

# **Gaia**

## **Global Climate Tragi-Comedy**

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**Material for stage writing within the framework of the project:  
Gaia Global Circus**

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*The play takes place in a sort of circus tent. The audience occupy one part of the arena on stepped rows of seats. The actors perform either in the sandy arena or in the tiers of seats, which form a circular belt that runs, partly, behind the spectators.*

*Both actors and spectators find themselves under a sort of canopy that has to be able to be lit up in various ways and on which different atmospheres have to be able to be projected – a bit like in a geode or planetarium. In a way, this canopy screen is the lead actor in the play, the centre of all the references and all the screenings. So, you need to anticipate being able to perform in either a hi-tech or a low-tech situation according to whatever spaces or budgets are available.*

*When they find themselves in the arena – and thereby on a level with the spectators, who occupy the other half of the circle – the actors play The Chorus; when they move to the bleachers, the actors play whatever the chorus see, dream or think.*

*For the entire show, the seats are divided into three different atmospheres and the chorus takes on the colours of these three zones successively according to the role they are playing in them.*

*Each scene needs to be performed in a different spirit, without worrying about continuity since there is no established genre and there are no shared feelings about the matters raised.*

[diagrams of the zones and of the canopy]

## Prologue

*Darkness*

*A sort of street entertainer burst onto the arena.*

### Voice of the Prologue

You who keep lamenting  
 The end of humanism  
 And the decline of the humanities  
 Will be reassured to learn  
 That a conference on geology  
 The thirty-fourth of its kind  
 In Brisbane, Australia  
 Is gearing up to bestow  
 The age we're all embarked on  
 With the fine name of the *anthropocene*.  
 Will you be glad to learn  
 That at the very moment that the poets  
 Have abandoned all hope, even,  
 Of giving form to the human,  
 It's up to the learned societies  
 To hug this giant to their hearts  
 A giant so outsized  
 He's now putting his stamp  
 On geology itself?  
 You mightn't find him especially life-like  
 This tectonic Atlas  
 A grimacing monster bending beneath the yoke  
 Of all the havoc he wreaks  
 Merging his deformed features  
 With the indiscernable features of Gaia.  
 Unless what we see  
 In those two faces, now one,  
 Is the true icon,  
 Truly unforeseen  
 Of a Holy Face:  
*Ecce Homo Redux*

## Sequence 1: the night of multiple heavens

### *Darkness*

*The spectators find the chorus dozing in the arena in a dreamy atmosphere like on a summer's night after a day of work in some camp. Some are dressed in the uniform Japanese Tepco workers wear; others in blue workers' overalls; still others in white lab coats.*

*The chorus is chatting more or less disconnectedly as you do when you're gazing at the stars. The voices aren't yet clearly personalised, they will become more recognizable as the play progresses according to the colours produced by what the actors see or do in the three zones.*

*Voices are of men and women indiscriminately, sometimes overlapping. After each point, the sentence may be taken up by another actor.*

### Sounds of Voice 1

That white dot, over there, that's Venus rising; I do wonder what it'll bring me? Love, success in love, that's what I hope for you. Venus, yes, but behind it, lying in ambush, I can see Mars, the red planet. Uh-oh, looks like someone's wife is cheating on him; what are you getting yourself mixed-up in, now? Tomorrow, at the crack of dawn, I must check my horoscope. What're the stars saying about me, I can't quite work it out. Do you believe in all that, you lot, in the stars?

### Sounds of Voice 2

Click, click, click, that's not a planet, it's a satellite, it's twinkling; can you see it? When I was a little girl, it knocked our socks off, our hearts would beat faster, you remember, you oldies? Cosmonauts, we all wanted to be cosmonauts. Outer space, infinite space, making a break for it, leaving this tiny planet behind at last; getting away from it all, sailing into the wide blue yonder; there was the Moon to conquer, then Mars, then way beyond that. '20001, A Space Odyssey' – it all seems so old-hat now, that whole future. Even the space shuttles, you know they've stopped them, too, now, all that's left is the Space Station. Maybe that's it, up there, flashing its warning light at us: *Houston we have a problem*. Don't talk about accidents, these things are so fragile; a few of them have blown up in flight, you know. Well, at least they died close to the Good Lord.

### Sounds of Voice 3

You remember: 'Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name'? 'Our father who *is* in heaven, you don't arse about, you don't 'art' God, all the same. 'Who is in Heaven' – isn't there more than one heaven? Yes, there are lots of heavens, probably, or skies if you like. You believe in all that, do you? More than in the stars, anyway. Do you

remember Gargarin, Gargarin, what sort of name is that, anyway, good name for a clown; he said that, up in heaven, the Russian one, you know, *space*, he didn't see God. As if God would be in the same heaven as him! 'Thy kingdom come' – *that* was a beautiful prayer, anyway; that he should appear in the heavens, there, in front of us, that he should set the heavens ablaze all of a sudden; now, that would really be something – imagine the special effects. 'Deliver us from evil. Amen.' Yes, more than anything; deliver us from evil; good idea! *Houston, we have a problem.* And you think God'll answer: *Station God, Station God on the line, what's up folks?*

#### **Sounds of Voice 4**

None of that tells us what the weather'll do tomorrow, that's our problem; if it rains on site again, we'll never finish the ark in time. Did anyone hear the weather report? They always get it wrong anyway. Like horoscopes. Like prayers that are never answered. It always rains too much or not enough, they're never happy. You have to have confidence in predictions all the same. But they can't forecast anything, more than three days ahead they don't know anything precise. Yes they do, they've got confidence indicators. Forecasts, not predictions.

#### **Sounds of Voice 5**

In the long run, it's going from bad to worse, no one can deny that. Tornados, cyclones, rising sea levels, glaciers shrinking and melting. Everything's out of time, the heat, the cold, the rain, the snow. Look, you can't even see the Milky Way anymore with all the dust, the pollution. It's cold for the season, don't you find? There *is* no season anymore; everything's out of whack. Our ancestors the Gauls were afraid of nothing, except the sky falling on their heads, and *voilà*, it's falling on our heads in earnest now. I couldn't care less, I'm not a Gaul. I am, a Gaul, but I'm not scared, either. After all, it's not our fault if it rains. They can't forecast anything, anyway; they don't know. Yes, they do, they've got confidence indicators. Like with horoscopes? No! Like with prayers? No! No indicators, there. So, do you really think it's our fault, then, our most grievous fault?

*They go back to sleep.*

*Darkness.*

## **Sequence 2: three appeals to the almighty gods**

*A member of the chorus gets up and goes towards Zone 2 where a sketch of a vast worksite in the form of a hull is revealed. The canopy of heaven is replaced by storm clouds, lightning and the distant sounds of torrential rain.*

### **Mr. Noah**

They're sleeping, poor buggers. They don't realize how little time they have left, how their time's running out. They'll have to work day and night. But you've got to feel sorry for them. They're doing their best, I'm well aware. But we'll never finish in time. And it will never be big enough to hold them all.

O thou the Unutterable, thou the Creator, I turn to thee, why have you turned your back on your Creation? What have they done, then, all these poor bastards, to so defile the Earth you gave them? And why entrust to me, poor sinner that I am, the task of saving this little remnant, this little seed, so that everything can begin again afresh, only better? Look at them, will you. Listen to them breathing. Why abandon them all? I don't have the courage to choose the ones who'll be saved. And all these doomed beasts that you fashioned from your breath.

*Howling of abandoned animals.*

*Racket of the coming rain.*

The Flood. They must be protected from the Flood. The Flood must be pushed back.

*Takes up a long list which he unfurls between his hands.*

Do it all again, we have to do it all again, start over. But first, get away from here, before everything is destroyed. A promise, O what a promise. A covenant, O what a covenant.

*Darkness. The actor resumes his place in the chorus and falls asleep.*

*Another actor gets up and heads towards Zone 1. What you see there is a sketch of a vast smoking heap of high tech scrap iron, something like the Fukushima nuclear plant. The actor is wearing a Tepco helmet and number on the back of his bodysuit and is talking into a mobile phone.*

### **Mr Jolly**

I know, Director-General, sir, they should be at work day and night, but they do have to sleep, after all, the poor bastards. They're working flat out. They haven't even turned on their radiation monitors. They're absorbing incredible doses. I know very well that it's for the good of all. They know that too. They're heroes. It's for progress, of course, oh

yes, brave victims, voluntary soldiers in the great battle for progress. No, no, rest assured, their morale is excellent. No doubt about it. We'll get there. It's a bit hard at the moment. But the situation is under control. We're absolutely on top of everything. Almost everything. Yes, yes. No, no reason to jeopardize the servicing program. It's just an incident. What? Oh, yes, you can't make an omelette without... Yes, you're right. We're the ones who built it, so we're on top of everything, of course, down to the last detail. Sorry? Verrat? To each his own? *Verum factum*? Oh, it's the Latin! We're not going to drown everything, no of course not. Abandon everything, no. A tsunami isn't the Flood after all, it's not the end of the world. We'll keep on keeping on. See you tomorrow, Director-General, sir. Absolutely, we're learning and we'll incorporate the lessons in the next design. See you tomorrow, without fail.

*He hangs up.*

*We hear hissing and cracking noises, we see jets of smoke shoot out of the heap of scrap iron.*

Since we built it ourselves, we're on top of everything. Of course, there are a few little details we didn't quite foresee, all the same. We'll see tomorrow, tomorrow's another day. They're sleeping, that's great, they don't know everything, it's better that way, the director's right, we'll do the design better next time. Design. Design. That's what it's all about. Let's take, let's take matters in hand again. 'If at first you don't succeed', etcetera.

