

**THE JULIA PASCAL
ARCHIVE**

COMPILED BY GARY BRANNAN

**THE BORTHWICK INSTITUTE FOR ARCHIVES THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK
HESLINGTON YORK YO10 5DD**

2005

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INTRODUCTION

Born in Manchester in 1949, Julia Pascal initially became an actress at such institutions as the Traverse Theatre, Apollo Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company. A spell at the National Theatre in 1978 gave her the opportunity to break down the commonly held convention of male only directors to reach the milestone of becoming the first woman to direct a play at the National in 1978, putting on an adaptation of Dorothy Parker's *Men Seldom Make Passes*. Never one to avoid the issues, Pascal exposed the unfavourable climate for women directors in an expose to the press, prompting an angry response from director Trevor Nunn.¹ Forming the Pascal Theatre Company gave Pascal the opportunity to take herself in her own direction and instead of taking the 'accepted' course of producing plays centred around 'women's issues', the Company chose to put on hard-hitting plays about issues such as Northern Ireland (an example being Seamus Finnegan's *Soldiers*).

Pascal's first forays into theatrical writing were 1984's *Special Category* and 1985's *Far Above Rubies*, staged at the Drill Hall. However, it was 1990's *Theresa* which brought Pascal one her first brushes with controversy. *Theresa* was prompted by a 1989 news article about a Viennese Jew, Theresa Steiner. Steiner was resident on Guernsey during the German invasion and subsequent occupation of 1940. Although the German occupation of the Channel Islands is often presented in the terms of brutal but ultimately uneasy truce between the remaining Islanders and the Occupiers, Pascal highlights the case of Steiner, who was betrayed to the Nazis by Guernsey's Bailiff. Haunted by the story, Pascal attempted to find more but found instead a wall of silence. Eventually she was allowed to consult documents at the Museum of Occupation on Guernsey – as Pascal puts it "Something happens to you when the words pass through your head to your hand"² and the play became a unswerving critique of the fine line between co-operation and collaboration, illustrated through the tragic story of Theresa. The play itself caused such furore that the play was banned on Guernsey. However Islanders have been moved by the fundamental truth of the play – as the grandson of the wartime Bailiff of Guernsey told Pascal, "when the war ended, the British authorities didn't know whether to hang my grandfather or to knight him."³ *Theresa* became the first in Pascal's landmark *Holocaust Trilogy*.

The second part - 1991's *A Dead Woman on Holiday* - was in part an extension of many of the themes in *Theresa*. As Pascal put it, she wanted to examine "the next generation: people who weren't in the firing line".⁴ Set in 1945, the play focuses upon the

¹ <<http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>> (accessed 19/08/05).

² <<http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>>.

³ <http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>. He was in fact knighted by the Queen Mother in 1945.

⁴ <<http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>>.

Nuremberg trials, and in particular the dilemma faced by a French-Jewish interpreter – specifically the issue of love in a world that has lost its innocence – “If you’ve known the Holocaust, you can’t accept the world as it’s given to you. I wanted to look at that process from a woman’s point of view: a woman who is free, who works, who travels. To a certain extent, that’s me.”⁵

The final part of the trilogy is 1992’s *The Dybbuk*, based upon the work by Solomon Ansky. The play is cemented in Jewish legend and once again was borne from the experience of researching and writing *Theresa*. During a performance on tour in Germany, Pascal noted that it seemed “there were nothing but ghosts. Hitler had won. So I used the Ansky play as a way into my personal *Dybbuks*. At the same time, I was very aware of a culture that was mine. There is very little Jewish theatre tradition, no Mystery Plays, only *The Dybbuk* and *Golem*”.⁶ The *Dybbuk* was written in only one draft, exploring Ansky’s play as the play within her play, through a French translation of the original Yiddish, finding an English with a more Latin root to liberate the theme’s mysticism.

Pascal’s next work was *L’Anée Zero (Year Zero, 1994)*, again, set in wartime France. The work was constructed from interviews with survivors of the German occupation of Maubeuge. The town had historically been a military stronghold, being situated on the frontier near Flanders. Years of conflict had made the town a strategic centre, as had its flourishing steel industry. In 1940, it lay right in the path of the German invasion, and the old town was almost completely obliterated. The play, introduced by a fairground-like announcer, was originally written in English, being translated into French by Alain Carpentier in 1994. The play has never been performed in its original English version.

