

ROSES ON ROSES

~ An Intergenerational Musical Play
about the story of Ridvan ~



By Amy Stephen & Carren Bough

ROSES ON ROSES ~ An Intergenerational Musical Play about the story of Ridvan
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Most of the narration is taken from "Central Figures: Baha'u'llah, Volume Two", pp. 115-117 and pp. 120-121

List of Characters:

Storyteller (non-singing role, an adult or youth)

Children (could be as few as 1 or as many as 7 or any number in between) to ask questions 1 through 7 - this could be any number of children up to seven - (non-singing roles, although they could join in on choruses)

A minimum of four (4) solo singers - (adults, youth, or junior youth who can also double as chorus). These four soloists should ideally include two male and one female (and the other can easily be either) in order to present the solos in "God Loves Us All".

Chorus Singers (any number, any age, who can also sing solos in other songs)

To any Baha'i Community interested in producing this play:

The minimum number of people required to perform this musical is seven (7), however many more can be included and can be assigned many various song solos. The only songs that require more than one soloist are "God Loves Us All" which requires 4 different solo singers and one solo speaker, and "O Nightingale" which requires a minimum of 3 different singers (although those 3 parts do not have to be solos, they work very well as small groups). All other songs have solo parts that can be assigned to whomever would like to sing them, and those solos could also be broken up into smaller sections in order to share the solos around. It really depends on who is performing - on their abilities and their willingness. You could also add movement and dancing to the play in appropriate places. This play takes about 30 minutes to perform.

We have made suggestions for staging while the singing is happening, which you don't have to follow but are just helpful suggestions. The general idea is for the stage set to be plain at the beginning, and then gradually decorated as the play goes along so that by the end of the play it is beautifully decorated like a garden of paradise. Decorating the stage can be part of the action, done by the singers themselves.

It is recommended that an adult (or youth) be the Storyteller, so that the telling of the story is very clear, and it is also recommended that, in a theatre or larger space, microphones be used for all reading, questions and solos so that the telling of the story is understood by the audience. Any additions to the play such as sets, costumes, or screen projections are encouraged if you have the time and resources. The whole play can be performed with none of these things, but if you want to use them please go ahead.

This musical play can be performed with the accompanying musical tracks, or by live musicians. For printed sheet music of all the songs please contact Amy at stephamy@gmail.com

PERMISSION

The play "Roses on Roses" is provided free-of-charge to Baha'i Communities or other faith communities or schools around the world with no permission required to produce the play, as long as no material is left out or added, and the entire play is presented in a respectful manner.

If money is charged to audiences (through ticket sales or admissions) the money must be collected by the community's Local Spiritual Assembly to be distributed throughout the local or international Baha'i Community (or to performers if required) as per consultation by that Assembly. It is intended by the creators of this play that it be accessible to all people regardless of economic situation, and so preferably it will be free-of-charge for audience members unless otherwise decided by the community's Local Spiritual Assembly.

Producers and performers of this play may not change any of the text, music or lyrics, and must verbally, at the beginning of each performance, before the play begins, include credit for creation of the play to Amy Stephen and Carren Bough, and to the book "Central Figures: Baha'u'llah, Volume Two".

If there is a printed program created for the audience, it must include the above credits for creation plus the web address for the Baha'i International Community: www.bahai.org.

It would be quite wonderful for us to know if you have performed it, so you could let us know at **stephamy@gmail.com** and/or **carrenb@yahoo.com** as it will make us feel happy! Likewise, no permission is required for videotaped presentations, and feel free to send any of those along to us as well for our personal archives. However, no individual or group of any kind may make money from audio or video performances of this play. By presenting this play it automatically means that you agree to these terms.

We hope you enjoy putting together this presentation as much as we enjoyed creating it!

