

BERLIN

A Musical by Tim J. Spencer



Script

BERLIN

By Tim J. Spencer

List of main characters

Gustav Muller – ages between 26 & 49

Elin Muller – 24 & 47, Gustav's wife

Beppo Fischer – 26 – Gustav's best friend

Lutz Templin – 28 & 51 – another friend / IM

Hans Fischer – 36 & 59 Jailer at Bautzen Prison

Marietta Fischer – 33 & 56 His wife

Paul Freidrich – 45 & 68 Deputy of Arbeitsgruppe 6

Joshua Fischer/Muller – son of Elin - 23

List of sub characters

Rando Stiller – West Berliner – 40-63

Olga Stiller – Rando's wife – 38-61

Cabaret Singer – ageless

+ A Chorus

Place

The city of Berlin, Germany

The action takes place in two times

The First Act during the period March 18th – October 18th 1966

The Second during the period October 18th – November 9th 1989 culminating in the climax on the night the Berlin Wall was freed.

ACT ONE – SCENE SEVEN

The jail in Bautzen

[Hans, a jailer, is reading to Elin from a piece of paper]

Hans : Elin Muller. You are charged with illegally attempting to emigrate from this country without the permission required by the State. You will be held here in Bautzen Prison until such time that the State feels you are ready to return to common life.

Elin : That will never happen

Hans : Then you will be here a long time. Your rations are here. You should eat. The country is not unsympathetic.

Elin : *Just who are you telling
Me or your conscience
Why the hell do you believe the State
You can't trust anyone
This isn't freedom
You must be blind, you must be blind*

*You do your duty
Like a good soldier
You'll never see cause you don't look
It's all around you
God it astounds me
You are all fools, play by their rules*

Hans : *I do my duty
To a great country
People like you don't understand*

Elin : *You know nothing
Nothing about me
You don't know me, nor I know you
How can you say that "people like me"
Who are you to judge
You don't know why
The four of us
Ran for our lives from the State*

Hans : *Four of you, you say
I only know two
Who the State captured tonight
Yourself and another
Now locked up quite safely
Will find the way to the light*

Elin : *Two others fled another gate
One was my husband, now I'm late
Late for a meeting over the Wall
He'll be worried*

Hans : *Life is a choice you broke the law
You will not see him anymore*

Elin : *He had a friend who fled in tow
Beppo knew more than you can know
They will have made
I will always believe*

Your name?

Hans : Pardon

Elin : If you are going to keep me here, I want to know your name.

Hans : *(a little unnerved)* Fischer, Hans Fischer

Elin : The same as my friend Beppo.

Hans : Beppo's last name is Fischer?

Elin : That is his name, if only you were anything like him?

[Hans is struck dumb by Elin's statement, Beppo Fischer is his brother]

Hans : And his friend, your husband?

Elin : Gustav Muller, why do you want to know?

Hans : *(very agitated)* No reason. Just if you are going to be here I would like to know more about you. Your food. Eat well. You are obviously eating for two people. I will try to find more blankets.

Elin : *(confused in the change of tone)* Um.....Thank-you.

[Hans leaves Elin in the room]

Hans : *Eight years ago I joined the service
And left a family behind
Now eight years on I am suddenly lost
Was my brother there tonight*

*There's only one Beppo Fischer in Berlin
It used to be a game
And his best and only friend was a child called Gustav
Could it be these men are the same.*

*All of a sudden I have feelings for
A woman I've never met before
Hoping that she can get through the night
Hoping that she might see the light*

*As for the fate of the brother
I must find what truth I can
I will try to help this woman
Could her child be that man
I must see*

[Light fades on Hans, Comes up on the cell. Elin is alone]

Music 15 Take a Dream (Lullaby)

Elin : *When I was young I was scared of the night
 Haunted by demons
 Prayed for the light
 Mother would tell me don't think about the fear
 So I always used to try
 To see dreams and lullabies*