*He returns to the arena and takes his place among the sleepers.*

*Darkness.*

*An actor gets up and heads for zone 3, which is set back slightly so that the spectators always have to twist around a bit to see what's happening there. He is in a white lab coat and heads to a large-scale screen that coincides with the doem of the ceiling on which what they talk about is shown as extended and enlarged powerpoints.*

*He speaks as if he's addressing an invisible audience.*

### **Dr Lovelock**

But there's absolutely no point in bothering to go to Mars to see whether there's life there or not, you'll be wasting your money, all you have to do is look at the results produced by my detector, everything's in thermal equilibrium there, on the red planet. Life, here, on Earth, is like walking a tightrope, it oscillates wildly, far from equilibrium. A Martian doing the same analysis on this blue planet of ours would immediately detect the presence of life, no need to come and see on the spot: far from equilibrium, you can see that the way the atmosphere regulates itself, it's as plain as the nose on your face, it ought to be minus 18° on average on this Earth, and you can see for yourself that if the temperature oscillates, it oscillates within limits, neither too high or too low, it's



disequilibrium endlessly compensated for, like when you're riding a bicycle. A system, if you like.

Yes, almost as if there were an intention. But there is no intention whatsoever, I assure you, just a stroke of luck that life has taken advantage of to put the odds on its side thereafter, to load the dice. Yes, a winning formula that Mars didn't come up with. A bit of tinkering, you see. Why did I call it Gaia if there was no intention? So it would stick in people's minds. But it's not a person, no, not a character, either. Just feedback loops that I've grouped together. I've done a bit of tinkering too. You have to dramatize, as you know very well.

Them, down below? Humph, what do you want me to say? They're sleeping, that's already something; the less they do, the better off we are. There're too many of them, that's the problem, they're too reckless, they push the system too far from its limits, as a result the thermostat has stopped working properly, which is inevitable. But you really mustn't fret, when they really go too far, Gaia will get rid of them, don't you worry about her. The planet won't die in a hurry. Them? Yes of course, but, oh well, they don't know a thing luckily, see how they're sleeping. And the animals? Hmmn, the big ones don't have much chance of surviving, either, but anything less than a kilo ought to pull through, rats, insects, worms, plants – they'll pull through, the rest...

*Howling of animals. Pattering? Sounds of the sea.  
Cracking of glaciers. A few volcano sounds.*

*A ring of fire that starts stage left and runs anti-clockwise, meets another ring running in the opposite direction.  
Oscillation of both. This double-ring must be able to surround the entire set.*

Look at them, they're sleeping the sleep of the blessed in the bosom of Gaia. And when she's had enough of them, pfft, she'll shake them off like fleas on an eiderdown. Is Gaia a friend? an enemy? They don't even know that. What recklessness, all the same. They don't have the faintest idea about the place where they happen to be. Lost, completely lost. Who do they think they are, really? Where do they think they are?

*The actor resumes his place and falls asleep. No more noise.*

*Darkness.*

### **Sequence 3: the Ark and the great threats**

*Bright light. It's daytime. The chorus shake themselves and slowly get up, still trying to drag themselves out of various dreams.*

#### **Voice noises**

Where are we? I'm completely numb. On planet Earth, in the sun under the sky. We have to get cracking, the worksite's waiting for us, we can't drag our feet. It was good to get some sleep, we really needed it. Oh, yes, the site? We'd forgotten all about it. Right, well, where do we start?

*The chorus gets up and embarks on a sort of choreography that sometimes takes it towards zone 2, sometimes towards zone 1, sometimes towards zone 3, as though they were gearing up for three different jobs. Each time they are led by one or other of the actors who performed scene 2, so the spectator sees either blue overalls – zone 2 – or Tepco uniforms –zone 1 – or white lab coats, running the show.*

*After circling round for a while, the chorus remain hesitant.*

*The actor who played Noah climbs up into the bleachers and calls them to work.*

*Throughout the play, the polarities of zones 1, 2 and 3 are maintained and if anyone violates them, it should have a precise meaning.*

#### **Mr Noah**

Well, then, what are you waiting for? Get to work, get to work, can't you hear the great clamour of the coming Flood. Didn't you hear the promise made to your fathers? Hurry up, hurry up, we've got to get out of here as fast as we can. To the Ark, to the Ark.

*The chorus make as if to follow him, then stop, interrupted by Mr Jolly and his megaphone in zone 1.*

#### **Mr Jolly**

Over here, boys, over here. Just as well we were there, Director-General, sir. These idiots were about to spend their entire fortunes building that great thing that wouldn't even have floated. Eh, Father Noah, we saved your bacon! And these imbeciles complain about not having any work. Go back to your factories, then, boys. Go and plant cabbages. Leave this old nutcase here. There's no evidence. Haven't you already had rainy summers? And warm winters? And dry springs? Well, then, is it raining? No, good, so don't get so worked up. The climate? Why, it's business as usual.

*The chorus stop moving.*

### **The Chorus**

It's true, all this wood you got us to cut – it could have been used for our houses, or to warm us up. And all the time we spend here, for how long already, we're not spending planting, making things, selling, buying. We're breaking our necks clambering over the framework.

### **Mr Jolly**

And ask him to see how many of you he's going to keep alive, just so's he brings you up to speed a bit. You'll get a laugh.

### **The Chorus**

Is it big enough, this contraption of yours, Mr Noah? Are we all going to fit? Do you know anything about this type of rescue? All we're leaving behind, what's going to happen to that? And to go where, especially? We've been told you only save a pair of each species, is that true?

### **Mr Noah**

Everybody, we're going to save everybody. What good would planting have done you, since you wouldn't have reaped the harvest? Making things, since you could never have produced anything? Selling, since you could never have bought anything? The Unutterable has spoken: 'You will have no more Earth, no more solid ground, no more foundation, go, you must go, leave all, and fast'. Why get yourselves in a lather? Get to work.

### **Mr Jolly**

All that stuff, it's just Father Noah's cunning little manoeuvre to get you to toil away on his floating zoo. A dirty trick. Believe us, boys, no danger, no matter of life and death, there is no rush. An old story, old as the world, priests whipping up fear and threatening hellfire and damnation. The sufferings that lie ahead of you. Get the hell out of here, and if you need any wood for your eco-houses, help yourself, there's as much as you could want, of wood. If you want to work, the worksite's this way.

### **The Chorus**

What about us, Father Noah, what do we do? We do what they say: we split. We wreck the joint. We help ourselves and we go back home. And if there is no more home? That's business, as they say. It's true we've never had summers as wet and winters as mild, me, where I come from, my grandfather's never seen anything like it. And the statistics, what do they make of it, I've seen statistics like you wouldn't believe? What do *you* know about stats? And what do *they* know? Me, I'm outta here. Me, I'm going to wait and see. Let's get back to work. They scare the pants off me.

*One of the actors climbs up, this time, into zone 3 and addresses the crowd as if he were making a powerpoint presentation (slides are projected on the canopy). The chorus stops moving and sits to listen to him. From zones 1 and 2 the two previous protagonists interrupt him from time to time.*

**Clive Hamilton**

My presentation will be very short. As short as the time we have left. It's called: 'Four slides announcing the end of the world'.

**Mr Jolly**

I'll be damned! Why hold back? Here's Philippilus the prophet. Eh, Dr Strangelove, you forgot your flag and your gong, you doddering old fool!

**The Chorus**

Sssshhh. Let's hear him. He's showing slides. I liked the Bible better. You've got to have curves and powerpoints, to dramatize. We really don't have anything else to get ready for what's coming? Let the man speak.

[Figure 1]

**Clive Hamilton**

The red line is what could have happened if we'd made a success of Copenhagen. Well, we stuffed it up and in any event it was already unlikely, we'd have had to limit our CO2 emissions by 3.7% a year right up to 2050. The dark blue line and the green one, is what would allow us to catch up to Copenhagen by taking decisions in 2015 or in 2020, but they are totally unlikely, since they assume efforts at reduction this time of 5.3% or of 9% per annum. No chance, consequently, of success. OK, so the only possible scenario is the one represented by the pale blue line and, looking at a best-case scenario, we start getting a move on in 2020 and we manage to commit ourselves to a decrease of 3%, which is unlikely but, well, if we're really scared, let's assume we manage that. Result: 4° in 2050. Looking at a best-case scenario.

**Mr Noah**

You see, I told you so. The Flood, the Flood is coming. Why do you still want evidence?  
To the Ark, to the Ark!

**Clive Hamilton**

I'm talking about an event that's already happened. Everything's already come to pass.  
The carrots are cooked. Mass has been said. In fact the indicators are all more pessimistic  
than this one.

**Mr Jolly**

So, you heard him, that was his optimistic scenario! And the pessimistic one, then? 6°?  
The alarmist, between 7 and 8°!! Come on, why hold back?

**Clive Hamilton**

A world at 6°, the Earth hasn't seen that for 15 million years. So humans, ciao, it was  
nice knowing you, we won't be seeing each other again.

**Mr Jolly**

The guy's a monster. Cassandra! Cassandra! You know the title of his book: 'Requiem  
for a Species'! Talk about dramatising! It may well be the end of the world, but he hasn't  
forgotten his royalties. He's not stupid.

**The Chorus**

And the species that's disappearing is us?

**Mr Noah**

Naturally it's you. How much more evidence do you need?

**Mr Jolly**

And the funniest thing is the subtitle: 'Why We Resist the Truth About Climate Change'.

**Clive Hamilton and Mr Noah**

Well of course you resist the truth! Faced with messages that contradict your hopes, what  
do you do? Do you change your hopes? No way, you deny reality to the very end. The  
prophets are killed, accused of being blind, and those who kill them blind themselves.  
We're dying of it.

**Clive Hamilton**

Only hope can save us from the abyss, we have to have confidence in the Covenant.

