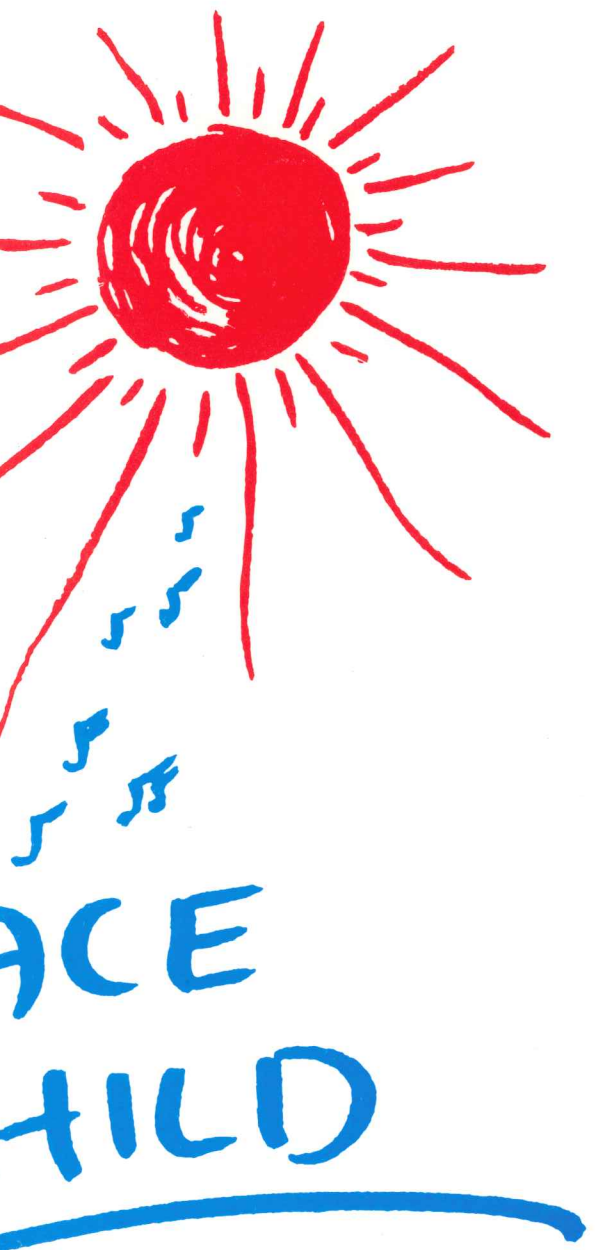


PEACE CHILD





PEACE CHILD
A Musical Fantasy about Children
bringing Peace to the World

1986 SOVIET-AMERICAN TOUR SCRIPT

and

TWENTY-MINUTE PLATFORM PRESENTATION

PEACE CHILD FOUNDATION
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PEACE CHILD

ACT I

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The curtain rises on a bare stage. A spotlight from the back of the hall splits the darkness, picking out the figure of the female soloist downstage right who comes forward singing:

Gwen Come into my Joy !
Sasha Come into my Pain!
Gwen & Sasha Come you be a friend of mine
I'll be the same.

A second spot picks the figure of the male soloist downstage left. As they join for the second pair of lines, they walk towards each other, greeting each other warmly.

Gwen As I go through my years with many thousand tears
I've never seen my guiding light
The clouds in front of me won't ever let me see

Sasha I've tried so many times to read between the lines
But the words keep turning round
And a thousand fears are ringing in my ears
And I'm so weary of the sound -

Gwen & Sasha So give me Peace enough -
Peace Enough, Peace enough,
So give me peace enough for peace of mind
Everything coming up sunshine! (REPEAT)

As the refrain repeats, the soloists walk downstage right/left to greet the children of the large chorus who come in down the aisles,(led by the dancers), singing:

ALL Come into my joy,
Come into my pain!
Come - you be a friend of mine,
I'll be the same.

The dancers take up position center stage, the children of the chorus are ranged throughout the auditorium. The house lights should come up at this point, and a warm glow as of a sunrise should fill the stage. The children turn toward the audience and greet them, singing:

ALL (Majestically) PEACE DAY, PEACE DAY, WE ALL SAY !
HAPPY WORLD, HAPPY DAY !
WEAR A LEAF AND SHOW THE WAY -
CELEBRATING THIS PEACE DAY !!

The music whips back into fast tempo, and the children dance with simple movements in the aisles, showering the audience with streamers, flowers, and symbols of celebration. On stage,

trained dancers do a choreographed piece, vigorously evoking the joy of the new Peace Day. The children sing:

ALL Peace Day Peace Day we all say
Happy world, holiday,
Wear a leaf and show the way etc.

The song rises to a magnificent climax as the children, divided into four groups, ascend the stage to join the dancers, one group to each repeat of the chorus. Waving their ribbons, they kneel and form a tableau. Hold the tableau for a moment. Then the children break out, leaping and hugging and kissing each other, wishing everyone, "Happy Peace Day", exchanging presents as though it was everybody's birthday.

The cast slowly sort themselves out, the older chorus members (OCMs) gravitating towards the back of the stage, the younger chorus members (YCMs) towards the front. (These may also be the same as the named members of the main cast). As the noise dies down, a little voice is heard to cry:

YCM 1 Hey look ! - It's the story-teller !!

ALL Hooray! - Welcome (etc. The story-teller enters)

Storyteller Happy Peace Day! - Happy Peace Day everyone!

YCM 2 So who's going to play the Peace Child this year ?

YCMs Meel! - please me, Can I?? - please! (etc. together)

S.T. Well, I've....

OCM 4 Storyteller, - we were thinking it might be good to learn a new story this year....?

OCM 5 Yes, storyteller: here we are twenty five years into the twenty-first century, and every Peace Day we have to look back to the 1980s -

OCM 6 We've decided it's time we did something new -

OCM 7 - something different!

YCM 2 (amid general groans of disappointment) But it's Peace Day!

OCM 1 We want to do something that relates to the problems of today -

OCM 2 It's a long time now since any of us had to worry about nuclear bombs -

OCM 3 - or the arms race!

OCM 4 Soviets and Americans have been happily working together for ages.

OCM 5 I mean we're never going to be best buddies, but - what - it's thirty years since we went to Mars together, and now we're setting up a university there!

OCM 6 Yeah - peace isn't really an issue now...

The younger children are unimpressed. A trio of them walk away -

YCM 3 I wanted to do 'Peace Child' so much -

- YCM 4** So did I -
- YCM 5** It wouldn't be Peace Day without it
- YCM 7** These older guys have all done it before!
- YCM 6** It's not fair!
- YCMs** Yeah! (*murmurs of agreement, growling noises etc.*)
- S.T.** How many of you have learned the *children's parts* ?
- Children** (*A forest of hands shooting up*) Me - Me! I know it all(etc.)
- S.T.** All of you ?
- Children** Yes! Yes! - please let me be the boy! I want to be the little girl; I know all the songs; please! please! - me! mee!! (etcetera)
- YCM 7** We've got the costumes and stuff all ready -
- YCM 8** Right here !! (*pulls on a trunk and opens it*) Look at all this weird stuff they had back then... (*showing a walkman, a baseball hat, a bumper sticker - something typically '80s.*)
- YCM 1** Storyteller, isn't it true that if we didn't have peace, we wouldn't have a world now ?
- S.T.** Very possibly. Peace is fundamental to everything we are trying to do now so don't you think on this one day every year we should remember how it came about.
- YCM 2** If we forget how peace came, there would be wars again, and everyone could die.
- S.T.** Exactly, so - let us do our Peace Child story first, then let's have a story of the future from each of you... OK?
- Children** Hoo-ray!!!
- S.T.** Now - let's choose ourselves a couple of Peace Children. We'll do it in the old way - that's right: in a circle!

