

**AD ASTERA
TO THE STARS ...**

...AD ASTERA...

Joan of Arc
The Night Before ...

Joan of Arc The Night Before ...

Joan of Arc, The Night Before... is a monologue in one act, written and interpreted by Daniela Paluselli, about Joan's last night, before she was burned at the stake.

This event is organized by Ad Astera.

Ad Astera

Ad Astera is an educational company.

*Through the Sciences, Philosophy, Religion, History,
Culture and the Arts*

*We seek to encourage, empower, enlighten and inspire
All individuals*

*To cause change in ourselves for the better
By drawing out our innermost positive powers*

First into our own lives

*Thereby our families, communities, societies and our world-
Forever creating and living a higher vision*

*That uplifts the consciousness and character of humankind
To the stars ... and beyond ...*

www.joanofarcthenightbefore.com

On the cover: The Hubble Deep Field, courtesy Space Telescope Science Institute

Joan of Arc

According to documentation, Joan of Arc was born in Domremy, North East of France, around the year 1412. She was the daughter of a shepherd and remained illiterate all her life. By the time she was a teenager, the English had been taking French land for more than one hundred years. The French people were humiliated and demoralized. When Joan was 17, the city of Orleans was under siege and was reduced to starvation. The capitulation of Orleans would have meant a decisive victory for the English. Had Orleans fallen, France would have been completely conquered.

Joan had come to believe that God mandated her to rescue her country from the foreign invader. She convinced the King of France, Charles VII, to give her the troops necessary to rescue the besieged city. To the English disbelief, Joan of Arc and her troops liberated Orleans.

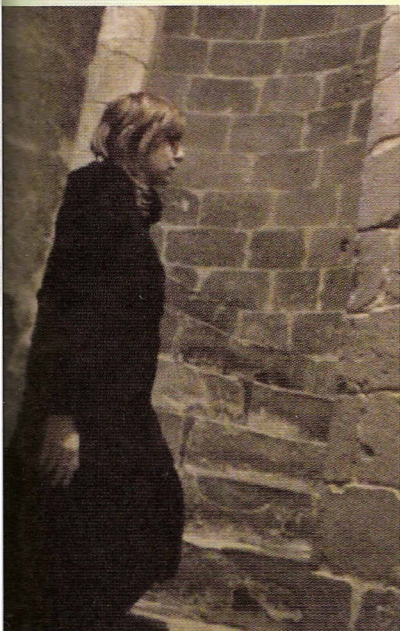
Joan's victory was a bolt of lightning to the English, who started fearing and hating her, and for more than one year tried to capture her. After leading the French troops to one victory after another, Joan was captured by the Burgundians, French allies of the English, at the battle of Compiègne. She was put on trial as a heretic.

King Charles, who owed Joan his crown, made no attempt to rescue her or pay a ransom. During the trial, Joan was offered to have her life spared if she admitted that God never sent her to save France. She refused. On May 30th 1431, at Rouen, Normandy, she was mercilessly burned at the stake.

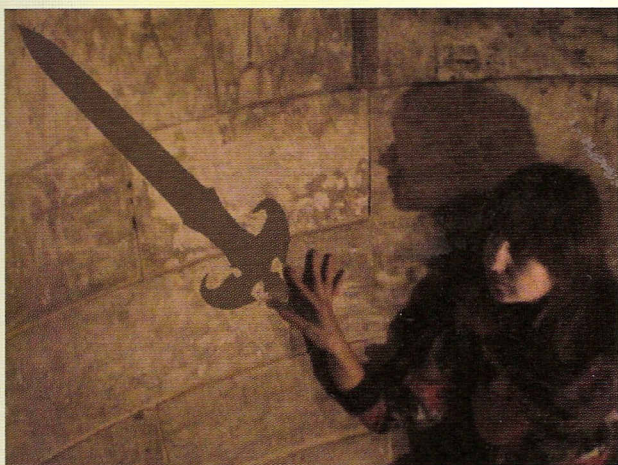
Joan's intervention had turned the tide on the Hundred Years' War. Inspired by their heroine, the French troops kept on fighting and, as Joan had prophesied, France was liberated.

