

FUNDAMENT!

AN OPERATIC EXPERIENCE IN ONE (OVER)ACT

written by
Maria Hamilton

with help from

John Bray (who OCR'd it 28 years later in 2016 with help from Maria)
Penny Heal
Jason Stevens
John Styles
Ivan Towlson
Tom Yates

as performed at CONINE, 6.8.88, with

Nancy Reading as Hari Seldon
Matt Bishop as the Judge
Lydia Towlson as the Sheep
Tim Adye as Salvor Hardin
Adrian Cox as Haut Rodric
Penny Heal as Pirenne
Alastair McCullough as the Narrator
John Styles as Aporat
Phil Raines as Lefkin
Jason Stevens as Commodora Asper
Colin Wilkinson as Commodor Asper
Neal Tringham as Ebling Mis
Penny Heal as Bayta
Tom Yates as the Mule
Ivan Towlson as Arkady
Dave Clements as Dr Darell
Jason Stevens as Homir Munn
Tom Yates as the Announcement
Marina McDonald as Preem Palver
Alastair McCullough as the Soldier
Matt Bishop as Mrs Preem Palver

and a Chorus composed at various times of Nancy, Matt, Tim, Adrian, Penny, Alastair, John,
Phil Jason, Colin, Tom, Ivan, Dave, Marina and Maria Hamilton

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Hari Seldon's Psychohistory (to "Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band")

Chorus: (It was) Thirty thousand years ago today
That the Galaxy fell in decay
It was going down and down and down
Which is just what Hari Seldon found
So let me tell you all about
The technique that he did it by
Hari Seldon's psychohistory!

It's Hari Seldon's psychohistory
It tells you what the future is
It's Hari Seldon's psychohistory
It's something that you'd best not miss
Hari Seldon's psycho--
Hari Seldon's psycho—
Hari Seldon's psychohistory!
It's such a lovely theory
I think you will agree
It's such a lovely theory
We'd like to write a trilogy
Or maybe we'll write two".

Hari: I was just a sociologist
Until one evening I got pissed
And suddenly it came to me
I saw a future history
The foundation of this all was laid
And a trilogy was on its way
Hari Seldon's psychohistory!!!

Scene: a court. A judge with a sheep tied to the top of his head.

Judge: So, Mr Seldon--if you're not going to overthrow the Empire, what exactly do you plan to do with these 100,000 people, if you---er---don't mind me asking?

Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation (to "Supercalifragilistic...")

{Said Hari S} I fear that the Empire is doomed
The Galaxy will have collapsed by Thursday afternoon
My solution is psychohistorically sound
To escape this dreadful fate I say that we must found

Chorus: The Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation
Saving the known universe from certain degradation
Holding all our knowledge for another generation
The Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation!

Hari: I don't need much to do this, just a pen, a desk, a phone,
A hundred thousand people and a planet of my own
Of course you could just kill me but it's not a good idea
My equations say that you'd be dead within the year!

Chorus:

Fifty years later: Terminus. Scene: a dinner table.

Salvor Hardin: (puffs on cigar) Let me get this straight. You want to conquer the
Foundation and parcel Terminus up into estates.

Haut Rodric: Of course not. Anacreon is offering Terminus protection at a low, low,
near-cost price. Mayor, this military base we offer is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Hardin: American Express?

Rodric: Sorry, no credit. Gold.

Hardin: Ah... No can do... Terminus has no metal at all. Not a smidgen. Has it, Pirenne old boy?

(He removes his hand from Pirenne's mouth, where it has been up until now, just long
enough for him to speak)

Pirenne: None gmph gmph .. urgh gmph.

Hardin: In fact, while we're on the subject, could you let us have some plutonium for our atomic
bom—— power plants?

Rodric (squeaking): You've got atomic power?

Hardin (cool): Well, of course. Oh look, he's fainted... What's this? (He picks up a sheaf of
paper from Haut Rodric's limp hand)

Pirenne (Reads): "Cookability—that's the beauty of steam—power" Gosh.

The vault. Hari Seldon sings.

Hari: As you may know already the Foundation is a con
At the end of the Galaxy there is another one
Working independently you both shall overcome

And shape a bright new Empire by the next millennium!

Chorus: The Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation
Shaping all the rulers for a thousand generations
Heading towards total universal domination
The Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation!

Thirty years later. A spaceship.

Narrator: The attack ships of the Anacreonian navy are speeding towards the great Foundation, from whom all blessings——ie. atomic power——flows.
But the Foundation priest on board has other ideas”.

He Who Would Violent Be (to "Monks' Gate" aka "To Be A Pilgrim")

Aporat: He who would violent be
'Gainst the Foundation
Shall lose his heavenly
Health Care and Pension
Son, we do wish you well
But you will fry in Hell
If you try to rebel
'Gainst the Foundation

Chorus: In the noble tradition
Of Hober Mallow
We would rather scare you to death
Than use our ammo
It would be such a waste
To blow you out of space
So be thou meek and chaste
Like the Foundation.

