

Youth
MASQUE
Theatre

the children's crusade

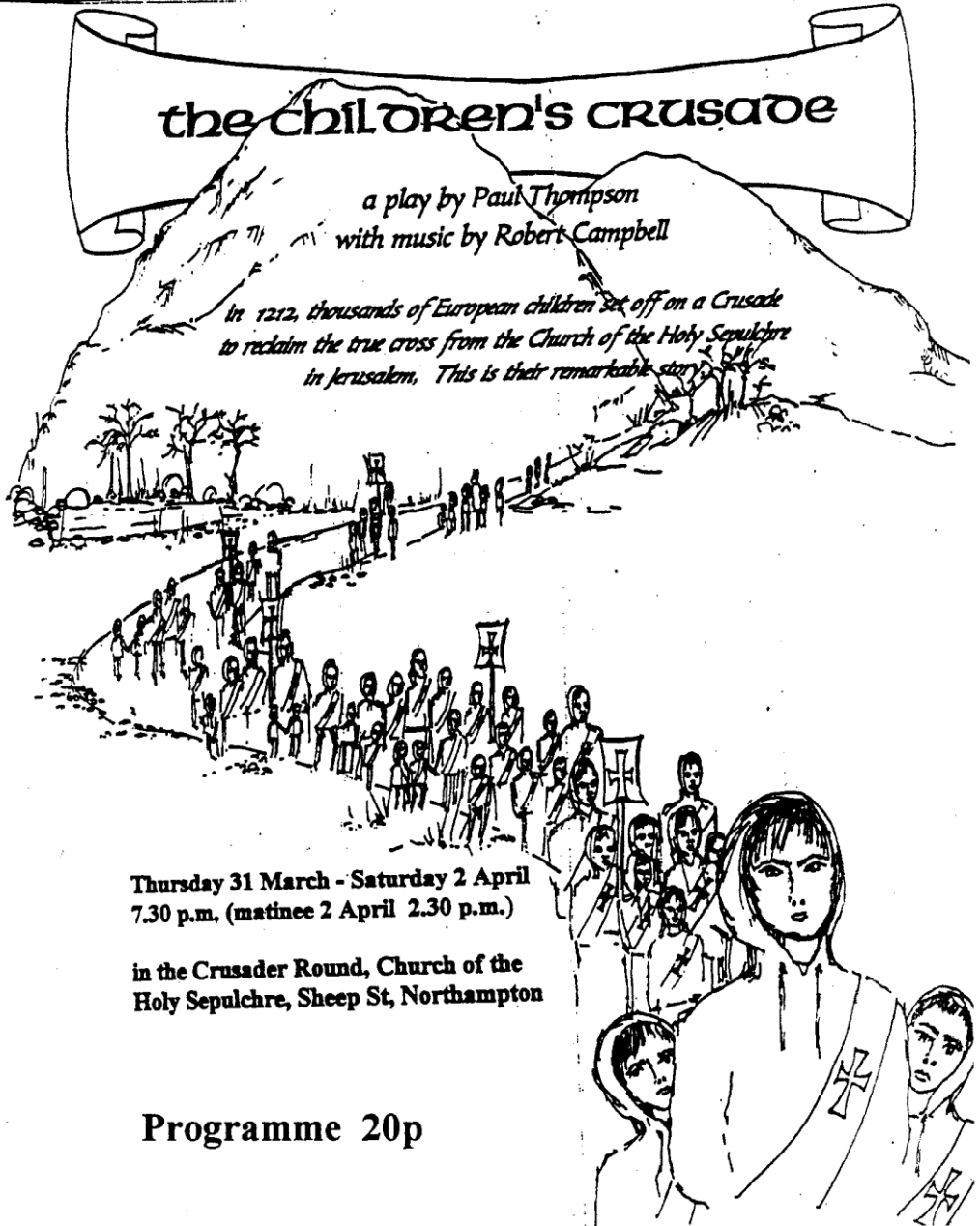
a play by Paul Thompson
with music by Robert Campbell

*In 1212, thousands of European children set off on a Crusade
to reclaim the true cross from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre
in Jerusalem. This is their remarkable story.*

Thursday 31 March - Saturday 2 April
7.30 p.m. (matinee 2 April 2.30 p.m.)

in the Crusader Round, Church of the
Holy Sepulchre, Sheep St, Northampton

Programme 20p



Historical Note

For two hundred years, in the Middle Ages, Christian armies fought Muslim armies for possession of the Holy Land. These were not romantic conflicts, nor were they motivated solely by religion. To a large extent they were wars of conquest undertaken for economic and political ends. Between 1095 and 1291 seven major Crusades set out from Europe. Of these, the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204) was a particularly vivid example of imperialist expansion masquerading as Christian duty.