1996 brought the educational play about drug abuse, *Heroine*, again performed in both France and London before Pascal moved on to write *St Joan (1997)*. Many works had by this point been written about the life and death of Joan of Arc – not least the version by George Bernard Shaw. Pascal however, set out to write her play as a response to the rise of the far Right in France and its subsequent use of St Joan as a nationalist icon. The play centres around a Black, Jewish Londoner who dreams she is Joan then and now, with the culmination of the play being based around a real life event where a young Moroccan was thrown in the Seine and drowned as Le Front National marched around the Paris statue of Joan – here, Joan wills the statue to come to life and save the man, illustrating the Jewish saying ‘If you save one life, you save a nation’.⁷

After writing *The Yiddish Queen Lear* in 1999, Pascal moved to examine post war Jewish history in *London Continental (2000)*. Set at the end of the Second World War, the play features three Irish-Jewish brothers and their dilemma over supporting the establishment of a Jewish nation state. Set in Dublin, London and Jerusalem, the work

⁵ Julia Pascal at <<http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>>

⁶ <http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>

⁷ JP 1/8/1/1: covering notes to *St Joan*, Julia Pascal Archive, Borthwick Institute for Archives (York)

asks questions about identity and loyalty in a changing world for the Jewish faith.⁸ Pascal further developed the idea with 2003's *King David Hotel*.

Woman on the Moon again continued to extrapolate many of the themes in Pascals' work, namely the experience of the Jews in the Holocaust. Set in the concentration camp of Dora-Mittelbrau, and simultaneously in the US in 1969 the work examines a basic dichotomy of the post-war period -namely, how Nazi scientists like Werner Von Braun managed to escape trial for their crimes and settle in the US or the Soviet Union; the work they undertook in the war leading to the space race and paradoxically a new, Cold War. Camp Dora was established in 1943 for the production of the new V2 rockets - 60,000 people from over 40 countries were deported to the camp; over 20,000 of these died.⁹ The play is based upon interviews conducted with Dora survivors, and in a powerful scene a woman journalist, Dora, confronts an unrepentant Von Braun with the truth of what happened.

*The Golem*¹⁰ took up again, the root of Jewish legend as Pascal had in 1992's *The Dybbuk*, presented here as a play for children. The Yiddish tale of the Golem has echoed down the ages in many different variants - a creature in the image of man made from clay and incantations by a Rabbi to protect his community from a pogrom; the creation eventually escapes the control of its creator and wreaks havoc on the town. It is not hard to see the *The Golem* in the roots of such tales as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. In Pascal's version, the religion of the people of the village ('The people with yellow patches') is clear to those with a sense of history - the yellow patch being an enforced identifier of Jewishness since the Middle Ages - but here the work also draws out more general themes of exclusion and self defence. Pascal also introduces new elements to the tale, namely the role of the grandmother - the grandmother cannot marry and her children cannot be born until they learn how to defend themselves, representing the past that all Jews carry with them. The message of the work, that 'each of us carries our own Golem inside' and the need to express its wildness with care¹¹ resonates with then-current fears about the future of Israel.

Crossing Jerusalem (2003-4) was described by Pascal as 'the hardest play I ever wrote'.¹² Set over 24 hours of the life of a Jewish family in March 2002, the play follows the family as they cross Jerusalem to celebrate a birthday at a restaurant. As the family meet both Christian Arabs and Muslim Palestinians, Pascal illustrates the difficulties faced by all sides as they attempt to live their life amongst the regular suicide bombings and deaths that characterise modern Jerusalem. Each member of the family brings their own perspective to the table - from the matriarchal Varda and conscience-ridden son

⁸ JP 1/6/2/1: script and promotional flyer, Julia Pascal Archive, BIA

⁹ JP 1/10/1/1: leaflet from Dora-Mittelbrau commemorative exhibition, 1995, Julia Pascal Archive, BIA.

¹⁰ 'Golem' meaning an unformed, shapeless thing.

¹¹ JP 1/4/3/1: full script with introduction, September 2002, Julia Pascal Archive, BIA.

¹² <http://www.jewish-theatre.com/visitor/article_display.aspx?articleID=1305> (accessed 19/08/05).

