

# Director's Notes

## MAIN CHARACTERS

**The Shepherds – ideally (but not essentially) all have solo singing parts, leading several of the songs.**

Old Jacob	The grandfather of the group. Keeps the other shepherds in order.
David	The youngest shepherd. Plays a pipe. Very much wants the Messiah to be a warrior king.
Peter	The joker of the group. An optimist. Up for anything.
Saul	A funny mixture. Star gazer. Cynical about the coming of the Messiah, yet would like the prophecy to come true.
Daniel	A worrier, fearful of everything – wolves, angels, the dark.

## OTHER PARTS

Mary & Joseph	Non-speaking parts, but they sing a song on their own.
Angels (speaking)	The Angels' Message can be delivered by one child, or several.
Angels (non-speaking)	Any number.
Sheep	Any number.
Stars	Any number. They dance to the music of Millions of Stars, or other suitable music.
Extra Shepherds	Can join in the first scene.

## MUSICIANS

Suggestions are given for simple percussion parts to several of the songs.

## STAGING SUGGESTIONS

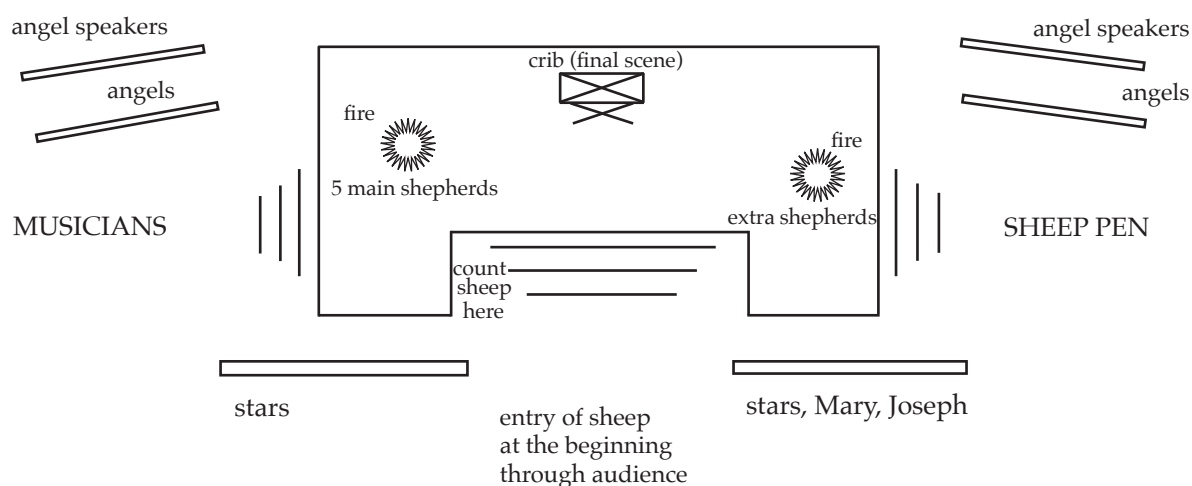
**Up Stage** (i.e. at the back) and/or to sides, benches for angels/sheep/stars.

**Stage Right** fire for the main shepherds.

**Stage Left** fire for the extra shepherds (if any).

**Props** firewood for shepherds to collect (unless mime is preferred)  
 cloaks for one or two of the shepherds (for 'Hail To The Saviour')  
 sheepskin-type fleece, and pipe (or recorder) for David  
 shepherd's crook for Jacob (if available)  
 crib (offstage, for the nativity scene)  
 stool(s) for Mary/Joseph if required.

### Original Production Stage Set



# Director's Overview

Daniel, a shepherd, is trying to count his sheep without much success. His fellow shepherd, Jacob, tries to persuade him that it is not worth the effort.

## SONG - COUNTING SHEEP

⦿ Track 1 / 12

It is a cold night and the shepherds are trying to keep warm by the fire. David the young shepherd boy is practising playing his pipe.

## SONG - MY HANDS ARE FREEZING

⦿ Track 2 / 13

The shepherds discuss the Messiah, the mighty King whose arrival they have long been waiting for. David says he will play his pipe for the King when he comes.

## SONG - HAIL TO THE SAVIOUR

⦿ Track 3 / 14

Shepherd Saul doesn't think that the Messiah-King will ever come, but Jacob is sure that he will.

## SONG - I'M WAITING

⦿ Track 4 / 15

Jacob asks David if he would still play for the King if he wasn't as grand as they expected - if he was a poor king. David can't imagine a king ever being poor. He says he would only play for the King of kings.

## SONG - I'M NOT GOING TO PLAY

⦿ Track 5 / 16

The shepherds lie down to rest after their busy day and gaze up at all the stars which they think are shining very brightly that night.