Pope Innocent III's proclamation of this Crusade met with little response throughout Europe, but eventually a small army was gathered together, for which the Republic of Venice offered to provide ships. This army never reached the Holy Land. The Venetian merchants took them instead to the Christian cities of Zara and Constantinople, which the Crusaders attacked and looted. Venice thus obtained a trading advantage over her rivals, and Rome also benefited from this corrupt and bloody expedition since it secured the unity of the Christian world for the next fifty years.

The Children's Crusade may be seen as a consequence of these shameful events. For in 1212 thousands of European children set out to win back the Cross by peaceful means, seeking to succeed where their fathers had failed. In fact there were two Children's Crusades, both in 1212. The first began near Vendome in France, led by the twelve year old boy, Stephen of Cloyes. It seems that thousands of French children followed Stephen, believing him to be the recipient of a letter from Christ instructing him to organise a Crusade. They marched round the countryside for weeks, suffering the ridicule of their elders and the drought that affected the area at the time, until finally, tired and hungry, they dispersed, having achieved nothing.

The second Children's Crusade was more significant. It began in Germany six months after the first. A young boy called Nicholas, who was apparently gifted with considerable powers of oratory, was encouraged by his father to organise an army of children. About thirty thousand children, mainly from the agricultural classes, gathered in Cologne. Although the average age was probably about fifteen, there are reports that some of them were under eight years old. They marched down the Rhine valley and crossed the Alps by the Mont Cenis Pass. Many died en route, others were abducted as cheap labour, still others deserted as the hardships of the journey became too much for them. Of the thirty thousand who left Cologne, seven thousand reached the Italian city of Genoa. Here they expected the sea to open and when this did not happen their disillusionment was made all the more cruel by the hostility they received

from the Genoese, who saw them as a threat to civic order. None but a handful ever returned to Cologne.

The Children's Crusade is a combination of the two Crusades and is not intended to be an authentic account of the historical events. As far as possible the play should be treated as a modern subject - the story of a generation in revolt against the corrupt world of their elders.

Paul Thompson (*Introduction to The Children's Crusade* 1975)

While the First Crusade began, in theory, as a Christian "holy war", for many it became more a struggle for power and territory. For the Muslims, however, the reverse was true: what began as territorial expansion and defence turned into a jihad - or holy war.

Georges Tate (*The Crusades and the Holy Land* 1991)

In the long sequence of interaction and fusion between Orient and Occident out of which our civilization has grown, the crusades were a tragic and destructive episode ... There was so much courage and so little honour, so much devotion and so little understanding.

Steven Runciman (*A History of the Crusades, vol.3. 1954*)

Two very different versions of the legend have grown up. The Sunday School 'Onward Christian Soldiers' version emphasises the children's faith, courage and determination. The disabused, post-modern version sees the children as helpless pawns, exploited by unscrupulous adults, in the grip of mass hysteria and doomed to catastrophe.

Blake Morrison (*Paula Rego - The Children's Crusade* 1999)

At this time a frivolous expedition occurred, as children and foolish men marked themselves as crusaders without any discretion, more out of curiosity than for their salvation. People of both sexes .. set out with empty purses .. Those who had once passed through the land in groups and never without a song of encouragement among their troops, now returned singly and silent, barefoot and famished, held in scorn by everyone; and many virgins had been raped and lost the flower of their chastity.

from *Annals of Marbach* for the year 1212

CAST

Pope Innocent III
Cardinals

The Old Crusader

Nicholas

His father

Francis

A Farmer

Klaus, his elder son

David, his younger son

Simon, a Crusader

The Marquis of Monserrat

Mascolo, the peasant leader

The Bishop of Genoa

Senators of Genoa

Hugh Ferreus, a merchant

William Porcus, his colleague

Shipping office clerks

The Bandit

Schoolboys

The Auctioneer

His clerk

A Merchant

A Teacher

The Sultan Al Kamil

Crusaders, Parents, Citizens, etc.

