

A PLACE to STAY

Production

The music for this production was first performed by a secondary school that needed a set of narrative songs based on the Christmas story to intersperse with their dance-drama. Primary schools also enjoyed using the music, which we later developed and recorded with our own highly professional team. We created a versatile Christmas production with a flexible format that gave schools some ownership. Small schools can involve everyone; whole year groups at Key Stage 2 can take a scene each; and very large groups give concert performances. One scene is fully scripted but, unlike our other musicals, A Place to Stay does not contain a play. Instead, a resource book provides ideas for creative writing, poetry and readings and for evolving scripts and developing the drama if required. This production enhances children's personal, social and moral education. It allows them to explore issues such as the use and abuse of power and control, freedom and persecution, in addition to discovering the historical, cultural and religious aspects of the Christmas message.

A Place to Stay has been performed in schools, churches and concert halls around the world and Music Service providers have organised concerts with very large groups in this country.

From a Choirmaster

"I have a Choir of 110 children. They all love singing your amazing songs. Self esteem and confidence shine through when they perform on stage to their parents. They are always so proud of what they do. So am I! The quality songs and thought provoking scripts captivate the children and they perform with such enthusiasm – it's quite emotional at times!"

The Story

This is based entirely on the Christmas nativity

Scene 1 Caesar Augustus

Caesar and his groupies dance and sing in 1920's style

Scene 2 Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem

Crowds dance in the street with much shouting and clapping

Scene 3 The Stable

No place to stay so Jesus is born in a stable

Scene 4 A hillside nearby

Very cool, guitar playing shepherds meet angels singing a round

Scene 5 An oasis in the desert

Fully scripted scene with 3 kings, their advisors and a group of courtiers and dancers
[Nativity tableau for younger children could be inserted here if required]

Scene 6 Inside the stable

Presentation of gifts

The Music

Backing Tracks

We know that children respond brilliantly to our backing tracks. We feel that the broadcast quality of the recording helps you to present a very professional production and motivates the children to perform at the highest level. You can listen to all our music and songs on our website and also on **SoundCloud** and **Facebook**.

Vocal guide tracks

The vocal tracks help children to 'pick up' the songs, however difficult, after listening only a few times. Some organisations may prefer a 'live' performance so we also include a full vocal / piano score with a fairly challenging piano accompaniment. As CDs may not be copied, many groups choose to purchase the vocal tracks on CD for the cast and choir. Alternatively, a licence to copy can be purchased.

Piano/Vocal score

This is available for a live performance, rehearsal or conductor's score. If you would like to see more pages from this score than are available on our website please contact:

info@firesticksandsong.com or telephone +44 (0) 1803 813977

The Songs

You can listen to samples of all songs on our website – (audio gallery, button icon and again at the bottom of the page for each musical) - as well as on Facebook and SoundCloud.

Caesar Augustus – 1920's romp - Caesar solo verse 2

Bethlehem in Judah – an ethnic dance

No Place to Stay – a gentle ballad with string/ flute orchestration in instrumental verse

Shepherd Boy – guitar accompaniment

Gloria – angelic round in 2 and then 4 parts

Three kings – a sand dance

A Place to Stay – a rousing ballad

Script Sample

BALTHAZAR: Enough of this silly squabbling! We will rest here by this cool oasis and wait for the others. I can hear Melchior's flute in the distance.

[Balthazar's group sit down. **Enter Melchior's group.** Melchior is playing a flute, his are courtiers burning incense. Balthazar stands up to greet Melchior, who is in a world of his own.]

MELCHIOR's COURTIER 1: Your Majesty!

[Melchior goes on playing flute]

M. COURTIER1: [louder] You Majesty!

[still doesn't hear]

M. COURTIER 2: It's no good. He's always like this when he's composing. We'll have to shout!

COURTIERS: YOUR MAJESTY!!

MELCHIOR: What? Who? ME? Are we there yet? Have we arrived? I must concentrate harder but it is so difficult when I'm in the middle of making up a new tune.

BALTHAZAR: We heard you before we saw you, brother Melchior.

B's COURTIER 3: We also smelt you before we saw you, your majesty!

[Gasps of shock from the others. Melchior looks bewildered]

BALTHAZAR: Forgive my courtier, noble sire. He is very young and inexperienced and has not yet learnt the proper way to talk and behave. What he meant to say was that we smelt the incense you are burning.

M's COURTIER 2: This is our gift for the new king.

B's COURTIER 4: Then why are you burning it now? It will be used up by the time you get there.

M's COURTIER 3: There's plenty more where this came from!

MELCHIOR: We are burning incense because the smoke will take our prayers to heaven. We are praying that the star will lead us safely to the new king. He is the greatest king that has ever lived and we want to worship him. I am composing a tune especially for him.

BALTHAZAR: And I am sure that the beautiful melody will waft with the smoke of the incense, straight to heaven.

[Noisy din]

MELCHIOR: I hope so brother Balthazar! Oh, I think Casper is coming. That's enough praying everyone. Blow out the incense. Our peace is shattered!

[Casper and gang bound in]

CASPER'S COURTIERS: Hurray! Hurray! He's found it! He's found it!

CASPER: Yes! Looks like an oasis to me! We've found water, thanks to my trusty jasper.

[Casper holds up a crystal]

C's COURTIER 1: That's real magic. You said the jasper would help you find water.

C's COURTIER 2: What else have you got in your box, sire?

CASPER: Do you really want to know?

C's COURTIERS: Oh yes! Show us....please show us..etc

CASPER: Very well. This is my very special box. I never go anywhere without it! In the first drawer I keep my magic stones. As you've just seen, my magic stones are a great help. This one, jasper, can help me to find water. And this one, a lapis lazuli, can cure fever! Anyone feeling poorly?

C's COURTIER 3: We are never poorly when you're around, your majesty. We have too much fun!

CASPER: Well, if you ever have enough of me and you feel like a snooze, I'll give you this moonstone because it helps you to go to sleep.

MELCHIOR'S COURTIERS: That will be the day! Then we'll all get some peace!

C's COURTIER 4: [to Casper] And what does this one do?

CASPER: That's a ruby. It protects you from lightning

Resource Book Sample

1. Imagine aliens have invaded our country. They make ten rules that make life miserable and unbearable. What are the rules?
2. Find out about the Romans. Who was Bacchus?
3. Persecution of the Jews in 2nd world war. Diary of Anne Frank. Read anti-Jewish decrees (pages 3-4) and the list of items Anne took into hiding (pages 12-13).
What would you take with you if you had to go into hiding?

Lyric sample

THREE KINGS

Three kings with frankincense
With myrrh and with gold
Travelled through heat of day
And nights raw and cold
But these men were wise you see
Did math'matics and astronomy
Knew that if they'd got it right
A new king
Would be born that night
A star would lead them to him with a shining light

These were important men
So good and so brave
They knew the proper way
To talk and behave
But this left them mystified
They could not believe their eyes

Could it be they'd come this far
By the light
Of a shining star
To find a tiny stable with the door ajar?

Inside this humble room
Where no man had lived
There shone a radiant light
From the child in his crib
Then they knew by God's good grace
They had found this very holy place
And with shepherds joined to sing
Songs of praise
To the new born king
And joyfully they gave to him their offering

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