The younger chorus members excitedly scurry round, taking off the trunk, fetching the basket of leaves for the Storyteller, and gathering in a circle around her. Some of the older children join the circle as well; others go off stage to prepare for the show.

- S.T.** Sssh! - kneel down, bow your heads, and I will sprinkle peace day leaves upon you. Those who find the golden leaves, they will be the Peace Children this year. Close your eyes, minds at peace, - Music.....

Rippling music begins as one of the young chorus members hands the Storyteller a basket of different shaped silvery-green flakes. The Storyteller circles the group. The children reach up as the flakes are scattered over them, searching for the magic leaves which will identify them as this year's Peace children.

MUSIC CHANGE - *two children stan up holding the golden leaves they can hardly conceal their excitement. The other children wish them luck as they withdraw. The large chorus go to*

their places either side of the stage where they will sit and watch the show; the rest of the YCMs & OCMs go off to get ready for their parts.

The two children take up position either side of the story-teller who begins to sing: (The whole manner of the choosing of the child should take on the feeling of a ritual, well-known to all the children.)

S.T. *(Sings)*

I was a child who ran full of laughter
I was a child who lived for toda
My eyes full of sunshine
My heart full of smiles,
I was a child for a day -

We're getting older, as time goes by,
A little older every day -
We were the children - of yesterday.

During the song, two of the YCMs come out with 1980s costume for the two leads, (something that can go over their whites - a jacket or cardigan) - a third YCM comes out to give the Story-teller the Great Peace Book from which she will read the story. As the song ends, the two peace children exit.

MUSIC CONTINUES UNDER.

* * *

S.T.

(moving downstage left into a single spot, she reads:)

"Eta Dien Mira - it is Peace Day. The day the world remembers that first Peace Day when children representing every country gathered at the United Nations and made their commitment to struggle for peace. How did it all come about? Our story begins in America - a young girl, let's call her Jennifer, sees a television program about nuclear war. She becomes frightened. She tries to dismiss it as a fantasy, but she reads books, - she sees the photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. She understands how her fantasy could become horribly real.

Day and night, the fears obsess her - **BLACK OUT.**

MUSIC AND LIGHTS TRANSITION.

The stage is suffused in red light as the dancers come on. Athletic dance evokes the horror of a nuclear holocaust. The girl playing Jennifer lies at the front edge of the stage as though asleep. The chorus sings:

FIREBALL

Jennifer *(screaming)* NO !!

I don't want to die - I want to live!
(sings) I want to live I want to live
The right to live my life,
I want to search far and wide
Have the chance to wonder why
I want to learn all the secrets
The world has to give
I want the chance to live my life
I want to live, I want to live....

Jennifer *(leaving no pause for applause, with music continuing)*

They tell me they have enough bombs to blow up the world a hundred times. Why do they need so many? If you blow the world up once, what is there left to blow up the next 99 times?! - And yet still they are building more bombs - !

WHY ??

It is because we are afraid of the Russians. We're frightened they take over the world, but - nobody can prove to me that the Russians really want to do that. So - I've decided to go find out for myself! I've signed on for a Russian language course - in Moscow!

(MUSIC AND LIGHT CHANGE)

Here I am in Moscow! *(The stage instantly fills with characters in '80s costume as though in a Moscow street.)* "Zdrastvutye!"

OCM 4 Zdrastvutye! *(smiling broadly and passing on)*

Jennifer Phew! - it worked! - the people here seem nice enough but it's so hard to get to talk to any of them. At the hotel, of course, they're all KGB: they wouldn't tell me if they were preparing to take over the world. I've got to meet some real Russians...*(Approaching a passer-by:)* "Izvinitse - *(consulting her phrase-book)* Gdyezh produyu morozhnoye ?"

OCM 1 Shto ?

Jenn. Gdyezh produyo morzhnoye ?

OCM 1 Ah Morozhnoy - *(goes into a long explanation in Russian; Jennifer gapes blankly)*

Jenn Do you speak English ?

OCM 1 Nyet. *(He smiles looking beyond her to where his girl-friend is waiting, smirking. Jennifer is about to say something but then notices the girl-friend. They embrace then EXIT.)*

Jenn. Oh dear - I'm never going to find out if the Russians are planning to conquer the world....

There is the sound of a boy whistling "Moscow Nights" off stage; the boy comes on. His character is called Igor.(He is the other peace child chosen at the opening.) Jennifer listens recognising the tune: she joins in. He stops, letting her sing a line solo, then joining her for the last line. He looks at her, liking what he sees, whistling accordingly:

Igor Ti haba karasho goss!

Jenn. Spaceeba - ti toja...

Igor Ah - you are English ?

Jenn. Nyet - Amerikanka - I...

Igor What is your name ?

Jenn. Jennifer -

Igor And I am Igor. *(They shake hands shyly)*

- Jenn.** Pleased to meet you...
- Igor/Jenn.** What's your/How did...(speaking at the same time)
- Igor** So you are tourist ?
- Jenn.** Nyet - *(struggling with her phrase book)* Ya hachoo Rooski yazook v gostinitza Moscva....
- Igor** *(repeats the line, reading in perfect Russian from the phrase-book)*
- very good! You are a good student!
- Jenn.** I'm sure your English is better than my russian - !
- Igor** Thank you -
- Jenn.** *(seeing another couple greeting each other passionately)* Are you meeting your girl-friend - ?
- Igor** Girl-friend? - No -
- Jenn.** Everybody else seems to be!
- Igor** This is Pushkinskaya! Everybody meets here - you seen the statue: it is Pushkin, the poet of love!
- Jenn.** Ah - !
- Igor** So how do you like our city - have you seen much ?
- Jenn.** Oh yes a lot - and it is very beautiful, but we've seen only -
- Igor** - museums, galleries: the tourist spots?
- Jenn** Yes!! - Oh I'd like so much to see your Moscow, and meet real Russian people...
- Igor** It is very simple: you must come to our Pioneer Palace. You are with group of students, yes?
- Jenn.** Yes, there are twelve of us.
- Igor** We can lay on special party for you: it will help you learn your russian, and give us chance to practise english.
- Jenn.** You can! Oh that would be wonderful !
- Igor** Come - let me show you a little of "My Moscow" and we will plan it. Have you seen our Metro?
- Jenn.** No -
- Igor** Come on, it is very interesting. The finest in the world, I think.
(She hangs back wondering if she is being drawn into a trap.)
Why are you worried - come on !!

(They EXIT)

* * *

SCENE TWO - The Party

MUSIC TRANSITION between the scenes. Lights change to a very stark mood. Jenny and her friends come bounding in full of excitement:

Jenn. Come on guys, in here -

ALL Hey! - this is so great! - party! - gonna be great(etc.)

One by one they freeze, noticing the surroundings. They look in horror.

Gary What are you getting us into, Jennifer ?

Allison This couldn't be a party room - ?!(*investigating*)

Maury Looks more like a mortuary!

Allison Come on - it's a locker room! - see they've got showers through here.

Alexis Maybe they have locker-room parties in Moscow - !! - ??

The joke does not go down well with her friends. Jennifer and Steve go down stage left.

