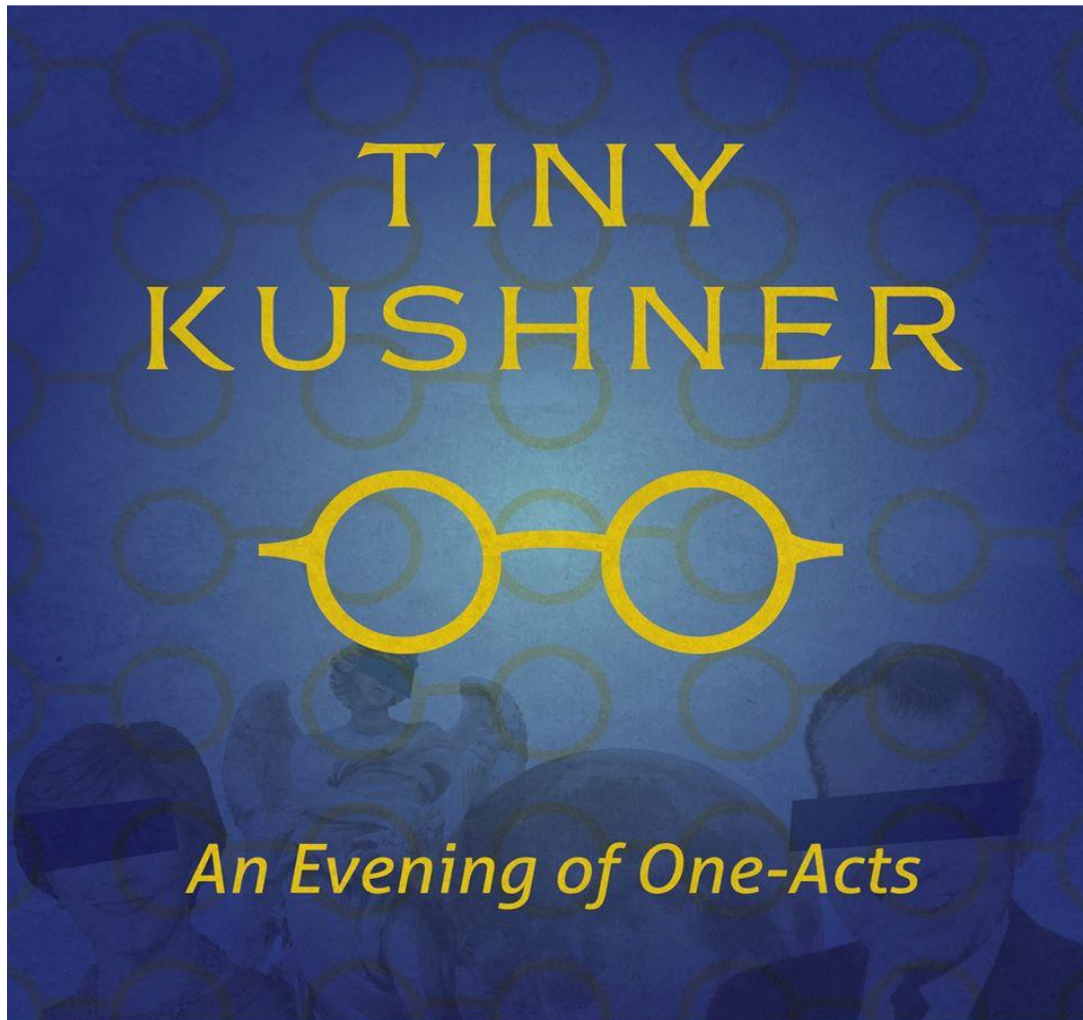


***ONLY WE WHO GUARD THE MYSTERY  
SHALL BE UNHAPPY***



*Tiny Kushner* Dramaturge Guide  
compiled by Lindsay Kujawa

## **Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)**

French composer, and organist. Considered to be one of the most influential composers of the 20th Century. Messiaen travelled widely and absorbed the musical influences he encountered, which is evident in his work. In addition to music, Olivier had a vast knowledge and interest in birds.

### **Saint Fracois D' Assise (Ah-Ce-Ce)**

St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and the ecology, was a Roman Catholic saint who took the gospel literally by following all Jesus said and did. Growing up a wild and rich youth, St. Francis heard Christ speak to him one day and was charged by Christ to repair the church. St. Francis' teaching are vastly different than many others in the church, and to this day his influence is still widely seen throughout the church.

