC Chairman (1), Announcer-Advertiser (6)

Lobbyist:

I sent our best people down to Florida  
to talk to this Jesus guy. But it's not clear whose side he's on.  
He's not a non-partisan.  
He's all partisan all right.  
But a partisan, it appears, of himself.

DNC Chairman:

As DNC party Chairman I tell you  
Jesus is right now,  
and we need him. The question is still  
how to make him our own.

Announcer-Advertiser:

I can play it beaucoup ways,  
but I need to know where he stands.  
I've got people working with possible slogans:  
"Jesus, the Democrats, and You."  
"Jesus is voting for us. Are you voting for him?"  
We've got to be sure he'll sign on.

DNC Chairman:

We want a middle-of-the-road Jesus,  
a don't-rock-the-boat Jesus,  
a fiscally responsible Jesus,  
one who appears  
open and unprejudiced,  
a rainbow, pro-meritocracy Jesus  
who still believes in individual responsibility  
and opportunity for those  
who'll take what jobs there are.  
If he comes on too left, we're in trouble.  
If we call him extremist, he'll take  
some voters with him, maybe a lot.  
What can we offer that will move him  
to drop the crucifixion fantasies  
and help to make the system  
a little nicer for grateful users?

Lobbyist:

We'll have cabinet positions.  
Interior or Health and Human Services?  
Maybe even Governor, say of Florida?  
But he's said more than once

that he's not interested in worldly things.

DNC Chairman:

We're not talking about worldly things.

We're talking government.

We're talking principles.

Somebody needs to get down to Jesus-a-Logo

and drag out of this Jesus

what he wants.

Lobbyist:

I'll catch a plane there today.

Announcer-Advertiser:

"What does Jesus want?"

Now *that's* a slogan I can work with.

end scene

Act 1, Scene 7: NEWS shapes the public view of The Rapture

(Image of Exciting News or Breaking News)

Four characters: Announcer-Advertiser (6), Lobbyist (5), CEO (1), Woman Journalist (4)

Announcer-Advertiser:

Welcome to our program.

We have gathered with us today  
several highly esteemed experts  
on the subject of the alleged Jesus  
who has been stirring up people  
from his hidden fortress at Jesus-a-Logo.

Welcome, everybody.

Here's the question of the day:

is this so-called Jesus  
a good thing for America?

We ask our blue-ribbon panel  
of corporate leaders and government spokesmen.

Woman Journalist:

Nearly two-thirds of Americans  
have made a personal commitment to Jesus.  
They believe they're going to heaven  
because they confessed their sins  
and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.  
So it's crucial to get a better sense  
of what, politically, Jesus stands for.

Lobbyist:

But Jesus is a real man, I've seen him,  
who calls himself Jesus  
and He says He's here  
to call the righteous upward.  
Revelations says,  
"Rise, and measure the temple of God."

CEO:

My Homeland Security contacts tell me  
they vetted this man carefully,  
looked into his resources,  
and asked him hard questions.  
They can find no guilt in him.  
He thinks everything he does is perfect.

Woman Journalist:

Democrats have been very clear.  
They're very happy  
to work with this Jesus. They want religion  
to represent equal opportunity  
under the law. They think Jesus  
stands behind that. But which Jesus

is this Jesus going to be,  
he who raises the poor and the meek  
or the Jesus of limos?

Announcer-Advertiser:

Jesus says, "We have to change  
the way we think and to think about him."  
He seems to have a message for everyone.  
To the Advertiser, Jesus says,  
"Let he who is without sin, cast the first stone."  
To the CEO, he quotes the Second Commandment,  
"There are no other gods before me."  
To the Journalist, the Gospel of John says,  
"I write this to you who believe  
in the name of the Son of God,  
that you may know you have eternal life."  
There is no god but God,  
Oops, damn that teleprompter.  
Only the faithful will rise up.  
Think about it, panel.

Woman Journalist:

I'll say it again:  
The Democrats like Jesus  
and would love to work with him.  
But they also like Jews, Muslims, Buddhists  
and many other reputable world religions  
who make our country great.  
What does this Jesus have to say  
to women as well as men?  
Where does this Jesus stand  
on people with non-binary identities?

Lobbyist:

You all make sense and you all disagree.  
Jesus can reconcile these differences.  
His point of view is transcendent.  
He wants us to come together in him  
to find the way, the freedom, the light  
in most individual identity he shapes for you.  
Jesus wants all of you  
to want what he wants, to find yourselves in him.

(Other panelists react aggressively, trying to be the next to speak)

Announcer-Advertiser:

Unfortunately we're out of time.  
Thank you all for being here.  
I'm sure we're all excited to see  
what Jesus will do in our wonderful country.

End scene

Act 1, Scene 8: In the pool at Jesus-A-Logo

(Photo of men in pool with cigars, antique photo of this might be funny)

Four Characters: CEO (1), Russian Oligarch (3), Minister (2), Lobbyist (5)

CEO: (worried, looking out towards edge of stage)  
Why aren't the EU CEOs in the water?

Russian Oligarch:  
Germans can be outlasted  
as has often been proved.  
They're always on time  
But can't handle space.  
There are some pretty shady  
elements here.  
Who invited *Democrats*?

Minister:  
Jesus is open for negotiations  
to all who are open  
to negotiations with Him.

Russian Oligarch:  
Democrats bickering create many options.

Lobbyist:  
There are more bankrupts  
and failed candidates in hell  
than successful CEOs in heaven.  
Everyone's getting too chummy.  
Maybe it's about time  
for Jesus to show everyone  
a few big boss miracles.

Minister:  
Jesus will not be forced, by anyone,  
to show his power.  
Still, as an act of goodwill  
towards your guests, he's willing  
to raise a few dead.

CEO: (awed)  
Wow. How many?

Minister:  
Not many. In fact,  
not even as many  
as the population of Nevada.

end scene, end act

Act 2, Scene 1: Heaven's view of humanity and the goals of finance

(Photo of Groucho Marx as lawyer)

Two characters: CEO (1) & Angel Michael (3)

(Angel Michael enters with flaming sword, threatening)

CEO:

What must I do to please God,  
to please you?  
I want to ascend,  
not go to hell:  
I'm afraid for my immortal soul.  
"God judges the righteous, and  
God is angry every day."

Angel Michael: (waving sword)

Fear God.  
He has given you free will  
So, you can make a fool of yourself  
on social media whenever you desire.  
But you are subject to error,  
therefore, imperfect.

CEO:

How am I imperfect?  
I wanna be perfect.  
Imperfection puts me at risk.

Angel Michael:

You think you act alone  
and are separate  
from the rest of the world.  
Fool, you are not.  
All God's children got links  
to every other changing thing.

CEO:

How can there be no stable position?  
Am I not me?  
I am identified on Facebook  
as I wish to be.  
This slow theatrical can't match  
the speed of moral judgments on Twitter  
that energize and anger consumers.

Angel Michael:

You're you, but vary with every role.  
From Twitter to Instagram you are

never the same person twice.  
Do you see God in the same way  
when signing a deal as when  
putting your children to bed?  
You're imperfect, you change  
to a different imperfection.  
Your links complete you  
But also put you at risk.  
You reach out to love Jesus  
to love God  
but your love always falls short  
of the perfect love of the Trinity.  
You are only human  
in your imperfection. For example,  
what is the color white?

CEO:  
Our schools teach us  
white combines all colors of the spectrum.

Angel Michael:  
Yet you see white as a colorless luminescence  
and therefore differently  
from what you know.  
True purity arises from diversity.

CEO:  
Why has God made me imperfect?

Angel Michael:  
He cannot make you perfect like him.  
Only together can humanity  
Embrace all of his qualities.  
Only God who is everywhere  
can be perfect. He doesn't want  
that kind of competition.