Steve Hey Jenny, how about we give this party deal a miss and go back to the hotel. I've still got two packs of cuppa-soup.

Karla (*overhearing*) You have?! - you told me you'd run out!

Maury (*As everyone gathers round them*) I'm down to my last pack of prawn crackers !

Colleen And wasn't that meal tonight the grossest thing!

Gary I swear it was dog-meat -

Steve It was the tongue that got to me: I mean, how can they give you tongue for breakfast ?!

Colleen Tongue and cucumber!!

Steve If it wasn't for cuppasoup and snickers bars, you would all have died of starvation by now - !

Maury Why can't they have MacDonalds in Moscow ?

Jenn. Guys, quit complaining, will you. Tonight these Russians are laying on a party for us: They're trying to be nice to us - !

Karla They've got a strange way of showing it !

Alexis I wonder how long they'll keep us here -

Two absurdly dressed Soviet kids run on carrying a trunk:

Sov.kid 1 Welcome to our American friends!

Sov.kid 2 Here are your costumes!

Colleen Who are you ?
Sov.kid 1 I am Fyedor -
Sov.kid 2 - and I am Oksana!
Fyedor You are welcome to our(*pronouncing it strangely*)"Masquerade!"
US Kids What ? (*looking dumb*)
Oksana "Carnivale" ! (*consulting the phrase book*)
Maury (*opening the trunk and looking*) Costume party!!
US Kids (*clustering round*) Ah! - All right! - check it out!
Jenn. Where is Igor ?
Fyedor He is waiting upstairs -
Oksana He is making disco !
Gary Russian Disco - this has got to be seen !!
Fyedor Come - hurry dressing up your costumes!
Oksana Thank you extra large for coming ! *They EXIT*
Steve (*trying on a crazy costume*) Hey how do I look ?
Jenn. That's great - how do you like this ?
Alexis Hey I want that !
Maury - (*roars like a gorilla*)
Gary At last Maury's found his true personality - !
Gwen (*coming in*) Take me back to civilisation! I am not going to stay in this place another minute. I have never been so insulted. They have no consideration for foreigners...
Allison What's the matter Gwen ?
Gwen I walked into the wrong bathroom!
Steve (*giving her a male face-mask*) Take it like a man!
Karla Steve - how do we know they're not setting us up for something ?
Jenn. Like what ?
Karla I don't know - the KGB might want photographs of Americans making fools of themselves...
Gary Why would they go to this trouble ?

Allison They could take an hour of prime-time soaps....
Steve Ach - this is going to be OK. Russians are pretty crazy too!
Alexis Who's this ?

Igor, dressed in a bird suit, making weird bird noises, comes on:

Jenn. Igor ?? (she goes up to him and raises his mask)

Igor It is me! So - you are looking wonderful ! When we are dancing, no one will be able to tell which is American and which is Soviet children ! (picking up a fairy queen cape and crown) - but why is no one wearing this ? Jennifer !

He places the cape on her shoulders and the crown on her head. Jennifer blushing deeply, is thrilled. Only Steve looks a little sour.

Igor Come - my princess ! **MUSIC as they EXIT.**

* * *

Raucous sound of Russian rock music as lights flash, and the atmosphere of the Disco is created on stage. The Soviet kids all dance energetically on stage left; the Americans watch in amazement from stage right. The song ends. The Americans clap enthusiastically.

Gary Great music, man -
Karla Incredible! They never play any of this on radio Moscow!
Fyedor So why aren't you dancing ?
Slava Come - we sing you a song now will make you dance.
Xenya It is called "Mwi Jelayem Shastya Vam" -
Alexis What does that mean ?
Igor It means - "We wish you to be happy!" - So come on, be happy!
Have a good time!!

The Soviet kids put on the backing tape; a couple of them pick up microphones. The others try to pull in the Americans. Jenny and Igor start; Oksana hauls in Steve. As the song is sung, one by one all the Americans are drawn into the dance - a carnival affair which is fun and involves everybody.

MWI JELAYEM SHASTYA VAM

By the end, everyone is out of breath. The ice is well and truly broken; the Soviet and American kids embrace each other laughing as they EXIT. **BLACK OUT.**

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MUSIC under as the lights make a transition to an exterior night atmosphere. The party appears to be over, and the children wander outside. Some practise their Russian with their new Soviet friends; others come forward with Alexis.

Alexis You know guys this is IT! - isn't this the answer? - here we are, two great nations with enough nuclear weapons to blast each other off the face of the universe, and we're having the best time! Our leaders should have been at this party!

Pavel We should have another one in Washington DC!

Karina Right there at the White House !

ALL Yeah! - All right ! (etc.)

Nina - and perhaps after the White House, we could go to the United Nations and say: "Look how the United States and the Soviet Union have made peace! Let all the nations make peace now - there can be peace throughout the world!"

Allison How do we do that ?

Gary Do what ?

Allison Get you guys to Washington -

Maury Come on, Allison - you're dreaming!

Tigran It's very hard - but not impossible.

Slava Of course it's possible: you are good singers - good dancers! We could create musical show and take it on tour of the United States...

Alexis That's a brilliant idea: a musical about kids bringing peace to the world!

Xenia *(moving toward Jenny and Igor who are talking by themselves)*
We could do musical Romeo and Juliet - *(pointing)* - with Romeo - and Juliet!!

Steve Wait a minute - remember how that story ends... I was thinking of something more like "FAME" - !

US Kids Great idea, - yeah! (etc.)

Tigran What is "Fame" ?

Igor *(translates) --*

Gary No - it's a TV show about a group of extremely talented kids who sing and dance and have a great time !

Slava Just like us!

ALL Yeah! *(cheering)*

Igor My friends, this is wonderful idea. But now it is late - our Pioneer Palace is closing. How about we meet tomorrow - ?

Jenn. Well our lessons are over at twelve - we could....

Maury - skip lunch!

Allison We could be here by two.

Igor Very good. We meet here at two.

Karla - Thanks guys, this was great...

Alexis - the best night of my life...

They all wish goodnight to each other and go off, the Americans to the left, the Russians to the right.

Steve Come on, Jenny -

Jenn. I'll follow you: there's something I really want to ask Igor.

Steve I'll wait -

Jenn. Please Steve -

Steve *(walking slowly back to her)* Jenny, look...

Jenn. *(angrily)* Will you stop acting like an older brother! I'm old enough to look after myself.

Steve OK, OK - sorry I spoke. Goodnight, Igor. **EXIT.**

Igor I like very much your group. For Americans, they are very clever people. This Steve is very clever -

Jenn. He's OK -

Igor He is your boyfriend ?

Jenn. Well - yes... No - I mean, we dated a couple of times. I don't want to talk about that, I want to ask you a question.....

Igor Please - ask!

Jenn. After all that's happened tonight, it suddenly seems rather silly - and yet, - well: *(steeling herself)* Most people in America think that the Russians - the Soviets - want to take over the world. Is that true?

Igor Now Jennifer - that is not so clever.

Jenn. *(defending herself shrilly)* You took over Afghanistan and most of Eastern Europe. You're doing your best to take over Central America. Do you want to rule the world ?

Igor Do you? - I cannot answer this question. You must answer it yourself. Look - I have little present for you. *(He gives her a set of nesting dolls)* You take it a part, and inside there is a different doll. So it is with our country: any time you think you have found the "Real Soviet Union" - peel off the skin and you will find a new one underneath.

Jenn. You like being mysterious, don't you ?