Blessings,
Amy & Carren

THE PLAY BEGINS with the Storyteller either seated on a chair, or on the floor, with a book on his/her lap, reading to a group of children who are gathered around to listen to the narrator. Its nice if they are all seated on an area rug (like a Persian carpet, for example), denoting a living room or comfortable area. The Storyteller should be mic'd so all can hear (a hands-free mic is best). There could be a microphone set up next to the Storyteller for the children to use when they ask their questions, or else a hand-held mic that could be passed from child to child would work well so that the children don't have to move. The Storyteller should be telling the story to the children, not to the audience, so that the audience can overhear the story as opposed to being told it directly.

THE MAIN STAGE SET MAY INCLUDE BACKDROPS OF SOME KIND THAT ARE PLAIN AT FIRST, BUT CAN BE DECORATED GRADUALLY DURING SONGS AS THE PLAY GOES ALONG. BY THE END OF THE PLAY, THE WHOLE STAGE AND SET SHOULD BE DECORATED WITH ROSES, GARLANDS, GREEN PLANTS, FLOWERS, BASKETS OF FRUIT, AND LANTERNS, FESTIVE BANNERS ETC.

SCENE 1 (The Messenger):

LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN. THE CHILDREN ARE SEATED AROUND THE STORYTELLER, LISTENING. THE CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER ARE SEATED ON STAGE RIGHT, RIGHT AT THE FRONT OF THE STAGE. MAIN STAGE LIGHTS ARE OFF.

Storyteller: It was April of 1863. Baha'u'llah and his family had been living in Baghdad for seven years. During that time, Baha'u'llah was always kind, loving and truthful to everyone he encountered, and he showed great compassion to the poor. For these reasons, His reputation gradually grew throughout the city as a man of great wisdom and perfect character. Hundreds of people flocked from all over, from far and wide, to see Him.

The more respected and well-known Baha'u'llah became, the more the authorities became uneasy and jealous of how many people listened to Him and followed Him.

The Governor of Baghdad conspired with the Shah of Persia to further banish Baha'u'llah and his family to far away Constantinople, which today is known as Istanbul. The Governor sent a messenger to Baha'u'llah's house to give the official notice about His banishment.

LIGHTS LOWER ON CHILDREN, LIGHTS UP ON STAGE. PEOPLE ARE STANDING IN SMALL GROUPS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STAGE, JUST TALKING. MESSENGER ENTERS AND EVERYONE STOPS TO LISTEN AND REACT.

SONG: MESSENGER'S SONG (Music & Lyrics by Amy Stephen)

(Suggestion: the "crowd", or chorus should be listening intently to the Messenger and looking shocked, and worried)

MESSENGER:

*LISTEN PEOPLE, LISTEN PEOPLE, LISTEN TO ME
THE GOVERNOR IS BANISHING MIRZA HUSSEIN ALI
TO CONSTANTINOPLE WITH HIS WHOLE FAMILY
HE'S FAR TOO POPULAR, YOU LOVE HIM TOO MUCH,
THE GOVERNOR WANTS TO SEND HIM OUT OF TOUCH.*

CROWD OF PEOPLE:

*DID YOU HEAR THAT, DID YOU HEAR THAT, CAN YOU BELIEVE
THE GOVERNOR IS BANISHING MIRZA HUSSEIN ALI
TO CONSTANTINOPLE WITH HIS WHOLE FAMILY
OF COURSE HE'S POPULAR, WE LOVE HIM SO MUCH
OH WHY DO THEY HAVE TO SEND HIM OUT OF TOUCH?*

MESSENGER:

*(spoken) HEY, I'M JUST THE MESSENGER! THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT!
(singing) LISTEN PEOPLE, LISTEN PEOPLE, LISTEN TO ME
THE GOVERNOR IS BANISHING MIRZA HUSSEIN ALI
TO CONSTANTINOPLE WITH HIS WHOLE FAMILY
HE'S FAR TOO POPULAR, YOU LOVE HIM TOO MUCH!*

RANDOM PERSON FROM THE CROWD *(spoken): OF COURSE HE'S POPULAR, HE LOVES US SO MUCH!*

CROWD OF PEOPLE:

*OF COURSE HE'S POPULAR, HE LOVES US TOO MUCH
OH WHY DO THEY HAVE TO SEND HIM OUT OF TOUCH?*

RANDOM PERSON FROM THE CROWD *(sung): OH PLEASE, DON'T KEEP HIM OUT OF TOUCH!*

LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN.