Elin : *Take a dream, a little dream
 One in which your hero
 Leads your hand to distant lands
 And wipes away your fear
 So once the dream is in your mind
 And everything's alright
 Lullaby, before you say goodnight*

*Lullaby to help you sleep
See the sun tomorrow
Hush a while, cry a while
Helps relieve your sorrow
Don't despair, just say a prayer
Pray to he who smiles on you
Lullaby when you feel like a child*

*Fairy tales with magic spells
And knights in shining armour
Princesses, white horses, unicorns
A prince or two, in love with you
To rescue you from danger
When it's real to you
You never know, it may come true*

*If you take a dream, a little dream
One in which your hero
Leads your hand to distant lands
And wipes away your fear
So once the dream is in your heart
And everything's OK
Lullaby until the break of day*

ACT ONE – SCENE EIGHT

West Berlin and Park

[Rando, Olga and Gustav are stood in the park. There is no sign of Elin or Lutz, Rando and Olga are worried about Gustav]

Rando : Gustav. It's eleven thirty

Gustav : They must have made it

Olga : They might be resting

Gustav : They wouldn't miss the time, it's been planned for weeks.

Rando : Maybe they've just been delayed

Gustav : Eleven o'clock sharp, if not this night then the following night.

Rando : They'll be here tomorrow then.

Gustav : Yes, Maybe. But there should be three more people here tonight.

Music 16 Always through Always

Gustav : *I'm stood here waiting so why aren't you here
Where are you hiding? Will you appear?
And if you are listening please show me a sign
If ever I needed to see you this is the time.*

*We made the plans, I can't do this alone
And what of our family? This was meant to be home*

*Beppo, my friend, this is not what was planned
You should be here too, you'd understand
Four of us meeting. Five would then live
Here with the freedom we wanted as kids*

*So how do I do this? How can I go on?
What's the point with no-one to share it
You should all be here, I don't think I can bear this
And why would you leave me? Just what can that mean?
I'm so scared, so frightened
I can't live in an abandoned dream*

*Always through always I still see your smiles
Won't you please join me just for a while
If always through always I need you with me
How do I survive the nightmare?
This was meant to be our dream*

ACT ONE – SCENE NINE

Arbeitsgruppe 6, a few days later

Music 17 Arbeitsgruppe 6

[Hans enters the reception area of Arbeitsgruppe 6]

Hans : I have an appointment with Herr Freidrich

Rec : Can I have your name please?

Hans : Hans Fischer

Rec : Just a moment (*Calls through to Freidrich's office*) Hans Fischer is here for his meeting with you Sir (*She waits for a reply – then looks back at Hans*) He says for you to go through, 3rd door on the left.

Hans : Thank-you

*[Hans goes through. He knocks on the door marked
PAUL FREIDRICH – DEPUTY OF ARBEITSGRUPPE 6]*

[The voice of Freidrich is heard]

Freidrich : Enter

[Hans enters a little cautiously]

Music 18 The Demand and Solitude

Freidrich : *Hans it's good to see you
It must be now two years
Since our paths last crossed*

Hans : Indeed sir

Freidrich : *You have made good progress
Since you took the post at Bautzen
This office felt a loss
Now you ask to see me it's the least that I can do
You have never called before so what is troubling you
We were always friends and you were confident with me
Tell me my friend, what do you need?*

Hans : *One of our prisoners Elin Muller
She is pregnant with a child
She has been there but a week now
She has told me of her file

How she tried to escape through the wall
She went with a friend but that's not all
How her husband went as well
With another friend but they chose another gate*

*She doesn't know yet what became
Of her husband who she named
Gustav Muller, there was another man
I would like to be able to tell her of their fate*

*I know that this is a large request
But I serve as I know best
I'd like to be able to ease her mind
A little at a fateful time*

[Freidrich ponders]

Freidrich : *I'm aware of these two people
That you have just mentioned
Yes, they were stopped as well
Both men chose to run
Our guards opened fire
I believe they went to hell
But why are you asking for a prisoner of the State
I find this confusing, are they not the ones we hate
I don't like this attitude, you'll start to worry me
Traitors can convince most easily.*

Hans : *She is not corrupting me I'd simply like to know
A woman with a baby due has feelings that will flow
It could save me time and grief, and now I know the truth
I can play the situation, like the State is due*

Freidrich : You say she's pregnant, how long til it's due

Hans : Not more than two weeks I would think, the doctor is keeping her under surveillance.