Igor It is the old Russian way! Goodnight my princess - **EXIT**

Jenn. *(Alone)* Goodnight. *(She looks at her doll, starts to take it apart, laying out the family on the stage before her.)* They're so nice! - Look at this, so generous! And yet, - Oh why am I so suspicious ? I feel like this is all some act they put on for

foreigners, softening us up for the communist take-over. But - what about Igor ?
I've never felt like this about anyone else. (shakes her head)
I'm excited by the idea of this play, - can't wait to see what ideas they come
forward with, - 'cos if we can sort out our problems in a musical play, perhaps we
can do it in real life.

MUSIC - she kneels with her dolls in front of her, as behind her dancers bring the dolls to life:
dressed in beautiful Russian costume, they dance
as the **Story-teller** sings:

ETA MUSICA

As the song ends, Jennifer exits with the dancers. (The dancers have picked up the dolls during
the dance.) Three of the small children gather round the Storyteller:

Ian Is it true the children wrote the first "PEACE CHILD" all by themselves?
S.T. Yes they did - and after that many other people tried, but the only versions that
ever worked were those written by children.
Sarah It must have taken them a long time -
S.T. No - it was all written those few days they were together in Moscow -
Natasha They must have been very clever children -
S.T. No more than you - they simply wanted Peace, and because they had found it
amongst themselves, they Knew it was possible. But look - see the problems they
had.... **EXIT.**

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SCENE THREE - Rehearsals

Lights go up revealing bare stage: we are in the same room as the party was held, but it is now
day-time. The Soviet and American kids amble in chatting happily. Steve comes in from the
other side of the stage:

Alexis Steve! - where've you been ?
Steve At the gallery -
Colleen You've missed all the fun - !
Steve What time did you guys get back last night ?
Karla Ooh about three! -
Allison But we finished it ! -
Maury It's OK, man. I think you're going to like it.
Jenn We've written in a great part for you! -
Tigran Let's show Steve the Military number -

Gary Oh yeah! - it's this great song we found! Come on Gwen - !
Positions everyone !

MUSIC starts. The ensemble launch into the upbeat, dynamic "MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX" number, the dancers striding and strutting about the stage; the singers bopping to the rhythm either side; Gwen and Sasha belting the song for all they're worth.

Gwen It's a Military Industrial Complex,
Isn't it sad, the world is quite mad!
A fashionable national contest -
The biggest - the best! The East and the West -

Sasha Indestructible immovable object!
The ego at large, it's a tragical farce!
Uncontrollable horrible shambles
Such a sorrowful sight, everyone's right!

ALL Oh what a hopeless case it is
No one really cares !
Oh! - what a crazy world this is -
No one can win this race,
Because the bigger they build
The faster they go
The greater the bang
Spells the end of man - !

Sasha It's a military Industrial Complex,
Isn't it sad, the world is quite mad!
A passionate emotional subject -
Who's right and who's left? - It's anyone's guess!
Gwen An inexplicable typical jungle -
There's no one to blame for this ridiculous game!
Uncontrollable horrible shambles
Who's wrong and who's right in this tragical fight!

ALL Oh! It's a really hopeless case,
No one seems to care!
Oh! - what a crazy, crazy race,
No one really dares!
(because) The bigger they build,
The faster they go,
The bigger the bang
Spells the end of Man!

It's a Military Industrial Complex
Such a sorrowful sight - everyone's - Right !!!

The kids form a tableau at the end, in the best musical fashion - big smiles, waving hands! Steve has picked up a copy of the script during the song and starts to read it; what he reads appals him. He now stands downstage right. One by one they notice his aghast expression:

Allison What's the problem, Steve?

Slava You didn't like ?

Steve Who wrote this thing?

Oksana It is English song by David Gordon -

- Steve** Not the song, this whole thing ?
- Alexis** We all did -
- Steve** Come on - you can't all write a play !
- Gary** We did pretty much! - when it came down to it, Tigran, Colleen and I wrote most
- Maury** What's the problem, man ?
- Steve** I sure hope you know what you're getting into. Look at this:
(reading)" - and by the end of our lives, the spirit of sharing and socialism will
- Jenn.** What's wrong with that?
- Steve** For "spirit of Socialism" - read "Soviet Union" !!
There's your answer, Jennifer!
Of course the Soviet Union wants to take over the world:it always has, and it always will!
- Slava** Maybe America does too, with your money, your Television, your Pepsi....
- Tigran** Economic Imperialism!
- Steve** We want to win the world for freedom, to save it from your communist dictatorship - !
- Oksana** The "freedom" you talk about is just freedom to make money - to use the poor people to make money for the rich!
- Maury** Oh come on! - just look at the shops here in Moscow! there's nothing in them!! Then think about the ones back home: That's freedom for you: people like to make money - and to spend it! Here you can't do either!
- Steve** And remember the food; and check out the newspaper stalls - no foreign newspapers, and all the Russian ones are censored.
You talk about taking these guys to the US: forget it !! kids never get to travel abroad from here... And yet in this script, you make them look like sweet, peace-loving little pussy-cats!
- Tigran** So the Russians must be the bad guys, yes? - and the American cowboys are the good guys charging in to save us, hm?
Well - how come there are fifteen million starving people in America? - how come twenty million who cannot read?? - and why do half the poor Russians who defect to your country plead with our government to be allowed to come home?
- Slava** Look at the Arms Race! - Star Wars! What is Star Wars if it isn't your way of trying to rule the world ?
- Karla** Star Wars is a defensive system - to defend innocent people and kids like us if you ever attack us ?!
- Tigran** Nonsense! - it is attack system so you can kill our missiles from space!!
- Steve** Rubbish!! - it's a defensive shield against nuclear missiles!

Tigran Are you crazy?! - if your star wars can kill a missile flying through space at a thousand miles an hour, it can kill one sitting still on the ground, No?

Alexis Guys - please!

Colleen Yeah - stop it will you ?

Gary No - this is very interesting, please continue!

Allison We were trying to write a play about peace and - ...

Maury - we got duped by the commies!

Jenn. It seemed so easy in the play... *(she picks up the script from Steve and looks at it)*
Why can't we just declare peace and be friends ?

Tigran Money.

Steve Fear.

Oksana Pride

Tigran - but the biggest problem is money: yes, we are a little frightened of you, but we could declare peace and stop the arms race tomorrow if it wasn't for your Military Industrial Complex eager to make profits for American millionaires.

Steve Can you believe this guy ??! - we've got different values in America. We're free! If a guy pays his taxes, drives on the right side of the road, and obeys a few laws, he's free to do pretty much what he likes, not what the government likes.

Tigran That's what worries us: if Americans and others are allowed to rush round the world doing pretty much what they like, pretty soon there will be no world left!

Jenn. I guess it all comes down to: "Do we rule the world, or do you?" - and until there is a nuclear war, that question can never be answered.

Slava No!! - there can be peace!! - we can be friends. We have shown that - but first we must put this pride, this greed, this fear - outside!

Steve Hard to do ...

Allison So what do we do ?

MUSIC begins. *The Soviets and Americans have gravitated to different sides of the stage; most of them are sitting down, depressed, mumbling amongst themselves. Jenny is looking aggressive and hurt. She checks a few lines in the script, puts it down and goes over to a microphone:*

Jennifer Please listen to me, heed the words that I say,
We live in one world so our home is the same
The same sun is our fire
The same clouds give us rain
So whatever you may desire, our future's the same.

Say not that you're rich nor that you are poor
Say not that I'm less nor that you are more
Say only 'We are friends' and we want to live in peace

In this here our world, let all wars cease!