### **Saint Fracois D' Assise (opera)**

An opera chronicling the life of the catholic Saint Fracois D' Assise. The material for the comes from the writings of Franciscan brothers. The opera debuted in 1983 with the Paris Opera at the Palace Granier.

#### **Synopsis:**

##### **Act 1 Scene 1: The Cross**

**Saint Francis explains to Brother Leo that for the love of Christ he must patiently endure all contradictions, all suffering. This is the "Perfect joy."**



##### ***Scene 2: Lauds***

After the recitation of Matins by the Brothers, Saint Francis, remaining alone, prays that he might meet a leper and be capable of loving him.

##### ***Scene 3: The Kissing of the Leper***

At a leper-hospital, a leper, horribly blood-stained and covered in pustules, rails against his disease. Saint Francis enters and, sitting close to him, speaks gently. An angel appears behind a window and says: "Leper, your heart accuses you, but God is greater than your heart." Troubled by the voice and by the goodness of Saint Francis, the leper is stricken with remorse. Saint Francis embraces him and, miraculously, the leper is cured and dances for joy. More important than the cure of the leper is the growth of grace in the soul of Saint Francis and his exultation at having triumphed over himself.

## **Act 2**

#### *Scene 4: The Journeying Angel*

On a forest road on La Verna an angel appears, disguised as a traveler. His knocking on the door of the monastery makes a terrific sound, symbolising the inrush of Grace. Brother Masseo opens the door. The Angel asks Brother Elias, the vicar of the Order, a question about predestination. Brother Elias refuses to answer and pushes the Angel outside. The Angel knocks on the door again and puts the same question to Brother Bernard, who replies with much wisdom. The Angel having gone, Brother Bernard and Brother Masseo look at each other, Bernard remarking, "Perhaps it was an angel..."

#### *Scene 5: The Angel-Musician*

The Angel appears to Saint Francis and, to give him a foretaste of celestial bliss, plays him a solo on his viol. This solo is so glorious that Francis swoons.

#### *Scene 6: The Sermon to the Birds*

Set at Assisi, at the Carceri, with a large green oak tree in spring with many birds singing. Saint Francis, followed by Brother Masseo, preaches a sermon to the birds and solemnly blesses them. The birds reply with a great chorus in which are heard not only birds of Umbria, especially the blackcap, but also birds of other countries, of distant lands, notably the Isle of Pines, close to New Caledonia.

### Act 3

#### *Scene 7: The Stigmata*

On La Verna at night in a cave beneath an overhanging rock, Saint Francis is alone. A great Cross appears. The voice of Christ, symbolized by a choir, is heard almost continually. Five luminous beams dart from the Cross and successively strike the two hands, the two feet, and the right side of Saint Francis, with the same terrific sound that accompanied the Angel's knocking. These five wounds, which resemble the five wounds of Christ, are the divine confirmation of Saint Francis's holiness.

#### *Scene 8: Death and the New Life*

Saint Francis is dying, stretched out at full length on the ground. All the Brothers are around him. He bids farewell to all those he has loved, and sings the last verse of his *Canticle of the Sun*, the verse of "our sister bodily Death". The Brothers sing Psalm 141. The Angel and the Leper appear to Saint Francis to comfort him. Saint Francis utters his last words: "Lord! Music and poetry have led me to Thee [...] in default of Truth [...] dazzle me for ever by Thy excess of Truth..." He dies. Bells ring. Everything disappears. While the choir hymns the Resurrection, a patch of light illuminates the spot where previously the body of Saint Francis lay. The light increases until it becomes blinding. The curtain falls.

## **Concrete bombing (1st bombing reference)**

In 1999 the US and British governments created a new laser guided bomb that was filled with 2,000 pounds of concrete rather than explosives. The use of these bombs was meant to decrease the amount of casualties to minimal or none, and also allow for more targeted attacks. Although the US and British governments claimed there were minimal casualties there is no way to track the accuracy of these statements because no official tally has been kept. It is known that there are vast atrocities that people do attribute to concrete bombings.

## **Amiriyah shelter bombing**

*(from Wikipedia)* The **Amiriyah shelter bombing** was an aerial attack that killed more than 408 civilians on 13 February 1991 during the Persian Gulf War, when an air-raid shelter ("Public Shelter No. 25"), also referred to as the Al Firdos C3 bunker by the U.S. military, in the Amiriyah neighborhood of Baghdad, Iraq, was destroyed by the U.S. Air Force with two laser-guided "smart bombs".