CEO:  
Aha, gotcha!  
(addresses audience)  
Michael just confessed God's weakness  
in competition with humanity.  
My CDS on the Rapture doubled  
since we started this conversation.  
The angel has fucked up  
and we're going to give God  
a run for his money.

Angel Michael:  
I have returned to bring salvation  
and the light of wisdom to the human race.

(exit)

CEO: (to audience)

The Rapture. (holds out his arms wide)

But (looks around) all these changes threaten my assets.

I'm rapturous about improving  
my position on this planet.

My son starts Harvard in the fall.

Maybe this angel needs some education, too.

end scene

Act 2, Scene 2: Army reports on the impending battle

(Images of dead bodies or impressive military hardware)

Two characters: General (1), Sergeant (6)

Sergeant:

General, our army gathers near Las Vegas,  
Temperature 112, morale high.  
We build these weapons  
to keep money  
churning and that's why, if you make  
a bunch a bombs,  
you've gotta use 'em, sir.  
Beggin' your pardon:  
Reconnaissance reports  
2 million undead fighters  
armed with crosses and AR15s  
moving toward our position, sir.  
Somebody's training these zombies, sir  
to chant something unintelligible,  
"male state" or "make great,"  
We're not sure which  
and we're not sure who's  
doing the training. Politicians?  
Corporations? The Media?  
What is this army of the undead?

General:

You've heard of the Rapture, Sergeant?

Sergeant:

Yes, sir.

General:

This is it.

Sergeant:

Not very pretty, sir.

General:

No, Sergeant. It isn't.

Sergeant:

What are we going to do about it, sir?

General:

We're going to blow these fucking zombies  
into the ground they came from!  
Damn the consequences.

Sergeant:  
Sir?

General:  
We're the U.S. military.  
We don't hand over our power  
even to Jesus. If he has something to say,  
he should come out here and talk to me.  
Not knowing what's going on  
makes me nervous.  
And when I get nervous  
I reach for my artillery.

Sergeant:  
Sir, we decoded communications  
from pockets of living people  
resisting the undead menace.  
And, I'm afraid to say,  
many Democrats, even fringe leftists—  
a group called Burning Man.  
They're all fighting valiantly—  
maybe the Democrats not so much.  
We can't just bomb them, too?

General:  
Right, we can't just bomb them.  
We've got to keep  
a moral compass and room  
for plausible denial. Send some drones  
to bomb the Undead. A few commies  
as collateral damage  
will keep our moral position intact.

Sergeant:  
Sir, the Undead Army  
is sending a signal.  
They say Jesus has told them  
he's willing to negotiate.

General:  
Collect their stats.  
Set a meeting with Jesus and his priests.  
We will attend with those  
who can show their skin's in the game.

Sergeant:  
Yes, sir.

end scene

Act 2, Scene 3: Zombie congregation

(Image from *Night of the Living Dead*)

Three characters: First Zombie (2), Second Zombie (3), Third Zombie (6)

(Two zombies shake dirt off themselves)

First Zombie:

What a relief.

I feel great.

(moves around, exercising)

Second Zombie:

Again? Have we been raised

from the dead again? I'm getting sick

of being raised from the dead.

We're shifted from death to insignificance  
and inarticulate.

First Zombie:

That's a bad attitude.

Second Zombie:

I'm a zombie. What kind

of attitude do you expect

from a useless cog of rotting flesh?

Should I pretend that exercise

and diet will keep me alive forever?

First Zombie:

A little—hey, it's nice

to see you—wouldn't hurt.

Second Zombie:

It's not nice to see you.

You look like dirt.

I don't even want to know

what I look like.

Who raised us from the dead

this time?

First Zombie:

Jesus, of course.

Second Zombie:

I know it was Jesus,  
you dickless decaying zombie.  
It's always Jesus.  
I mean which Jesus this time?  
The Statue of Liberty give me  
your tired, your poor Jesus  
or the good ol' gun-totin',  
ass-kickin' Jesus.

First Zombie:

I'm pretty sure this Jesus  
is our kind of Jesus,  
the American Jesus  
ready for barbecue and beer.  
I'm pretty sure even you  
would have voted for this Jesus.

Second Zombie:

I don't like any Jesus at all,  
but as long as it's no  
holier than thou rainbow coalition Jesus,  
no urban fancy slick boy Jesus  
I guess I'll do what I'm asked.  
I want a job I can do  
and someone who believes in America.  
It's simple for me.  
Otherwise the whole country will be stormed  
by people from who knows where.

Third Zombie: (limps up, sycophantic)

Hey, boys! What's happening?  
I just took my Longeva  
and when I woke up whammo.  
No logic I can trust, only emotions  
and really bad breath.  
Looks like it's time  
To slurp up some libtard brains  
instead of listening to them whine  
about snowflakes and unicorns.  
I really miss the good old days  
of taking out desperate poor people  
in muddy hell holes  
to fatten the American banking system.

Second Zombie:

The American banking system

went overseas and left me  
with nothing. How do you think  
I got dead in the first place?  
(shakes head, disgusted)  
Why, when Jesus  
asks for zombies, does he give us  
these shit for brains leaders  
who line their own pockets?  
Guess that's what  
I deserve working 20 years  
at the ampm in Kingston, Arizona.

First Zombie:  
We've got a duty here all right?  
I sure do love when I have a duty,  
something to do with friends I trust.  
So are we working together on this  
or going to turn on each other  
like a bunch of university communists?

Second Zombie:  
I already said I was in.  
What do you want me to do,  
like it that I'm the guy  
that Jesus uses to clean up his messes?

Third Zombie:  
It's just like the old days  
when men were men I could adore.  
Now, I'm a zombie with a mission!  
Brains, must eat brains!

First Zombie:  
Brains, must eat brains!

end scene

Act 2, Scene 4: Jesus' Undead Army & US Army Command Negotiate

(Image from *Dawn of the Dead*)

Four characters: Lobbyist (5), General (1), First Zombie (2), Sergeant (6)

Lobbyist: (entering)

General, our undead are not your enemy.  
They just want a seat at the table.  
They're tired of being stepped on.  
I don't see any reason for anybody  
to, well, arm.

First Zombie:

Fuk u.

Lobbyist:

Don't stoop to insults.  
We're not Commies.  
Treat us like you think  
decent Americans ought to be treated.  
This is the greatest country in the world.  
Think about the technology you can put to work  
in the next ten years, the opportunity for an award  
if we all work hard and take advantage of freedom.  
But this conflict puts us all at risk,  
the living, I might mention, more than the undead.

Sergeant: (to General)

We're still in charge here  
so, our best tactic  
is to keep different groups  
hating each other  
but stop them from fighting.

First Zombie:

Freedom to eat.

General:

Only the U.S. military  
does the fighting.

Sergeant:

Exactly my point Sir.

Lobbyist:

The backlash is here  
and conflict destroys our shared space.  
What if I say what I want  
then you say what you want?

Then we can figure out how  
to both have most of it.

First Zombie:  
Freedom!!  
Freedom from you, ha ha.

General:  
We want people free to choose  
the full array of product options,  
to make them comfortable,  
resilient and to have  
many ways of getting into debt.

Lobbyist:  
We want our people to decide  
their own fate with faith in Jesus  
and consistent with traditional values.

Sergeant:  
Our citizens want freedom of choice  
and freedom to dominate.  
They're worried that people outside the U.S.  
are trying to take their profits.  
They want freedom of speech  
in the public sector, and no restrictions  
on corporate earnings.

Lobbyist:  
We have some common  
ground to lie in.  
We want family values,  
The freedom to limit behavior  
that doesn't fit community values.  
You want freedom of behavior;  
that's just consumerism.  
But corporate earnings sound good to us.

Sergeant:  
If I adopted your negotiating style,  
we're going to war.

General:  
Did somebody say war?!!  
Boy, howdy!

First Zombie:  
Ummm laa, god, GOD.

Sergeant:  
Almost forgot, I have a field memo for you, sir.