For where would we go if this world we destroy?
There's only one home - this world - to enjoy.
The same earth feeds our hunger, and we all breathe the air -
So change your desires, this world we must share

ALL Say not that you're rich nor that you are poor
Say not that you're less nor that I am more,
Say only 'We are friends' and we want to live in peace
In this here our world, let all wars cease!

Jenn. In this here our world, let all wars cease!

Jenn. My friends, I've made a decision. I'm going to finish this play and I'm going to put it on so that the world can see that the Soviet Union and the United States can be friends. Will you help ?

Most of the kids immediately gather round Jennifer, showering her with hugs of support. Steve and Tigran remain outside the group gazing with venom but also resignation at each other.

A pool of light remains on the bunch of children upstage center; a sharp spot picks out Steve as he walks downstage right:

Steve I won't be any help to them. Don't get me wrong, I love this country: every time you go to a gallery or a concert, you get a glimpse of what it was like before the revolution: then you come out and see what it's like now. It's a tragedy. These people don't need peace! - they need our help to overthrow their rotten government...!!

Tigran Americans are so stupid!! They cannot see what is hanging right in front of their noses!! In this stupid arms race, they are the losers too, and yet they cannot see it! I don't know what the answer is, but in this I think my government has the right course: peace and complete nuclear disarmament by the end of the century. Will we ever be able to get that message across to the Americans ? - I doubt it !

Gary I'm real confused. There we were, happily writing this play, learning more Russian in an afternoon than I had learned in a year of school! - then Steve comes along and makes me feel like I was being a traitor! I got over it though, - I mean, if we can't get along, what hope is there ?

Slava For me, Gary's argument is the best! Now I see why it is so important we work for peace! There are so many mis-understandings, so many things we must learn about each other before there can be peace. And now we learn. It is wonderful !

Gwen The lack of trust around here was awful for a while: every one went around looking at each other as though we were CIA or KGB. It was crazy - but we're getting over that. And you know what really surprised me? - these Russians are so spiritual it's... - you can't talk about it! There's got to be good in these people for the power of love is alive here.

Nina I do love Jennifer. Every word that she says, I agree with.
I think she is my best friend! And yet that does not help our governments trust each other. Sometimes I think it's hopeless -

Gwen Trust in the power of love, Nina. It works -

Maury How can you say that, Gwen - you've got to check out the economic stuff -

Allison Oh, Maury - you're always such a downer!

Gary He's right: this play is meaningless if it doesn't check out with reality -

Nina - but who's reality, your's or mine ?

Gwen Forget reality - get it right in the spirit, then reality will take care of itself.

Karina The economics is too complicated!

Alexis - none of us understand that stuff;

Allison - we can't deal with it... etc. (Hubbub of discussion)

Jenn. *(having turned up something interesting in the script)*
Wait guys - listen to this! - sing it for us Gwen -

MUSIC *begins, the children gather round Gwen who begins to sing:*

Gwen Reach out with love, gather all your courage,
Reach out with love, seek a brighter day,
Gwen & others Peace as our sword, love as our weapon,
(Harmonising) Reach out with love, let us win this way -

*The music continues as the children EXIT discussing the script.
Light comes up on the Storyteller:*

S.T. Some days later, the children performed their play in the Pioneer Palace; Steve and Tigran did not come, but those that did saw peace secure in the hands of beautiful children. There were articles about it in the Newspapers, and the children decided they had to meet again the following summer to give more performances of their play. When the moment came for the Americans to leave, many tears were cried.

The lights change as the children of the main cast emerge to bid farewell to each other, Jenny & Igor being the last to separate.

Full Chorus Reach out with love, gather all your courage,
Reach out with love, seek a brighter day!
Love as our sword, peace as our weapon,
Reach out with love, let us win this way.....

The music does not resolve.

* * *

S C E N E F O U R

The Story-teller continues:

S.T. The year passed slowly for the children. There was one delightful moment, when they saw each other on a children's satellite TV program and sang their songs together.

MUSIC under as the children rush on either side of the stage, framed in large wooden TV Screens, with "USA/CWA" and "CCCP/USSR" written above them. They wave at each other wildly for a moment, then the lights fade; the Music continues under, leading to into "Reach out for a star"

S.T After this, the Americans were determined to get their Soviet friends to perform with them in the USA. Every spare moment, they made plans for the summer - until the day came when they climbed on the plane to go back to Moscow...

Spotlight fades on Storyteller. Ian comes on downstage right singing:

Ian (softly) Reach out for a star
Come out from where you are
Show me what you can do
Believe in me, I believe in you.

The cast begin to bound on to the stage, Russians from the left, US kids from the right. They greet each other rapturously as the song continues:

Karina Reach out for your dream
It's not as hard as it may seem
Ian & Karina Together we can make it through
Together - me and you

Full Cast: Wake up, open your eyes,
This is our world, our paradise!

Reach out, don't be afraid
Come on now, we'll find a way,
There's a whole new world for us to see
There's a universe in you and me!

Don't be shy, just be yourself
You are your greatest wealth

At this point, to the surprise and pleasure of the entire cast, two of the youngest cast members emerge from the wings,(or the aisles) dragging the extremely reluctant and embarrassed-looking Steve and Tigran.

Full Chorus Reach out for a star
Come out from where you are
Show me what you can do
Believe in me - I believe in you

Jenn./Igor Show me what you can do
Believe in me, I believe in you.

As the song ends, they force them to shake hands with each other. At this, the two boys crack up and fall into each other's arms.

Steve So how've you been ?

Tigran Great - ! How about you ?

Steve (To the others)You know, I can't believe I feel so happy to see this guy again!

Tigran I too - !

Steve I mean, I'm sure that the minute he opens his mouth I'm going to disagree with him completely, but I feel now that whatever he says, - we can be friends -

Tigran It is good beginning: now perhaps you can learn where you are wrong....!!

Steve Wait a minute...!!! (*chases him round the stage*)

Alexis Guys! -

Igor We need your help: we want to take our play around the world; we want other

Tigran Well what's the problem ?!

Steve - get out and ask the children to support you, raise money,

Tigran - get their parents involved !

Jenn. This is the problem:

Colleen (*going up to a chorus member*) Hey look! - we're taking this play around the world to make peace - !

Chor. 1 That's great!

Colleen We're having a meeting about it tomorrow night to make plans, will you come ?

Chor. 1 Oh I'm sorry, I've got basket-ball practice -

Chor. 2 I've got too much home work -

Chor. 3 I've got a date -

Chor. 4 There's a party at Chuck's place...

Chor. 5 We're going out of town...

Colleen See - ?

Jenn. Apathy -

Igor People always have excuses not to make peace.

Steve Wait a minute, let me try this: (*going up to the chorus*)
If you guys were strapped to a rail-road, and I told you there was a train coming at a hundred miles an hour, you'd listen, wouldn't you ?

Chorus (*weakly*) Yes -

Steve You'd cancel other plans, wouldn't you ?

Chorus Yes -

Tigran (*joining him, getting Steve's idea*) Well there is a train coming - it's called Nuclear War!

Steve - and we are strapped to a railroad: it's called the Planet Earth -

Tigran And the only people who can stop that train is us !

The cast raise a great cheer, and Steve and Tigran look round beaming.

Chor. 2 Why us ?

Jenn 'cos nobody else seems to be doing it!

Colleen - and if we don't have peace, it is our lives that will be cut short: the old people will already be dead!