*The Chorus begin going round and round in circles, wailing, as though not knowing where to turn.*

### **The Chorus**

No more hope. Beyond hope? What truth? *Hohimé, hohimé*, what's going to become of us? The fruits of the earth perish, still locked up in their buds, the herds of cattle languish, and the seeds conceived by women are no longer born. Brandishing her torch, Gaia, the most odious of goddesses, worse than the plague, has pounced on us and laid waste to the land of men.

*Two of the actors, without climbing up any of the steps, move in front of the chorus as imprecators addressing the zone that Hamilton finds himself in.*

*They perform Sophocles in a deliberately archaic way, as a 'quotation'.*

### **Oedipus**

*O splendour! O royal throne! O knowledge that has cleverly prevailed over science! What jealousy you stir up through an existence you've made others too envious of! For love of this sceptre, the city's tribute to me, which it has placed in my hand without my seeking it, Creon, that faithful man, that lifelong friend, gives himself over to secret machinations; he dreams only of supplanting me, by bribing that sort of wizard, with his webs of intrigues. That crafty charlatan, who can see only his own advantage, but who is, in his art, completely blind! For, come now, tell me, where is it, your divining power of clairvoyance? How is it that in the days when the Sphinx made its spells felt here you didn't open your mouth to deliver your fellow citizens from them? I turn up, then, I who know nothing, Oedipus the dupe, and I tackled the Sphinx. It's my wisdom that made me guess right: I had no birds to inform me!... So here I am, the one you are endeavouring to drive away? You count on finding a place beside Creon on the steps of his throne! Methinks it will cost you dearly, you and its instigator, this holy purge! You're lucky I see you so old, otherwise you'd already have learnt at your cost exactly what your judgement is worth.*

*Another actor, staying inside the arena, replies from zone 3 merging with Clive Hamilton.*

### **Tiresias**

*Today, you think you see more clearly than I, but soon you will see nothing but darkness! There is no place in which your cry will not drop anchor, no cliff where your voice will not awaken echos, when you've seen the breakers you've come to throw yourself at to build your hearth upon, after your happy cruise! The sorrows that still await you in huge*

*numbers, you know them not: they will give you your true rank, and even the rank of your children – After that, you can spit on the gods and on me who am speaking to you: never has a man here below been more atrociously crushed than you will be.*

**The Chorus**

*'I hesitate, not knowing how to speak, and I remain in suspense, and I see nothing certain, either in the present, or in the past.'*

**Clive Hamilton**

What divination was ever as precise as that? All that is your doing, and your doing entirely. Apollo, Sun with the golden bow, has nothing to do with it. It's you and you alone that you should blame.

**The Chorus**

We did nothing bad, we fled poverty, pulled billions of human beings out of utter humiliation, made sense of all the riddles of the world, one by one, dominated the Earth and now we reign over it.

**Clive Hamilton**

It's a strange master who can't see that he is capable of such crimes, which he carries off by fleeing – and to get the oracle to lie!

**The Chorus**

*'Among the many splendours that the Earth has created, there is man, the wonder of the world. Spirit of the universe, he fears nothing, apart from death, Hades, which he can't escape.'*

**Clive Hamilton and Mr Noah**

It's over, it's all over. That was the world of men.

*Long drawn-out pause.*

**The Chorus**

Out with prophets and prophecies. We've got more than enough of them to go round and round in circles. We don't want any more predictions. No more togas and peplums. If only we could know once and for all. Stop, calm down, don't panic. We want forecasts. We want the truth.

*Darkness.*

#### **Sequence 4: Luntz and Lovelock**

*The lights go up on zone 1. Mr Luntz rejoins Mr Jolly. He talks with a strong Yankee accent.*

#### **Mr Jolly**

I think they're beginning to get their wits back, they're finally ready to listen to the voice of reason. Ah, Mr Luntz, you're the specialist sent by the director? He told me you were a great communicator. How can I persuade them to be reasonable at last and not to believe in all this nonsense anymore?

#### **Mr Luntz**

You're all going about it like bumbling idiots. First off, you have to stop talking about 'global warming', it gives them the willies, talk about 'climate change' exclusively, everyone knows the weather's up and down. It's like the inheritance tax. You recall? When I suggested you call it 'death duties', what happened? It was done away with everywhere. No one wanted it anymore. That's the power of words!

#### **Mr Jolly**

Very good, excellent, but they say they're relying on science, and science, well, it's powerless to defend itself alone against all this pathos.

#### **Mr Luntz**

Nothing easier: all you have to do is not let the scientific debate close on you. For the moment the voters still believe there's no consensus in the scientific community about the human origin of global warming. But if the public starts being convinced that the scientific issue is resolved, then they're really going to change their minds and consider themselves responsible in earnest. They're going to demand radical changes in the laws to do with the air, the water, energy. They'll support the projects of the Democrats and their European allies. That's socialism! *This is the end of the United States of America as we know it.* Consequently, it is of the utmost importance that you make the lack of scientific certainty the main obstacle to any governmental measure. Say every time that there are other researchers and other experts who have other views on the issue. We'll find them for you.

#### **Mr Jolly**

Ah, fabulous! 'Sound science', proper, balanced science, no partisan science!

#### **Mr Luntz**



If we don't react, you're done for, you'll be backed into a corner. You have to insist in good times and bad that we're not completely sure and that the other science, the Democrats', is excessive, unreasonable, absurdly costly and interventionist. In short, demand honest debates, we're in a democracy, yes or no? '*There are no great limits to growth when men and women are free to follow their dreams.*' Try it, you'll see.

*Mr Jolly turns towards the chorus.*

### **Mr Jolly**

Whenever there's a climatologist, demand that they also hear the point of view of a climate sceptic, for there to be an honest, reasoned debate. We owe you balanced information, that's the key, ba-a-al-anced.

### **Mr Luntz**

Ladies and gentlemen, Sound Science! Sound Science! Fair and balanced. 'The United States has not won two world wars just so humanity can cultivate organic vegetables in complete security!' Let's follow our dreams. Let's follow our dreams.

### **The Chorus**

If there is still a debate going on, it's because they're not sure, and that's rather reassuring. Myself, I think it's rather worrying that they still don't know for sure. It's true we've had enough of all the deprivation we have to endure; they want to take everything away from us, one day it's tobacco, next it's cars. Meat, even meat, they want to take meat away from us. And now air travel, because of the CO2. If we listened to them, we'd still be in the stone age. We need a democratic debate. They're right. Forward, forward.

### **Mr Jolly**

Get to work, this way, to the power station. We need energy. Nuclear energy.

### **Mr Noah**

And my Ark, what about my Ark? Can't you hear the waters rising? Yet you do nothing. The call of the Almighty? Give me, give us, give yourselves a chance still.

*Just as the chorus is about to set out to work in zone 1, a new scene is set up, but not in zone 2 as you might expect after Mr Noah's appeal, but in zone 3, around the actor who played Dr Lovelock who is now sitting opposite a journalist in talk-show fashion. The chorus, like the audience, begin playing the crowd and applaud and laugh when the teleprompter requires. You could shift members of the audience and get them to sit around the journalist.*

*The journalist is very witty. Lovelock a charming old gentleman in understated British style. The whole thing follows the frantic pace of talk shows and sound bites.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRQ-NqaYFzs&feature=related>

**Journalist**

Please join me in welcoming Dr Lovelock, who has just written ‘The Vanishing Face of Gaia – A Final Warning’ (*applause*). Dr Lovelock, how did you come to this theory?

**Dr Lovelock**

Oh, it goes back a long way, to when I was in California, at the Jet Propulsion Lab, in the mid-60s, the name was suggested to me by the great writer Bill Golding, a Nobel Prize laureate, the author, you know...

**Journalist**

Of ‘Lord of the Flies’, kids lost on a desert island, another hair-raising tale...

**Dr Lovelock**

Exactly, ‘Lord of the Flies’, we were from the same village, at the pub we talked about my concerns, he was a physicist originally, I was telling him that the Earth was a living organism, and he said to me ‘we need to give her a name that’s right for her’, and he’s the one who suggested Gaia.

**Journalist**

Was it the beginning of the night at the pub or getting towards the end?  
(*laughter*)

**Dr Lovelock**

Ah! You’ll come to the wrong conclusion!

**Journalist**

So, according to your theory, catastrophe is inevitable, we’ve had it.

**Dr Lovelock**

It’s not a theory, no, it’s the result of observations, the Earth has gotten along by itself very well, but now we’re heading for a much warmer period such as it hasn’t known for, let’s say, 55 million years. It’s rather extremely robust, the data.

**Journalist**

Human beings aren't all going to disappear, though?

**Dr Lovelock**

Oh my God no, no, not at all.

**Journalist**

But a good number even so, not just a few, it won't be a picnic apparently, according to you.

**Dr Lovelock**

I fear not, no, seven out of eight will be wiped out, in all probability, yes.

**Journalist**

Ah, seven out of eight...

Everywhere, or just in certain parts of the world?

**Dr Lovelock**

Oh, let's say Canada, Siberia, Kamchatka and Tierra del Fuego will most likely be spared. Well, at first, afterwards they'll be invaded by refugees they won't be able to feed. It's already happened several times that life has come and gone up there, over 55 million years.

**Journalist**

And all that's our fault, according to you?

**Dr Lovelock**

Oh no, no, not really, it's a bit like if you have a loaded gun and you accidentally pull the trigger, pow! it does some damage, you can't help it, it's only afterwards that you see what's happened. It wasn't our intention, we just wrecked the system.

**Journalist**

It's reversible, at least?

**Dr Lovelock**

No. Absolutely not. That's the crux of the problem. Once Gaia begins sliding into a new state, there's nothing more to be done. All political men believe that if we're nice, if we sort the rubbish for recycling, if we change our lightbulbs, if we do 'sustainable development', etcetera, things will work out, but, no, not at all.

**Journalist**

Can we slow down the downhill slide at least?

**Dr Lovelock**

I'd like to be able to say we can, but no, we can't.