General:

Thank you, Sergeant. (reads memo moving his lips)  
(looks at lobbyist) Apparently you are already moving  
your zombies into forward positions.

Lobbyist:

Let's try a test agreement.  
You keep your soldiers in position  
and we'll hold ours just where they are.  
Let us keep our positions for 72 hours  
and see if we can find more common ground  
out of this simple agreement.

General:

Agreed!  
But this thumb right here,  
it's right by the button.  
If any undead get sneaky,  
I'll blow you all  
into the bright Nevada sunshine.  
My guess is your corpses  
won't do much complaining in Washington.

end scene

Act 2, Scene 5: People who prefer to live without fighting

(Image of Workers from Soviet Era 'heroic' or Workers in suffering)

Four characters: Mother (5), Unemployed Union Worker (2), Contract Worker (3)

Mother:

Comrades, zombies and the military are fighting  
across the radioactive field  
of what used to be Nevada.  
Nature is beginning to come apart.  
Now's the time for direct action.  
We can take our country back  
and install humane values for people  
who believe in working with others  
to make a better world.

Contract Worker:

Let's start with making the basics  
ourselves and bypassing the industries.  
We can make clothing in homes,  
lumber at local sawmills,  
and gardens for food in every yard.  
Many people in my neighborhood  
have been doing this sort of thing already.

Mother:

We have more than ten thousand households  
ready to supply our region.

Unemployed Union Worker:

Several teams from the army  
have deserted to our side.  
Regions are working together  
all over the central states  
and doing what we're doing,  
rebuilding the country  
one firm step at a time.

Mother:

The questions are,  
how do we coordinate  
different constituencies with different interests  
while leaving them free  
to make personal and local decisions?  
How do we get them to act together  
for key objectives  
without some coordinated leadership?  
"All for one and one for all"  
isn't as easy as it seems.

What goals do we all  
have in common?

Unemployed Union Worker:  
We all want our basic needs guaranteed  
And a say in the decisions that affect us,  
To speak for ourselves and be represented honestly.

Contract Worker:  
And none of us want anyone  
interfering with our lives.  
We want to be as free as possible,  
to live as we like, to play music,  
invent our own technology,  
and go on the water in boats.

Mother:  
Security for our needs,  
a say in our lives,  
and freedom to be who we want,  
like my daughter always tells me.  
All labor,  
even my sweeping, should be honored  
by proper pay, both love and wages  
and I think we've found the right combination.

Contract Worker:  
Unless the Democratic Party  
co-opts it for their donors.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
Can we reach our friends in the cities  
and get everyone out of their homes and marching?

Mother:  
I think we can.  
Log on to Twitter.  
If anything will get people moving,  
it's their fears  
of imminent zombie invasion.  
(to herself)  
I wonder what my daughter  
would think of this platform?

end scene

Act 3, Scene 1: On Earth, the Non-Elect realize the situation has changed

(Painting of souls rising to heaven)

Three characters: DNC Chairman (1), Announcer-Advertiser (6), Woman Journalist (4)

DNC Chairman:

Let me get this straight  
You're telling me our main competitors,  
the entire GOP  
has all gone to heaven?

Announcer-Advertiser:

(on the phone, talks to DNC Chairman)  
Going right now? (announcing) Look (he points)  
Those slow, upward moving blobs  
aren't exactly UFOs.  
I received insider info  
regarding their big trade  
and rushed right over to tell you.

DNC Chairman:

Is this a good thing  
or a bad thing?  
Are they out of the game  
or playing it on a whole new level?  
(looks at Announcer-Advertiser)

Announcer-Advertiser: (shades eyes from sky)

I refuse to acknowledge  
that it's happening at all.  
That would be throwing my whole career  
of news reporting  
into a fundamentalist trash can.

Woman Journalist: (overjoyed)

I always wanted to send the boys' club packing  
but even I never thought  
they'd just float right off the planet  
in the high self-regard they have  
for their own hot air.

Announcer-Advertiser

I feel left out.  
I support both Democrats  
and Republicans?  
What's so wrong with that?  
I'm every bit as corporate  
as any of the GOPs rising up  
right now to meet God in heaven.

So what if I throw a few scraps  
to citizens so they watch my show?  
I'm still shilling for the boss.  
History is full of people  
claiming to have religious experiences  
when they're really just stoned.  
Did any of you spike the punch?  
I had enough youth  
to know when I'm tripping.

Woman Journalist: (sings Wilco song)  
"Theologians  
They don't know nothing  
About my soul  
About my soul."  
You can all sit around  
and bemoan your lost resource options  
as much as you want. I'm going over  
to Capitol Hill  
and put women in the open  
Congressional seats.

DNC Chairman:  
Is there a middle ground here?  
I don't want to go to heaven  
and I sure don't want to go to hell.  
I just want a more  
stable institutional system,  
built on giving more speakers the right  
to be consulted on decisions that matter.  
Forget the metaphors of idealism,  
aiming for what hasn't happened yet,  
forget the metaphors of heaven and hell.  
Is that too much to ask?

Announcer-Advertiser:  
Maybe there are still a few tickets  
for late leaving flights  
Who's handling blob transportation?  
Why is the American airline system  
always in such disarray?  
(listens to his cell phone briefly, nodding)  
Turns out there's a special lane  
for people with the right  
"Go straight to heaven;  
do not pass GO" card.  
If I'm lucky, there will be  
a black market for them soon.

end scene

Act 3, Scene 2: In heaven, Lobbyist corrupts Angel Raphael

*“How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all” and “In His hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to Him” and “The earth is the LORD’s, and the fullness thereof.” (Psalms 104:24, 95:4 and 24:1).*

(Image of theft or shopping center)

Five characters: Angel Raphael (4), Angel Michael (3), Minister (2), Third Zombie (6), Lobbyist (5)

Angel Raphael:

You believers caught up in the Rapture  
May be in pain and suffer greatly.  
I hereby make you whole,  
cured and free of doubt.

Third Zombie:

Unnnnh! (suddenly perking up and looking better)  
Thanks!  
Suddenly, I’m less hungry.

Minister:

What can we do now  
that we are whole,  
cured and doubtless?

Angel Raphael:

Praise God! I give you Zombies’ voices.

Third Zombie: (now looks a lot livelier since coming to heaven, and more articulate, but ungrateful)

We praised God on Earth.  
We’re the patriarchal support group,  
even zombie women.  
Rah! Rah!  
What’s new up here?

Angel Raphael:

You Zombies were already sanctified on Earth  
by devouring human brains.  
We appreciate your devotion  
to pure desire. Now in heaven  
the truth of your support  
manifests love, love of God,  
the only God.

Third Zombie:

We are addicted to hate of humanity,  
especially if they’re not white,  
and love of malls, I mean, God.  
We suffered making the transition  
from hatred to love;

we loved our rage.  
Our people have voted.  
Although we are the elect,  
we'd like to go back to Earth  
where we can hate and kill  
to our heart's content.

Angel Michael: (enters waving a flaming sword)  
You are here to praise God.  
There is no right of return to your Earth.  
The next seven years will be  
pretty ugly down there.  
After the Rapture brought you here,  
the next era on Earth—  
ecological disaster, crop failures,  
political upheaval—  
will not be friendly even to zombies.

Third Zombie: (clearly afraid of the sword)  
Yes, my lord Michael.  
Please lead us. We don't believe in reason  
or that slippery sidebar, wisdom,  
only faith and rage.

Angel Raphael:  
Michael gathers with his sharp scythe  
the clusters of the vine of the Earth,  
for its grapes are ripe.  
He has thrown them into God's wine press.  
Only genetically modified crops can grow  
in this new climate on Earth.  
We are assured of profits forever.  
As a healer I justify  
and cope. I've learned how to care.

Lobbyist:  
I can address these zombies' needs  
through my office.  
Does that sound like a good partnership?  
I'd love to get to know your organization,  
Rafe. Let's do lunch.

