

REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA FESTIVAL

*The Pastime Players*  
*J.C. Erhardt Memorial School, Makkovik*

*present*

*"Lest We Forget This Long Journey"*

Cast

Friend, Dolf (Toy Soldier).....	Frank Michelin
Becky, Aaron.....	Rebecca Winters
Policeman, Helena, Soldier, Mother}.....	Beryl Mitchell
Marie (Marionette).....	Marilyn Winters
Tess (Teddy Bear).....	Jodie Strangemore
Sam (A Golliwog).....	Jason Voisey
Diana (Ballerina).....	Michelle Ford

Student Director

Jodie Strangemore

Teacher Advisor

Fiona Andersen

Music Selections

Schindler's List - Isaak Perlman  
Children of the North - Susan Aglukark and Native Singers

*This play is written as a tribute to the United Nations 50th Anniversary, to show that we must never forget the atrocities of war, and that ridding the world of prejudice, racism and intolerance is not an insurmountable journey.*



*Rex Voisey, J.C. Erhardt Memorial School*

The Pastime Players Present...

LEST WE FORGET THIS LONG JOURNEY  
A TRIBUTE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

CAST  
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

FRIEND.....FRANKIE MICHELIN  
BECKY.....REBECCA WINTERS  
POLICEMAN.....BERYL MITCHELL  
AARON (The Storekeeper).....REBECCA WINTERS  
HELENA (The Customer).....BERYL MITCHELL  
MARIE (The Marionette).....MARILYN WINTERS  
TESS (A Teddy Bear).....JODIE STRANGEMORE  
SAM (A Golliwog).....JASON VOISEY  
DIANA (The Ballerina).....MICHELLE FORD  
DOLF (The Toy Soldier).....FRANKIE MICHELIN  
MAN.....BERYL MITCHELL  
MOTHER.....BERYL MITCHELL

Music:

Schindler's List - Itzhak Perlman

Children of the World - Six Aboriginal Singers

Prologue.... an announcement is heard over a P.A. system. "Lest we forget  
"How can there be peace without people understanding each other,  
and how can this be if they don't know each other" so said a former  
Prime Minister in his 1957 Nobel Peace Lecture. Lester B. Pearson  
founded a United World College in his name where students from over  
70 countries come together to foster international understanding  
through study, recreation and community service. To continue with  
our tribute to the International Year of the United Nations we have  
some special guests at our assembly this afternoon. [~~Students from  
United World College~~] So if you are interested in  
finding out more about this educational opportunity come to the  
auditorium this afternoon at 2:00pm. ~~I'll be there~~ I'll leave  
you with these thoughts of a former Pearson College  
graduate. LIGHTS SR

Friend: Hey Becky, isn't that where you sent an application to?

Becky: Yeah and I hope I hear something from them soon. Mom isn't  
too keen on me going - something to do with her thinking I'm going  
to be treated bad, or I'm going to lose my identity.

Friend: Why would she think that?

Becky: Oh, you know Mom. She's still got this idea that no matter  
what happens, we'll always be victimized. But Pearson College  
sounds like a great place to me.

Friend: She's got a lot to learn.

Becky: Well, she has good reason to be cautious. Can you blame  
her? Well I must be going, I have to help with Hannukah  
preparations.

Lights down. Music . . . . Curtains open

There is a sound of footsteps. A flashlight shines on the interior  
of a toy store. The scene is in wartime Poland.

Policeman: Well, everything looks fine in Spielberg's tonight.  
Poor old soul, his time is coming soon. Such a shame, you know.  
He's brought a lot of joy to the little ones in this area for many  
years. I've only known him for a short time but he's a good man.  
It's unfortunate about his wife. He's all alone now that his  
daughter emigrated to Canada. Well, that's no concern of mine. I  
just have to make sure that these shops are secure.

The footsteps fade away.

LIGHTS UP FULL STAGE DAYLIGHT

The scene switches to the interior of a toy store. There is a  
counter, a toy chest, and toys on the shelf. The storekeeper  
enters whistling, goes to the counter and takes a feather duster  
and starts to polish the toys. The door bell rings and a customer  
enters.

Storekeeper: Happy Hanukkah Helena. How may I help you today?

Customer: Good day Aaron. Do you have my order in yet? It's a gift for my granddaughter.