**Journalist**

Wow. We're in for some fascinating times! (*autocued laughter*)

**Dr Lovelock**

It's not so terrible. There'll be some good moments.

**Journalist**

The politicians can't hear what you're saying?

**Dr Lovelock**

Not just the politicians, but the scientists too. They're not free to say what I'm saying. If they start saying things that are too alarmist, they won't get any more grants for their research. No one in this business dares talk freely.

**Journalist**

But what about you, who's financing you, then?

**Dr Lovelock**

I am! I finance myself all on my own, with my books, I also invent things, little things, like the electron detector which enabled us to prove what Rachel Carson had predicted about pollution through pesticides. I'm totally free.

**Journalist**

Can nuclear energy help us?

**Dr Lovelock**

Ah yes, a bit. In any case, it's better than renewable energy, that's a joke. But then we'd have to invest massively, one nuclear power station a month pretty much over ten years.

**Journalist**

But the pollution, the radiation?

**Dr Lovelock**

That's absolutely nothing beside what lies in store for us. Nuclear energy is safe. To say it's dangerous, well, that's a total farce for the benefit of children.

**Journalist**

So, the ecologists can't be too fond of you?

**Dr Lovelock**

No not really. *(autocued laughter)*

**Journalist**

They say Richard Branson has promised you a seat on the next tourist trip into space he has planned?

**Dr Lovelock**

Yes, I'd chalked up a lot of miles. *(laughter)* He wrote to me to offer me a seat on the rocket. I said 'OK'.

**Journalist**

That's not a bad bonus. *(laughter)*

**Dr Lovelock**

Even if I die up there, at my age it doesn't matter, and I'd like very much to gaze on the face of Gaia, one last time, for real, from on high.

**Journalist**

Ah yes, I get you, before we all disappear... Is there the remotest chance that you've got it wrong?

**Dr Lovelock**

Of course, I'm a scientist, science can always get it wrong.

**Journalist**

That was Dr Lovelock for 'The Vanishing Face of Gaia: A Final Warning', Give Dr Lovelock a hand. *(applause)*

*Flood of various advertisements. The audience go back to their seats. Everyone is plunged into profound silence.*

*Mr Noah, in tears, covers himself with a bag and sits.*

**Mr Noah**

He said seven out of eight? He really said that?

*The chorus stop and stand around him without knowing what to say to him, whether he should be pitied or shaken.*

*Mr Jolly, full of gusto, proclaims loudly.*

**Mr Jolly**

Nuclear power, as you clearly see, is the only solution, and it's safe, one nuclear plant a month over ten years. Get to work. The future's opening wide before us.

*Darkness.*

## Sequence 5: PP and the wreck of the Ark

*This scene could be performed as a sort of comic interlude, or even as a clown act, playing on the circus form, but it must end in disaster.*

### The Chorus

Either they don't know, or they know but they aren't sure. And that's a good thing because at the same time we can bring the precautionary principle into play. Play, but who wants to play the precautionary principle, you don't play a principle! Yes you do, I do, wait, I'll play PP, poppy, grandpa, we'll make 'em laugh. What is it you find so funny in this story : we're all goners? Exactly, exactly.

*One of the actors breaks away from the chorus to play PP.*

### PP

If you don't mind, ladies and gentlemen, and if you'd just like to lend me an ear, I'm about to tell you exactly how it is. Hey! Lighting, send the text.

*(The text of the French Constitution is brought up on the screen)*

'The absence of certainty, taking account of the scientific and technological knowledge of the moment, ought not to delay the adoption of effective and appropriate measures aimed at preventing a risk of serious and irreversible damage to the environment at an economically acceptable cost.'

### PP

The Precautionary Principle, familiarly known as PP, *Pépé*, Grandpa, signifies, one, that action does not follow knowledge, two, that, consequently, in the absence of absolute certainty, I said absolute, it is a good idea to act, in spite of everything, by facing one's responsibilities, three, that if we don't act, we will never know, four, that Father Noah is thereby perfectly right, in the absence of absolute certainty, to build that thing, that he has shown admirable...

### Mr Noah

No, no, not a bit of it, it's the Almighty, I followed, I listened, I understood, I passed on to you, it's not a matter of precaution at all. It's a Covenant, a matter of a Covenant. A rainbow, a whole scene you would have cut. There is no more Earth, the ground has just run out.

### Mr Jolly

Can't you see you're being taken for a ride?

**PP**

No, no, Mr Noah isn't taking you for a ride – at least not yet. It's a good thing what he's getting you to do. You've acted without being sure, that's a good thing, you've 'applied the precautionary principle' to perfection, you've taken the risk... and now you are going to finish this great contraption, launch it on the seas and find out at last what the story is with this whole dire threat business.

**Mr Jolly**

Shut him up. Down with PP! I'll tell you what the story is: the PP is the end of all possible action. If you heed it, it'll mean guaranteed idleness, it'll mean the absence of all risk, you won't do a thing anymore, you'll wait till you're sure, you'll be scared of everything... A mouse, a baby mouse will scare you. Don't be such wimps, for heck's sake. Man up!

**PP**

Excuse me Mr Jolly, but I fear you're making a mistake. I've just told you the exact opposite. This build is a very good thing. They're taking the risk that it all serves no purpose and that's a very good thing. You'll see what happens. Don't listen to this character. Do I honestly look like a lazy oaf? Aren't I full of verve, full of daring? Do I look like a coward? Look me in the eye. I am energy itself. Not at all fearful, quite the opposite. I act. I experiment. I stride ahead with a firm step. It's just that I don't wait till I'm sure before taking measures, that's all.

**Mr Jolly**

You have to be able to take risks. Pascal. 'We are embarked'. Blaise Pascal. It translates to 'we're off to a flying start'. You have to forge ahead. Come what may. When we're gone, the world can go to rack and ruin! Bring on the Flood!

**The Chorus**

The Flood! *He's* telling *us* about the Flood, now. So, the Flood's coming in earnest? No, no, that's just it, we're not off to a flying start at all; you made us stop everything, the Ark's on hold. Get to work, get to work. Let's get back to the building work. Quick. Quick. You're either embarked or you're not embarked. We're embarked. We're dashing off. We're getting a move on. We're going home. No, we're not, we're leaving. We're sunk.

**Mr Jolly**

It's Pascal's fault. You have to wait till you're sure before you act, of course. And at the same time, be able to take risks, it's quite simple.



**PP**

You see, the same people who want you to take risks are the ones who wait till they're sure, absolutely sure, before they take radical measures. What's one more contradiction to them!

**The Chorus**

It's very simple, I've got it: if there's the slightest risk, we stop everything. On the contrary, you've got nothing, you have to run risks without worrying about anything. Do you want to know before acting or act without knowing in advance? I'm lost. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Mr PP, Mr PP, would you like to start again? See what happens when you let principles amble about on stage.

**PP**

Seriously, ladies and gentlemen, did you wait till you absolutely knew, with total certainty, to get married? No, obviously. Ah, I see some who sigh with regret. To have children? No, oh dear, no, never. To open a shop? No, of course not. And yet you did it. You see why action does not require absolute certainty beforehand. Mr Noah is not quite sure and yet he acts. It's the same thing.

**Mr Noah**

No it's not, it's not remotely similar. Quite the opposite, I'm sure. I have faith. I believe profoundly in His promise. God, the Almighty told me.

**Mr Jolly**

Can someone tell me why this PP was written into the French Constitution? It's a total piece of fraud. The entire Academy of the Sciences petitioned against it. Nothing for it, those gutless deputies voted it in anyway. It should be erased from the Constitution. Chirac is a criminal. No precaution. We're not sissies. Let's forge ahead. Let's innovate. Let's make progress without fear.

**PP**

If I'm written in big letters into the Constitution ladies and gentlemen, you who wrote it, it's for a host of excellent reasons. France, yes France, needs me, to get over a serious disease, the disease of absolute certainty – the absolute certainty that would supposedly lead to confident action without precaution. 'Without precaution', please note the absurdity of such a position. Mr Noah, of course, once he's freed from his archaic and infantile beliefs, is an excellent example to follow.

**Mr Noah**

Don't look at me. That wasn't around in my day. It was never a question of taking precautions, I assure you.

**PP**

For, just think ladies and gentlemen, if you don't have absolute certainty, with such a theory, what do you do, eh, tell me that, what do you do?

**The Chorus**

Nothing, we haven't done anything since the beginning, that's just it, we've been waiting forever for the building work to start again. We're constantly interrupted. And on top of that we don't know what's most urgent. Or even if it's still worth the trouble. Unless we make nuclear power stations.

**PP**

Exactly. You do nothing. He's the one, that clown there, who's the lazy oaf.

*Pointing to Mr Jolly.*

When you know you act. And when you don't know? Well, you don't act! And that's what's so scandalous. That's where this madman is leading you. They want absolute certainty on this particular subject only, for everything else it's a case of 'whatever will be will be'. Result: total inertia the absence of certain knowledge. *They* are the immobilists, the reactionaries, the...

**The Chorus**

We're wasting our time with this interlude. How do you make this PP pipe down? He's starting to bug us. For a principle of uncertainty, he seems a bit too sure of himself.

**PP**

You want to make me pipe down? But I'm nowhere near finished. The true risk-taker, is me. To act with precaution means... And what's more Ulrich Beck said... And if Chirac wanted... And if the French Constitution... aaagh.