Angel Michael: (not supporting Lobbyist program)  
On Earth or in heaven,  
people are given what they've earned.  
When you are ready to accept that,  
I'm sure Raphael can set up a lunch  
with the necessary parties  
for achieving everyone's just desserts.  
He's not only competitive in good works,  
but rationalizes bad decisions

to make himself feel as good  
as he makes patients.

Lobbyist:  
Getting what they have earned?  
That's what I've been talking about all along,  
not freeloading, not Communism.  
Bring on the desserts. Bring on the earnings.  
My team and I are ready to make it happen  
at whatever time and place you name.

Angel Raphael: (taking the Lobbyist and the Minister aside)  
Don't fret about Michael.  
He's always such a dreary fellow,  
shedding blood and shouting.  
Why don't we three have a chat  
away from all this hullabaloo?  
I'm sure you all are feeling just fine.

(Third Zombie exits the scene.)

Minister:  
This sounds a lot like the earthly plane.

Lobbyist:  
Humanity is merely a reflection of God.

Angel Raphael:  
On Earth you cooperate to acquire your desires  
but in heaven they are realized fully.  
Here on your right is the river  
of the water of life, as clear as crystal.  
It flows from the throne of God and the Lamb.  
Whether in the city or the grandeur of nature,  
the tree of life is visible everywhere  
in the network of the bounty of living.  
It produces twelve kinds of fruit,  
each month having its own fruit.  
Which fruit would you like?  
Which desire would you fulfill?  
Why not jump right in with January?  
Fulfilling your desires improves your wellbeing.

Minister:  
There are souls who want to rise to heaven  
who do not belong here.  
They come from unclean places  
and their presence makes me suffer.  
Let's block them at the pearly gates.

Angel Raphael:

Do not fret, but relax and let us rule.  
What would you give for this chance  
to keep heaven pure?

Angel Michael:  
What are you three talking about?  
You know I have pretty good hearing.  
Heaven is not about your desire  
but praising God for his wholeness.

Angel Raphael:  
I'm trying to help them understand  
God's will as their own.

Angel Michael:  
That's good, I thought  
you might be hatching something  
shady. That Lobbyist hasn't stopped  
confusing things since he got here.

Angel Raphael:  
The political bedfellows we're sleeping with  
Here don't seem so savory.  
(then to himself)  
But perhaps there's some gain here.  
We who minister to the sick  
desire, yes, desire improvement  
for all, ourselves included.

end scene

Act 3 Scene 3: (heaven) Can the Student go to heaven?

(Rosetti painting of poet or similar humor)

Three characters: CEO (1), Student-Daughter (6), Second Zombie (3)

Student-Daughter:

How do we label these files?

What are the categories of goodness?

How do we include people  
who find no place to thrive?

CEO:

I asked you to help here because you seemed  
well, reasonable, but now I'm not so sure.

What do you mean, long term?

What's a student  
doing in Heaven anyway?

Student-Daughter:

Of all the students on Earth

Jesus chose me.

I always speak  
in the voice of God,

who is natural,  
and make a place for concern  
for those who cannot find their home.

A lot of us will end up here.

CEO:

No wonder you're in Heaven  
and still doing temp jobs.

Student-Daughter:

These days, in Heaven,  
even temp work is rare.

People of all kinds  
will arrive seven years  
after the Rapture,  
even those who didn't  
get invited to parties.

CEO:

Just get the job done.

Student-Daughter:

Your short term view  
ignores humanity's need  
for sustainability.

I'm here to sing the praises

of the poor and meek.  
I will not serve your desires  
with lyre'd melodies  
or camouflage with beauty.

CEO:  
Angels should want us secure and satisfied.  
Whose desires will you satisfy? (leering)  
What's the moral of the story?

Student-Daughter:  
You're afraid of the voice that searches.  
I know despicable things about you.  
You want to cover them up so no one sees.  
I'm tired of your condescension.  
I'm tired of being sweet and kind.  
I know your dirty secrets.  
Don't think for a second  
that it's easy to keep me quiet.

CEO:  
When you've calmed down, we can talk,  
but consider what you have to say.  
Corporate leaders will make Heaven ours, too.  
The tide is already turning.  
Heaven has always been available  
for those with courage to seize it.

Student-Daughter:  
Not every impulse  
produces intended results.  
Don't think I'm naive  
about my gut's intelligence.  
I eat your hate up like love.  
Stop for one minute...

Second Zombie:  
Why are you talking to him?  
I'm the unstoppable one,  
but I need logistics to bring  
our forces together in battle.  
What good are logistics to you?

Student-Daughter:  
I speak the realities of his crimes  
and show them to you  
so you can act on your own behalf.  
But I need the right labels  
to show his true colors.  
I write and wait. As you do  
all that creepy stuff

my words portray his assaults on the state,  
against humanity, against God himself.

Second Zombie:

We maintain order in the present,  
not some future ideal  
that never comes to pass.  
We eat the brains of humans  
to bring them closer to God.

Student-Daughter:

What do you mean? Look where we are?  
Humanity's civilized wonders  
can't be expressed  
without careful speech  
and the chance for people  
to find their own bliss.  
Without that, it's just highways,  
cliches, and box stores.

Second Zombie:

Yes, we here are raised to a higher plane  
by someone who doesn't exist alone.  
God's just a gathering  
of our parts, performing his existence ...  
This is a passion play  
where you put the pieces in order.

Student-Daughter:

Nonsense, I'm fighting you with every  
scrap of learning, here and on earth.

Second Zombie:

My dear, of course you are.  
But I am an officer, a warrior.  
Fighting and tearing your flesh  
is how I learn from you the next step  
in my evolution. I pay attention  
to your acts and reconfigure them  
into my own life.

CEO:

And I keep desire stoked  
so that you feel alive. For that I need  
to know how you think  
differently than I.  
I study you to make you want  
what I have to give. I read your labels,  
your poems and your rants.  
They feed my supply chain  
to know your thoughts.

Second Zombie:

If we allowed you all your desires  
and did not confront you  
to eat your brains,  
the world would sink to torpor.

Student-Daughter:

Understanding follows from more  
than violence. Knowledge speaks  
of more than pain.

CEO:

I'm not against potential  
and these zombies aren't either  
though they'll like it better  
if it comes with a burger and fries.  
I might be just the guy you need  
to get this Heaven up and running  
in a way that makes sense for you both.

Second Zombie:

I'm in if it comes with fries.

Student-Daughter:

Knowledge has room for fries,  
for gluten-free bread,  
and for people to be who they are.  
But how can I trust you?

CEO:

We don't need your services.  
We welcome the elect to Heaven.  
and decide who belongs where.

Student-Daughter:

You working on your own  
is a worse idea  
than working together.  
I'm joining you  
to keep an eye out.

(CEO shrugs)

(CEO and First Zombie exit arm in arm,  
with Student-Daughter following suspiciously)

end scene

Act 3, Scene 4: Jesus provides dispensations for devotees

(Painting of Papal dispensations maybe Titian or Tintoretto)

Five characters: Jesus (3), Minister (2), Lobbyist (5), CEO (1), Angel Raphael (4)

Jesus:

I'm glad to see the true followers are with me.

Minister, Lobbyist, CEO: (singing the Bryan Adams song with upstretched arms to Jesus)  
“(Everything I do) I do It For You”

Jesus:

I know you would.  
And soon you'll know  
what you can do for me.  
But now let's discuss  
what I can do for you.  
Line up, folks. Get your hands out.  
What do you want? Ask for anything.

(All three stare at him)

Lobbyist:

Anything?

Jesus:

Yes.

Lobbyist:

Anything *anything*? Or just anything?

Jesus.

Ah. Yes. Anything *anything*.