Storekeeper: I certainly do. It came in last week. She's a magnificent doll. (Goes behind counter and brings out a doll.) Here - what little girl wouldn't want her. Oh, it's a good feeling to know that there is still some joy in the world.

Customer: You're right Aaron - such terrible things happening. What is to become of us? I heard there were bombings in the ghettos just yesterday. Hitler's soldiers are getting crazier each day. I've also heard that anyone found not carrying their I.D. cards are being prosecuted. Heaven forbid Aaron that they come for us! We're old men and of use to no one.

Storekeeper: Terrible times indeed. I'm only grateful that Hester isn't here to witness all of this.

Customer: Did you manage to contact Rebecca? It was Canada she went to?

Storekeeper: Yes, she married a Canadian from Montreal - a French Canadian. A good man - Rubenstein - you must know his family. From Krakow originally. They were lucky enough to have left Poland some years ago....Kiss the little one for me, my friend. Tell her Uncle Aaron said she has the most beautiful doll money can buy.

Customer: How much money do I owe you Aaron?

Storekeeper: For you my friend, she is a gift. She's the finest doll I've seen in years. I hope she's a survivor. She carries my trademark!

Customer: I must be going Aaron. This may be the last time we meet. Good - bye old friend...Aaron, you should shut up shop, you know. Get out while you can. The stories from Germany are not good.

Storekeeper: No Helena, this toy shop is my life. It has too many memories, and the toys - well since Hester died and Rebecca left, they are the only friends I have.... I couldn't. Good - bye Helena.

T A P E

(Aaron turns on the radio. He hears an announcement...)

"The British Broadcasting Service reports that the Allies have landed in France on the beaches of Normandy. This operation is forcing the Germans back....." If only they could drive them out of Poland!

Aaron

Aaron: (Wakes up. He starts to clean up and talks to the toys.) My, my.....you are so dusty and I only polished you the other day. It's strange that no one buys you. They must know how attached to you I am - and yet I'd give you away if I could find a good home for you. I don't guess little boys and girls want toys that look old. (Aaron sits amongst the toys and opens the music box. The ballerina dances. He closes the door and leaves.) LIGHTS DOWN

TAPE  
dim \*  
CRASH!!! There is the sound of breaking glass and from off stage, the following is heard: "Jews, Christ Killers, Greedy Kikes." A silence follows and the toys then slowly come to life.  
slow lights up - music

Marionette: Mon Dieu! Look at the mess. This is twice this week. Who can hate our friend so much? Who does this to us? Mon Dieu - it is so sad!

Teddy Bear: What is the world coming to indeed. Can't a man earn an honest living without all this persecution. What is a kike?

Golliwog: It's a derogatory term for a Jew, Ted. It's like people calling me Nigger. It's a label that doesn't explain who or what a person is. Our friend is a good, honest, and decent man - but to intolerant and ignorant people, qualities like that don't matter.

Teddy Bear: That's too bad, Sam. It hurts when people call you names, doesn't it? People call me Simpleton because I don't understand too good. Why do people have to be nasty and mean?

Ballerina: For some people it's a way of life, Ted. Don't let it bother you.

Marionette: How would you know? You've led an easy life. You've never wanted for anything.

Ballerina: Yes, my life is good, but it wasn't always that way. My family was very poor and couldn't afford for me to have dancing lessons. I won a scholarship at age 11 and went to a posh dancing school. You have no idea what it was like to be at school with the children of the upper classes. They were very rude and ignorant. They called me names, made fun of my accent, and never made me feel welcome. I cried myself to sleep many nights. When I was chosen to dance for the London Ballet Company, many of them were jealous. Now that I'm a famous dancer, they want to be my friend.

Golliwog: And are they your friends?

Ballerina: Some of them.

Teddy Bear: Why? When they were so mean to you?

Ballerina: Because we have to learn to forgive, Ted. we have to learn to understand the prejudices people learn and show them there's a better way. Isn't that so, Sam?

Golliwog: That's right. I've illustrated this many times in my children's books and yet when people see me on the streets, they would call me "nigger, sambo, and loser." These comments would cut deep, Ted, but I've learned not to pay attention to them.

Marionette: Oh, listen to yourselves. Yes, there are injustices, you just to rise above them! Look at me - no one gets the better of me any more. Mon Dieu! Look at this mess.

Golliwog: Let's start cleaning up. It will soon be daylight. Come on everyone. If we all work together, we can get this done.

