CAST Oleksandr: Oleksandr Taras: Vova Luka:Tolik

Iurii: Ilya Arben: Vadiuk Marius: Artyom

Marieke: Svitla Blerta: Masha Fjolla: Tanja

Jana: Darya Three Bigots: Tanja, Natasha, Katya

3 Escapers Running: Artyom/Tolik/Vova

2 Escapers Swimming: Darya, Masha (w/Vova, Ilya, Oleksandr, Tolik)

PROPERTIES 4 BENCHES (2 stage right and left, respectively) + 1 CHAIR STAGE RIGHT

COSTUMES NEUTRAL BLACK CLOTHING COVERING FULL BODY, BLACK SHOES

**STONE 1** UNIVERSE

2 boys stand on top of 2 boys, peering over a wall made up of an “orchestra”. On the other side of the wall, a girl lies, sunning herself. In the first part of the scene we view it from the perspective of the girl. The 2 boys, Taras and Oleksandr, lean precariously over the top of the wall, trying to chat up the girl, Jana. Jana talks to Taras even though irked by the boys’ spying.

In the second part of the scene we see things from the boys’ point of view; Jana disappears behind the orchestra wall (which turns to face upstage). The boys argue amongst themselves as to the best course of action. Oleksandr wants to take them by force; Luka will do whatever he says, while Taras and Iurii disagree. Taras and Oleksandr come to the brink of a fight. Oleksandr storms off, taking Iurii and Luka with him. Taras calls for Jana.

**TRANSITION 1**

Clap: signal for orchestra-wall members to release; all actors sit on the sides of the stage. Marieke moves downstage centre in preparation for the next scene.

**STONE 2** BERLIN

Marieke appears and speaks directly to the audience, saying the words of a letter she has written to her boyfriend, Marius. He escaped to the western side of the demilitarised zone while the new “wall” was being erected overnight. She wonders why he decided to leave in the chaos of the night; she believes her society will be a fair and equal one, with work for all. Did he really love her?

As she speaks we see three boys, running across No Man’s Land, in slow motion. One is shot, dies; the other two continue, and one more is killed. One runner survives; he passes Marieke, continues, then freezes.

Two women approach the river, trying not to be seen. They jump in amidst the moving current and begin to swim. One swims forward, held by the others. She reaches the other side, relieved, exhausted. She waits. The water recedes from her. Her friend has disappeared amidst the current.

Marieke has frozen, silent. Marius, the surviving runner, turns to her as she turns away, on the other side of the barrier of the walls and the river. He shouts her name. He loves her. He can’t return. The water forms a barrier in front of him, gently undulating. He shouts that he believes they will find a way. He moves away.

**TRANSITION 2**

Marius’s final phrase – signal for actors on stage right and left to rise and become (silent) protestors for the following scene.

Oleksandr rises upstage centre (standing on a chair), leading the protest (voice on/off effect: speaking positive statements, silent for all negative statements).

Family (Arben, Fjolla and Blerta) gather at offstage right amidst the audience, slowly start to walk closer to the stage.

Luka: direct address to audience from downstage centre/amidst the audience members.

**STONE 3** LABYRINTH

The protestors mob around Oleksandr. Jana and Taras are distinguishable at stage right from the crowd; they observe without participating. Appearing from offstage right we see Arben and Fjolla, making their way with their child, aiming to get past Luka and the protestors. They are confused, tired and lost. Behind the crowd Oleksandr rises, standing on the backs of two henchmen. Arben and his family stop uneasily, as Taras and Jana watch their old friend warily from a distance. Luka hands out imaginary pamphlets and addresses the audience fervently, with wild eyes. The protestors cheer Oleksandr as he talks about information on the internet and the conspiracy against the great and pure people of the nation. The crowd members shout their approval, egging each other on. Arben and Fjolla, who do not speak the language, are frozen in fear as Oleksandr continues, mute. Luka recognises that they are foreigners. He attacks the family, shouting; protest members freeze and everyone turns, eyeing the family as prey. Taras and Jana break up the moment by intervening. They plead with Luka, they don’t recognise their old friend like this. The family has a few seconds to slip away. When Luka sees they have disappeared, he understands this as a blow to his leader. He storms off.

**TRANSITION 3**

As Luka moves upstage, Oleksandr dismounts. Protestors become stones, scattered across the space.

At the same time, 3 women break away from the stone transition and approach downstage centre, preparing for direct address to the audience.

**STONE 4** NAZARETH

Three women, inspired by Oleksandr’s speech, turn to the audience to find a new victim. Carrying the energy from the protest scene, each of them attacks the foreigners, whom they believe should be punished: tickled to death, poked to death, suffocated with cake. They begin to argue amongst themselves about the best punishment; the argument becomes more heated. One pushes the other, and she slaps another in the face, in a way that shows she’s not ever done it before. The second slaps back. The third slaps them both. One woman takes another in a headlock; the third takes her in a headlock; after grunting and cursing, they freeze, locked in static combat.