**Joan of Arc's life is a testament that through
faith all limits can be broken and the impossible
can be accomplished**

*“Tour de la Pucelle”
Lonely and dark
A holding cell
For Joan of Arc*



*Inside the tower
Seemed frozen in time
As I climbed the stairs
That Joan had to climb*



*I imagined the sword
Her brave hands had clutched
As my hands touched the walls
That Joan’s hands had touched*



*Unlike other martyrs
As historians depict them
Joan of Arc
Was NOT a victim*

*She listened only
To her inner voice
To burn at the stake
Was her conscious choice*

*You will be moved
By what Joan had to say
“The Night Before...”
That fateful day*

*She knows she will live
Just a few hours more
This is Joan’s last night
“The Night Before...”*



On a serene lawn of pale flowers, a simple plaque marks the place where unspeakable horror unfolded, almost six centuries ago, and Joan of Arc was burned alive, because she refused to betray the truth.

About Daniela

Daniela Paluselli was born in Rome, Italy, less than five miles from the Colosseum. She grew up hearing the ghosts of the past whispering through the ruins, and spent her teenage years translating ancient Greek and Latin texts. Later she moved to Hawai'i, where the breath-taking beauty of nature nurtured her heart for two decades.

Life circumstances and a personal interest in the subject inspired her to write "Joan of Arc, The Night Before...". Seeking Joan's spiritual guidance, the author first went to Orleans, France, where Joan triumphed, then walked the streets of Rouen, where Joan met her executioners. Casting a bridge across the centuries, Daniela went back in time. She reached out, and Joan allowed her a glimpse of her sublime soul.

Daniela asked Joan how could she appreciate life, in spite of her imminent painful death? How did she trust God from a dungeon, darker than a cave and "more silent than the echo of death"? How did she find the strength to forgive? That is how Joan's last words, in "The Night Before..." become a love song from a human being to God, the journey of a soul from despair to hope. Joan's battle is the struggle of all human beings, her tears are our tears, her victory over despair, our hope. Like darkness precedes light, "The Night Before..." precedes dawn.



Daniela next to a theatrical marble mask, decorating the ancient Roman Theatre of Ostia (Rome, Italy).

Photo by Francesco Paluselli

Director's Notes

"The captain has turned on the fasten seat belt sign." It had been a very long ride. We were on final approach to Charles De Gaulle International Airport in Paris. We took the train to Rouen. We stood right next to that plot of ground on which a nineteen year old girl was burned alive because she refused to betray the truth. She was no victim.

Yet Joan had her moments of fear and anguish. In "Joan of Arc, The Night Before..." you will experience some of the pain she endured in her last night. You will witness that despite her doubts, terror and tears Joan never renounced her convictions. She was a human being so connected to her creator that no one could dissuade her, a whole army could not defeat her, raging fire could not deter her. Joan accepted the most painful death with courage, faith, hope and love.

Daniela traveled more than 30,000 miles to bring Joan of Arc to life for you. After visiting the place where the great heroine crossed the Loire River to liberate the city of Orleans, France, Daniela went to Rouen and climbed the steps of the tower where Joan was held captive. Daniela walked the streets where Joan was tried unjustly, sentenced unfairly and executed unmercifully. Daniela connected with and brings to you Joan's soul.

Through her compelling performance, Daniela delivers a spiritual emancipation. If you allow it to, Joan's story will have a powerful and profound effect on you. If you choose to, you can embrace Joan's message and use it for the rest of your life.

I only had to keep the set as simple as possible to give Daniela the space she needed to bring her masterpiece to life.

The director has turned on the fasten seat belt sign. You are in for an incredible ride.

Marno Enidos