

Children of Eden Songs

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Children of Eden - Texture and Musical Elements

Question:

I was wondering if you could tell me where to get some information about the music from CHILDREN OF EDEN. We are studying texture and musical elements in our Introduction to Music class and I have an assignment to write about the pieces in this musical. May be you could write some of your influences and about the different aspects of your pieces.

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Thank you for your Email. I don't know of anywhere where you could get specific information about the music, as I don't know that I have done any interviews specifically dealing with the composing of the show.

Briefly, I can tell you a few things: I tried to keep the style of the music slightly different and appropriate for the three sections of the show. Thus, the music for the Eden section is very simple and innocent chordally, mostly major key, and scored with an emphasis on child-like mallet-sounding instruments. In "The Naming", the most naive of all the songs, I used additional instruments played by cast members which are from the little xylophones invented by Carl Orff for school children; this sound returns, appropriately enough, during "The Return of the Animals." The music for the Snake's song, "In Pursuit of Excellence", is the most sophisticated and urbane in terms of its chords and style, to contrast the Snake's worldliness with the innocence of the other denizens of Eden.

In the second half of the first act, the "Wasteland" section, the music uses guitars and other folk elements more, to suggest the idea of a homespun self-made life. The second act, which takes place several thousand years later during the Noah story, is more pop and contemporary in style. (The opening of the second act, "Generations", which is about the proliferation of mankind, uses a lot of so-called "world music" instruments to suggest the development of different races and cultures.) I hope this information will be helpful for your report, and I thank you again for writing.

Hope your production of CHILDREN OF EDEN goes wonderfully. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

Children of Eden: The Naming of the Naming

[Question missing]

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Sorry to send you scurrying to your dictionary. They're all contained in my big Random House dictionary (shame on you, Webster's.) I found the names originally by looking up "animals" in my Roget's Thesaurus, going to the list they included, and finding names I liked the sound of. (Yes, it was really fun to write.) So that you don't have to chase around trying to find a Random House Dictionary: an "amphiuma" is "an aquatic, eel-like salamander", an "avadavat" is a "waxbill" bird, and an "agama" is a brightly-colored lizard. The term "star-nosed" refers to the star-nosed mole, a strange and adorable little creature if there ever was one. Best, Stephen

Lyric for the Expulsion

Question:

I wanted to ask you about the meaning of one lyric in the musical CHILDREN OF EDEN so that I might be able to better understand it in my performance. The Lyrics in the song: And at this place/I set my sword/Now and forever will it burn! I will be most grateful!

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

That is derived from Genesis, 3:24 -- "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Hope you have a great experience doing the show. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

Children of Eden: Which Songs Were Cut and Why?

Question:

I have noticed people asking a lot about songs that have been cut from Children of Eden. Which songs have been cut and WHY? I hope none of the songs on the Papermill recording have been cut. They carry the storyline.

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

I can understand the confusion. When CHILDREN OF EDEN was originally produced in London in 1991, there was a cast album made which included songs that were in the London show but are no longer in the current version. A couple of these, particularly the original version of "A World Without You" and a quartet for Noah's family called "Shipshape" get requested from time to time. (I have a copy of the original "World Without You", but not of "Shipshape.") The PaperMill recording represents the show in its current form, with one tiny exception (Father's brief statement to Eve "There are things a father knows a child does not" at the beginning of "The Naming" has been cut due to a rewrite.) But you're absolutely right; the songs as they exist on the American recording tell the story, and it would not be possible to cut any of them without damaging the show. Thanks for your question and I hope this answers it. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

Children of Eden at North Shore/Sailor of the Skies

Question:

A few weeks ago I saw CHILDREN OF EDEN at the North Shore Music Theater in Massachusetts with most of the Papermill cast. I was struck by the powerful message of parents losing children to the ADULT world of non-innocence. This was beautifully captured in the song THE HARDEST PART OF LOVE. As someone who has witnessed the "passing on" (into the adult world) of several children, this really struck home. The yearning for the lost, innocent children of your memory is truly heartbreaking. I was wondering if Mr Schwartz was able to see this production and if so what he thought of it??

Also, I was wondering if Mr Schwartz could address one of my other favorite songs from the show, SAILOR OF THE SKIES. I was wondering why this song was shortened from the London production? I loved listening to Frances Rufelle sing that song on my London Cast Recording, and missed the deleted lines. Also, any chance of the London Cast Recording being reissued? I know a lot of people on the web are looking for it!

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Thanks for your questions about the North Shore production of CHILDREN OF EDEN. I did have a chance to see the production, and I thought the cast was wonderful (as I did when most of them performed the show at the Paper Mill Playhouse.) But somewhat surprisingly to me, I didn't like the show as much in the round. I thought some of the big dance moments worked well, but I found that there were many

times, such as Eve's last speech in Act One or during "The Hardest Part of Love", when I wanted to be able to see the actors' faces throughout, and of course that's not possible in the round. So I felt the show didn't have quite the emotional impact I have seen in the past. Nevertheless, I thought it was an excellent production, and I have certainly been hearing glowing things from people such as yourself who saw it.