SCENE 2 (Moving To The Garden):

Child 1: It sounds like people are really sad about Baha'u'llah being banished....

Narrator: When the people of Baghdad heard that Baha'u'llah was being banished to Constantinople, hundreds came to His house in Baghdad in confusion and grief. They were afraid they would never see Baha'u'llah again. The crowds so overran the house, that no one could make preparations for the journey. So it was decided that Baha'u'llah should go with a few friends to a garden and live in a tent so that the family could pack and make ready.

LIGHTS UP ON MAIN STAGE, LIGHTS DOWN ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN. DURING THIS SONG, GREEN PLANTS AND BLANKETS TO SIT ON CAN BE BROUGHT SLOWLY TO THEIR PLACES ON THE STAGE.

SONG: LET'S TAKE IT TO THE GARDEN (Music & Lyrics by Amy Stephen)

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*THIS IS A SMALL HOUSE, BUT IT HOLDS LOTS OF LOVE
AND IF YOU LOOK INSIDE YOU WILL SEE
SO ITS A SMALL HOUSE, EVEN IF IT WAS CASTLE-SIZED,
IT COULDN'T HOLD ALL THE LOVE THAT'S MEANT FOR YOU AND ME*

WHOLE GROUP:

*SO LET'S TAKE IT TO THE GARDEN, THERE WE CAN SET OUR SPIRITS FREE
AND OUR HEARTS WILL FEEL THE WONDER
OF A LOVE THAT'S MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY,
GOD'S LOVE IS MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY.*

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*HE SAID GO OUT TO THE COUNTRY, DON'T GET STUCK IN THE CITY
LET THE BEAUTY OF NATURE HELP TO KEEP YOU WHOLE
OUT THERE IN THE GARDEN, WE WILL BE REMINDED
THAT THE BEAUTY OF THIS EARTH CAN REALLY FEED YOUR SOUL*

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*THIS IS A SMALL WORLD, BUT IT CAN HOLD ALL GOD'S LOVE
AND IF WE LOOK AROUND WE WILL SEE
EVEN THOUGH IT'S A SMALL WORLD, WE CAN SHARE IT WITH EVERYONE
AS LONG AS WE LIVE WITH JUSTICE AND EQUALITY*

WHOLE GROUP:

*SO LET'S TAKE IT TO THE GARDEN, THERE WE CAN SET OUR SPIRITS FREE
AND OUR HEARTS WILL FEEL THE WONDER
OF A LOVE THAT'S MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY,
GOD'S LOVE IS MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY.*

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*HE SAID GO OUT TO THE COUNTRY, DON'T GET STUCK IN THE CITY
LET THE BEAUTY OF NATURE HELP TO KEEP YOU WHOLE
OUT THERE IN THE GARDEN, WE WILL BE REMINDED
THAT THE BEAUTY OF THIS EARTH WILL REALLY FEED YOUR SOUL*

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*THIS IS A SMALL WORLD, BUT IT HOLDS ALL GOD'S LOVE
AND WE CAN FEEL IT IF WE BELIEVE
EVEN THOUGH IT'S A SMALL WORLD, WE CAN SHARE IT WITH EVERYONE
AS LONG AS WE LIVE WITH JUSTICE AND EQUALITY*

WHOLE GROUP:

*SO LET'S TAKE IT TO THE GARDEN, THERE WE CAN SET OUR SPIRITS FREE
AND OUR HEARTS WILL FEEL THE WONDER
OF A LOVE THAT'S MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY,
GOD'S LOVE IS MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY.
SO LET'S TAKE IT TO THE GARDEN, THERE WE CAN SET OUR SPIRITS FREE
AND OUR HEARTS WILL FEEL THE WONDER
OF A LOVE THAT'S MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY,
GOD'S LOVE IS MEANT FOR ALL HUMANITY.*

RANDOM PERSON (*sung*): *NOW CAN WE TAKE IT TO THE GARDEN, PLEASE?*

LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN.