Igor When people get older, they've got so many things to worry about, peace gets forgotten..

Tigran You want peace, don't you ?

Chorus *(weakly)* Yes -

Steve Well do you? You don't want to die in a nuclear war ?

Chorus No !!

Jenn. You want to live ?

Chorus YES !!!

Cast You want to Live ???

Chorus YES !!!!

Jenn. Then help us !!

The Children of the chorus come down from their risers and dance out into the auditorium, carrying their message to the audience:

ALL I want to live I want to live
The right to live my life
I want to search far and wide
Have the chance to wonder why
I want to learn all the secrets
The wo-o-orld has to give
I want the chance to live my life
I want to live I want to live

I want to be I want to see
A world that's good and free
I want a home - someone to love
To share their life with me
I want to have and to hold
A chi-i-ild of my own
I want to live, I want to love,
I want to live - I WANT TO LIVE !!

The chorus and main cast hold a position in the aisles, then move quickly to the lobby. The story teller remains alone on stage:

S.T. With monumental energy, the children took their message out around the world; invitations came from the most unlikely places, and everywhere they went, children and parents, politicians and diplomats turned out in their thousands

to welcome them. One day they receive an invitation that thrilled them all -

Jenn. *(walking in holding an envelope)* Igor!! - look at this!

Igor *(coming on)* What is it ?

Jenn. Dear children of Peace Child! - We congratulate you on your important work for peace and would like to invite you to perform your musical show at the United Nations on the International Day of Peace this year. Signed, the Secretary General of the United Nations.

The others of the main cast have now joined them. They look at each other and smile:

Steve The Press is going to love this - !

Gary *(kneeling down, gesturing at Igor and Jenny, singing:)*

Others *(joining)* It's a story, - we really got a story !
Front Page story and definitely Headline News;

They launch into this song from their show which is appropriate to the moment:

ALL We're gonna be heroes! Headline Heroes!
Full page Features, the Op-ed Page and leaders too!
Maury The photograph
Tigran The photograph !
Maury/Tigran We've got to have the photograph
The photo- the photo - we've got to have the photo!

Maury Side by side
Tigran - closer in!
Allison - make 'em smile
Oksana - cheesy grins
Karla - outa my way
Gwen - whatdya say ?
Alexis - you're blocking my frame!
Karina - stop being a pain !

All*(softly)* Newsnight, satellite - print it right
Broad side, nationwide, any side
(crescendo -) Front page, center fold, get it sold!

Extra Extra - read all about it!
Headlines, Headlines - no doubt about it!
Front Page Extra - don't go home without it!

(separate solos) Hot News! - Build it high!
Print it bold! - Reach the sky!
Make 'em shout, - make 'em cry !!

ALL PEACE CHILD MEETS THE LEADERS OF THE WORLD !!

* * *

S C E N E F I V E: The United Nations

The United Nations flag descends slowly as the song ends. The children swing round with their backs to the audience, watching it. One by one, they turn round and gaze, as though at the Great UN General Assembly Chamber:

- Allison** So this is it! - the United Nations !
- Nina** We actually made it !
- Slava** It is the most powerful room in the world!
- Maury** Not yet, but it should be -
- Nina** This will be the seat of world government, where all the nations will sit together and work out laws for the good of all people -
- Gary** It's a pipe dream, Nina - !
- Nina** Why? - just to have peace means nothing! We must have International Organisation like United Nations to keep the peace -
- Alexis** Sounds like a new line for our show!
- Maury** Maybe we should write some new lines for the show tomorrow ?
- Oksana** I think we should look at every line because, my friends, this opportunity will never come again!
- Xenia** If we cannot make breakthrough here, where else can we go ?
- Igor** My friends, we are all tired - we should get some rest.
- Maury** Yeah - let's get back to the hotel, guys! **All EXIT.**
- Igor** Jenny (*she turns*) - I've hardly seen you these last days...
- Jenn.** You've been busy -
- Igor** We're always busy.
- Jenn.** Did you want to talk about changing the play?
- Igor** No - about how our lives are going to change when there is peace...
- Jenn.** I haven't thought about it !
- Igor** I know - none of us have! It means when we get peace, we won't know what to do with it ?
- Jenn.** Let's get peace first, then worry about that !
- Igor** But if we don't know what we want it for, why are we working for it ?
- Jenn.** Because we want to save the world!
- Igor** Ah yes! you know there is so much fun and love and happiness in our group, we sometimes forget that there are still people fighting wars out there -
- Jenn.** These people don't -

Igor Do you think they'll listen to us ?

Jenn. Yes - I do. I may be naive, but I do expect these leaders to act, not in their own interests, nor in the interests of their own country, but in the interests of the whole world.

Igor You expect a great deal -

Jenn. I do.

The song begins, and with it, the chorus process in through the aisles, carrying the flags of all nations. They mount the stage, and are in position around the main cast as they reach the end of the first refrain.

Slava(sings) Mr President, is it true what they say
You can kill all the world in less than a day?

Colleen Mr Secretary - is it true what I hear
Because of men's greed we must all live in fear

Slava/Colleen Mr Secretary/Mr President - can it be what it seems
There will be no more love, there will be no more dreams

ALL Oh No! (Oh No!) - it's plain to see! (it's plain to see!) But so hard to understand
That this world we all love
Could be taken away - all in a day -
Oh No! (Oh No!) - it's not fair! (it's not fair!)
That a few should have the right
For the sake of their pride
They can make us all die - without asking why,
Oh No !!

Karina Mr President, is it true what I read,
The world could be dead with a turn of your key ?

Maury Mr Secretary, can it be what it seems
There will be no more children, no more love, no more dreams?

Maury/Karina President/Mr Secretary, won't you hear our small plea?
For the millions of children, throw away your key !!

ALL *(REPEAT CHORUS x 2)*

ALL Mr President/Mr Secretary - it's a time to be brave!
Announce to the world, this will be a Peace Day - !!
The First - Peace - Day !!

The cast and chorus hold a tableau with the flags as Alexis comes forward:

Alexis Dear leaders,
We want a world at peace. We want a world where all people can be friends and not be fearful of their differences
We want you to begin a program of youth exchange in our schools which will allow all children to spend a year in another country, learning another language, learning to love another culture - as we have done.
If all children can grow up learning to love the rich variety of cultures in our world - there can be peace!

So please, do this leaders -

ALL For us !

Alexis gives the statement she has been reading to Jenny and Igor who go out stage Right. The cast watch them go; the chorus turns and sits down on their risers, furling their flags.

Sarah What do we do now ?

Gary We wait.

Music under as the cast sit down and the Storyteller reads:

S.T. Jenny and Igor were gone for almost an hour with the Secretary General of the United Nations. Outside the children waited, hardly daring to breathe! At last, Jenny and Igor returned -

Sarah Here they are! - what happened ?? *(The cast looks up as one)*

Igor *(nonchalantly)* Nothing much -

Jenn. *(unable to conceal her excitement)* He simply agreed with everything we said - !!

Igor - and gave us this Declaration! *(He pulls it out from behind his back.)*

Jenn. Isn't it incredible - ??!!*(gasps of wonder from the cast)*

Xenia A "Declaration of Peace for the Children of Peace"

Slava " - we insist that the children's requests be immediately implemented by all governments." That's it - !!

Maury We did it !!

Gary/Karina Wowie/whoopee/hooray!! (etc.)

The cast join in a whole jamboree of excited celebration, dancing about the stage and hugging each other. Until they see Steve and Tigran reading the document closely, shaking their heads -

Fyedor There is a problem ?