Freidrich : As it should be, but a baby (*his attitude obviously changes from sympathetic to heartless*).....well....yes.... it is the only way.

*Hans you must do this great service unlike things before
This is not an option it is now the law
You will wait until the child is born
Then you take the child and kill it, let the mother mourn
You will tell her that the child perished in it's birth
For the good of the State*

*The State and I will not tolerate the traitors in our midst
We must eliminate the threat that still exists
You are sworn to secrecy so you will never tell
Or you will die, don't deft, The State and I*

That will be all Hans Fischer. You have your orders, you will abide them, you may go.

[Hans leaves, dumbstruck at the order – In the streets his thoughts race]

Hans : *How can someone be so cruel
She won't have any soul to lose
How can they do this, this isn't right
The man is crazy
Surely there is some other way
I am in danger if my words stray?
This isn't just
You can't just play with life
So what am I to do, carry out his scheme?
And ruin the shreds of the woman's dream
This just can't be*

ACT ONE – SCENE TEN

Hans' Apartment

Music 19 Hans and Marietta

[Hans returns home, in a state, over the orders that Freidrich has just given him]

Hans : *Mad, heartless man how can this be
Why all the torment now in me
I worked for that man for six good years
And I never saw, never knew
He doesn't realise what he's done
Broken the faith of a faithful son
Of a country I cannot love again
When they ask you to kill the faith just ends*

Marietta : Tell me

Hans : There's a woman in the prison, she's been there a week. She tried to escape through the wall but was captured. She was one of four, one of the others was my brother, Beppo. She and another were arrested but she didn't know what happened to Beppo or her husband, Gustav so I went to find out from Arbeitsgruppe 6. Freidrich said they were both killed but I don't know whether he's telling the truth but they aren't they weren't arrested otherwise Freidrich would have told me. Elin, the woman is pregnant and due very soon. I mentioned this to Freidrich who decided instantly that I must kill the child. He ordered me to. Me kill a child, after they might have killed my brother, me kill an innocent child. I can't, I won't. There must be some way to save it from that. There must be.

Marietta : What can you do, go against the State?

Hans : I've been thinking. Ever since he ordered me to do it. I've come up with an idea, but it's crazy, the risk is unbelievable, I think it can work, and it's the only way.

Marietta : How crazy?

Hans : What if Beppo had a child, what if we adopted it, as family members.

Marietta : What are you saying?

BERLIN

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Ages given in first then second half

Gustav Muller Aged 26 & 49

Gustav grew up in East Berlin and saw the Wall rise around his 21st birthday. His childhood friend is Beppo who leads the party on their escape through the Wall. Gustav met Elin in the same year as the Wall went up. The two of them have been together and are totally in love. His world revolves around her, and finds, once in the West, it hard to survive without her. Rando, at that point, needs to be the driving force to break the somber mood. His faith in meeting Elin once more is paramount once they are separated.

Elin Muller Aged 24 & 47

Elin is a lady who begins the show very much led by her husband and full of innocence about how the plan to break through the Wall could go horribly wrong. She is full of optimism that is sadly cut short but her imprisonment. At first she is angry and then resolute and the character grows with the situation that is enforced upon her. Obviously she has to deal with the 'death' of her son, and then 23 years later, the actual story and the reunion. As the piece goes on she must gather more weight as a character and gathers more strength from the survival over all the heartache she is forced to endure.