SCENE 3 (In The Garden):

Storyteller: The garden Baha'u'llah stayed in was called the Garden of Ridvan.

Child 2: What does "Ridvan" mean? Is it an english word?

Storyteller: "Ridvan" is actually an Arabic word that means "Paradise". So Baha'u'llah and his friends stayed in the "Garden of Paradise". Nabil, one of the close companions of Baha'u'llah, was with Him in the Garden of Ridvan, and later described it. He said there were lots and lots of roses, and nightingales singing all through the night.

SONG: ROSES ON ROSES (Music & Lyrics by Amy Stephen)

**LIGHTS DOWN ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN, LIGHTS UP ON STAGE.
VASES OF ROSES, ALSO LANTERNS SHOULD BE BROUGHT OUT GRADUALLY
DURING THIS SONG.**

(Suggestion: during this song, roses could be handed out to the audience by children.)

WHOLE GROUP: ROSES ON ROSES, ROSES ON ROSES

SOLOIST:

ROSES ON ROSES, THEY WERE PILED UP SO HIGH
THE COMPANIONS, HAVING TEA THERE, COULDN'T SEE EACH OTHERS' EYES
BUT THEIR HEARTS BEAT AS ONE HEART IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ONE
WHO HAD SET THEIR HEARTS ABLAZE IN THE FIRST PLACE
THE NIGHTINGALE OF GOD

WHOLE GROUP: ROSES ON ROSES, ROSES ON ROSES

SOLOIST:

MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN, HE WOULD WALK UP AND DOWN
BY THE FLOWER-BORDERED PATHWAYS, NIGHTINGALES WERE SINGING LOUD
HE SAID LISTEN, HEAR THE BIRDS SING TO THE ROSES THEY ADORE
SO GREAT THE LOVE THEY HAVE FOR THESE FLOWERS
THEY SING FROM DUSK 'TIL DAWN

WHOLE GROUP: ROSES ON ROSES, ROSES ON ROSES

(flute interlude)

SOLOIST:

IF THESE SIMPLE BIRDS SING WITH SUCH PASSION SO BRIGHT
HOW CAN THOSE WHO CLAIM TO LOVE GOD CHOOSE TO SLEEP ALL THROUGH THE
NIGHT?

AND THE SONG OF GOD'S TRUE LOVE WAS HEARD BY EVERYONE
WHO HAD GONE TO SEE HIM THERE IN THE GARDEN
TO SAY FAREWELL TO THE NIGHTINGALE OF GOD

WHOLE GROUP:

IF THESE SIMPLE BIRDS SING WITH SUCH PASSION ALL NIGHT
HOW CAN WE WHO CLAIM TO LOVE GOD NOT SING PRAISES ALL OUR LIVES?
LET OUR HEARTS BEAT AS ONE HEART IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ONE
WHO HAS SET OUR HEARTS ABLAZE IN THE FIRST PLACE:

BAHA'U'LLAH

SOLOIST: THE NIGHTINGALE OF GOD

WHOLE GROUP: ROSES ON ROSES, ROSES ON ROSES ON ROSES

SCENE 4 (Greeting Each Other):

LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN, LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE.

Child 3: It sounds like it was such a beautiful place to be, and a wonderful time. I wonder who was there, and where they came from. What language did they speak?

Storyteller: The people came from near and far, from many different cultural and religious backgrounds, and they spoke different languages. But in Baha'u'llah's presence they were all friends. Baha'u'llah Himself spoke Persian and Arabic. Our Baha'i greeting, "Allah'u'Abha" is Arabic and means "God is All-Glorious". Do you know this song, we can sing it in Persian, Arabic, AND English!