Soldier: Shut up nigger boy. You can't tell me what to do.

All the toys look amazed at this comment.

Golliwog: Look soldier, haven't you been listening to us? In this place, we all work together. We're friends and we have no time for intolerance, prejudice, racism, or victimization. We care about each other regardless of race, religion, or background. We're a peace loving community and we don't need you or your Nazi ideas.

Soldier: I'm sorry. I have a lot to unlearn. Forgive me. Ever since I joined Hitler's Youth Movement, I've been a different person. When I wear this band, I'm full of hate. I don't like myself...what can I do? (Toys look at the swastika on his arm, he rips it off.)

Golliwog: There - does that feel better? Come on now, let's get working - together.

Everyone: Yes!!

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP - spot Aaron.

Aaron comes into the store. He doesn't notice anything because the toys have cleaned everything up.

Aaron: What a nice day. If there isn't much business, perhaps I'll go for a walk. (He goes over to the toys and begins to talk to them.)

Aaron: Well, well, well. No matter how much I clean you toys up, you always manage to get yourselves dirty. Now why is that I wonder. Anyone would think you didn't want to get sold. It's my greatest hope that I can find good owners for you before I have to close shop. We've been together for such a long time. I'm surprised that you're still here. ....what's this? Paint? Now how did that get on you? Oh well, not to worry. (He goes over to the music box and opens it. The ballerina comes out and dances.) This ~~music~~<sup>music</sup> brings back so many memories. It was a favourite of Hester's too. I'm so lonely without her. I should do as Rebecca wants and go join her in Canada... if only I could! Poland is not the same anymore. The Germans are becoming more and more insane! Oh Hester I miss you so much. (Wipes his eyes...exits.)

Lights go down. <sup>TAP E</sup> There are sounds of breaking glass.

Voices from offstage: Round up the Jews. Get rid of the kikes. Hiel Hitler!

MUSIC Toys come alive again..... <sup>dim</sup> Lights up

Teddy Bear: What do they mean, Sam? They sound so cruel and full of hate. Aaron is a good man. Oh why can't they leave us alone?

Marionette: I'd like to give them a piece of my mind! How dare they, the brutes! Perhaps you can explain what's happening Dolf. I hear marching soldiers and explosions and guns and people screaming. But I don't understand why.

Dolf: It's Hitler's plan to round up all the Jews and put them in camps. He's an evil man. This is his Final Solution.

Marionette: It's so unnecessary. It's hateful. I thought the victimization of innocents was over. So many lives wasted, so many children homeless.

Teddy Bear: What are you talking about Marie? You talk as if from experience.

Marionette: You're right Ted. I was orphaned during the great war. My parents were killed by Germans. I've been alone since then. You are the first family I've had. I care for you all so much even though I've been pretty stuck up. We can't let them separate us.

Golliwog: I have an idea. We must try to do something so that Aaron can escape to Canada. We'll hide in the steamer trunk he's started to pack. But first let's get this mess cleaned up again.

Toys get in trunk, LIGHTS DOWN.  
Next morning. Enter Aaron.

LIGHTS UP  
Aaron Something seems different this morning... I wonder what has happened to the toys.... someone must have broken in and....  
(Sound of loud banging.) Sorry I don't open until nine o'clock.

Suddenly a man barges in.

Man: Come with me!

Aaron: I don't understand.

Man: Shut up and do as I say. Leave everything and come with me.

Aaron: But I have my papers right here. I am a citizen of Krakow. You cannot do this to me.

Man: Oh yes I can. (Grabs Aaron and pushes him towards the door.)

Aaron: Let go of me. You have no right!

Man: Oh yes I do. You are a Jew. No-one wants you you. You are worthless.

Aaron No! Please...( man drags him out)...my toys, my friends...

They exit. There is the sound of explosion and breaking glass.  
SOUND TAPE

The lights go down.  
CURTAINS CLOSE  
Pause. Voices in the dark are heard.....

Voice: Aaron 's heart would break if he saw the state of his beloved shop. Look! Look over here in the corner. What can it be? Why it's a steamer trunk addressed to Rebecca Rubenstein in Canada. That's Aaron's daughter, isn't it. We should send it off to her. I'm sure she'd be pleased to have it. Aaron loved these old toys.....



It is fifty years later.

LIGHTS UP

UP

SPOT  
C

Sound of footsteps running upstairs, door opening and slamming.