(Note: Each character in the room is then going ask for what they want and this Jesus will say that he's giving it, although he has no power, actually, to do it)

Minister:

I'd like a chain of megachurches  
in downtown Tulsa, Jackson,  
Charlotte and Nashville.

Jesus:

Your ministry is valuable to us  
in these final days. We need to support  
Raphael up here in heaven.  
But that can't be all? Anything anything.

Minister: (grins)

Well. If you put that way,  
I would like an unbeliever  
brought to me every day.  
And a new sports car, every day.  
And I want to drive that sports car  
right into that unbeliever,  
and I want it to be televised  
and I want to get in no trouble at all.  
How about that? And maybe for variation,  
I want to gun some of them down  
right on 5th Avenue while everyone cheers.

Jesus:  
It shall be so. (turns to Lobbyist)  
And you?

Lobbyist:  
I want dessert every day for lunch and dinner.  
I want servants lined up at my door.  
I want the raiment of the Pope.  
And I want no regrets.

Jesus:  
Your loyalty will be rewarded.  
And no regrets, dear boy. And?

Lobbyist:  
And?

Jesus.  
Yes.

Lobbyist:  
Okay. I want to be a movie star.  
I want to do sex scenes, real ones.  
And I want a poster of me, naked,  
to be the most popular poster in America,  
and I want that poster in every bedroom in America,  
and I want women and men, lots of them,  
to see that poster when they're in a bedroom  
with a man and I want them to wish, and say they wish,  
that I was there, and that they feel disappointed  
that I'm not. And I want no one, ever,  
to ever remember Burt Reynolds or Lana Turner again.  
(he looks around, embarrassed) Too much?  
I knew it would be too much.

Jesus:  
Not at all.

Lobbyist:

It's not too much?

Jesus:

It's already done. (turns to CEO) You?

CEO:

We need to reorganize this place.  
Heaven has too flat a pecking order.  
I will report directly to the big guy.  
My retinue should include both Raphael and Michael.  
And of course I support Raphael  
in his reorg according to your love  
of profits, er, prophecy.

Jesus: (frowning)

Anything anything on *Earth*.

CEO:

You didn't say on Earth.

Jesus: (eyeing the CEO coldly)

Are you moving in on my territory?  
Who do you think you are, Putin?  
I know Putin. And let me tell you:  
you're *no* Putin.

CEO:

You didn't say on Earth.

Jesus:

I did say on Earth. Are you calling me a liar?  
I know you wouldn't. So, anything on Earth.  
Don't hold back.

CEO:

But I didn't hold back.

Jesus:

It's okay. Everybody holds back.

CEO: (adamant)

I want a piece of heaven. A big one.  
Anything short of that, no dice.

Jesus: (snaps fingers)

It's done.

CEO:

How so?

Jesus:

You're now 30% owner of heaven (™).  
30% of proceeds from any business  
using the word "heaven"  
in any aspect of what it does  
now belongs to you.

CEO:  
That's not what I meant.

Jesus:  
It is what you meant. So, what?  
Nobody's got a song for Jesus?

and Minister and Lobbyist break into Bryan Adams' song:  
"(Everything I Do) I Do It For You"

CEO:  
Hey.

Jesus:  
Look. I'm the biggest, ever.  
I'm bigger than biggest.  
But I like your style.  
Let's confer with some of these angels,  
see if we can bring you in  
on organizing heaven.  
What about Attorney General?

CEO:  
Attorney General of Heaven? I'd take  
Attorney General of Heaven.

Raphael: (to Jesus)  
I don't know if we can get that done.  
(to himself) And what's in it for me?  
Maybe I want  
to be Attorney General.  
Or maybe just Secretary of Heaven's Interior.

Jesus:  
If I ask you to do it, you'll do it.  
Loyalty, that's what counts in heaven.  
So, how's everybody feeling?

Minister, Lobbyist, and CEO:  
"Everything I do / I do it for you"

Jesus:  
And you should.  
I've done more for humanity than anyone.  
I'm, like, a smart person.

I love people and I do everything for you  
and I do it really well.  
Look at all those paintings of me,  
even as an infant everybody loved me.  
My mother loved me so much, I was amazing.  
And I'm the most convincing speaker.  
I can deal with a bad situation really well.

Minister, Lobbyist and CEO:  
"Everything I do, I do for you"  
(organ music, fade to black)

end scene

Act 3, Scene 5: Meanwhile, back on Earth

(Painting of the three Fates by Goya)

Three characters: Woman Journalist (4), Mother (5), Union Worker (1)

Woman Journalist:

This new Jesus wants  
to dumb down the language  
so he can control it.  
He enforces his will on us:  
“Judge not, that ye be not judged.”  
How convenient. God does all the judging.  
What happened to free will?

Mother:

Ok, maybe that’s not Jesus’ job;  
maybe that’s God the father’s job.  
But I’m telling you, this three-part deity  
wreaks havoc with my understanding  
of the importance of being human.  
Is humanity a multiple?  
I’m beginning to think our days  
as a species are numbered.  
If we want to stop that from happening  
we’ll have to act  
or we may end humanity’s days.

Woman Journalist:

Post-human means  
there are no more people.  
We defeat our own cause to label like that.  
Decentering humanity linked to others  
in a single complex entity  
is not post-human, it’s bio-centric.  
But we can’t just proclaim all one;  
protecting the body remains a key  
to life and understanding.  
We’ve had the Rapture.  
Now we predict seven really bad years  
and then the world ends...  
How is that for numbered?

Union Worker:

We have to organize the people  
who are left on Earth  
and get them to focus on homo sapiens.

Mother:

That homo again; it’s not just about men.

We definitely need a language  
not mired in male authority.  
The world will be better when everyone  
has equal say in what they get called.  
Odd, I sound like my daughter.

Woman Journalist:

That's not really surprising  
considering that she's been working for the Elect  
for several weeks now.  
I tried to talk her out of going up there  
but she's stubborn, like someone else I know.

Mother:

(sighs) I should have guessed.  
She never listens to anybody.  
(suddenly smiles)  
I wonder what will happen  
when she discovers what they're really like.  
She doesn't like being controlled  
and she doesn't like using  
any words but her own.  
The moment she was old enough  
she changed her own name.

Union Worker:

How things are controlled  
and what they get named  
are what we need to fight for.  
Fighting for language isn't enough.  
Fighting for material isn't enough.  
Language is material  
as the work of my hands.

end scene

Act 3, Scene 6 (was 7): Channels of corruption in Heaven

(Image of angel with tarnished wings or fallen angel)

Four characters: Angel Raphael (4), Lobbyist (5), Angel Michael (3), God (6)

Angel Raphael:

Have I got a deal for you.  
It's really a great deal,  
possibly the greatest deal.

Lobbyist:

You're channeling your boss  
who, by the way, didn't deliver.  
I understand we're here for eternity.

Angel Raphael:

True and that's why this is such a great deal.  
I am delivering and so will you.  
This is what you wanted, right, sir?  
(project image of Lobbyist poster, naked)  
It's renewable. I see  
you've brought my suitcase.

Lobbyist:

Yes, your new wings.  
The Minister knew your size.  
And not easy to acquire.

Angel Raphael:

They'll help me convey my message.

Lobbyist:

And the enemies of the people will be squashed.

(Angel Michael enters with lightsaber)

Angel Michael:

The people need support, fairness and honesty.  
I think this deal is over.  
I'm going to drain the swamp.

Lobbyist:

They can't help themselves.

Angel Raphael: (bowing their head)

I'm trying to help the elect to be healed  
from the stresses of the Rapture  
and the corruption of the unbelievers  
in power on Earth.