(Storyteller and kids can sing along from where they are sitting).

**LIGHTS DOWN ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN, LIGHTS UP ON STAGE.
BASKETS OF FRUIT COULD BE BROUGHT OUT DURING THIS SONG.**

SONG: ALLAH'U'ABHA (Music unknown, Lyrics by Amy Stephen & Amir Haghghi)
(Suggestion: preschoolers and kindergartens could be invited up to sing along with the chorus of this song, even play little shakers and tambourines. Its so nice to include the really little ones, and this chorus is very simple. It is easy to get the audience clapping along on this one!)

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*DAR IN BAGHEH RIDVAN TO LU E RUZI NAW
RACIDEH E ARAAN BEEYA BEKHAANI MAA HAM
PAAYAME IN RIDVAN*

GROUP AND AUDIENCE:

ALLAH'U'ABHA, ALLAH'U'ABHA etc.

SOLOIST OR GROUP:

*HERE IN THE GARDEN OF BEAUTIFUL RIDVAN
A BRAND NEW DAY HAS DAWNED,
WHY DON'T WE SING ALONG,
COME ON AND SING ALONG!*

GROUP AND AUDIENCE:

ALLAH'U'ABHA, ALLAH'U'ABHA etc.

LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN.

SCENE 5 (Sharing Stories of Transformation):

Child 4: Is it true the festival of Ridvan is twelve days long? How come its so long?

Storyteller: Baha'u'llah lived in the Garden of Ridvan for twelve days and nights, and during this time all the friends came to see Him there to say goodbye. Baha'u'llah was very kind and loving

to them, but they were all so unhappy that he was going to have to go away. They did not want Him to go.

Child 5: What did they all do for twelve days?

Storyteller: Well, they talked with Baha'u'llah, they chanted prayers to God, they sang together, and of course, they shared with each other their stories of how Baha'u'llah had really transformed their lives.

LIGHTS DOWN ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN, LIGHTS UP ON STAGE. FIVE SOLOISTS IN CENTER OF STAGE, COULD BE SEATED OR STANDING AROUND A LANTERN OR BLANKET, IN AN INTIMATE SEMI-CIRCLE SO THEY CAN SHARE STORIES. OTHER SINGERS COULD BE GATHERED AROUND THEM LISTENING, OR JUST SITTING FURTHER BACK OR OFF-STAGE.

SONG: GOD LOVES US ALL (Music & Lyrics by Amy Stephen)

SOLOIST 1

*WE ARE POOR FOLK, WE LIVE AS WE'RE ABLE
AND HE CAME TO VISIT US, HE SAT AT OUR TABLE
WHEN I ASKED HIM, "WHY SHOULD YOU CARE HOW I AM?"
HE ANSWERED ME THUS, "YOU ARE MY FELLOW MAN"*

*HE SAID GOD WANTS US TO LOVE EACH OTHER, WANTS US TO BE FRIENDS
AND HE WANTS US TO CARE ABOUT HOW EACH STORY ENDS
HE SAID GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HE LIVES IN EACH OF OUR HEARTS,
FROM EVERY CLASS, FROM EVERY FAITH, WOMAN OR MAN, ONE HUMAN RACE
WHEREVER WE COME FROM, GOD LOVES US ALL*

SOLOIST 2 (male):

*I AM A RICH MAN, I'VE MADE MY OWN FORTUNE
AND I ALWAYS TOLD MYSELF I'M VERY IMPORTANT
BUT HE KNEW THAT I WAS NOT HAPPY INSIDE
HE SAW THROUGH MY BOLDNESS, HE SAW THROUGH MY PRIDE*

*HE SAID GOD WANTS US TO LOVE EACH OTHER, WANTS US TO BE FRIENDS
AND HE TAUGHT ME TO CARE ABOUT HOW EACH STORY ENDS
AND NOW I TRY TO SEE GOD IN EVERY FACE
FROM EVERY CLASS, FROM EVERY FAITH, WOMAN OR MAN, ONE HUMAN RACE
WHEREVER WE COME FROM, GOD LOVES US ALL*