## SONG - MILLIONS OF STARS

⦿ Track 6 / 17

While the shepherds sleep, angels arrive with important news for them.

## SONG - UP IN THE SKY

⦿ Track 7 / 18

The shepherds awake and are startled by the presence of the angels but then they are amazed at what the angels have come to tell them.

## SONG - UP IN THE SKY (reprise)

⦿ Track 8 / 18

Jacob, Peter and the other shepherds run to find the stable where the Messiah has been born, but David does not think that it is a suitable place for a king.

## SONG - HE'S SO VERY SMALL

⦿ Track 9 / 19

David enters the stable and when he sees the baby he realises he has been wrong. He kneels before the Raggedy King, aware that he has no gift for Him.

## SONG - RAGGEDY KING

⦿ Track 10 / 20

Jacob points out to David that he does have a gift for the King. At first David doesn't understand, but then he remembers that he can play for the Messiah.

## SONG - I AM GOING TO PLAY

⦿ Track 11 / 16

## SONG - HAIL TO THE SAVIOUR

⦿ Track 3 / 14

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# THE RAGGEDY KING

by Veronica Clark

[SHEPHERDS enter leading SHEEP, who bleat loudly! SHEEP are herded into the pen.]

SHEPHERDS (*ad lib*) Keep them together!  
Watch out - they're wandering off!  
Come here you! Easy now.  
Don't rush them. Take it slowly.

[DANIEL (*harassed*) tries to count the sheep as they enter the pen.]

## COUNTING SHEEP

( ☉ Track 1 / 12 )

All ONE AND TWO AND THREE AND FOUR.  
Daniel HEY, KEEP STILL! NOW I'M NOT SURE.  
All FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, TEN,  
Daniel I'VE LOST COUNT. LET'S START AGAIN.

DANIEL turns to count SHEEP, already in the pen.

All ONE AND TWO AND THREE AND FOUR.  
Daniel ONE'S GOT OUT. I'M STILL NOT SURE.  
All FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, TEN.  
Daniel I'VE LOST COUNT. LET'S START AGAIN.

All SEVENTEEN, EIGHTEEN, NINETEEN, TWENTY.  
Daniel (*spoken*) How many now?  
All (*firmly*) **We've got plenty!**

Jacob LAST ONE'S IN, NOW SHUT THE GATE.  
SETTLE DOWN, IT'S GETTING LATE.  
ALL OUR SHEEP ARE SAFE AND SOUND.  
LIGHT THE FIRE AND GATHER ROUND.

JACOB tries to persuade DANIEL to stop counting but he keeps going.

Daniel ONE AND TWO AND THREE AND FOUR,  
HEY, KEEP STILL! NOW I'M NOT SURE.  
FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, TEN.  
I'VE LOST COUNT. I'LL START AGAIN.  
(*spoken*) OH NO! I'LL START AGAIN.

JACOB

(to DANIEL) Oh no you don't! The sheep are in the pen. Let's get this fire going.

*[During the song, SHEPHERDS collect wood and build a fire. DAVID sits to one side and plays his pipe. PETER is on the other side, hopping about, trying to keep warm. As he sings his solo verses in the next song, the SHEPHERDS are still working to collect wood and build the fire. Having 'lit' the fire, SHEPHERDS stand and watch him. One by one they join in the actions. They join in with the singing on the repeat. The rest of the children may join in with actions all the way through.]*

## MY HANDS ARE FREEZING

( © Track 2 / 13 )

Peter

MY HANDS ARE FREEZING

*(all clapping rhythm)*

MY HANDS ARE FREEZING.

*(all clapping rhythm)*

MY FEET ARE FROZEN.

*(all stamping rhythm)*

MY FEET ARE FROZEN.

*(all stamping rhythm)*

MY TEETH ARE CHATTERING.

*(all clicking teeth to rhythm)*

MY TEETH ARE CHATTERING.

*(all clicking teeth to rhythm)*

*(repeat with everyone singing)*

PETER

*(with a big grin)* That's better. I'm warm right through.

JACOB

*(grumpily)* You'd be even warmer if you'd helped us make the fire.

DANIEL

*(worried)* Are the sheep all right? They're very restless.

JACOB

*(teasing)* There may be a wolf about. Come to the fire.

*[SHEPHERDS arrange themselves around the fire.  
DANIEL continues to look around nervously for a while.]*

PETER

Tell us a story, Jacob. The one about the Messiah.

SAUL

*(in a bored voice)* Not that again. I've heard it about a hundred times!

JACOB

*(grandly)* The king will be a mighty king.

ALL

A mighty king!

JACOB

*(standing proud, showing arm muscles)* He will be brave and strong.