Take Off Your Shoes

John Steven Paul
Valparaiso University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholar.valpo.edu/soul_purpose

Recommended Citation
http://scholar.valpo.edu/soul_purpose/1

This Liturgical Drama is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Theatre at ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Soul Purpose Liturgical Dramas and Essays by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at scholar@valpo.edu.
Take Off Your Shoes
A liturgical drama based on Exodus 3
As performed at Holden Village
June 15, 2005
By John Steven Paul and Soul Purpose,
The liturgical drama troupe of Valparaiso University

A shoe can make a who.
    A what?
    A who, like you.
    A shoe or two can make
A who into a you who do…
    What?

Characters:

Moses
Dancer
Someone
Another One
Still Another One
Yet Another One
One
Two
Three

I

The sound of sheep; many sheep.

Enter Moses.

MOSES:

Where am I?

SOMEONE:

Mount Horeb.
MOSES:
The mountain of God?

SOMEONE:
Mm-hmm.

MOSES:
How’d I get here? Where’s Midian?

SOMEONE:
Didn’t you see those two logs and the sign that read, “Entering the Wilderness“?

MOSES:
No, the darn sheep distracted me – LOOK AT THAT!

Enter the DANCER, aka “The Burning Bush.” The DANCER dances in a tight circle of pirouettes.

MOSES:
I must turn aside and see this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up.

The DANCER’s circle becomes gradually wider and wider encircling MOSES.

SOMEONE:
Looks like you’re not going to have to do much turning.

DANCER:
Moses, Moses!

MOSES:
Here I am.

DANCER:
Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.
MOSES steps back as if to get off the holy ground, but he stopped by ANOTHER, who says:

ANOTHER:

Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground.

MOSES steps back as if to get off the holy ground, but he is stopped by YET ANOTHER, who says:

YET ANOTHER:

Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet…

ALL:

… for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.

MOSES:

Okay, okay, I get the message. But I’m not wearing sandals.

DANCER:

What-EVER! Take off your shoes!

MOSES does this. And when he has removed his shoes, the actors all take off their shoes and bring them to the center creating a little mound or heap of shoes.

MOSES:

There. With interest!

DANCER:

I am the God of your father.

MOSES:

Amran?

DANCER:

Yes; and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
MOSES:

No.

DANCER:

Yes.

MOSES:

(hiding his face) Where’ve you been?

DANCER:

I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the… uh…

SOMEONE:

… the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

MOSES:

(checking a road map, maybe) the Hittites, the Amor- could you slow down? After the Hittites, it’s the Perizzites, no wait, the Amorites…

DANCER:

Never mind. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh, to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.

Pause.

MOSES:

Who am I –

DANCER:

You’re Moses. You know, “drawn out of the water”? 
MOSES:
I know that, but who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?

DANCER:
You’re my guy. I will be with you.

MOSES:
(muttering) Your guy. Yeah, sure. Who’s gonna believe this?

DANCER:
(getting impatient) You’re my creature; you’re topsoil; you’re dust! And to dust you shall return.

MOSES:
(to SOMEONE) Is this a dream? Am I hallucinating under the influence of sheep… uh… dip?

DANCER:
This shall be a sign for you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall workshop God on this mountain.

MOSES:
When will that be?

DANCER:
Don’t ask. Just go down there.

II

MOSES doesn’t ask, but others do:

ONE:
What if they ask me the name of who sent me?

DANCER:
I am who I am.
TWO:
What if they don’t believe me?

DANCER:
I will give you signs to show.

THREE:
What if my speech fails me?

DANCER:
I will be your mouth.

ANOTHER:
And I will be your mouth.

STILL ANOTHER:
And I will be your mouth.

YET ANOTHER:
And I will be your mouth.

1, 2, 3 and MOSES:
Oh, please, Lord, send SOMEONE ELSE!

DANCER:
You know, Mo, maybe I made a mistake after all.

A sound is heard like a crackling fire.

MOSES:
(to SOMEONE) What’s that sound?

SOMEONE:
That’s the sound of God’s anger being kindled against you.
MOSES:

Uh-oh.

SOMEONE:

Right.

MOSES:

(taking the deep breath of decision) All right. I’ll go. Best put my shoes back on. Where are they? Buried in this heap. *(He picks up a shoe – not his own – and considers it.)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

1: You could walk back down the mountain. *(MOSES tosses the shoe to someone on the side)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

2: You could make a home for a gerbil. *(MOSES tosses a baby shoe to someone on the side)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

3: You could plant a seed in it. Or a petunia. *(MOSES tosses the shoe to someone on the side)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

4: You could bang it on the table to make your point. *(MOSES tosses a hard-soled shoe to someone on the side)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

5: You could give them to someone who has none. *(MOSES tosses the shoe to someone on the side. And then another one; and another one; and another and another)* what can I do with a shoe? Or two?

6: You could march for justice and peace. *(MOSES tosses a pair of boots to someone on the side)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

7: You could walk away. *(MOSES tosses the shoe to someone on the side)* What can I do with a shoe? Or two?

8: You could walk to the foot of the cross.

*MOSES finds his own shoes and puts them on. He starts out in the direction of the cross.*
III

DANCER:
Moses?

MOSES:
Here, I AM.

DANCER:

(acknowledging the play on words) Good one. How are you doing?

MOSES:

Well, I got my shoes back on. That’s a start.

DANCER:

Are you beginning to figure out what I have in mind for you?

MOSES:

Get back to me on that, okay?

DANCER:

Oh, I will. You’ll be back you know.

MOSES:

To Mt. Horeb?

ANOTHER:

To Mt. Sinai?

STILL ANOTHER:

To Mt. Buckskin?

YET ANOTHER:

To Mt. Copper?
ONE:

To Mt. Dumbbell?

DANCER:

Yes. And, to Topsoil.

ALL:

Topsoil?

DANCER:

To dust. To dust you shall return.

SOMEONE:

Holy wisdom. Holy Word.

THE END