In answer to your question about "Sailor of the Skies": Changes to that song, as to many of the others, had to do with overall length of the show and the amount of weight we wanted to give certain moments and characters. While I liked the London version, I prefer the current one and particularly the incorporation of the "Stranger to the Rain" themes into it musically. I think it is unlikely that there will be a reissue of the London cast album, about which, to be honest, I have many reservations. I much prefer the currently available American premiere recording. But a decision to reissue has nothing to do with me and would be made by London Records.

I hope this answers your questions, and once again, I thank you for writing and for your enthusiasm for CHILDREN OF EDEN. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

World Without You from Children of Eden

Question:

Two questions about CoE. First of all, will the OLC CD ever be re-released commercially again? I have the cassette, and love that cast (Ken Page is magnificent), and wish I could own the CD of that recording.

Secondly, can you explain why you changed the tune and lyrics to WORLD WITHOUT YOU from London to the current version? I can see changing the lyrics, but I greatly preferred the tune to the London version of that song.

Answer from Michael Cole:

Dear CofEFan: In answer to your first question, I found this post by Stephen Schwartz in the archives: "I think it is unlikely that there will be a reissue of the London cast album, about which, to be honest, I have many reservations. I much prefer the currently available American premiere recording. But a decision to reissue has nothing to do with me and would be made by London Records." I'll post Stephen's response about World Without You when he has time to write it. Thanks for visiting the new forum! Michael Cole

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Dear CofE fan: The moment in the show changed with the increased involvement of Father, and it became much more of a musicalized scene, as opposed to a song. The wistful quality of the original tune no longer seemed to work in the scene (we originally tried it that way). But while I can't say that I prefer one over the other, I really did like the original and I'm glad it was recorded by John Barr on his CD, "A Small Affair". Thanks for your enthusiasm for the tune and for taking the time to write. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

World Without You

Question:

Was "World Without You" cut from the show?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

There is a confusion, because the London version of "World Without You" (which was a totally different song than the current one) was replaced. The original was a solo; the current one is mostly Adam's, but includes material for Father and Eve and is much more story-oriented. The confusion arises because they share a title. (The London version of "Lost in the Wilderness" is almost entirely different from the current one too.)

Children of Eden Song "Good"

Question:

I notice that on the COE double CD the song "GOOD" is not recorded. Was this because it was cut from the Papermill production or was it a decision based on the length of the recording? I only noticed because it was included in the score that MTI sent the director of the production that I had the happy privilege of being a part of. I also think that it's one of the most "fun" songs in the musical. Love your work and looking forward to future projects.

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

The song "Good" is not included on the CHILDREN OF EDEN recording because it has in fact been cut from the show. This is because I came to feel it was unnecessary and slowed the progress of the story through the Eden section of the show. It's not that I don't like the song, just that I think the show works better without it, and the current MTI version does not include it. Still, I'm glad you enjoyed performing it! Best, Stephen Schwartz

Children of Eden: London/Stranger to the Rain

Question:

I have been listening to Children of Eden the UK cast and I LOVE the arrangement of STRANGER TO THE RAIN. Can you tell me why on this recording the orchestrator wasn't David Cullen but John Cameron?

Also, I agree with what you said about that Brick Wall moment when you are writing a song. I have been having a problem with a relaxed wistful love song in the show I am writing at the moment and after three weeks of hacking away at it, the composer and I restructured the scene slightly and the book melted into a great duet moment and the song almost wrote itself!

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

The arrangement of "Stranger to the Rain" was done by John Cameron at the request of (some might say the insistence of) Frances Ruffelle. I'm glad you like it, but I'm afraid I don't share your enthusiasm. I vastly prefer the PaperMill cast recording, where the arrangement is much closer to my original intention. But you know, as the French say, "Chacun a son gout." Congratulations on solving the song you were blocked on. Best, Stephen Schwartz

Children Of Eden: The Return

Question:

Hi, Stephen. I've been listening to "The Return" more carefully lately, and would be interested in hearing how difficult it was to write. How did you decide how long to make it? I mean, I imagine you wrote it alone, with just you and your piano, with no animals doing their thing in front of you. So how did you decide on the length? Did you just aim for a certain number of minutes? As I listen to its structure, I'm struck by all the different sections of it, and how it eventually always comes back to a certain theme (I don't know what you might call a refrain in a song with no words, but that's what the recurring theme sounds like to me). So I wonder if you wrote it that way so that sections could be added or deleted or repeated depending on the size of the cast. I mean, what if all the animals have done their thing and

there's still more music; or what if there are more animals than music? Did you have to think of these things as you wrote it? As I think of the version we did last year, and the version at San Jose this year, I don't recall hearing any changes or adaptations to the music to make it fit with the number of animals, etc.; so maybe it's up to the choreographers to make what the animals do fit with the music as it is. I'd be interested to hear your comments on the song and it's structure as it relates to what the animals do.