SOLOIST 3 (female): (spoken):

I'M JUST A GIRL, AND THAT'S WHAT I TOLD HIM. HOW COULD I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY? BUT HE TOLD ME SOMETHING I'LL NEVER FORGET, AND ITS CHANGED MY WHOLE LIFE AND HOW I THINK OF MYSELF. HE TOLD ME WE ARE ALL EQUAL, WE MUST ALL RECOGNIZE AND REALIZE THE EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN. WE MUST BE EQUAL IN STRENGTH, IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE, SO THAT THE ONENESS OF HUMANITY CAN BE ESTABLISHED, AND THE HAPPINESS OF ALL MANKIND BECOME A REALITY.

SOLOIST 4 (male):

*I AM A SCHOLAR, A MAN OF THE CLERGY,
I ONLY RESPECTED THOSE WHO BOASTED GREAT LEARNING
BUT HE OPENED MY MIND UP TO EVERY CLASS AND CREED
HE SAID WE MUST JOIN HANDS TO HELP THOSE IN NEED*

*AND THEN HE SAID WE MUST WALK TOGETHER, SERVING EVERYONE
PRAISING GOD SIDE BY SIDE UNTIL THE WHOLE WORLD IS ONE
AND NOW MY HEART IS OPENING, AND I HEED THIS CALL:
FROM EVERY CLASS, FROM EVERY FAITH, WOMAN OR MAN, ONE HUMAN RACE
WHEREVER WE COME FROM, GOD LOVES US ALL*

ALL SOLOISTS TOGETHER, plus chorus singers can join in this line
*FROM EVERY CLASS, FROM EVERY FAITH, WOMAN OR MAN, ONE HUMAN RACE
WHEREVER WE COME FROM, GOD LOVES US ALL*

LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN.

SCENE 6 (Baha'u'llah's Mission Revealed):

Child 6: So were they sad for those twelve days?

Storyteller: Oh not at all! Because it was in this Garden, the Garden of Ridvan, that Baha'u'llah first revealed His mission. He told His secret only to a few followers. He told them that He was a Prophet of God, sent to bring new laws and teaching to all the people of the world. His teachings would centre around UNITY: the oneness of humanity, the oneness of God, the oneness of religion. I'm sure that you have learned some of His teachings....

Children (*stand up, and, in random order, taking turns with the mic and taking their time to say clearly*):

"Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch!"

"So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth!"

"Consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship!"

"The earth is one country, and mankind its citizens!"

"It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world!"

Storyteller: In the Garden of Ridvan, the people found out that Baha'u'llah was the Promised One of All Ages, and that the Promised Day of Peace had come. This was the greatest news that anyone had ever heard. Listen closely to what He said, as it has been written down for us and for future generations to hear...

SPECIAL LIGHTING ON STAGE, LIGHTS LOWER STORYTELLER & CHILDREN, PLAY MUSIC UNDERNEATH the reading... *"Release yourselves, O nightingales of God, from the thrones and brambles of wretchedness and misery, wing your flight to the rose-garden of unfading splendour. O my friends that dwell upon the dust! Haste forth unto your celestial habitation. Announced unto yourselves the joyful tidings: "He who is the Best Beloved is come! He hath crowned Himself with the glory of God's Revelation, and unlocked to the face of men the doors of His ancient Paradise". Let all eyes rejoice, and let your every ear be gladdened, for now is the time to gaze on His beauty, now is the time to harken to His voice. Proclaim unto every longing lover: "Behold, your Well-Beloved hath come among men!" and to the messengers of the Monarch of love impart the tidings: "Lo, the Adored One hath appeared arrayed in the fullness of His glory!" O lovers of His beauty! Turn the anguish of your separation from Him into the joy of an everlasting reunion and let the sweetness of His presence dissolve the bitterness of your remoteness from His court."***

** Should be read by someone off stage rather than by the Storyteller. Or if someone reads it from on-stage it should be obviously read from a book or paper so that no one is portraying Baha'u'llah speaking. There could be low light so as just to focus on the words.... there could be an accompanying projection of the words, or just beautiful gobos or lighting making a nice effect during this reading. There should be some special, dignified and beautiful atmosphere created for this reading if possible.*

***From Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pp. 319-320*

LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN.