Gideon; to Varda's daughter-in-law Yael, representing a section of Israeli society that wishes to get on with life amongst the chaos. As Pascal commented to the EAJC European Theatre Forum in Prague (2003) "Trying to address the balance of mistrust and hatred between Israelis and Arabs made me push the characters to their limits and reach some hard conclusions. I was glad that audiences came out of the performances talking avidly and with many preconceptions broken. A Palestinian family came up after one performance to tell me this should be seen in Israel and in Palestine. A greater compliment I could not have".¹³

Julia Pascal continues to write challenging works, unafraid of convention, political situation or societal pressures. She still writes for those who she describes as being 'on the fringes'¹⁴ writing thought-provoking pieces that broaden our perceptions of both the past and the world around us.

¹³ <http://www.jewish-theatre.com/visitor/article_display.aspx?articleID=1305>.

¹⁴ <<http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>>.

THE ARCHIVES

The manuscripts remained in the possession of Julia Pascal until 2004, when they were purchased through a grant from the Samuel Storey Charitable Trust. At present, only the manuscripts relating to productions (JP 1) have been deposited. All titles, dates and draft status are taken from the cover of the script – in some cases, this may have changed before performance, and every effort has been made to indicate when this has occurred.

Although there are no Conservation problems, due to their sensitive nature all items marked <*> will need consultation with an Archivist before issue.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

All users will be asked to sign a Data Protection form before ordering any archive material. Some material in the Archive is of a particularly sensitive nature - these items are marked <*>, and so will need to be consulted by an archivist before issue. There are no conservation problems.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

JP 1/8/1/1: covering notes to St Joan, Julia Pascal Collection, Borthwick Institute for Archives (York)

JP 1/6/2/1: script and promotional flyer, Julia Pascal Collection, BIA

JP 1/10/1/1: leaflet from Dora-Mittelbrau commemorative exhibition, 1995, Julia Pascal Collection, BIA

JP 1/4/3/1: full script with introduction, September 2002, Julia Pascal Collection, BIA

<<http://www.pfd.co.uk/clients/pascalj/h-sdi.html>> (accessed 19/08/05)

<<http://www.pascal-theatre.com/pascalarticle.htm>> (accessed 19/08/05)

<http://www.jewish-theatre.com/visitor/article_display.aspx?articleID=1305> (accessed 19/08/05)

PRODUCTION CHRONOLOGY

DATE	PRODUCTION	STATUS	IN ARCHIVE
1978	Men Seldom Make Passes	Adaptation	No
1982	Charlotte and Jane	TV drama	No
1984	Special Category	Unperformed Play	Yes
1984	Far Above Rubies	Play	No
1985	Prima Balleria Assoluta	Prose	No
1990	Theresa	Play	Yes
1991	A Dead Woman on Holiday	Play	Yes
1992	The Dybbuk	Play	Yes
1996	L'Aneē Zero (Year Zero)	Play	Yes
1996/97	Heroine	Play	No
1996/97	The Road to Paradise	Radio Play	No
1997	St Joan	Play	Yes
1999	The Yiddish Queen Lear	Play	Yes
2000	London Continental	Play	Yes
2000	Charlotte Bronte Goes to Europe	Adaptation	No
2001	Woman on the Moon	Play	Yes
2002	The Golem	Play	Yes
2003	King David Hotel	Play	Yes
2003/4	Crossing Jerusalem	Play	Yes

JP	THE JULIA PASCAL ARCHIVE	1984 -2004
JP 1	PRODUCTIONS	1984-2004
<u>JP 1/1</u>	<u>CROSSING JERUSALEM</u>	<u>2001 – 2004</u>
JP 1/1/4	PRODUCTION INFORMATION	
JP 1/1/1	DEVELOPMENT NOTES	
JP 1/1/1/1	Handwritten development notes detailing initial ideas, with script notes	c. 2002
JP 1/1/1/2	Script notes on early drafts	January 2003
JP 1/1/2	DRAFTS	
JP 1/1/2/1	5th draft	September 2001
JP 1/1/2/2	5th Draft, 6th working	September 2002
JP 1/1/2/3	6th draft with annotation by JP	September 2002
JP 1/1/2/4	6th draft – a collection of assorted scenes, marked as being a result of a script meeting.	November 2002
JP 1/1/2/5	6th draft with annotation by JP	c. late 2002
JP 1/1/2/6	6th draft	late 2002
JP 1/1/2/7	Later copy of 6th draft	late 2002
JP1/1/2/8	8th draft with annotation and notes by JP	November 2002
JP 1/1/2/9	9th draft with annotation by JP	late 2002 – early 2003
JP 1/1/2/10	10th draft with annotation by JP	late 2002 – early 2003
JP 1/1/2/11	11th draft	2003
JP 1/1/2/12	Draft French translation by Alain Franck	2004
JP 1/1/2/13	Act 2, scene 4 - loose pages from an unidentified version	c. 2003
JP 1/1/3	REHEARSAL SCRIPTS	
JP 1/1/3/1	Final draft used as Rehearsal script for performances between 10th February - 12th April 2004. Script indicates that there are changes from this version in the 2003 published version	2004