Becky: (expressing frustration) I can't understand the mentality of some people. Why is it so hard for them to understand. The debate went well this afternoon. Those students from Pearson College gave a good presentation. We got some grass roots things underway to rid our school of racism and then on the way home from school, I see some kids beating up on Waleed. Calling him names like 'Sadam', dirty Arab, camel jockey... and these were black kids doing the name calling!

Mother: Becky, there's someone on the phone for you.

Becky: Tell them I'm busy Mom. I have to get great grampa's box down from here. I told Miss Chaulk I'd have it for class tomorrow. We were talking about our heritage and I told her about your Gramps. She asked if I would share some of his things with the rest of the class.

Mother: Oh Becky, there's nothing there that would be of interest to anyone. It's just a box full of old toys. Why I haven't opened that box in years. The things inside are probably rotten by now.

Becky: Perhaps if I see them it might help me to understand. I wish I had known him Mom. I would have asked him to help me understand why people have to be so bigoted and prejudiced. And I would have asked him what it was like to be in a concentration camp...and to be a survivor.

SPOT OFF C  
Mother leaves and Becky opens the trunk..... DIM LIGHTS UP SR & SL

Becky takes toys out of the box and carefully inspects each one. She leans against the box, closes her eyes and drifts off to sleep.

Marionette: We can tell you more about your great grandfather if you'd like us to.

Becky: Who said that?

Marionette: I did...

Becky: Who are you?

Marionette: My name is Marie and I once belonged to a very fine gentleman. He gave me a home in his toy store....

Becky: How did you get here? I must be dreaming. This is incredible!

Marionette: You are dreaming! We're here to help you know your great grandfather, Aaron Speilberg. Let me introduce the rest of the toys....This is Sam, a wonderful friend whose bright idea it was for us to hide in this trunk. This is Ted whose spirit has given hope to us all. This is Diana who taught us about dignity and this is Dolf who showed us that wrongs can be righted.

Becky: Please tell me about my great grandpa. My Mom doesn't speak much about her family. All I know is that her grandfather survived the war. Before he was put in a concentration camp, he owned the finest toy store in Krakow.

Sam: Aaron Speilberg was a scholar. He read many books and understood a lot about human nature. People would drop in to his store and they would discuss all kinds of things. He was a well respected man .....

Diana: He was the kind of man that listened to other people and their point of view. He had no time for small talk or gossip though. He spoke his mind and was afraid of no one.....

Ted: He was a kind man. He spent many hours helping the poor and needy. There was always a young child coming in to look at the children's books he had on the shelves and he would gladly show them the new toys....

Marie: He was a man full of imagination. He created each of us. He gave each of us a personality and used us to help him explain to others about how we should all love each other. He often said that we were the world...each of us a victim of some kind of prejudice or intolerance. He would talk to us as if we were real and he would tell us his solutions.

Sam: Do you remember the time Jesse Owens won at the Berlin Olympics in the thirties, and what Hitler had to say? It was then that Aaron Speilberg brought books and toys into his store to support minority rights.

Dolf: Aaron Speilberg had time for everyone. He used to dream of returning to Jerusalem but somehow he knew that he had to remain in Krakow; that he was needed there.....so he stayed.

Diana: There was more than one occasion he could have left. But he had his dignity and integrity....and he placed more value on these things than anything else. Yes, Aaron Speilberg was a survivor.

Ted: He taught us that no one should accept intolerance and we should dedicate our lives to ridding the world of injustice, prejudice and racism, regardless of what form it takes.

Marie: He would be so proud of you. To know that you were a great grand daughter who shared the same values as he had. Oh! Listen toys! I hear footsteps! Be still!

LIGHTS DOWN SR & L

Becky wakes up from her dream.

SPOT (C)

Becky: What an incredible man Aaron Spielberg was. I have a lot to live up to ..... but I'll try my best....

Mother: Becky, I have a letter here for you. It arrived this morning. My goodness look at these old toys...now what can you possibly have learned from them?

Becky: You'd be surprised Mom. It's from Pearson College! (Tears open the envelope. There is a big yell heard from Becky.) Yes! Yes! I've been accepted.

Mother: I'm so proud of you Becky. I think we can both learn from this. This will be the first step on a long journey.  
(Mother and Becky embrace.)

SPOT OFF (C)

LIGHTS DOWN.

THEN SPOT ON (C)