Steve You're darn right there's a problem. There's nothing binding on governments here, nothing about where the money's coming from, nothing about who's going to organise the program....

Tigran It is very pretty piece of paper, but all it really says is "Thank you, kiddies, nice idea - bye-bye !"

Steve The United Nations, kids, is just like us: it has no power!

Nina We have power, Steve - we are the future !

Slava - and the United Nations is respected throughout the world!

Steve Not much -

Tigran - not enough to make governments listen to this.

Alexis You mean we've failed - .

Steve Yes.

Igor/Jenny No !

Fyedor Certainly not. This is great beginning !

Oksana - when before have children received such Declaration from United Nations, tell me when ?

Allison It's a great success !

Gary It is only paper -

Karina But -

Colleen Listen - if there is not love, if there is not hope, if there is not peace, I don't want to live. And yet I love this planet, and as long as I'm alive, I'll work for peace.(PAUSE)

Maury That's what we should be saying to the leaders - come on, let's go right back in there -

Steve It's no good, Maury, - we're going nowhere !

Jenn. Come on Steve, let's do this together -

Steve I'm sorry, Jenny, I've had enough of this peace stuff -

Jenn. Tigran ?

Tigran (*holds out a moment, then capitulates*) Come on Steve - what's the alternative ?

Steve The alternative is to be like everybody else and not get hyped up about peace. Haven't you ever wondered why it's only us that are worried about it? Grow up, guys, live with the world as it is - make the best of it!

Jenn. No, Steve - that way lies death. The way of life is with peace-makers and love. We need your help, we need everyone's help -

Steve returns more out of compassion for his friends than any deep conviction. The chorus stands up; the lights revert to the UN cue as the children come forward, saying:

ALL Listen leaders,
Without love, without hope, without peace, - we do not want to Live; and yet we love this planet, and as long as we're alive, we're going to work for Peace.

They turn and walk slowly from the stage as the music comes in. The Storyteller stands to sing:

S.T. We're getting older as time goes by
A little older every day
We were the children - of yesterday.

Ian How long did it take the children to make the world at peace?

S.T. Many, many years. We will always be working at it -

- Sarah** Is peace so very hard ?
- S.T.** No - it is very simple, but when we grow up, we become complicated, and we forget about peace...
- Natasha** How can we forget?! If there was a war, the world would end !
- S.T.** I know, - they know too; but like Steve - it is convenient to forget. That's why we have Peace Day - so that at least once a year, we will remember how important peace is.
- Ian** What happened to Steve -
- S.T.** Steve? - Ha! - he became a peace-maker! One of the best -
- Natasha** - and Tigran ?
- S.T.** Became a politician.
- Sarah** But what about Jenny and Igor - ?
- Ian** Did they get married ?
- S.T.** They did, actually - !
- Sarah** Were they happy ?
- S.T.** Very, very happy. You see, even while they were children, they had done something with their lives and that is the happiest feeling any person can have.
- Ian** Did they have any children ?
- S.T.** Two - a little boy and a little girl. That's also the happiest feeling any person can have.
- Sarah** - and they went on working for peace ?
- S.T.** All their lives!
- Sarah** They must have been very happy -
- Ian** You! - You were the little girl of the story! That's how you know so much about it....!!!

The rest of the cast have been filtering on in their Peace Day costumes, watching as the storyteller winds up the story. They now dart forward, full of interest:

- ALL** Were you, were you really?? - why didn't you tell us? Where is Igor? (etc.)
- S.T.** Sssh! It doesn't matter who the children were or where they are now. You could be the little girl - you could be the boy,
All of you carry within you the power to create peace like they did. And you must use your power: the world depends upon it. We must all be Peace Children, even when we are old. Come, I hear the music playing - it is the end of our story, even though for you, it is just beginning.
Happy Peace Day - today and every day!

The two soloists lead off the song "Sing" as the stage clears for the dancers who come on for the final, festive finale.

Gwen Sing! I do wish the world would sing!
I do wish the world would say
How they love to live and play
How they need each other's -

Sasha & Gwen Peace! - that is all we want to have
That is all we want to share,
Let us live our lives in peace,
Oh let us give this life a chance to -

ALL Love! - love is all I need,
Love is all I want,
Love is everywhere -

Peace! - peace is all I want,
Peace is all I need,
Peace - everywhere !!

Love! - it will help us all to sing,
It will teach us all to dance,
I do wish the world would sing,
I do wish the world would

Say! - how they love to live in Peace
How they love to sing and dance,
All we need is one more chance,
Won't you give one more chance to -

(REPEAT "LOVE/PEACE" REFRAIN)

As the song repeats, four of the older chorus members raise the boy and girl on their shoulders, and lead a procession of the cast out through the auditorium in two columns. They stop at the back of the hall, turning about, filling the aisles with their music, alternating the choruses, thus:

Come into my Joy!
Come into my Pain!
Come - you be a friend of mine,
I'll be the same!

Peace - peace is all I want,
Peace is all I need,
Peace - everywhere!

Love - Love is all I need,
Love is all I want,
Love is everywhere!

Come into my joy!
Come into my pain!
Come - you be a friend of mine,
I'll be the same!

The final refrains are repeated as the houselights come up, the cast spreading their song through the audience, - singing, dancing, clapping their hands as the number builds to a massive celebratory climax!

* * *

THE END

Twenty-Minute Song Medley

Before you embark on either a small or a large-scale production, you might like to gather a small group of children and try staging this short-form *Peace Child* which has been used as a promotional "Teaser" at Festivals, conferences etc. It requires minimal costume, almost no staging, and needs no lighting; all you need is kids and a pianist. It can also be done as a reading, the children holding scripts in their hands.

With a youth choir of relatively competent singers, this show can be put together in three or four rehearsals. We have done it with as few as five kids and as many as thirty. Twelve is a good number. If possible, they should be costumed in Peace Child T-shirts with sashes and ribbons.

The stage area should be at least 12' x 8'. There are no lighting cues: if you have lights, you can add some color to the Fireball song, use a spotlight on the children for I Want to Live, etc. The entire show must be staged to microphones so that every word and song can be heard. Three microphones ranged across the stage area is ideal.

THE SHOW

An adult will introduce "Extracts from Peace Child - a musical fantasy which tells how children can help to bring peace to our world."

The best singer in the group comes on stage, singing:

CHILD 1: Come into my joy,
 Come into my pain
 Come - you be a friend of mine
 I'll be the same!

She pauses a moment, then cries: "Happy Peace Day everyone!!"

The doors at the back of the room are thrown open and the other children come bounding down the aisles singing, and greeting the audience with hugs and kisses:

CHILDREN: Peace Day Peace Day we all say
 Happy world, holiday,
 Wear a leaf and show the way
 Celebrating this peace day.

Peace Day Peace Day - sing and dance
It will be a big romance
People of the world as one
Peace day peace day has begun

Celebrations, jublations -
Laughter, shouting - lots of fun!
Singing dancing, - take your partner,
Celebrations have begun!

Celebrations, jublations -
Laughter shouting, lots of fun!
Smiling dancing - take your partner,
Happiness for everyone.

Peace enough for all mankind
Healthy body, happy mind,
Faith and love - the world as one,
Peace Day, peace day has begun!