The ship darkens and loses power. The soldiers bow, scrape, generally grovel and ask for mercy. Admiral of the Fleet Lefkin appears.

Lefkin: There you are! What is the meaning of your treasonable action?
Return the power to the ship, you snivelling Foundation sky-pilot!

Aporat: Shan't

Lefkin: Seize that man! Surely you don't believe in the Galactic Spirit,
Zanussi--?

Aporat: Seize the blasphemer! (Soldiers seize Lefkin. He disappears under a sea of religious fanatics.) How can you stand by and listen to this man speak against the holy Foundation (from whom all blessings, ie. atomic power, flow) in the very presence of one of its sacred priests?

Of course, the Foundation wins (this is one of those "They climb the Andes" stage directions). The scene returns to the time vault. On comes Hari!

Hari: Ninety—eight point four percent says you lot are still here
Flogging all the plebs electric cookers for a prayer
But you should still remember that religion's in decline
I just hope that you can think of something else in time!

Chorus: The Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation
Swapping fake religion for some cheap refrigeration
The best piece of theology since Luther's Reformation
The Encyclopaedia Galactica Foundation

Some years later, on Korell. Commodor and Commodora Asper in bed.

Commodora: Oh, look, dear, the electric blanket's stopped working.

Commodor (Lecherously): Well we'll have to find some other way of keeping warm, eh? Eh?

Commodora: Oh no. Not until you stop the war and get all our nice goodies back.
Just because you don't want their religion you're spoiling all our fun.
My microwave hasn't worked for months

Commodor: Look, I'm no more keen on the Foundation trade blockade than you are.

Commodore: But I don't think you appreciate how bad things are getting. (Enter a chorus of wives; they all sing together)

Our Favourite Things (to the obvious tune)

Raindrops on roses and mains—run vibrators
Microwave ovens and sleek calculators
Atomic haircurlers tied up with string
These are a few of our favourite things

Tell our despot
He can't get hot
Till the ships come in
He'll sleep on the spare bed
His wife won't give him (a sudden fit of coughing overtakes the chorus)
Till the power flows again.

Narrator: We skip ahead a few decades--valuing plot over action, or was it vice versa, noone ever tells me these things, I should have taken that job with the National Theatre, it pays better, Freudian sheep, oh God, I'm cracking up, I can't stand much-----

The Narrator is arrested or otherwise forcibly evicted. Ebling Mis, Bayta and Torah (the honeymooners) and Magnifico the Mule are all gathered round an Amstrad—y thing. Apparently.

Ebling Mis: Eureka!

Bayta promptly shoots him.

Seldonian Rhapsody (to a somewhat mutant version of "Bohemian Rhapsody")

Chorus: Bayta just killed the man,
Thought that he would spill the beans
So she blew away his brains
Knew that he would tell the Mule
If he lived to breathe another word

Bayta: Toran, ooh-ooh-ooh—ooh
You're always such a wimp
The Mule had your mind under his control
All along, all along
Right from the beginning

Mule: I'm just a mutant, nobody loves me

Chorus: He's just a mutant with a large Empire
Nose like a light bulb, long skinny legs
Here he comes, there he goes
What a stupid nose

Mule: Mind—zap! I have a lovely nose!
Mind—zap! Mindzap!

You will love my nose
Love my no~o—o—ose

Chorus: Ho~ho—ho—ho~ho—ho-ho!

Mule: Richard Nixon, Richard Nixon
I have a lovely nose

Chorus: By Seldon's Plan, plastic surgery is what you need
You need, you need!
(cue guitar (acoustic only) solo and high-kicks by chorus)

Mule: So you think you can mock me and laugh at my nose
The more planets I conquer the longer it grows!
Oh, Bayta, why not be a traitor
Life is more fun
When you're on the run
With the Mule!
Noses do not matter
However big they be
Noses do not matter
Noses do not matter
To me

But suddenly--shock horror--the Mule spontaneously dies! How strange!

Mule (It's a Wagner death speech—~oh joy.) Curses! I forgot that my mutation renders me so weak that the effort of singing could at any time kill me stone dead". Aaarggghhhhh. (He sings)

Don't Cry For Me (tune obvious again. we think)

Don't cry for me, Hari Seldon
The truth is you are a stiff now
You have been dead now
For such a long time
And your predictions
Were on the wrong line
I fucked up your theories, dear Hari
You never considered mutation
Some cosmic rays zapped
My Daddy's dingle
Now I go in for
Mind domination

Scene: Arkady's bedroom. Arkady is sitting in front of a very advanced (you'll be lucky) Amstrad. During this scene all the words spoken come up on the "Amstrad" in curly purple letters (you'll be doubly lucky)

Arkady: The future of Seldon's plan". (There is a tap on the window. A MAN is outside

Pelleas Anthor: Be a good girl and let me in.