*Exit PP*

*An actor breaks away from the chorus to play the worksite foreman, he walks over to Mr Noah.*

**The Foreman**

Mr Noah, Mr Noah, this is no good at all, our calculations were wrong, we need to scale everything up much higher, much, much higher. I don't think you quite realise, it's millions of species we have to take in, we need to multiply the dimensions of our contraption by two hundred at least. And I've got loads of other problems: the wolves want to enter as a pack, the elephants as a troop, not one of them as a couple, two is too narrow, too small, except for the doves which are lovely. We'll never get there, it's going to make a hell of a racket, and they all need immense spaces, luxury suites, just for the elephants immense territories where they can stretch their legs. It's not a zoo, at all. And for the plants, there are dozens of climates, of different biotopes, we'll never get there, we're going to need an incredibly complicated aircon system, we're going to emit CO2 to the max, it's a true conundrum. And just in diesel oil alone, we're going to need two or three tankers for refuelling. It's off to a very, very bad start, our concern. And on top of all that, they can sense the threat, they're gathering together to discuss what to do, they're making a hell of a racket, it's quite disturbing. I'm not going back there.

*On the screen a vast assemblage of creatures: various /riotous noises.*

*Right till the end of the scene the noise of the animals becomes more and more deafening.*

### **Mr Jolly**

Freeze them all. Take their DNA. Keep only the eggs. Only the seeds. No need to keep them alive. They can be thawed out later. In liquid nitrogen. An Ark of liquid nitrogen, that's quite enough. And while you're at it, freeze Father Noah and this whole bunch of imbeciles. They'll take up less space and bawl less.

*On the canopy screen, crazier and crazier plans for the Ark are brought up.*

### **The Foreman**

You see? If we follow the projections, Mr Noah, we'd need such a big structure that we'd never have enough wood, enough dowels, and wooden flooring, and caulking, we're heading straight for failure; or else we'd need to do a very strict culling; make terrible choices; and time presses; and uncertainty grows.

### **Mr Noah**

O Unutterable, how to save your Creation? I'm not an architect, or a conservationist, or an ecologist, enlighten me? How to save this multitude?

### **The Chorus**

*Various cries add to the growling of the creatures.*

Is there enough room, yes or no? Everyone or no one. All or nothing. We are united.

**Mr Noah**

I'm not up to scale. I'm not up to it. We can't flee. We'd have to get the entire globe in there. We don't have the budget. It will never hold up.

*Dr Lovelock pops up again and addresses the foreman.*

**Dr Lovelock**

But I told him, from the beginning, that it was far too small, Father Noah's build, that it would never float, that he lacked ambition, you have to think big, in this business.

**The Foreman**

Big? Bigger? How do you mean, bigger than his Ark?

**Dr Lovelock**

Sure! The risk is far bigger. Your cockleshell would not have stood up to it.

**The Foreman**

Our cockleshell? The Ark! But it was God, the Almighty himself who dictated the measurements, well, that's what we believed...

**Dr Lovelock**

You must have misunderstood. And saving couples, that's far too limited. You've understood nothing. It's not the world that has to be put in a nutshell, you're the nutshell that will find yourself crushed by the world. And the world will take its revenge on you, get rid of you, to save itself.

**The Foreman**

But that's just it, the end of the world, that's what's foretold, it is in fact why we have to embark.

**Dr Lovelock**

The world's not coming to an end, not at all, there's a misunderstood prophecy for you: *you* are, all of you, me – well, not me, I'm too old, luckily.

**The Foreman**

So, it's even more serious than he let on. It's imminent. But if we stop everything, how can we save, how can we save Creation?

**Dr Lovelock**

I'm talking about nature, not Creation. Don't worry, Gaia will manage all right on her own.

*The blue planet is shown on the canopy screen and fills the whole space.*

**The Foreman**

It's so big. It's so beautiful.

**Mr Jolly**

Don't get carried away, those are moist, fluid envelopes, clouds, the seas, chaotic phenomena, we can't forecast anything, or calculate, or seriously model, just show us the solid envelopes instead, Ge, the earth of geologists, black, somber, brown. The earth that resists all ranting. The calculable. The Measurable. The solid earth of established facts.

**Dr Lovelock**

Hmmn, geologists with their solid envelopes – they've never understood a thing about life, about moist, fluid envelopes, their Earth is as sterile as Mars or Venus, without a single feedback loop, nothing but brute, brutal rock hurtling ahead without being aware of anything.

**The Foreman**

So *she* is the Flood? Her? It's Gaia?

**Dr Lovelock**

But of course, that's the only dimension that counts. You have to think big after all. Never too hot, never too cold. And you wanted to put airconditioning on the Ark! But there's your airconditioning. It's already there. The only thing being asked of you is not to wreck the one installed by Mother Nature.

*(On the ceiling the Daisyworld model is deployed, white, black, grey splotches increase and decrease in time without the screen ever being all black or all white. We stay for a moment watching this alternation and balancing of positive and negative loops.)*

**The Foreman**

I don't understand this business of airconditioning. Mr Noah didn't say anything about it to me. Is that the real Ark? The size of the Earth? I didn't see it like that at all. And what

does it float on? It's empty all around. Where will the dove come from? How are we going to run aground on Mount Ararat?

*(In a very calm tone; while he's talking we see the Daisyworld model start becoming unsettled little by little, the temperature rises and changes its equilibrium point.)*

**Dr Lovelock**

*You* are the Flood that's coming, the Deluge, haven't you got that yet? You and the multitude of your children. Noah wanted to hold the world on his Ark, whereas she, Gaia, here, who can't hold out if we weigh her down with billions of people. *You* are the great disturbers, deregulators. You've succeeded beyond all hope. 'Your descendants will be as numerous as grains of sand. I will make of you a people more numerous than the stars in heaven. Go forth and multiply.' And now, no more sand, no more heaven. Nice promise he made, the Almighty. What are you going to do with them all now? Drown them?

**The Foreman**

Drown them? Of course not. The opposite. What, all? A few, how many?

**The Chorus**

I thought it was a matter of saving us, not sinking us. They're going to drown as like cats. Can you confirm whether I'm on the waiting list, whether I'm going to be able to get onboard? What list? The one for the Ark. There is no more Ark. We're embarked, horribly embarked. And they want to throw us overboard. There is no board anymore. They want to write us off. If we squeeze in maybe we'll get there, no? Pile in? Trim down?

**The Foreman**

Of course we can't save all of them. We don't know what to do anymore, what's right or wrong. How many would *you* save?

**Dr Lovelock**

More than your Mr Noah in any event. How many living did he leave? A dozen in his Ark? No, no, me, I'm more optimistic, a lot more optimistic, let's say a hundred million.

**The Foreman**

The others, consequently, all those people there...

*Makes a 'krrk' gesture as if cutting his throat.*

**Dr Lovelock**

Yes, it's inevitable.

**Mr Jolly**

Listen to the two of them: 'Ah you, how many would you kill, ah, oh, me, I'd only keep a few'. And we're the climate sceptics that are treated like dangerous criminals, negationists!

**The Foreman**

And... meanwhile? Gaia? So, she's the Unutterable? She's the Covenanter, the Promiser? She's the one who tells me in my dreams, without my ever being able to remember word for word, word for word, what She asks us to do?

**Dr Lovelock**

No, Gaia is that – mindless – globe there, floating over the waters, something positive, nothing but positive. Facts, nothing but facts. Just linked together, that's all, tethered by loops. Nothing more. It's very simple you know. It lives, that's all.

**The Foreman**

So, there are no Creators?

**Dr Lovelock**

But She doesn't hold it against you, rest assured. No resentment. It's not a person, not a character, not really a goddess. Too much positive feedback, not enough negative feedback; that's all. Nothing to do with all that God, the Almighty business, unfortunately for Father Noah. No one is taking revenge, no one holds anything against anyone, it's a thermostat issue. I'm ninety years old, I don't hold it against you, I just warned you, do what you will, She will always come out on top, She'll just shudder a bit and, oops! no more civilisation. Humans, there'll always be enough of them. But to tread the boards doing comedy, no, that's *curtains*.

**Mr Jolly**

Why don't you put up altars to her, to Gaia, while you're at it! Why not make human sacrifices to her to appease her anger, to put an end to her vengeance. A little billion to start with, and after that, if your heart so desires, you'll soon get into the habit, the other five billion.

**The Foreman**

No, no, no sacrifice, no human sacrifice anyway, at any cost!

**Mr Jolly**

And what does he say the Flood is, your Father Noah, if not a sacrifice offered to a vengeful God?

**The Chorus**

It's just an airconditioning system, feedback loops that we've upset a bit. If I've got this right, She has nothing against us, nothing personal anyway, I don't think sacrifices and altars... I really, really hope that there is no evidence of any of this. But if we pile in, all the same, make ourselves very small, lilliputian, we'll get there all the same no?

**Dr Lovelock**

You shouldn't have played sorcerer's apprentices.

*The noise of the Flood and the cries of the animals become deafening.*

*Darkness.*



## **Sequence 6: Viktor and Mary**

*From this point on three very distinctive voices stand out from the chorus, the ones that played Mr Jolly, Mr Noah and Dr Lovelock, but without turning into simple silhouettes as in previous scenes. They are called Hamid, Christof and Lynn respectively. 'The Chorus' refers to the other actors.*

### **Hamid (who played Mr Jolly)**

I've had enough of being told the same old story about the sorcerer's apprentice.

### **Lynn (who played the Foreman)**

Except when it's told differently.

### **The Chorus**

What story? The one about Frankenstein, of course. Everybody knows that one. No, they don't, we don't know it. One more horror film, having got this far, that can't hurt us.

### **Christof (who played Noah)**

Yes, we may as well go the whole hog in this business, and be done with it.

### **Hamid**

Well then, wheel in Frankenstein!

*Horror film music. Gothic atmosphere in the style of Shelley. The actors change to play the rest of the scene.*

### **The Chorus**

Huh? Are you Frankenstein?

### **Viktor**

Yes, I am, of course, Dr Viktor Frankenstein, citizen of Geneva, founding member and president of the association of reformed innovators, C.A., *Creators Anonymous*. In other words, sobered up. You look surprised?

### **The Chorus**

Err, well, to tell you the truth, I imagined you... well, I mean. We were thinking of something else.