Hans Fischer Aged 36 & 59

Hans is a child of the State. He has always served his country with pride, until the day he is faced with Elin in his prison. Then questions over his whole existence appear. He begins to realise that he's not sure what he should be fighting for. When he questions Freidrich he is left in an impossible position and the faith he once had in the system is gone. From there he knows he must find his own path to satisfy his own conscience. He makes the decision to save Joshua against everything he originally believed in and is resolute in his actions. Even when he has to explain the real story to his adopted son. He permanently lives with the knowledge that he will probably die for his actions and is thrown completely when Freidrich, instead of killing Hans, kills himself.

Beppo Fischer Aged 26

Beppo is Gustav's childhood friend. He is the dominant of the two characters and is the protagonist of the piece. After his death he reappears at the start of the second half as the voice of the Wall itself, and works in some ways as a narrator and bystander on the action.

Lutz Templin Aged 28 & 51

Lutz is weak, or so it appears. He actually is more designed as one who is more frightened for himself than others. This is a situation that, at the time in East Berlin, was true of many people. He is not a bad man, he is just someone who is put in a no win situation and hasn't got the strength to be the hero. Even in the second half he is too frightened to not inform on his previous friend Elin, and the jailer Hans.

Paul Freidrich Aged 45 & 58

Freidrich's story is told in the song 'The State and I'. He lived through the holocaust by escaping to the Soviet Union a move that saved his family and he has always been a believer in the Communist way of life. In essence he is also not a bad man. He totally believes in the system of government and is very 'black and white', if you don't agree with the State you are the enemy. At no point does he does anything that should seem malicious, he is only doing what he believes is best for the country, and at the point where the country is no longer to be believed in, the night of Nov 9th 1989, he chooses to end his life in front of Hans, rather than live in a country that no longer is Communist.

Marietta Fischer Aged 33 & 56

Marietta is Hans' devoted wife. She will always support her husband whatever the consequences including the rescuing of the child, Joshua. She has always wanted a son anyway so agrees to Hans' plan to save the child. Over the 23 years she treats Joshua like her own and is far more scared of losing 'her child' than Hans, who has always remembered how this will end.

Joshua Muller Aged 23 (only in the 2nd half)

When we first meet the adult Joshua, on his 23rd birthday, he has to be without a care in the world. He loves his parents, as he knows them, Hans and Marietta. Once he is told the true story of where he came from he is curious to find his real parents, but never bears animosity towards the parents who saved him. He asks Hans to help him trace his real parents and Hans, as always, assists Joshua to reunite the family the night the Wall came down.

Rando Stiller Aged 38 & 61

Easiest described as think Brian Blessed or Simon Callow in the film 'Four Weddings and a Funeral'. Must be full of life and nothing is ever too much of a problem. His time with Gustav must be driven by Rando's infectious mood. He tries to pull Gustav out of the depression that Gustav is in danger of dropping into with his jovial and well meaning banter.

Olga Stiller Aged 36 & 59

Rando's wife. She is the stabilising influence in Rando's life. She is a nurse and also the caring one who does sympathise with Gustav's plight.

Cabaret Singer Ageless

This is a drag artist (although could be played by a lady) in traditional Berlin-esque cabaret. It's a very light hearted and fluffy song that the character sings and must be over the top interacting with the audience (chorus) who are in the bar at the time. It's a throwaway to break the somber mood but needs to snap the audience's attention.

Director's Notes

Berlin is an Epic show, therefore the work can be staged fully, but will also work played more minimalistically.

The main staging point of the show is how to portray the Wall. In it's conception the opening number of the second act is with the Wall 'coming to life' and being part of the song.

The story though, is essentially one of love, and faith in people. Each of the characters hold their own beliefs, whether right or wrong, Freidrich inherently believes in Communism whilst Gustav and Elin believe and trust in each other.

Costumes again can be set as realistically or symbolically as the director chooses. Obviously the two acts are two different times of both history and fashion, but always the West is brighter and more colourful.

The staging of the Wall escape attempt is left really to the director's discretion, it is written as a spotlit freeze shot sequence but can be retranslated however works best for the director.

Musical numbers are as such unchoreographed, more staged, the only two songs in the piece that lend themselves to choreography easily are the two numbers in the West : '*The West in the East*' and '*Berlin belongs to me*'. All other numbers are more likely to be staged, although '*Chant of the Wall*' may be choreographed depending on the director's interpretation.