Storyteller: Now, Baha'u'llah's friends found their sadness turned into joy! The roses that grew everywhere in the Garden of Ridvan seemed large and beautiful. The birds that sang in the garden at night seemed to be the nightingales of Paradise! Those who had learned the secret were happier than they had ever been before.

LIGHTS DOWN ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN, LIGHTS UP ON STAGE.

SONG: O NIGHTINGALE

(Suggestion: During the bird-song interlude of this song, young children could run through the audience from the back with birds on sticks with streamers - a craft they make themselves ahead of time, or something like that - to express joy and further entertain the audience. We did this

when we produced the play and everyone loved it. Then they can end up on stage singing the chorus with everyone).

WHOLE GROUP:

*O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH*

SOLOIST 1 OR SMALL GROUP 1:

*SING OF LOVE, SING OF UNITY, SING OF PEACE TO EVERYONE
SING IT HIGH, SING IT LOW, ITS COMING FROM THE GARDEN OF RIDVAN*

WHOLE GROUP:

*O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH*

SOLOIST 2 OR SMALL GROUP 2:

*LISTEN, LISTEN, CAN YOU HEAR IT? LISTEN, CAN YOU HEAR THE SONG?
LISTEN, LISTEN, CAN YOU HEAR IT, ITS COMING FROM THE GARDEN OF RIDVAN*

WHOLE GROUP:

*O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH*

SOLOIST 3 OR SMALL GROUP 3:

*SEE ALL THE PEOPLE THERE, GATHERED IN THE GARDEN
THE KING OF FESTIVALS IS HERE!
PEOPLE PRAYING, TWELVE DAYS STAYING THERE WITH BAHA'U'LLAH!*

WHOLE GROUP:

*O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH*

BIRD SONGS.... During this birdsong interlude singers could be looking around, listening to the birds, perhaps at children coming through the audience, with paper birds or streamers... be

creative! On the sets, festive banners could be unfurled, more flower garlands put up, etc. to look especially grand at the end. Again, get the audience clapping along with the song.

ALL SOLOISTS OR SMALL GROUPS SING TOGETHER THEIR OWN PARTS...first time softer, second time louder

WHOLE GROUP:

*O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH
O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH*

LIGHTS DOWN ON STAGE, LIGHTS UP ON STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN.

SCENE 7 (ENDING):

Child 7: So, everyone was really happy at this festival!

Storyteller: Yes, any sadness they had was turned into joy!

Child 7: And after the twelve days, did he have to leave?

Storyteller: After twelve days in the Garden of Ridvan, on May 2nd, 1863, Baha'u'llah left Baghdad forever. He rode out of the city on a great horse whose dark coat was sprinkled with white. Crowds of people came into the streets to see Him off.

Child 7: And did he ever get to come back?

Storyteller: No, He was never allowed to come back, and he lived the rest of His life as a prisoner, but He was always proclaiming His new laws and teachings to unify all of humanity. People who learned these teachings and believed in them found a new faith, and very quickly the news of Baha'u'llah spread all around the world!

LIGHTS UP ON STAGE AS STORYTELLER AND CHILDREN WALK ON TO MAIN STAGE TO JOIN EVERYONE IN SINGING IN THE FINAL CHORUS AND THEN ALL TAKE A BOW.

WHOLE GROUP

*O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH
O NIGHTINGALE, SING YOUR WONDROUS SONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT ALL THE NIGHT LONG
O NIGHTINGALE, SING OUT LOUD AND STRONG
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH,
YOUR SONG OF LOVE FOR ALL THE EARTH!!!*

THE END