**Viktor**

It took time, but we got there, I'm properly reformed, you know. You mustn't hold anything against me anymore. There wasn't an act I didn't commit. I paid. I did my time. I almost froze to death in the Arctic, in the ice fields of the North Pole, but I ended up killing the creature that I know, I know, I should never have brought into the world. I sort of drowned it in the waters of a new flood. More precisely, it ended up killing itself. It's a complicated story. But there is a statutory limitation. You didn't send for me to put me on trial again, in front of all these fine people, I hope? I've already said everything. There must be no, no, no more innovating, nor more pushing boundaries, no more wanting to get beyond Hercule's columns. Hubris is finished, finished. Prometheus is behind the times. But I've said everything already. I apologised in every possible way. I'll never do the sorcerer's apprentice bit again. I'll never again play God. I promise, I swear.

**The Chorus**

I think we're a bit lost, Doctor. What exactly are you referring to? Actually, to be honest, we were expecting the other Frankenstein.

**Viktor**

What other Frankenstein?

**The Chorus**

You know the... well...

*Gestures designating a monster criss-crossed with scars.*

**Viktor**

There is no other. My father is dead, my brother William too, alas, murdered by her, that creature, that is, indirectly by me. There's only one Frankenstein now, Viktor, that's me. Eternal witness offered to humanity in expiation by way of saying: no more innovating. That you have to be careful of your own creations. Think before you act. Take precautions. *Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*. That's what you wanted to hear, wasn't it?

**The Chorus**

Not exactly, no. Actually, we didn't really know.

**Viktor**

Downsize, you have to downsize. Withdraw on tiptoe. I won't do it anymore. I promise I won't do it anymore. No more laboratory, I've destroyed everything, burnt it. No more

patents. No more genetic engineering. Let's cultivate our garden. Switzerland, nothing but natural produce. A bit of green, you know? I've gone green. That's it.

### **The Chorus**

He's going to make me cry. What he says is frightening. He's right, he's right. We really shouldn't have. What have we done? Let's withdraw. For a start, let's begin by not having children; no more rich children anyway. We have to reduce our footprint. Turn out the lights. Curse Prometheus. All that CO2 you give off when you breathe, it's horrible. Let's not breathe anymore. Nature, nothing but nature.

*Everyone is crying, the lights go out one after the other, the circus is plunged into darkness; it's all moaning and groaning.*

*Enter a little lady with an umbrella, Miss Marple style, played by Lynn.*

### **Mary Shelley**

Allow me, allow me. I'm Mary Shelley, the author of the book, 'Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus'. I think I sort of have the right to appear on stage, all the more so as, you know, if we wrote so much that summer, Percy Shelley and Byron – yes, Lord Byron himself, it was in 1815 in the Alps, we formed a sort of commune, very 70s, don't you think? they were great geniuses you know – it's because it rained, see, it rained all summer, impossible to do even the shortest ramble, and you know why? Because an Indonesian volcano, the Tambora, had erupted; we didn't know that at the time, of course, but it's not unrelated to your topic, it seems to me?

I'm not sure Viktor told you the story all that accurately.

### **The Chorus**

The author ought to know a bit about it in actual fact. An author, at least, controls his creatures.

### **Mary Shelley**

I see you have quite convenient means today. May I get you to witness something

*She grabs a remote control and sends Edison's film of Frankenstein to the screen.*

*First projected on the screen, the silent film is replayed by actors from the chorus in the fashion of Mnouchkine in Fol Espoir: it's the scene in which Viktor, initially enthusiastic about his success, sees that he's created a monster and flees the laboratory, shutting the door behind him and double-locking it and running out of his laboratory in pelting rain. The stage directions should of course recall the flight of Oedipus.*

**Mary Shelley**

Dear Viktor, do you remember?

**Viktor**

Mary, O Mary, you the author of my life, my progenitor, why do you torture me with such a recollection? I know very well that I shouldn't have. But Mary, I've expiated, I've paid. I've put all that in good order. I've put things right. I've made up for it. I've cleaned the place up. Down to the tiniest little bone. I incinerated it myself. Well almost. Why do you all keep tormenting me? I told you I'd never play the sorcerer's apprentice again. I'm finished with experiments – for good. 'Crossbreed and multiply', no! 'Decrease and escape', I've understood the lesson perfectly, believe me. Once bitten, twice shy, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

**Mary Shelley**

I'm not torturing you Viktor. I'm trying to refresh your memory.

**Viktor**

But I remember all too well, I've suffered enough. Doesn't a person have the right on this earth to expiate and be forgiven?

**Mary Shelley**

For sins committed and confessed, yes, not for those one has not committed or not confessed.

**Viktor**

I confessed everything.

*During this whole sequence, stage left, the Creature, stage right, gradually appears (on the screen or played by an actor) as if it were listening to what they are saying.*

*Viktor and the Creature spot each other, flee each other, catch up to each other again, all in silent film manner with exaggerated gestures.*

*At the end of the performance, The Creature grabs Viktor and holds him tight; if it is only appearing on the screen – in the Boris Karlov manner – we will hear everything it says as voice off.*

**The Creature**

Confessed everything?! Then why, why did you abandon me, you wretch?

**Viktor**

Demon, monster vomited out of my imagination, creature from hell, let go of me, go back to the nothingness you should never have emerged from.

**The Creature**

You're the doubly demonic monster who pulled me out of nothingness only to then flee shamefully. Ah, you thought you'd locked me up for ever in your alchemist's lair. But I got out, to take my revenge on you, and that's when I became worse, infinitely worse.

**Viktor**

You were already odious, vile, monstrous. Anybody would have fled in the face of such horror.

**The Creature**

Since you took yourself for God, why didn't you do what God would have done?

**Viktor**

Even God fled in the face of His Creation, he washed everything in the waters of the Flood. I did what He did, you horrible rough draft of an aborted experiment. The only thing I could do was try to drown you.

**The Creature**

Why run away, then? If you didn't know the secrets of Creation, why did you plunge into your laboratory only to give up after the initial results? I was born good, Viktor. It was only after being abandoned by you, yes, that I became loathesome. I'm the one who killed your brother William; on your wedding day, it was also I who murdered your wife; All over the Earth I've left a trail of blood caused by my jealousy at seeing them happy and beautiful, all these human beings.

**Viktor**

How dare you say you were born good? The opposite—horrible. Crazy, hideous, scarred, made of pieces and bits hastily stitched together.

**The Creature**

And whose fault is that? I was like anything that is born, anything that begins, anything that wails in the appalling pangs of childbirth. You ran away, Viktor, you ran away.

**Viktor**

I did not run away. I ran away?

**The Creature**

To atone for your crime, and for me to forgive you, there is just one thing I ask of you on bended knee, give me a companion, a monster in my own image, as badly designed as I am maybe, but someone I can at least gaze on with my eyes without her pushing me away, like the rest, screaming in terror.

**Viktor**

What! You want me to add to my folly in having made you, the folly of doubling you and – O atrocious thought – letting you reproduce! I'll destroy you, on the contrary. I'll plunge you into the waters of the Flood.

**The Creature**

What creature wouldn't avenge themselves for such abandonment? O, I'll kill the lot of them, those that you love.

*The Creature runs away. Viktor falls into the arms of Mary Shelley, who has herself slumped a bit.*

**Viktor**

*Pulling himself together this time without tears, more assured and more grave, less of a wet rag.*

Mary, Mary, if I hadn't run away, if you hadn't made me run away that sinister night, what should I have done? Should I have, did you want me to abort that monster I'd made with my own hands? For me to imitate the God of revenge?

**Mary Shelley**

What God are you talking about? I'm lost now too. Poor sinners who no longer know what crimes we've committed. *You're* telling *me* about smothering one's own creatures in the cradle... Alas, alas. If only mine had survived. My little Hogg, how I would have loved you. Poor Clara, poor William, they were so delicate, and wrinkled, and ugly... so ugly. How I loved them. Who said anything about abortion? There are enough dead, already.

**Viktor**

Why didn't I understand, why don't you make me see? So, my tears of contrition were feined? O Mary, Mary, so aptly-named. That was the secret, then? Mary, what if we started the whole thing again from the beginning, from the laboratory scene.

**Mary Shelley**

I don't even know what I made you do anymore. This Flood sent to Earth to drown all creation, on the pretext that is sinful, what an abomination. You did, indeed, imitate that particular God, to the bitter end. I was wrong to blame you.

**Viktor**

No, Mary. I didn't imitate him since I ran away. It's not creating that is the crime, it's abandoning one's Creation.

**Mary Shelley**

But why then drown it? Never does a God abandon his creatures, no matter how sinful they've become. You're not a sorcerer's apprentice. Neither am I.

*From the wings.*

**The Creature**

Cursed be he who, in confessing a venial sin, hides another, this one mortal.

**Viktor**

*Addressing the Creature who has vanished into the wings.*

Come back, then, Creature, come back demon derived from my over-inventive imagination. No, alas, no, not inventive enough, not consistent enough, not obstinate, patient, loving enough, come back, let me remind you, console you, fashion your face anew...

**Mary Shelley**

Too late. The genie's out of the bottle.

**Viktor**

We must abandon everything, even abandonment.

*Darkness*

*The chorus reforms. Long pause.*

**Hamid**

We did need to do that scene again, actually. We are neither sorcerers, nor apprentices, nor gods.

**Christof**

What a novice He was, this God served by Mr Noah, like some cack-handed inventor who'd toss his drafts in the bin in a rage, one after the other. How pitiful the Flood is, and the Ark, which was too small and the ocean, which you had to bury yourself in in order to be able to float –there is no more shore, no more beyond to escape to.

**Lynn**

There is no Creator God at all, everything has to be started again, everything has to be gone back over. Even what it is to create.

**The Chorus**

There is no more outside, is there? We're heading nowhere, that's it. No more building work, then. No way out.