Laura Hemming

Lydia Adams, Janey Foster

Lauren Shaw, Eleanor Toone

Lewis Hook

Andreas Christodoulou

Tim Page

Amelia Wilson

Eleanor Toone

Mark Scott

William Morgan

Katie Beacham

Jack Hook

Elliot Waldie

Ellie Wise

Dawn Anderton, Athana Leeson,

Lauren Martin, Lisa Neophitou,

Melanie Revell, Carmen Simoni

Emily Downing

Katharine Dowsett

Rebecca Allan, Katie Beacham,

Liz Lalani, Alyce Biddle

Joe Richardson

William Cheyne, Nicos Christodoulou,

Nic Munday

Alex Rex

Tim Page

Mark Scott

Krishan Sood

Ruth Parks

The Company

MUSICIANS

Accordion

Viola

Violin

Cello, violin

Oboe

Percussion

Kay Warcaba

Mischa Warcaba-Wood

Ally Warcaba-Wood

Natalya Warcaba-Wood

Jenny Wood

Fred Claridge

THE COMPANY

Lydia Adams, Rebecca Allan, Dawn Anderton, Elliot Bannister, Katie Beacham, Alyce Biddle, Jonathan Boorman, Emma Britten, Alicia Brown, Ben Buckler, William Cheyne, Andreas Christodoulou, Nicos Christodoulou, Emily Downing, Katharine Dowsett, Janey Foster, Olivia Galliano, Laura Hemming, Jack Hook, Lewis Hook, Aliza Lalani, Athana Leeson, Holly Manning, Lucy Manning, Lauren Martin, Maud McCutcheon, William Morgan, Jenifer Mulchrone, Nic Munday, Lisa Neophitou, Ruth Parks, Melanie Revell, Alex Rex, Joe Richardson, Mark Scott, Lauren Shaw, Carmen Simoni, Krishan Sood, Eleanor Toone, Elliot Waldie, Amelia Wilson, Nicola Wilson, Ellie Wise.

ACT ONE

- 1 In a period of crisis and confusion Pope Innocent III proclaims the Fourth Crusade
- 2 Cologne 1212 - German children respond to the corruption and failure of the Fourth Crusade
- 3 In the Duchy of Suabia - Principles are put into practice
- 4 The Alps - Difficulties are overcome
- 5 Rome - An Infallible decision
- 6 Northern Italy - The ends and the means
- 7 Genoa - An Emergency Meeting of the Senate
- 8 Outside Genoa - The Senators welcome the Children

INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES

(refreshments will be served in the Church Rooms opposite)

ACT TWO

- 9 Outside Genoa - The Question of Survival
- 10 Genoa - The Law of Supply and Demand
- 11 South of Pisa - The Question of Tactics
- 12 Bougie, Algeria - Money Talks
- 13 Rome - Pope Innocent III discovers the source of new recruits
- 14 Near Pisa - The Good Samaritan
- 15 Cairo - The Crusade reaches its conclusion
- 16 Cologne - A rumour of no consequence

Directed by	Ursula Wright
Assisted by	Joan Walding, Michelle White
Musical Director	Kay Warcaba
Singing Coach	Debbie Holmes
Costume Design	Rowan McAllister
Stage Manager	Alyce Biddle
Assistant stage manager	Alicia Brown
Lighting Design	The Works
Lighting Desk	Liam O'Leary
Sound Desk	Tim Page
Wardrobe Mistress	Deirdre Conroy
Assisted by	Dee Townsend
Costumes	Deirdre Conroy, Alison Dunmore, Dorothy Granger, Masque Costumes
Box Office	Rosemary Revell, Mary Greaves
Poster Design	Rowan McAllister
Front of House and refreshments	Masque Youth Theatre parents and members

We gratefully acknowledge the help and support of the following individuals and organisations who have made props, donated fabric, lent additional staging and given us their time and expertise:

Northgate School
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 Rob Kendall
 Sheila Morgan
 Liz York
 Nicola Wilson
 Sue Wilson
 Brian Wright