JP 1/1/4	PRODUCTION INFORMATION	
JP 1/1/4/1	Casting notes on potential cast members and records of the audition process for the performances at the Tricycle theatre, 2003 <*>	December 2002 - January 2003
JP 1/1/4/2	Promotional listings guide for performances at Tricycle theatre, including details on <i>Crossing Jerusalem</i>	2003
<u>JP 1/2</u>	<u>A DEAD WOMAN ON HOLIDAY</u> SECOND PART OF HOLOCAUST TRILOGY	<u>1991</u>
JP 1/2/1	DRAFTS	
JP 1/2/1/1	'First and only draft' - with minor annotation by JP	September 1991
JP 1/2/1/2	'First and only draft' copy of above but without annotation	September 1991
<u>JP 1/3</u>	<u>THE DYBBUK</u> THIRD PART OF HOLOCAUST TRILOGY, BASED ON PLAY BY SOLOMON ANSKI	<u>1992</u>
JP 1/3/1	SCRIPTS	
JP 1/3/1/1	Photocopied script with minor annotation	June 1992
JP 1/3/1/2	Second copy of June 1992 script	June 1992
<u>JP 1/4</u>	<u>THE GOLEM</u>	<u>2002-2003</u>
JP 1/4/1	DRAFTS	
JP 1/4/1/1	Draft with deletions and annotation	September 2002

JP 1/4/2	REHEARSAL SCRIPTS	
JP 1/4/2/1	Script - used for a reading / semi-staged version performed at the University of York	2002
JP 1/4/3	PERFORMANCE SCRIPTS	
JP 1/4/3/1	Full script with introduction, signed copy	September 2002
JP 1/4/3/2	Script with show reports, lighting notes and contact sheets from touring version <*>	September - December 2002
JP 1/4/4	REVIEWS	
JP 1/4/4/1	Reviews and listings	September - October 2002
JP 1/4/5	PUBLISHED VERSIONS	
JP 1/4/5/1	Proofs for published versions	2003
<u>JP 1/5</u>	<u>KING DAVID HOTEL</u> FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FROM 'LONDON CONTINENTAL'	<u>2001-2003</u>
JP 1/5/1	SCRIPTS	
JP 1/5/1/1	Early version Script	February 2001 September 2003
- 11		
JP 1/5/1/2		
JP 1/5/1/3	Script	2003

<u>JP 1/6</u>	<u>LONDON CONTINENTAL</u> LATER BECAME 'KING DAVID HOTEL'	<u>2000</u>
JP 1/6/1	DRAFTS	
JP 1/6/1/1	First draft	c. 2000
JP 1/6/2	SCRIPTS	
JP 1/6/2/1	Script and promotional flyer used to advertise Autumn tour 2000	October 2000
<u>JP 1/7</u>	<u>SPECIAL CATEGORY</u>	<u>1984</u>
JP 1/7/1	DRAFTS	
JP 1/7/1/1	First draft of an unperformed work marked as being publicly read in 1984 by the Women's Theatre Group	May 1984
<u>JP 1/8</u>	<u>ST. JOAN</u>	<u>1995-1996</u>
JP 1/8/1	DRAFTS	
JP 1/8/1/1	First draft	October 1995
JP 1/8/1/2	Second draft	c. 1995/1996
JP 1/8/1/3	Final draft with additions and amendments in correction fluid	November 1996
JP 1/8/1/4	Final draft with amendments and annotation	November 1996