**Christof**

Yes there is, of course there is, it would be too awful otherwise.

**Hamid**

We have to get through this.

**The Chorus**

So what are we going to do? You didn't hear: we're starting everything again. We're taking everything in hand again.

*Darkness*



## **Sequence 7: Theatrum Mondi**

*This scene will be difficult to perform without hi-tech tools since it's a matter of turning the circus into a vast control room a bit like the operations room in Dr Strangelove. The whole thing should be performed frenetically and the quality of the images should constantly vary. The scene could be greatly prolonged depending on the quality of the data.*

*All the actors put on white lab coats.*

### **Hamid**

Let's start again. We need established facts. Enough history, enough metaphors, enough monsters. Facts, nothing but facts.

### **Christof**

Which we produce ourselves, so we can finally see how they're made.

### **Hamid**

Exactly: verifiable, inspectable, falsifiable, unfalsifiable. Data, nothing but data.

### **Lynn**

That's all very well but you'll soon see that it's not all that easy. You spoke of monsters, Hamid – well, you're in for a fright.

### **Hamid**

I'm not afraid of anything, I'm perfectly ready to look reality in the face. I want to look reality in the face.

### **Christof**

Where do we start?

### **Hamid**

With the globe, obviously, we want global data.

### **Christof**

But we need to get away, then, it's too cramped here. We can't get the globe in here, surely?

**Lynn**

Yes, we can, this circus is a very good size, we just have to make a few alterations. The globe will fit in here very well. You'll see, we just need to learn how to transform the Earth into data, into terabytes of data.

Firstly, we have to ask all the weather bureaus of the world to get their data to us. We need giant screens, big mainframe computers too, good graphics palettes, powerful visualisation instruments, satellites.

**Christof**

*Consulting a list in the same style of acting specified in Sequence 5 with Noah.*

That makes, let's see, we'd need fifteen satellites, one hundred moored weather buoys, six hundred drifting buoys, three thousand planes, seven thousand three hundred boats (on condition that they all have the same forms to fill out), nine hundred stations equipped with radiosondes (those are for atmospheric measurements), eleven thousand land-based stations, dedicated networks, and several very, very big mainframe computers. That would equal seventy-five million items for each twelve-hour period. With that we should be able to hold up. But it won't be at all cheap. And it will never fit into this room.

**Lynn**

Yes it will, the world isn't any bigger, the orb of the known world. Do you want to get data or not?

*Addressing the chorus who are ready for fun anywhere they turn.*

For the world to get in here, we have to go out and look for it all over. You, you'll go and investigate. Us, we'll stay in this nice, calm, quiet, airconditioned room and make a giant immobile eye that will look the world in the face.

**Hamid**

Get to work, get to work.

*On the screen, historic forms of weather bureaus and old 'computing centres' appear.*

*Richardson's computing center as imagined by Schuiten.*

*The chorus vanish into the wings, scattering in all directions.*

*A short-lived character bursts on the scene.*

**Theatre Director**

What is this mess? Where do you people think you are? This is a theatre, this is a play you're supposed to be performing. We're not in a laboratory. You've already cost me an arm and a leg. The audience isn't here to learn something, they want to be entertained. Get all those white lab coats off for me and pick up the storyline – if you're still capable of finding the story for me.

**Lynn**

We're on the right track. Ask the audience if they wouldn't like to find out how the fate they've been saddled with works out.

**Hamid**

Without science, there is no play, no drama, no stakes – all that stems from the sciences. Is the climate getting warmer or not in your view?

**Theatre Director**

How do I know?

**Lynn**

Well, exactly. You know nothing without them, without us. The plot, can only lie there. We have to go through that narrow door.

**Christof**

Anyway, the audience isn't expecting anything precise on our part. They've lost all hope of escaping, there is no more Ark. So let them at least know where they are. That interests them a bit at the end of the day.

**Hamid**

They want facts, that's for sure, not opinions.

**Lynn**

We're putting the world on stage – that's not theatre? Let's get on with our work. We've been interrupted enough. The real worksite is this one. Let the theatre of the world enter.

**Theatre Director**

But I warned you: no didactic theatre. Read the contract again.

*Exit the theatre director, shoved outside by the three stooges and jostled on his way out by the chorus on their way back in.*

*Bustling return of the chorus streaming in from all directions.*

### **The Chorus**

The data aren't easy to get. They've changed the calibration of the thermometres, we can't make comparisons. China refuses to share its data on the pretext that it's fighting against capitalism. The stations are located in cities where it's too warm, and that changes everything. There are twelve models of radiosondes that aren't compatible. The boats take days to send their reports in, so we can't incorporate them.

*They all sit down at the table, you can hear morse code, radio calls, log reports quoted over the air.*

*Noise of teleprinters, fax machines, modems. They type up data by hand using keyboards. Noise of punch cards.*

### **Lynn**

Let's try and see what it amounts to all the same.

*In the dark, everyone holds their breath. A map of the globe appears on the screen but it is full of holes, almost impossible to recognise, made of enormous pixels.*

### **The Chorus**

You can't see much. It's full of holes. Yawning gaps. If that's the world, it isn't a pretty sight. The weather girl on tele does a lot better than that and she's a lot more accurate with it.

### **Lynn**

Obviously with the data you've collected... I acknowledge that's it's not a very pretty sight.

### **Christof**

Can't we increase the resolution a bit?

*The image becomes even more blurred.*

### **Hamid**

I told you we couldn't know anything precise. It's not like geology, or cartography. The atmosphere and the oceans are far too complex. Earth and fire, that's still doable, water and air, pffft, they go all over the place. If you were hoping to convince us once and for all, it's backfired.

**Lynn**

We need more stations, more data points, more standardisations, more international institutions, more cooperation, more meetings, more forms.

**Hamid**

You think bureaucrats and congresses will give us confidence? Me, I'm like St Thomas, Lynn, I want to see things directly.

**Christof**

He didn't see all that directly either, yet he believed without touching.

**Lynn**

It's not a matter of belief! You just need to have confidence in the institutions we've put in place.

**Hamid**

The institutions! So, then, science is like the Catholic Church, a heavenly climate bureaucracy... The World Weather Watch, the GARP, the GATE, the FFGE, the NWP, the Global Historical Climatology Network, the MCDW... bureaus and more bureaus, meetings and more meetings, resolutions and more resolutions.

**Lynn**

Of course we need bureaus and records. Without infrastructure, there's no visible globe. Without those things you wouldn't even know the temperature in this room.

**Christof**

I take bets, I take measurements.

*Stage direction: the chorus spread out with thermometers and barometers to the various corners of the room, under the seats, between spectators, and call out the results while one of them writes them down at the table. They get the data wrong, and have to go through everything again. It's a bit like an election night.*

**Lynn**

It's the only way of bringing the world to them. Here in the theatre we're changing the scale. We have to divide up, calibrate, standardise, collect, refine, interpolate, verify.

**Hamid**

Too many middlemen, far too many middlemen. We'd need scrutineers all over the place.

**Lynn**

Anyway things are looking up, the resolution's getting higher, the pixels are getting smaller, the stations moving closer, the satellite coverage is improving. Look.

*In the darkness a new moving image of station coverage appears and it is in fact more precise. The images are drawn from the cartography of the tools of knowledge.*

**The Chorus**

We still can't work out a thing.. It's like a fly's eye, only the fly's blind. What exactly is happening? This stuff is just data sources. But the storyline, the crux of the plot, where's that?

**Lynn**

Obviously you can't see anything. You need a model to interpret the data.

**Hamid**

And what'd you know, more middlemen.

**Lynn**

Without a model we'd never be able to correct the data.

**Hamid**

Go on, correct, interpolate, cook and recook – that'll really increase confidence!

**Lynn**

We'll show models without data, just to see what that produces.

*The canopy then fills with visualisations of abstract simulations and this time all the points on the grid are filled. We see different forms of scenarios scroll past.*

**Christof**

That's better, that's much better, the resolution is excellent, this time.

**Lynn**

Yes, but it's purely theoretical, it's what ought to happen if we understood anything, if we were capable of coming up with true laws of physics, if we could derive all the equations. That is not the reality.

**Christof**

Pity, you could see something. You felt like you could, anyway.

**Hamid**

Would you mind feeding some data into your model? Just a small dose from time to time.

**Lynn**

Just the right ones, well the most firmly established, the ones that have been corrected thanks precisely to models. All we can do is simulate. There's no way of doing anything else; afterwards we inject properly recalibrated observations and we see where that leads us, in fifty or a hundred years.

*New projections, this time moving images in colour, the models gradually absorbing data.*

**Hamid**

Yet another snake biting its tail, going round and round in circles: the data are based on the models which are based on the data.

**Lynn**

Exactly. That's why it's so reliable: we don't use any data that hasn't been redesigned by the models and no model that hasn't been calibrated by the data.

**Hamid**

What you're building is a house of cards.

**Lynn**

A puzzle, it's a puzzle made up of tens of thousands of pieces accumulated over close to a hundred and fifty years by tens of thousands of interpreters. The more you cook, as you

put it, that more certain it is. That's it, we make comparisons with human action, up above, and without human action, down below.

*The resolutions become more and more precise.*

**Christof**

A sort of subtle textual analysis, immense, magnificent, on a planetary scale – I mean, it changes the scale of the planet. Mr Noah would've liked this Ark of calculations. It's really quite beautiful, isn't it?

**Hamid**

But is it true, is everything there?

**Lynn**

It's plausible. It's slowly, gradually, patiently, institutionally, probably verifiable. Point to point, Hamid. It's woven together little by little.

**Hamid**

But it's not really and truly true.

**Lynn**

It's like a rug woven with the silk of fifty thousand spiders of which each thread is four times stronger than steel.

**Hamid**

That's exactly what I said: not really and truly true.