According to the U.S. military, they targeted Amiriyah because it fit the profile of a military command center; it picked up electronic signals coming from the site, and spy satellites could see a lot of people and vehicles moving in and out of the bunker. The shelter was used in the Iran–Iraq War and the Persian Gulf War by hundreds of civilians.

## **Eid al-Fitr**

Known as the Feast of Breaking the Fast, Eid al-Fitr signifies the end of Ramadan and is the one day no Muslim is allowed to fast.

## **The Gulf War**

The Gulf War (August 2, 1990- February 28, 1991), codenamed Operation Desert Shield, for operations leading to the buildup of troops and defense of Saudi Arabia and Operation Desert Storm was a war waged by coalition forces from 34 nations led by the United States against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait.

Although this war technically ended in 1991, it still has never truly ended, as air strikes and sanctions have continued since.

## **Depleted Uranium Dust**

Radioactive particles left over from nuclear weapons that can cause cancer and other terrible diseases.

## **Fyodor Dostoyevsky**

*"if everyone were actively Christian, not a single social question would come up ... If they were Christians they would settle everything"*

*(from bio.com)* Born Nov. 11, 1821 in Moscow, Russia, Fyodor Dostoyevsky was educated at home until 1833. He studied to be a military engineer, but shortly after graduating decided to become a writer. He experienced traumatic events, including a mock execution and exile. His work explored the human condition and is credited with shaping existentialism. *Crime and Punishment* is one of his most well-known novels.



## **The Brothers Karamazov**

*(from wikipedia)* *The Brothers Karamazov* is a passionate philosophical novel set in 19th century Russia, that enters deeply into the ethical debates of God, free will, and morality. It is a spiritual drama of moral struggles concerning faith, doubt, and reason, set against a modernizing Russia. Dostoyevsky composed much of the novel in Staraya Russa, which inspired the main setting. Since its publication, it has been acclaimed as one of the supreme achievements in literature.

The novel is published in 13 sections.

## **The Grand Inquisitor**

*(from cliffnotes)* During the sixteenth century in Spain, at the height of the Inquisition, someone resembling Christ appears unannounced in the streets. The people recognize Him immediately and begin to flock about Him. But, as He is healing several of the sick and lame, an old cardinal also recognizes Him and orders the guards to arrest Him. Once again Christ is abducted.

That night, He receives a visitor. The Grand Inquisitor enters the darkened cell and begins a severe reprimand of Christ for appearing again and hindering the work of the church. The Grand Inquisitor explains to Christ that, because of His rejection of the three temptations, He placed an intolerable burden of freedom upon man. The church, however, is now correcting His errors and aiding man by removing their awful burden of freedom. He explains that Christ erred when He expected man to voluntarily choose to follow Him. The basic nature of man, says the Inquisitor, does not allow him to reject either earthly bread or security or happiness in exchange for something so indefinite as what Christ expects.

If Christ had accepted the proffered bread, man would have been given security instead of a freedom of choice, and if Christ had performed a miracle and had cast himself down from the pinnacle, man would have been given something miraculous to worship. The nature of man, insists the Inquisitor, is to seek the miraculous. Finally, Christ should have accepted the power offered Him by the devil. Because He did not, the church has now had to assume such power for the benefit of man. And since Christ's death, the church has been forced to correct the errors made by Him. Now, at last mankind willingly submits its freedom to the church in exchange for happiness and security. This balance, says the Inquisitor, must not be upset.

At the end of the monologue, the Grand Inquisitor admits that of necessity he is on the side of the devil, but the challenge that Christ placed on mankind allows only a few strong people to be saved; the rest must be sacrificed to the strong. The Grand Inquisitor's scheme, at least, provides an earthly happiness for the mass of mankind even though it will not lead to eternal salvation. On the other hand, Christ's method would not have saved these same weak and puny men either.

When he finishes, the Grand Inquisitor looks at Christ, who has remained silent the entire time. Now He approaches the old churchman and kisses him on his dry, withered lips. The Grand Inquisitor frees Him suddenly, saying that He is never to come again.

Ivan finishes his story and wonders now if Alyosha will reject him or will try to accept him as a brother. As an answer, Alyosha leans forward and kisses his brother. "You are plagiarizing my poem," Ivan cries in delight. The brothers leave the restaurant together, but then they part, each going his separate way.