Angel Michael:  
You have always had good intentions, Raphael.  
But your head has been turned  
by seeing only the pain of the elect here on Earth.  
You, on the other hand, (points their sword at Lobbyist)  
are another matter altogether.  
(Michael raises sword to strike Lobbyist, when God enters)

God:  
Michael, we don't need more conflict.  
Drop the prop.  
The Lobbyist is just playing his role.  
And you angels and even I  
don't really exist on our own.  
I'm just another player  
performing their role in this scene,  
an identity in your mind.  
Of course my identity  
is a boundary condition.  
My existence is parts collected  
by language into a performance.  
Here we are on the stage,  
on one side my power, on the other my love,  
and on the third, nature absorbs us.  
I am leader to some, oppressor to many,  
but I only exist in your point of view:  
the passion and negotiation of Jesus,  
the wisdom and fear  
born of the holy spirit,  
and my own constructed self  
acting between.

Angel Michael, Angel Raphael:  
My lord is many.  
Tell us what we should do.

Lobbyist:  
I smell a rat.

end scene, end act.

Act 4, Scene 1: Jesus exposed and made man.

(Big photoshopped photo of Jesus on velvet)

3 characters: Jesus (3), God (6), Angel Raphael (4)

Bryan Adams' "Everything I do, I do it for you" on low in background until God enters.

Jesus: (fixing his hair in a hand mirror)

Yep, I'm the greatest.

I'm the biggest.

There's never been any bigger.

So how does it feel to serve me?

I guess it's just about the best

Feeling in the world.

Don't you think so?

Why yes, I do, you beautiful bastard.

God: (appears on stage, with Raphael)

That's enough, right there.

Jesus: (stamps his feet in a childish way)

There's never enough me.

I'm the biggest, I'm the greatest ever.

There is no bigliest other than Jesus.

God:

Raphael, who let this guy play the Jesus role?

(Angel Raphael looks chagrined.)

Angel Raphael:

He did it on his own

and brought the whole U.S. media along.

They're fascinated with his lies

that always bring top ratings.

God:

Didn't we have Hillary Clinton

fitted for her Jesus robes last year?

Angel Raphael:

Weak candidate. No charisma, no passion,

and it is a passion play after all.

She had the numbers, but not the heart

And obvious scorn for the people!

God:

No surprise there, I guess.

Never scorn the people.

Angel Raphael:  
It's tough these days, getting good help.

Jesus: (whining)  
I'm gonna tell my lawyers on you, Dad.

God:  
I'm not your Dad.  
You may be part of me  
but celestial surgery  
is just one of the innovations  
of the CEO's pharma corp.  
You and I are severed.  
If I read it right,  
Your lawyers are in jail.  
Your campaign managers, too,  
and half your consultants.  
Even a bunch of your Russian  
cronies are under indictment.

Jesus:  
You're not being fair to me  
Who said YOU decide  
who gets to be Jesus?

God:  
In Heaven, I speak  
for the will of All.

Jesus:  
All? Who's this All?  
You yourself said you're but parts.  
My will's the will that counts.  
And my lawyers here in Heaven  
are recounting this All thing,  
and you're going to realize that without me  
your All ain't nada.

God:  
Give it your best shot, kid.  
Sounds to me like you  
have to learn the hard way.  
Till then you're locked outside  
the wall of Heaven's will.

Jesus:  
Wall? You're going to pay for this  
just like the Mexicans did.  
My lawyers are myriad  
even if their dye job drips.

The more I sue  
and then cry hoax,  
the more I'm believed,  
the more I'm covered  
in the nightly news,  
the more support I gather,  
the more I, I am.

God:

It's a lot simpler than that, Jesus.  
I merely write you out of the script.  
When the news stops covering you  
you simply cease to exist.  
Wish the press got that headline.  
Now get lost.  
Go live in your golf hole.  
Start your own network  
This one's mine.  
(Jesus scurries out.)

God: (to Raphael)

Now let's really find a Jesus  
who can keep the whole machine  
tuned and oiled  
for the proper production rates.  
I'm not looking for radical change here.  
No inflation, no deflation, modest growth,  
keep the values level. I want humanity  
predictable and under control.  
Give them ideals that keep them wanting,  
anxious, vague and slightly nauseated.  
We want eternal values of leadership  
here and on earth. So get down there,  
find a new player for this role of man,  
and let me see the program this time  
before you pull the trigger. Got it?

Angel Raphael:

Yes, Lord.

end scene

Act 4, Scene 2: On Earth, workers plan a demo

(Soviet Era workers photo)

Four characters: Mother (5), Contract Worker (3), Unemployed Union Worker (2)

Unemployed Union Worker:

Now that those god-fearing folks  
have gone to heaven,  
we can build our world  
the way we want.

Mother:

We've got seven years of chaos  
before the final days. Unless we do something,  
we'll be in heaven with the elect,  
but they'll have taken the main positions  
and we'll be on the lowest rung again.  
Not all are equal in heaven.  
Equal in god's eyes maybe  
but after millennia of oppression,  
all people deserve  
a place at the table.

Contract Worker:

Sounds like we need to act to break  
the business patterns that control us.  
But what's our alternative  
to just trying to assert  
centralized power  
whenever we deal with a conflict of interest?

Unemployed Union Worker:

I don't think we can solve  
this problem on Earth alone.  
What's the use in trying to create  
a people's heaven on Earth  
if what the Rapture is doing to the planet  
turns us all into Zombies?  
Let us workers go visit heaven.

Contract Worker

Those pearly gates aren't open  
just to anyone. Heaven takes only  
people with the right credentials  
and God decides what those are.

Unemployed Union Worker

My guess is that God, like any boss,  
sometimes needs some persuading.

Maybe he wants dollar bills  
but maybe we give him an iron fist.

Mother:  
There may be ways around  
Heaven's gate or through it.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
Let's picket it.

Contract Worker:  
Does heaven allow pickets?

Unemployed Union Worker:  
In theory we're all employees,  
even the President.

Mother:  
If we let heaven's current system  
dictate our actions  
then we're already finished.  
What are we sitting around for? Let's organize  
and get to the pearly gates.  
We'll smash them if we have to.

end scene

Act 4, Scene 3: God corrects the corruption caused by Jesus

(Judgment painting probably Italian 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century)

Five characters: CEO (1), God (6), Minister (2), Lobbyist (5), Angel Michael (3)

CEO: (walks up to God, Lobbyist and Minister trailing him, and speaks to God)  
Who do you think you are?

God:  
I'm God.

CEO:  
I don't believe in God.

God: (sarcastically)  
Don't I know it.

CEO:  
What I mean is, God doesn't exist.

God:  
I get it. I is a sum  
of natural numbers  
adding up to now.  
I is projection.  
I is a concept all you, uh,  
people use to promote your own ideas  
and gain authority from another—me.  
Then you complain about each other  
and claim that I'm the solution.  
But I'm just another player performing  
my role in this scene. My existence  
is parts of speech collected into dispute.  
On the Father's side my power,  
on the Son's side my love,  
and the Holy Ghost's the constitution  
we're all within.  
I am leader to some, oppressor to many,  
but I'm only a composite:  
the passion and negotiation of Jesus,  
the wisdom and fear engendered of the holy spirit,  
and my own constructed self-acting above.

CEO:  
But what about our *deal*?  
What about my piece of heaven?

God:  
Piece of heaven? Piece of *nothing*,

Mister I don't believe in God either.  
Didn't anybody ever warn you  
about overextending a position  
before you had the capital?  
You're bankrupt.  
And those assets you're hiding?  
Looks to me like somebody else has them.  
Even your golden parachutes are lined with lead  
and you're crashing hard. But I'm going to see  
that the new Jesus saves you.  
We'll bankroll your losses  
and keep you solvent—or is that  
apparently solvent?

CEO:  
Thank you.  
(picks up his phone and calls Earth)  
Cut wages, increase sales prices, add a VAT tax.  
We're moving into a new regime.

Minister: (pushes forward frantically)  
What about my churches?  
What about my daily victim?

God:  
They're there all right.  
You're wanted on three counts  
of embezzling church funds,  
five counts of hit-and-run  
and countless counts of abuse.  
Not to worry. You've got a long period  
of enforced contemplation ahead  
to muse on your spiritual nature.