Arkady (Seductively) : How dare you! I'm not the sort of girl to let strange men into her bedroom... at... night.

Pelleas (Agitated.): But it's urgent! Quick, before someone sees me!

Arkady: How do I know you're not armed?

Pelleas: But I'm not

Arkady: I don't trust you. Take your coat off. (He does.) And your shoes
How do I know you haven't got a knife in your trousers?

She lets him in, promptly overpowers him and ties him to the bed. Her father comes in.

Arkady: Er... (Holding whip)

Dr Darell: (Sees purple script) ARKADY!!!

The script rolls up again: "Shazbat!" The scene shifts to Dr Darrell's living room, where the conspirators (those members of the Chorus who have dark glasses, or better still mirrorshades) are gathered.

The Conspirators' Song (to Disney's "The Bare Necessities")

We are all good conspirators
Such virtuous conspirators
Rooting out the spies under our beds
With our encephalography
And our mind photography
We'll root out all the evil from our heads.
If you have a flat line
In your frontal lobe
The Second Foundation
Has got you cold

It isn't hard for us to find
If they have tampered with your mind
Munn will go to the Mule's home
And find their hideout on his own
Thank you, well volunteered!

Homir Munn leaves to go to Kalgan.

Dr Darell You can come down now, Arkady... (shouts) Arkady?

Homir Munn's spaceship. Arkady hiding in corner (obviously desperate for loo). Vidphone beeps.

Dr Darell: Er... you didn't see Arkady at the Spaceport, did you?

Homir Munn (Behind Munn, Arkady creeps out.) No, why? (Flushing noise.): She's in my loo!

The Arkady Hate Song (to "How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria?")

Chorus: How d'you solve a problem like Arkady
A girl too young to wriggle on your face
Dress her up in skins
And sell her to Stettin
Or push her out the airlock into space
Won't somebody take out dear Arkady
Kill her off with style and with grace

Put her in an Anne McCaffrey novel
Push her off a dragon while in flight
If we can kill her off
We'll end this awful plot
And all go home and get an early night
Won't somebody take out dear Arkady
Consign her to a grave far out of sight

Put her in a novel by Bob Heinlein
How about The Number Of The Beast
Melt her down for glue
Or put her in a stew
And serve her up as Farmer's Unknown Feast
Won't somebody take out dear Arkady
Kill her off and give us all some peace

The Spaceport. Announcements ("Flight 656 to Betelgeuse blah etc").

Announcement: The new sex slave of Lord Stettin has escaped! We shall be searching the spaceport shortly. No—one is to leave...

Arkady: Well, actually I wouldn't mind being a sex slave--

Kindly farmer Preem Palver appears and rushes up.

Preem Palver (Yokel accent.): Poor child! (He claps his hand over Arkady's mouth as a soldier approaches.)

Soldier: (Sloane. Remember this was your idea.) Excuse me, OK, but you appear to be holding the escaped sex slave, yah?

Mrs Palver: How can you say such a thing, zur! She's our niece, zur!

Soldier: Then, like, why (to Palver) have you got your hand over her mouth, OK, y'know, yah?

Palver: She was playing with superglue, zur.

Soldier: OK, yah, I see. And have you any ID, OK?

Palver (Fluencing him.): Second Foundation, zur?

Soldier: That'll do nicely, OK.

Palver (To Arkady): Now, zur, we be going to Trantor to fu— farm sheep, and we be wantin' you to come with us, zur. Be you objectin'?

If so, it is evidently tough shit as they whisk Arkady off stage left. Or right. But, six months later, she bursts dramatically into Dr Darell's living room and cries...

Arkady: The Foundation is on Terminus!

Dr Darell: What?

Arkady: Terminus! Terminus! This kindly farmer and his wife took me in and taught me lots of really interesting things about sheep and while I was there and I suddenly realised that a circle has no end and that and the Second Foundation must be on Terminus and let me tell you about the pink mushrooms that attacked me on the way to--

Dr Darell: Arkady... you seem stressed. You're not... pregnant, are you?

Arkady: Baa...

Her brain is scanned to make sure she's not a Second Foundationer. Green lights flash; the massed hordes cheer.

Meanwhile, on Trantor, the Second Foundation (the Chorus led by Preem Palver and his wife) gather.

Tomorrow Belongs To Me (to "The Saints Go Marching In")

Chorus: The First Foundation think that they have won
They know no psychohistory
Foundation Two is now Number One--
Tomorrow belongs to me.

Seldon's video lies in the vault
Misleading them for centuries
Left in the dark they could not revolt——
Tomorrow belongs to me

They sought us on Kalgan and Terminus
While we corrupted Arkady;
Precocious 'cause she's ours from birth--
Tomorrow belongs to me

The First Foundation may not want to be
Ruled by a psychocracy
So we just don't tell them and govern--
Tomorrow belongs to me!

Voice of Hari: Tomorrow belongs to me!

He laughs hideously as lights, curtains and cast go down.