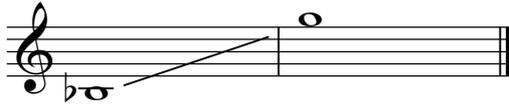
Lighting should give a far lighter and brighter air again when in the West, whereas the East should have a hint of the grey. But again this is not essential.

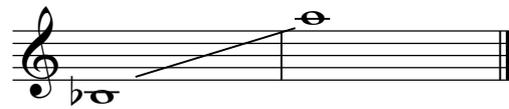
Berlin

Vocal Ranges

Gustav (*Tenor*) 

Elin (*Mezzo*) 

Joshua (*Tenor*) 

Hans (*Tenor*) 

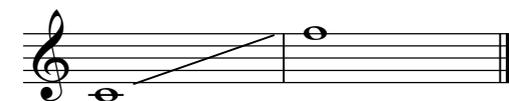
Marietta (*Mezzo*) 

Lutz (*Baritone*) 

Freidrich (*Bass*) 

Rando (*Baritone*) 

Beppo (*Tenor*) 

Cabaret Singer (*Baritone*) 

BERLIN

Cast

6 Male and 2 Female main characters, 2 Male and 1 Female sub characters
Chorus (to play various small parts)

Orchestrations

11 : Piano, Keys 2, Elec Gtr, Bass Gtr, Kit, French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Wind 1 (Flute, Oboe), Wind 2 (Clt, Ten Sax), Cello ; optional Perc/Keys 3 part

act one - 1966

EAST BERLIN - March 1966. The people of East Berlin sing of how oppressing and low morale is in the city's east side since the erection of the Wall in 1961, whilst the FD Regiment sing of how the country is strong and praise the system and the flag (*Hammer and Sickle*). We see the head of Arbeitsgruppe 6, Paul Freidrich, as he intimidates a man, Lutz, with threats unless he gives up his friends, who have 'traitorously' planned to escape through the Wall. Lutz is forced to agree and will return later with the information Freidrich requires.



In a bar we hear a cabaret singer (*Always drink the wine*) as two friends and Lutz wait for the last piece of the puzzle. Elin enters and apologises to her husband, Gustav, his best friend, Beppo, and Lutz for her tardiness and they discuss the final plans for their break through the Wall. Later, when the three have left Lutz sings of how the system is unfair, and how he has to give his friends up, just so he can live in peace. Freidrich meanwhile, back in his office, sings of how he found Communism and his beliefs that it is the only system that works (*The State and I*). Lutz returns to the office of Freidrich and relays the plans. Freidrich is pleased.

The next evening Elin and Gustav talk of the new life to come and, now she is pregnant, how it will be fantastic to raise a family in the West. They decide that if the child is a boy they will call him Joshua. They also look forward to meeting in the park on the west side the night after the escape.



March 19th 1966 and the friends meet. They will travel in two cars, in a compartment in the trunk, but as they approach the wall both cars, at different checkpoints, are stopped. Elin and Lutz are arrested but when Beppo and Gustav get out of the car Beppo makes a run for it. Gustav follows a couple of yards behind. The guards open fire and Beppo is shot dead, somehow Gustav makes it to the other side where he collapses. A passing couple, Rando and Olga realise he has come through the wall and decide to take him home to look after him.

Elin is taken to the jail in Bautzen where a jailer, Hans, introduces himself. He is a kind man who believes in the system but also wants to make the world a better place. He is surprised to learn that the jailbreak included Beppo, who he believes may be his estranged brother. Suddenly he is empathic to the situation. He goes to learn more leaving Elin alone (*Take a Dream*)

Gustav has gone to the meeting place, the park, but Elin does not arrive. Rando tries to bring Gustav away but he is a devastated man as he has lost his best friend and now his wife has not shown and he has no idea what has happened to her. (*Always through Always*).