Lobbyist: (steps forward)  
Okay, okay, maybe we can still cut a deal?  
I was never all in with this Jesus stuff really.  
I just wanted an angle, you know, a way into the action.  
God's just a concept? Cool, I can work with that.  
Only please, please, don't take down the posters of me.

God:  
Oh, you're still the poster boy (girl) all right.  
Your face adorns post office walls.  
You're wanted for felony  
financial and publicity crimes.  
Welcome to America's Most Wanted, Ms. Insider.

Lobbyist: (head in hands)  
I don't understand how you did this  
since you don't exist.

God:

Don't I know it.  
But that's the thing about me,  
Raphael, Michael, and all the other good folk  
up here making heaven work every day.  
We don't have to do anything to you;  
you do it all yourselves,  
extracting till society's  
hollowed out by the right  
skimming the cream  
for their own profit.

CEO:

But you can't take us all down, can you?  
There are more CEOs, just like me, on the way.

Minister:

And there are more Men of God,  
just like me, on the way.

Lobbyist:

And more deals just like mine, and dealmakers  
just like me, on the way.

CEO: (viciously)

There are more movers and shakers  
and charlatans and liars than are dreamed of,  
and you can't stop us.  
Our human desire to seize  
resources is endless.

God: (looking at them all, shock and disgust lighting his face)  
That's why we brought you up here.  
To save the Earth, my creation, from your rampage.  
The Rapture was bait  
that Jesus didn't understand.

(Enter Angel Michael)

Angel Michael:

Lord, humans are picketing the gate.  
What shall we do?

God: (coughing)

That's a neat trick.  
Guess we really do need  
a wall. A little heavenly fire  
should take care of them for now...  
Michael, see to it.  
Talk to Peter about reinforcements.

These humans don't dictate to me.

Angel Michael:

Yes, Lord.

(then to himself)

With Jesus locked out

Heaven's out of balance.

God oversteps his bounds.

With Jesus gone as mediator,

God fears that people

will not listen to him.

Now we'll see the autocrat

of eons past.

Humanity will not follow him

and I think neither shall I.

end scene

Act 4, Scene 4: Raphael and Michael plan to overthrow God

(Painting of Brutus and Cassius by Edward Loomis Davenport)

Two characters: Angel Raphael (4), Angel Michael (3)

Angel Raphael:

I know I've made mistakes.  
Helping others is confusing.  
But you betrayed my deal  
With our charming corporates.  
My new wings lost, I must  
cope with tattered pinions.

Angel Michael:

I'm zealous and bloody,  
a purist,  
I admit it,  
but in this critical time  
it doesn't serve  
for every small offense  
to cause rebuke.

Angel Raphael:

You protect the state of heaven  
against intruders and transgression.  
We honor you for that.  
But now with Jesus gone  
and too much power  
in too few hands  
God seizes more power  
and sheds red blood  
in our blue white eyrie.

Angel Michael:

You'd blame God  
for your itchy palm?  
As much as I reject  
God taking all into his hands,  
I cannot forget  
your acquiescence to the CEO  
and co-conspirators.

Angel Raphael:

I'm not the only player here.  
All those corporate skills  
that Jesus raised have turned  
God to a vengeful version  
of his former self, as if humanity  
were still a tribe of unschooled herders.

Angel Michael:  
Such rough behavior does not train  
our heavenly host to act  
the way we claim we like them.  
God's not much of a role model lately.

Angel Raphael  
Thank you for confirming  
my suspicion. Look!  
God's a fake.  
He admits as much.  
He's jealous and composed  
of our fragments.  
Let's get rid of him  
and let the workers into paradise.

Angel Michael:  
Are you sure they know  
what to do with power?  
Every time revolution wins  
another set of oligarchs takes over.  
The mass wreaks too much havoc  
on itself for delicate decisions,  
even those you know are good.

Angel Raphael:  
They can't do worse.  
The Earth is about to implode.  
Toxicity and fire vent  
into the very air they breathe.  
Their skins are ashen  
and their eyes flood.  
We've got a big investment  
in it. Knowing what will happen,  
we let it happen anyway  
to have our way, confirming  
or should I say pretending  
that our will impels our purpose.

Angel Michael:  
I fear I may renounce my vows  
and as a thing I myself am suspect—  
as are you.

Angel Raphael:  
That's the normal condition.  
Don't follow me if  
you think we only line our nest.  
But if you believe that when  
the system stinks, cutting rot away

even to the bone  
allows the whole to regain  
its former glory, then we have to fight  
and not only for ourselves.

Angel Michael:  
OK. Let's shake it up  
and let the chips land  
where they may because  
we know that once the riot  
starts, control flies from our hands.

Angel Raphael:  
But what do we do when that CEO and lobbyist  
come storming in here  
demanding their dessert?

Angel Michael:  
One problem at a time, okay?  
We've got to take on God directly  
and go on from there.

Angel Raphael:  
I sure am ready  
to give God  
a piece of my mind.

end scene

Act 4, Scene 5: Humans take control after God disappears

(Painting by Delacroix of Freedom marching with the flag)

Five characters: Angel Michael (3), Raphael (4), Student-Daughter (6), Mother (5), Unemployed Union Worker (2)

(Mother and Unemployed Union Worker push through Pearly Gates, stumbling as they do it)

Mother & Unemployed Union Worker:  
Whoa!!! (they find themselves inside the Pearly Gates)

Unemployed Union Worker: (to Mother)  
Huh? That was easier than I thought.  
Those gates collapsed like my uncle  
in a pool hall on Friday.

Mother:  
I'm torn! Are we asking God  
to accept our goals  
or should we just act  
and make heaven work our way?

Student-Daughter:  
Welcome to heaven, Mom.  
I'm really glad to see you.  
I was starting to think  
I was on my own here.

Mother:  
It's nice to see you, honey.  
You look very professional and pretty.  
We're here to protest  
the way God has been handling  
the Rapture. We want diverse  
voices in the language that we use  
and diverse hands to have  
equal access to reality's materials.

Student-Daughter:  
I'm afraid you just missed God;  
up in a puff of smoke  
when Michael and Raphael  
challenged his authority.  
God's like that, you know,  
vanishes when the going gets tough.  
The thing about God though  
is that it doesn't matter whether or how  
God exists. What matters is what

the rest of us do.

(Angel Michael and Angel Raphael enter, looking disoriented)

Angel Michael:  
He's gone, just like that?  
After everything we've done for him?  
I wanted Him to listen,  
take Raphael's medicine,  
not just flee.

Angel Raphael:  
Concepts are like that.  
A whole system vanishes  
like the ancien regime under pressure.

Angel Michael:  
Attachments define our Heavenly collective:  
I'm not sure I can live without Him.

Mother:  
Women learned how to do that  
a long time ago.  
You might discover the power in yourself  
without relying on authority.

Angel Michael:  
But someone has to be in charge.  
Daily processes control our welfare.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
Why? Can't we all  
be in charge together?  
I didn't crash heaven just to work  
for some other boss man.

Angel Michael:  
Collective revolution puts things in order.  
Who takes over in the end  
gets blood on their hands—  
French, Russian, Chinese revolutions—  
all collectives transformed to oligarchy,  
those groups with the most connections  
and the will to follow up.

Angel Raphael:  
And I wanted to help ease the pain,  
to put an end to war between masters.

Student-Daughter:  
And I want to let

the language mean through use.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
And I'm ready for whatever kind  
of work I can do.

Mother:  
I can negotiate.  
Political authority is never more  
than borrowed, never more  
than temporary, and with luck...

Angel Michael: (interrupting, Mother looks annoyed)  
Zombies, environmental destruction,  
corruption caused  
by controllers of surplus.  
Humans on Earth  
are on the verge of collapse.  
Even in their finest hour—  
the four horsemen in chains—  
I see that they have gone too far.