**The Chorus**

But the storyline, we want to see the crux of the plot now that you've woven this immense tapestry. Is it getting warmer or not? Is it our fault or not? How long have we got? We really would like to take everything in hand again, but we'd like to know what to take.

**Lynn**

Wait, we still have to configure. And to do so, we need to cook because real calculations are not doable: we'd need a computer as big as the Earth for hundreds of years, to calculate a single time step of a single day. We're not God, there is no God. Clouds have an effect on the temperature of plants, plants on respiration, wind on dust, dust on clouds,



industry on dust, and so on. The only way of getting on top of all that is for there to be not one image, but dozens of simulations. That's the whole beauty of the exercise: not an image, not a model, but dozens and dozens of variations.

*A stream of configured models, together with different hypotheses each time, are shown on the screen.*

[Paul Edwards powerpoint]

**Hamid**

Stop this fairground wheel, I want one, one only, you're making my head spin, let it be the truth, the image of the truth that I can stare in the face.

**Lynn**

Here 's the thing: it's a matter of dramatising, we can't do any more than that.

**Hamid**

But it's the hockey stick graph, the most disputed graph there is.

**Lynn**

But also the most robust, thanks to the dispute and all the associated discussions. This is where you're at, this is where we're at. A maximum of certainties for a maximum of risks.

**Christof**

*Ecce Homo.*

**Hamid**

We'll never know any more than that about it? We're supposed to bet all on this?

**Lynn**

Maybe we will never know anything more precise, since we've totally immersed ourselves in experimentation and we've already disturbed the situation so much that we can no longer compare it to any series of historical data...

**Hamid**

No landmarks then?

**Christof**

That's what Mr Noah used to say: if it wasn't such a thorny subject, you'd already have changed your life based on indices a thousand times more tenuous.

**The Chorus**

Mr PP said the same thing. So, we have to change our lives then?

**Hamid**

We're embarked, horribly embarked.

*Darkness*

## Sequence 8: Atlas, Atlas

*We are back in the same dreamy situation as in sequence 1: it is once again night, under the starry vault.*

*In the middle of the arena, there is nothing more now but a globe of the kind you find in schools.*

*We hear Shelley's poem, the globe turns and the globe of the vault too.*

### A Voice in the Chorus

The **everlasting** universe of things  
 Flows through the mind, and rolls its rapid waves,  
 Now dark, now glittering, now reflecting gloom  
 Now lending splendor, where from secret springs  
 The source of human thought its tribute brings  
 Of waters, with a sound but half its own,  
 Such as a feeble brook will oft assume  
 In the wild woods, among the mountains lone,  
 Where waterfalls around it leap **forever**,  
 Where woods and winds contend, and a vast river  
 Over its rocks **ceaselessly** bursts and raves.

### Lynn

'The everlasting universe of things' ... All that was before, long ago, in days gone by, in the time of poets, when you could count on immutable nature, on ever-abundant springs, on the regular return of the seasons, on the eternal ice fields of the eternal poles. It's all over now, reliable nature is a thing of the past. The Great Pan is dead.

### Hamid

Nature is always there, indifferent to our worries and to our woes, unwilling consoler, vast amorphous worksite, it's not a matter of poetry, Lynn, but of engineers and scientists.

### Lynn

If only nature had remained indifferent, but she no longer is, Hamid, we're weighing her down, apparently we're completely incapable of making a difference. Neither the poets nor the scientists foresaw that.

### The Chorus

‘Anthropogenic origin of global warming’; ‘Anthropogenic origin of global warming’? How can we possibly weigh the Earth down to that extent? That’s what we can’t quite believe. Aren’t we dwarves, cheese-mites, microbes? We’re just puffs of air, we pass. All that stuff is just fairytales. It’s for our great, great grandchildren, not for us. It can’t concern us, it’s just too big for us.

**Christof**

It’s true that there’s a real problem of size here. You can see we’re not drawn to scale, not equal to the task. That they can’t lumber us with the way everything’s gone haywire. They can’t get us to shoulder all that.

*Lynn goes to the globe and spins it.*

**Lynn**

40 terawatts – that’s the energy released by the Earth, the loyal, the earthy Earth, and us, all of us together, is already 13 terawatts. All of us together, of course, with our animals, our plants, our factories, not just you Hamid, not you, Christof, not you there either, all of you silently gathered together in this place. Yes, Christof, we are drawn to scale. We finally measure up. We didn’t, it’s true. Not in the days of the poets and the engineers. Now, yes.

*The canopy shrinks as though the theatre had become a stifling circle.*

**Hamid**

The slightest volcanic eruption wreaks more havoc than we do. It’s too implausible. The tiniest meteor.

**Lynn**

Volcanos, it’s true, do damage, but they aren’t erupting 24/7, 365 days a year. We are! That’s what changes all the calculations. As if we were a slow meteor, distributed, silent, but drawn to scale, completely to scale, and almost as powerful as the tectonic plates – that’s what we’re culp.. capable of.

**Hamid**

We’d finally emerged from a world that was suffocating within limits that were merely human, and now you want to make us go back there again. We’ve moved on from ancient times; ‘man is not the measure of all things’.

**Lynn**

It's the end and the beginning, at once. Man's little circle has expanded and now covers the great circle of life.

*All around the stage apparatus the Ouroboros appears, curling around the spectators.*

### **Christof**

Locked down without a hereafter? Look at us, here, all together, and, up above, all that immensity, galaxy after galaxy, and around us, the indefinitely extended circle of the horizon. We've got room, plenty of room, and infinite space.

*The canopy expands so that the theatre is quite tiny.*

### **Lynn**

We *had* room. We *have had* room. Starting from the Moon and going beyond towards the stars, there may well be space, indifferent space to make poets dream and the engineers of NASA do sums, but below the Moon, no. Into that infinite space we will no longer go, you know very well, no Ark, no space station will take us there – we'd die, up there, anyway. We've come back down below the Moon. Just like before. The universe is a thing of the past.

### **The Chorus**

'Anthropenic origin of global warming'. Why can't they just say 'human origin' and be done with it? The evidence that we're responsible isn't quite in yet, happily. It may well be the sun. Do *you* feel responsible?

### **Hamid**

That's enough of all this human business. Anthropocentrism is so yesterday, it's finished, that's what we've left behind.

### **Lynn**

That's what we've gone back to. After the holocene, the anthropocene, *I* didn't come up with the name.

*On the canopy the following message is displayed:*

During the 34<sup>th</sup> international geological congress meeting in Brisbane, Australia, in August 2012, the special committee tasked with deciding the name of geological eras will in all probability adopt the term 'anthropocene' to refer to the current era, over the course of which human activity has dominated all other, natural, geological forces.

### **Lynn**

‘Man is the lack of measure of all things’, of all earthly things.

**Hamid**

God I hate this stifling little circle, this navel-gazing, this crushing soul-searching *in camera*, all these stuffy figures of anthropomorphism. Air, give me air, I’m suffocating. Let’s get away from human limitations.

**The Chorus**

Anthropocene, anthropophagous, he thinks he’s superman now, tectonic man! Either that or Atlas, the mythical giant. That puts us in our place a bit, that does! We’ve had the age of dinosaurs and the interglacial age. Now it’s the age of geological humans. So human beings are going to disappear? We’re dwarves, yes, yet we carry giants on our shoulders... I’m a lilliputian Atlas...

**Lynn**

You said it a moment ago, Hamid, ‘man is the lack of measure of all things’. Well, then, here we are, no? We’re finally the measure of all things, here below. We’ve got there. Once, people said it without believing it, now, it’s for real.

**Hamid**

We still have to measure up.

**Christof**

Here we are, standing on the shore, and we’re waiting for the ferryman who will carry us on his back, to the other side.

*The globe appears on the canopy and seems to crush the spectators as well as the actors who have turned into minuscule Atlases.*

**The Chorus**

We’re going to sink. Help. It’s the Flood. I’m drowning.

*The figure of St Christopher the cosmos-bearer then appears.*

**Hamid**

We’ll never get out of this.

**Lynn**

Hold on tight. We're already out of it.

**Christof**

Is that the face of Gaia over there?

**Lynn**

Her disfigured face...

**Christof**

... Beneath the deformed face of the human.

**Hamid**

Hold on, you have to fight the current. Get to work, get to work.

*Darkness.*

*The chorus gather together in the middle of the arena.*

**The Chorus**

It's weird: the very moment they're saying that the human is over, they're making him play the lead role. Yes, what a funny role they're making us play on stage in the theatre, the Globe theatre.

## Voice of the Epilogue

Adam. father of mankind  
 Wonder of Creation  
 On the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil  
 Were three apples, that Eve gave you, one after the other.  
 The first, they say, drove you from this Earthly Paradise  
 But the sentence was light  
 Since, through the pangs of childbirth,  
 Work, love and invention  
 Enchanted the earth  
 Preciously clasped  
 To the bosom of the Almighty  
 Cosmos of future blessings.  
 When you ate the second apple  
 It was the God of ancient promises  
 Who was driven from the world  
 But what a reward was this universe  
 This– infinite – universe  
 Offered up to your ingenuity  
 To go forth and multiply.  
 Deliverance, what deliverance it was!  
 But if we wore our mourning for the Beyond so gaily  
 It was because we didn't yet know  
 That nature, too, would one day be missing,  
 And here, in our teeth, we still have  
 Bits of the third apple  
 That we've only just bitten into:  
 It's from the universe, this time, that we find ourselves driven,  
 Brought back within the narrow confines  
 Of the tiny terrestrial world  
 Doomed like Atlas  
 To carry on our shoulders  
 The limited immensity of things  
 Encircled by this sphinx of air and fire  
 Gaia  
 False nature and false divinity  
 And we must, with her, acquire  
 At last  
 Knowledge of Good and Evil.

*Curtain*