They all arrive in the stage area and form a tableau. They break and wish each other "Happy Peace Day - Happy Peace Day" - then they turn to the audience:

- CHILD 1:** Welcome to our Peace Day Celebration!
- CHILD 2:** The year is Two Thousand Twenty Five and our world is at peace!
- CHILD 3:** Sure we still have problems,
- CHILD 4:** BIG problems,
- CHILD 3:** But our governments are working together to solve them. And that's what peace is all about, isn't it? - working together. Having fun together!
- CHILD 5:** We are the first generation to be raised in a world without war
- CHILD 6:** - and we know how lucky we are.
- CHILD 7:** That's why we come together every year to remind ourselves of the Story of how Peace came to our world.
- CHILD 8:** It is a simple story,
- CHILD 4:** - quite short!
- CHILD 8:** - and we'd like to share it with you today.

Child 1 picks up the Peace Child Story-book and starts to read:

- CHILD 1:** Our story begins in America at the end of the 1980s. A young girl, let's call her Jennifer, sees a television program about nuclear war. She becomes frightened. She tries to dismiss her fears but they return to her in nightmares. She begins to investigate. She finds the photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Suddenly she understands how her fantasy could become horribly real. Day and night, the fears obsess her -

The piano builds in a sinister rumble under this narration, rising to a shattering explosion of sound, then launching into the "FIREBALL" number:

SONG: "Fireball"

JENNIFER: *(screaming)* NO!! - I don't want to die!
I want to live!

(sings) - I want to live,
The right to live my life
I want to search far and wide
Have the chance to wonder why
I want to learn all the secrets
The world has to give,
I want the chance to see it all
I want to live, I want to live...

JENNIFER: *(leaving no pause for applause, with music continuing)*
They tell me they have enough bombs to blow up the world a hundred times. Why do they need so many? If you blow the world up once, what is there left to blow up the next 99 times?! - And yet still they build more bombs -!

WHY?

It is because we are afraid of the Russians. We're frightened they may take over the world, but - nobody can prove to me that the Russians really want to do that. So - I've decided to find out for myself! I've signed on for a Russian language course - in Moscow! *(turns and walks back to group)*

CHILD 2: *(coming forward)* In Moscow, she makes friends with many Russians and quickly forgets that this is the nation which is supposed to be so indescribably evil, we have to threaten the destruction of the whole world to protect ourselves. On her course, are children from a wide variety of nations - from different backgrounds, different cultures, - with different philosophies and political systems - but they all have one thing in common:

ALL: We want to Live!!

MUSIC.

I want to live, I want to live
The right to live my life
I want to search far and wide
Have the chance to wonder why
I want to learn all the secrets
The world has to give
The chance to see it all
I want to live - I want to live -

I want to be, I want to see
A world that's good and free
I want a home, someone to love
To share their life with me,
I want to have and to hold
A child of my own,
I want to live, I want to love,
I want to live, I - WANT - TO - LIVE !!

CHILD 2: The children go back to their nations determined to make their cry heard by the leaders of all nations. Jennifer, who lived in New York, sought out people at the United Nations, and finally persuaded them to allow the children to make their appeal to world leaders at a ceremony dedicated to Peace!

CHILD 3: The children came from all over the world. They stood before their leaders in the Great Hall of the United Nations and they made their simple request:

SONG: "MR PRESIDENT"

(JENNY) Mr President - is it true what they say?
You can kill all the world in less than a day?

(CHILD 5) Mr President - is it true what I hear?
Because of men's greed we must all live in fear?

(CHILD 6 & 7) Mr President - can it be what it seems?
There will be no more love
- there will be no more dreams?

(CHORUS) Oh No! - Oh No! - it's plain to see, it's plain to see!
But so hard to understand,
That this world we all love
Could be taken away - all in a day
Oh No! - Oh No! - it's not fair, it's not fair,
That a few should have the right,
For the sake of their pride
They can make us all die - without asking why,
Oh No!!

(CHILD 8) Mr President - is it true what I read?
The world could be dead with a turn of your key?

CHILD 3) Mr President, can it be what it seems?
There will be no more children, no more love, no more dreams?

(CHILD 2&4) Mr President - won't you hear our small plea?
For the millions of children - throw away your key!

(REPEAT CHORUS)

ALL: Mr President - it's a time to be brave,
Announce to the world, this will be a Peace Day -
The First Peace Day!!

CHILD 4: The First Peace Day! - The First Peace Day cannot come about through treaties or
victory in a war:- it can only come about when you make a decision to trust each
other -

CHILD 5: - to love each other, as we do!

CHILD 6: Keep your bombs; they are not the problem. The problem is whatever it is in your
heads that makes you feel you need them!

CHILD 7: You see them as a deterrent to war -

CHILD 8: - we look on them as a spur to Peace.

CHILD 4: We must use the danger of this moment now to Act!

JENNIFER: We have devised a plan: we want you to create systems in all our schools so that
every child will have a chance to live for a year in a foreign country, learn a foreign
language, another way of life. This way, when we grow up, we will already be accus-
tomed to working together. We will be friends -!

CHILD 2: We calculate a system of exchanges touching every child would cost about a tenth of
what you currently spend on weapons and defense.

CHILD 3: Knowing the danger of war and the power of Love, we will be able to create a world
of peace within our generation.

CHILD 4: We will be able to leave the world safe for our children -

CHILD 6: - and create plans and programs that will last deep into the twenty second century.

ALL: Please do this leaders, - for us!

Music starts - the introduction to Child for a Day. Child One comes forward with the story-book:

CHILD 1: The leaders were touched by the anxious longing in the children's voices. They did not respond immediately, but as the ground swell of support for the children's plan grew around the world, they were pleased to accept it. They knew the power of love, - they knew the fear of war - and they dreamed of the possibility of creating a world at peace, for after all, they were children once...

The eldest child in the group starts to sing:

SONG: "Child for a day"

(SOLO) I was a child who ran full of laughter
I was a child who lived for a day
My eyes full of sunshine
My heart full of smiles
I was a child for a day

(DUET) We were the children who sang in the morning
We were the children who laughed at the sun
Who listened to those
Who spoke with their wisdom
We were the ones, we would say -

(ALL) We're getting older as time goes by
A little older with every day
We were the children of yesterday!

CHILD 2: We're often asked "Who were these children?"

CHILD 3: - where did they come from?

CHILD 4: - did they build statues to them?

CHILD 5: And the answer is "No!" - the children didn't want it. They knew that any child could do what they had done

CHILD 6: Any child can be a Peace Child!

CHILD 7: - and we must all learn to be Peace Children: it is the only way our world can survive!

CHILD 8: For what is the purpose of our lives here if it is not to leave the world a better place than we found it?

CHILD 1: We must all work for peace - to build it, and to keep it -

CHILD 2: - in our selves,

CHILD 3: - in our families,

CHILD 4: - in our nations,

CHILD 5: - and in our world.

CHILD 1: We'd like to close our celebration with you today with a song in the language of a nation that used to be the great adversary of our country. It says in Russian, "Mwi zhelayem schastya vam" - which means in English - "We wish you happiness!"

ALL: We wish you to be happy now!
Happy in this great world of our's
Like the first bright rays of dawn
Creeping through your window pane,

We wish you to be happy now!
Happy for the rest of your life!
When you're happy in yourself
The world will share its best with you!

Mwi zhelayem schastya vam....etc

As the song moves into its final refrains, the children move out down the aisles, greeting the audience, and getting them to clap in rhythm with the music. After the false ending, the children should rush back up on to the stage area, join hands and take a single bow at the end of the song. Waving and offering their gratitude to the audience, they should then leave the stage.

THE END.