Angel Raphael: (worried)  
Maybe we can't make it work,  
this coalition between humans  
and non-humans.

Student-Daughter:  
But maybe we can.

Unemployed Union Worker:  
But maybe we can't.

Angel Michael:  
But maybe we can  
with freedom to be who we are,  
with cooperation and mutual aid. We can,  
with each contributing what they have  
and getting what they need,  
with each perspective having a voice  
we can right Heaven and Earth.

end scene, end act

Epilogue: 'indeterminate purpose'

Image: Epilogue

One character: Mother (5)

Mother:

Thank you for your kind attention,  
we know you've many grievances.  
Our scenes spoke to morality  
Through an unlikely sequence.

Power in the hands of few  
and in networking all  
depends on skills and strategies  
that do the people's will.

We understand you've taken your seats  
with certain prior allegiance.  
You judge us based on what you think  
already, in spite of new ideas and frequency.

The things we are are hardly fixed  
But combined from their relations.  
You love what you love in any case  
In spite of our orations.

Protect what you are no matter what.  
Never change your bold creations.  
Ethics built in different frames  
Can replace the morals of nations.

END play



## Cast & Crew:

**Lonely Christopher** is the author of five books, most recently the poetry collections *The Resignation* and *In a January Would*. His plays, including *Voyages* and *Endymion Dreams the Moon*, have been produced in Canada, China, and the United States. He is the founder of the Inter Poets Theater.

**Izzy Dow** is an event and performance producer based in Brooklyn, New York. She has coordinated hundreds of programs for cultural institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Whitney Museum of American Art, Chicago History Museum, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Izzy holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with concentrations in Visual Art, Art History, and K-12 Art Education. In her free time she runs an online vintage business, sews baskets, makes ceramics, takes photos, and teaches art.

**Thomas Fink** is the author of 11 books of poetry, most recently, in collaboration with Maya D. Mason, *A Pageant for Every Addiction* (Marsh Hawk Press, 2020) and *Hedge Fund Certainly* (Meritage Press and ie Press, 2019) and 2 books of criticism, and editor of 2 critical anthologies. His paintings hang in various collections.

**Stephen Ira** is a poet and performer. His poetry has appeared in venues like *Fence*, *DIAGRAM*, *Poetry*, and *tagvverk*. He has presented solo performance work and acted in plays at venues like La Mama and Dixon Place. "I Have To Think Of Us As Separate People," a short film he made with Chris Berntsen, premiered at OutFest in 2019 and has since been screened worldwide. In 2013, he was a Lambda Literary Fellow. He has an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. He is currently a poetry editor at the speculative magazine *Strange Horizons*.

**Anna Kohler**, Music and Theater Arts faculty at MIT, studied acting and directing at the Conservatory for Art and Drama and Mozarteum University of Salzburg. She received her degree in Acting and Aesthetic Studies at the Université IIIV Vincennes in Paris after studying mime with Etienne Decroux. Since joining the NYC experimental theater scene in 1982, she has worked with Stuart Sherman, John Jesurun, Richard Foreman, Fiona Templeton and Werner Herzog. She is an associate member of the Wooster Group. She has worked with Steve Buscemi and Mark Boone Jr. Her solo performance, *D' Arcness*, premiered at Amsterdam's Triple X Festival. More recently, she has toured Europe with *Ode to the Man Who Kneels*, written and directed by Richard Maxwell. She appeared in movies by Jonathan Demme, Peter Sellars and Hal Hartley. Her directing work has been shown in Salzburg; Kiel, Germany; São Paulo; and NYC.

**Clarinda Mac Low** began performing with her father Jackson Mac Low and with Meredith Monk at the age of 5. In the late 1980s, Mac Low worked in dance and molecular biology and now works in performance and installation, creating participatory installations and events that investigate social constructs and corporeal experience. Mac Low is co-founder and Executive Director of Culture Push, an organization that links artistic practice and civic engagement. Her work has appeared at Panoply Performance Laboratory, the EFA Project Space, P.S. 122, the Kitchen, X-Initiative, and many other places and spaces around NYC and the world, including the Manifesta Biennial in Spain. Recent work and ongoing projects include: "Incredible Witness," "Free the Orphans," "The Year of Dance," "Cyborg Nation," and "Salvage/Salvation." She received a BAX Award in 2004, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant, 2007 and a 2010 Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance Art grant. Mac Low holds a BA, double major in Dance and Molecular Biology, from Wesleyan University and an MFA in Digital and Interdisciplinary Arts Practice from CCNY-CUNY.

**Roland Sands** started his career in the street theater troupe "The Soul & Latin Theater" in 1969. He studied acting for many years with Clay Stevenson. He trained further at NY's Public Theater acting as an understudy in Shakespeare's *Pericles*. He worked on Broadway as understudy at the Negro Ensemble Company from 1974-76, performing the *The First Freeze of Summer*. For many years he worked in regional theater. He has also done extra work for film and television since the late 70s as well as principal

roles in commercials for major corporations such as American Express. More recently he worked on soap operas such as *One Life to Live* and *Loving* as well as many low-budget films, most recently *Boston*.

**James Sherry** is the author of 13 books of poetry and theory and one of the leading proponents of both Language Writing and Environmental Poetics. His books include *The Oligarch: Rewriting Machiavelli's the Prince for Our Time* (Palgrave, 2018), *Entangled Bank* (Chax, 2016), *Oops! Environmental Poetics* (BlazeVox, 2013), *Four For* (Meow, 1995), *Our Nuclear Heritage* (Sun & Moon Press, 1991), *Lazy Sonnets* (Potes and Poets Press, 1986), *In Case* (Sun & Moon Press, 1980), *Part Songs* (Awede Press, 1978). His work has been translated into nine languages including the Chinese edition of *Selected Language Poems* (Sichuan Literature and Art Publishing House, 1993), translated by Ziqing Zhang and Huang Yunte. He is the editor of Roof Magazine and Roof Books that has published nearly 200 titles of seminal works of language writing, flarf, conceptual poetry, new narrative and environmental poetry and poetics. He started the Segue Foundation in 1977 that has produced over 10,000 events in New York including the Segue Reading Series. Sherry was born in 1946 and lives in New York City.

**Greer Sinclair** was born on the studio backlots of Los Angeles and raised in the bayous of Louisiana, Greer studied filmmaking, performance, and literature at Mount Holyoke College, Sarah Lawrence College, and the San Francisco Art Institute (B.F.A). In 2017, Greer toured the U.S. with *Noir City*, a film festival presented by the Film Noir Foundation. As Miss *Noir City*, she co-hosted the festival with Eddie Muller of Turner Classic Movie's *Noir Alley*. Classic film is one of Greer's greatest passions and her love of noir influences much of her work. As a singer and performer, Greer was recently featured on a special "Watching the Hawks" segment of RT America, highlighting new and innovative musical artists. With frequent musical collaborator Joe Gore (Tom Waits, PJ Harvey), 2018 saw the release of two singles, *SILVER DAGGER* and *I'D KILL TO BE HER MAN*, produced at Outland Studios. Greer starred onstage as the title character in a new stage adaptation of Tennessee Williams' *BABY DOLL* through Summer 2018 at Pacific Resident Theatre in Los Angeles. Her performance garnered critical acclaim, and the production broke records with its extended sold-out run.

**Mark Wallace** is the author and editor of more than fifteen books and chapbooks of poetry, fiction, and essays. Most recently he has published a novel, *Crab*, and a book-length prose poem, *Notes from the Center on Public Policy*. Selections of his multi-part long poem *The End of America*, which he has been writing since 2005, have been published in several chapbooks and a number of journals. His current novel, *Sir Sleepy of the Bunny Nest (A Saga of the Revolution)*, is an ongoing serial appearing on a fugitive tumblr blog. He lives in San Diego, California.

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