Hans goes to see Freidrich to ask what happened to the other escapees. Freidrich tells him that they were both shot dead. Hans has also disclosed that Elin is pregnant and this is not acceptable to Freidrich. He tells Hans that when the baby is born it must be killed. No traitors will have children to grow up and pollute the country. Hans is stunned and disbelieving, but Freidrich threatens him should this not come to pass.

Back at his home Hans and his wife, Marietta, discuss the situation and decide that they will steal the baby and raise it as their own. This will have to be their secret, Elin cannot know, until a time comes when it is safe in the state to tell the truth.

In West Berlin Gustav is struggling to come to terms with what has happened so Rando tries to cheer him up explaining all that is good in the West, to get on with his life and make something for the day that Elin will see him again. (*The West in the East*).



In Bautzen Jail the baby is born. Hans and Marietta enact their plan and steal the baby, Joshua, whilst all are led to believe that the child has died. Elin is told of the death and is heartbroken. Marietta and Hans sing of how impossible the situation is and wishes that Elin might know the truth. (*When the Dream is Gone*)

act two - 1989

The second act opens with Beppo's Ghost on the Berlin Wall singing of the *Chant of the Wall* an echo of the cries of those lost that seems to sound in the dead of the night around the Wall.

In East Berlin Elin is working in her flat on some new art work. She has finally secured an exhibition (*Elin's art*). She was released after twelve years as a political prisoner and has learnt to keep her mouth shut. She tells of how she tried to find Gustav but that maybe he was killed at the Wall that night, but she doesn't believe so.

Gustav has made a life for himself in the West and drinks with his friend Rando as they sing of the good times they have had (*Berlin belongs to me*) although Gustav still thinks longingly of Elin and after the song makes his way to the meeting point of the park, just in case.

It is Joshua's 23rd birthday and having put off telling him the truth for two years Hans and Marietta finally decide that tonight Joshua will be told the truth of his parents. Marietta does not know how Joshua will react and is frightened that he may shun them after keeping the truth from him for so many years (*Judgement Day*).



Elin bumps into Lutz in a shop in East Berlin. She never knew that he was the informer that has cost so much of her life so when she suggests they have dinner some time, he is slightly taken aback. Nevertheless he agrees to the meeting.

Hans sits Joshua down and finally comes clean about the last 23 years (*Joshua*). Joshua is stunned, when he finally is able to speak he tells Hans that although it may have had to be done he now would like to find his parents (*Just your son*).

Elin, Gustav & Joshua sing a Trio of their feelings at this moment. (*Trio*)

Hans has an address for Lutz, one of the people with Elin on that fateful night which he has gained from the Stasi offices. He and Joshua go to Lutz's house to see if he knows where Elin is. They happen to have chosen the night that Elin goes for dinner and therefore Hans is ill prepared for Joshua and Elin coming face to face. Hans has to explain the story to Elin who

somehow has to deal with what Hans did and that the son she thought was dead is stood facing her as a 23 year old man.

Hans has been summoned by Freidrich, not surprisingly as Lutz is still an informer. After Freidrich confronts Hans with the truth he has now heard he produces a gun from a drawer. Hans fears the worst but as Freidrich raises the gun he turns the gun on himself and commits suicide. Hans, stunned, runs (*Run*)



Hans returns home in a panic. He is sure he should be dead, and barring that, why would Freidrich shoot himself. Marietta, Joshua and Elin are already at the house and un-noticed by Hans people are gathering in the streets. Marietta turns Hans' attention to the television where it has been announced that the Wall is open, the link between East and West is open. Freidrich had realised that the world he knew was at an end and saw no way to carry on. Hans begins to realise that maybe he won't have repercussions and the four of them decide to join the throng at the Wall. (*Freedom I*).

Elin's first thought is that of going to the meeting place from so long ago. She takes Joshua with her and sure enough Gustav is waiting patiently. (*Hold me, Love Me*). They return to the Wall to celebrate with the masses and the whole family is reunited the night the Wall came down on November 9th 1989. (*Freedom II*)