The family moves to a spot on stage, shivering in the night. Fjolla sings a lullaby to Blerta as Arben slowly looks around, assessing the location. Through silent communication he and Fjolla begin to move the stones so that they form three walls around Blerta, with the open end facing the audience. Arben steps forward and speaks to the audience. He is not naïve; he knows these walls can come down at any time, and that someday they will have to move. A house is a kind of dream of safety. And a dream can end at any time.

**TRANSITION 4**

A stone, or series of stones, thrown in the water. Recited by actors: The Wings (Lena Kostenko). As they speak, the actors slowly form a V (with the top point downstage) with Arben, Fjolla and Blerta at the top of the V. The three 3 women begin the poem, coming out of their frozen combat pose.

It's true. Those who have wings don't need the ground.   
If there is no land, there will be sky. Recited by 3 women  
  
If there is no field, there will be freedom.  
If there is no couple, there will be clouds.

This is the truth of the birds...  
But what about the human? And what about him?  
  
He lives on the ground, yet doesn't fly.  
But he has wings. Yes, he has the wings! Recited by the stones, rising   
  
Those wings are not from fuzz and feathers,  
But from the truth, honor and trust  
  
Somebody has wings of fidelity in love  
Somebody -- from eternal aspirations  
  
Others fly with sincerity in work  
And others with generous care Recited by Arben and Fjolla  
  
There are wings of songs or hope  
Wings of poetry and dreams  
  
It seems that the humans don't fly  
But they have the wings. They have the wings. Recited by the child (Blerta)

Oleksandr comes through the middle of the V; V splits & opens into two walls, stage right and left. Oleksandr stands centre, leading into the following scene.

**STONE 5** THE DEAD

Oleksandr appears, surrounded by protestors. He calls them to action; nothing happens. He shouts at them continually, to no response. Then he moves his hand across his body, giving the up-and-down motion of a rapid-fire machine gun. The first line of protesters fall. He stares at them. Then he turns his back on the dead and kills the second “wall”. As he does this the first wall has risen back to their feet. Oleksandr turns back and starts at the wall of risen dead. He shoots them again, turns, shoot the second wall again. This happens three times, as Oleksandr fires in increasing desperation and anger. Silence. Oleksandr feels the shock of the situation; he seems to hear something. Whispers. Slowly, differently this time, the dead rise again; they circle and engulf Oleksandr. They whisper

The Dead Speak when the Living Cannot

The Perished Are Always Present

A Crime is a Crime Forever

A Good Deed Is a Stone in the Water

You Can Erase Memory

But Not the Truth

And Not the Dead

You Cannot Vanquish Us

**TRANSITION 5**

Led by one voice, the dead sing in call-and-response, moving all together to stage edge:

If you throw a brick at me

I will build, I will build

A mansion of dreams

If a stone strikes me

My blood flows, my blood flows

A river of dreams

If you keep me out

I will come, I will come

Into your dreams

If you build a prison

I will break it, I will break it

With my dreams

(Chorus)

no wall lasts forever

no wall lasts forever

we will meet amidst the rubble

we will meet amidst the rubble

HUMMING

**STONE 6** HADRIAN

Jana and Taras poke around in the ruins of Hadrian’s wall. Jana has come to Scotland to study English; she tortures Taras with phrases he doesn’t understand. Taras has come to Ireland to study Celtic music and play with musicians. Taras hops from one side of the crumbled wall with ease, mocking the idea of national boundaries and permanent borders. Bounding between the stones, Taras jokes about being in two countries at the same time; anything to get Jana to laugh. From somewhere there sounds a call: “Marieke!” and reply, “Marius!” Taras and Jana do not react; Jana has something to discuss with Taras. They move to a free spot in front of the ruins.

They sit down in front of the stones in each other’s arms. She tells him she is returning. He says he wants to stay. She is furious. She tries to leave; he pulls her back. She tries to leave again; he pulls her back. The Exit Dance begins with the young couple; the space fills with couples (stones, rising) doing the Dance, separating, reconciling, again and again.

Over the dancing we hear the old man shout: Marieke! He moves through the dancers anxiously, looking for her. She appears on the other side, disoriented. She calls his name: Marius! Finally they meet in the midst of the forest of dancing couples with relief. It’s so noisy at the fair! But they won’t lose each other now, not after everything they’ve been through to get here, the walls they’ve climbed over, or under, or ignored. She takes his hand and they begin to dance, slowly. The other couples transition to dancing together as well (a slower dance). At a moment all freeze in positions of joy.

The actors come forward and bow to the audience. They are joined by the animateur and his assistant. All bow.

END