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Dear Peggy: In this instance, I wrote the music, and then the choreographer (originally Matthew Bourne) worked to it. It was written so that the choreography could be a series of pas-de-deux for various animal couples. Often, dance music for a show is written under the supervision of the choreographer (and often not by the composer of the show, but by a dance arranger, as was the case with most of the dance music from PIPPIN). But "The Return of the Animals" was written as a piece of music first. Thanks, as always, for your interest. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

Stranger To The Rain: Frances Ruffelle

Question:

Did you write stranger to the rain specifically for Frances Ruffelle? what was it like writing a song just for her? what about her made you come up with her character and song?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Dear Amanda: Actually, I didn't write "Stranger to the Rain" for Frances. I had already written the song for the character of Yonah before I knew that Frances was going to play it in London. I did (and still do) think she had an almost ideal voice for the song, though to be perfectly honest, she and I had some differences of opinion about how the accompaniment should sound. Those differences are the reason I much prefer the recording of the song done by Kelly Rabke on the CHILDREN OF EDEN American cast album to Frances' recording on the London cast. But Frances did sing the song stunningly. For some reason I myself don't really understand, "Stranger to the Rain" is one of my two or three favorites of all the songs I have written, so I appreciate your asking about it. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

Children of Eden - Original London Cast Recording

Question:

Hi - I'm new to this forum, but enjoying reading the threads very much. I have a question which I'm sure must have been asked before - but I can't find using the search facility. Does anyone know where (or if) I can get hold of a copy of the original London cast recording of Children of Eden? I saw the show back in '91, and thought it was fantastic, and was so pleased when the CD was released. However, I foolishly leant my copy to a 'friend' and it was never returned - and so I'm without. I do have the Papermill version, but would really like to hear the original score again (I did see the thread in which Stephen Schwartz says it's unlikely that it will be re-released, and that he had reservations about it anyway, but would still like to get hold of a copy, if possible.) Any suggestions as to where I can obtain a copy will be gratefully received. Thanks!

Reply from another Forum visitor:

I too was looking for the original London cast recording. It's funny that that I was reading your post while I'm listening to it. Anyway I found it on Ebay but it's a tape and not CD. Best of luck.

Children of Eden: Reissue of London Cast Recording

[Question about it becoming available again]

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

I think it is unlikely that there will be a reissue of the London cast album, about which, to be honest, I have many reservations. I much prefer the currently available American premiere recording. But a decision to reissue has nothing to do with me and would be made by London Records. Stephen Schwartz

Lost in the Wilderness

Question:

Mr. Schwartz: Hi...I just have a quick question...I love the score to Children of Eden first of all, it is one of my favorite shows, and the CD is constantly in my cd player. I am most infatuated by the song, "Lost in the Wilderness" and especially as performed by Darius DeHaas. I was just wondering what key is the song in the version that Darius sings? Obviously I think there are some vocal ad libs in there as well, and optional notes, but I was looking in the Vocal Selections, and looking at the music and going by my ear, I think the version in the selections is a little lower than what I am hearing on the CD. Although I could be mistaken. But any insight on this, or an answer to this would be greatly appreciated. Thanks for your time. Cheers, The Balladeer

Reply from a Forum visitor:

I just finished playing Cain/Japeth in a production of CofE. The score for the show has it written lower. I am not sure what key it is in.

Reply from another visitor:

I too just finished playing Cain/Japeth. The score (and vocal selections book) has the song in G (starting in E). On the CD, it's performed a whole step higher in A. I had practiced it with the score and went to sing it with the CD and was quite surprised!!!

The Flood – influences

Question:

I was particularly struck by the marvelous effects you created in the orchestral description of the Flood. I heard a few echoes of Britten's charming chamber opera Noyes Fludde and was very curious to hear from you whether this was coincidence or deliberate?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

You are correct that there are definitely influences of Britten's Noyes Fludde, which I played at music camp as a teenager, as well as the Carl Orff schulwerk instruments and compositions. I appreciate your catching that, and of course for your taking the time to write. Best, Stephen Schwartz

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Also see the other CHILDREN OF EDEN sections of this Forum archive.

For show meaning, see also performer notes for comments about the meaning of the roles of Father, Japeth, etc.

Background information, cast album, sheet music, etc.

<http://www.musicalschwartz.com/children-of-eden.htm>

Complete history and meaning

“Defying Gravity: The Creative Career of Stephen Schwartz, from Godspell to Wicked.”

www.DefyingGravityTheBook.com

The book explores the genesis of *Children of Eden*, from Charles Lisanby's conception and the early oratorio version by Schwartz, through the London production (including photographs), and revisions worked out in America. The *Children of Eden* chapters include quotations drawn from interviews with Lisanby, Schwartz, bookwriter John Caird, and others that explore the philosophy behind the musical.